

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the Marina City Council

Special City Council Meeting of
January 25, 2022

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION REGARDING UNMET COMMUNITY FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE, PUBLIC SAFETY & STAFFING NEEDS AND POSSIBLE FUNDING OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THESE NEEDS AND PROVIDE DIRECTION TO CITY STAFF

REQUEST:

It is requested the City Council consider:

1. Have a discussion regarding unmet community facilities, infrastructure, public safety & staffing needs and possible funding options and strategies to address these needs and provide direction to city staff.

DISCUSSION:

In October 2021, the final budget for fiscal years 2021/22 and 2022/23 was adopted. As part of the budget process, many public meetings and hearings were held including a community survey. In these meetings many unmet community needs were discussed. In adopting the budget which includes a capital improvement program, the City Council ranked/prioritized and funded some of the most important/urgent identified needs of the community which were able to be funded through our existing revenue sources. Attached is this priority list. However, there are other community facilities, road and park infrastructure, public safety and new staffing needs that were identified and discussed, but were not able to be funded due to lack of revenue. The City Council gave direction to staff to schedule a special study meeting to discuss these unmet needs and explore possible funding options to address these needs which may include a future ballot measure for the public to vote.

Facility Needs

City Hall, Community Center, Council Chambers, Community Development Annex

The current city hall and city council chambers are actually double-wide trailers hooked together that were installed at the civic center site back when the city was incorporated in 1975. The original plan was to start building a city hall within the next year. When the City's General Plan was adopted back in the year 2000, again the building of a civic center was included as a top priority and several sites were identified including Locke Paddon Park.

These buildings are now over 45 years old and need significant maintenance, ADA updates, and repairs over the next five years just to be able to continue to be used. As the city has developed and city staff has grown over the years, the building space is not sufficient to accommodate existing and future needed staff positions. Additionally, with the new work environment changes that will be required to accommodate current and future COVID conditions, the existing space needs to be reconfigured to address safety needs for employees and the public.

The estimated cost just to address the minimum maintenance, ADA, repair and renovations needed to continue to work in these facilities is estimated at \$7 million. This will leave a building that is still 45 years old that will not meet current and future space and staffing needs.

A site has been identified in the City's General Plan at Locke Paddon Park next to the library that can easily accommodate the construction of a new city hall. The very rough estimated cost to do this would be approximately \$20 million dollars. We are working with a consultant to refine the costs better and will have updated costs at our Tuesday meeting.

Most cities across the country are never able to save up funds to build new facilities. If a city is trying to save up funds, usually the increase in construction costs and cost of living outpace your ability to save. Additionally, if a city tries to save up for facilities it often creates inequity in the community. A generation or longer of residents will pay taxes into a savings or reserve fund for a facility or desired need, but they will not be able to experience the quality of life improvement or use of that facility. Most facilities are built by cities by issuing some type of debt or bond issuance.

Police and Fire Facility

The existing police and fire station was built over twenty (20) years ago. It was designed and built to meet the needs of the community at that point in time, but as the city has grown over the past 20 years, the current building and location of the building will not meet the future public safety needs of the community.

In 2020 a fire study was completed that analyzed the city's fire suppression, medical, and rescue operations; assessed the safety needs of the community; and identified hazards, risks, and challenges of the community. The study made recommendations to improve the delivery of fire and emergency services to the community.

The recommended time for a first fire response unit to arrive on the scene of a fire or medical emergency is 5 minutes 20 seconds. This includes dispatch and putting on turnouts time. Actual time driving from a fire station needs to be 4 minutes. The current performance of the Marina fire department is 8 minutes. To meet some of these needed standards a fire department needs to have sufficient staffing, and the departments fire resources (fire engines) need to be located close enough to the required service areas so that effective response times can occur within the identified time frames.

As cities incorporate and begin to grow, a fire station is typically located in the heart or center of the city so that adequate response times can be met. However, as cities develop and spread out, the fire station located in the center of the city, often is no longer able to provide adequate response times to the newly developed areas of the community. This is exactly what is happening to Marina, particularly in the Dunes, Sea Haven and Abrams Park areas. The Presidio of Monterey (POM) Fire Department which is currently located in Seaside on General Jim Moore Blvd is closest to these areas and typically is the first responder to arrive on scene. This station will be closing in 18 months, and after that, the Dunes, Sea Haven and Abrams Park areas will not be able to have adequate fire and medical response times due to the location of fire stations in Marina. The attached graphs show Marina's current areas of 4 minute response time and what these areas will be like when the POM station relocates.

Additionally, the current Marina fire station was built too small and a ladder truck, which is one of the priority needs of the city, cannot fit in this station. It is critical that a new headquarter fire station be built that can house a ladder truck and is located in the area around California Avenue and Imjin Parkway to provide needed fire and medical coverage to the southern areas of Marina including Sea Haven, Dunes, Abrams Park and future annexed areas of the city.

In the near term, the existing headquarters fire station on Palm Avenue needs to be relocated to the north end of the city in the Vince DiMaggio Park area.

The estimated cost of a new fire headquarters station is \$10 – 15 million. In addition to a fire station, a \$ 1.5 million fire ladder truck needs to be purchased.

Police Facility

A new police facility can be build built as part of the new city hall facility and that portion of the cost is estimated to be \$ 12 million.

Other City Facilities

Other needed city facilities that have been identified are:

- Upgrades to community center, teen center, skate park - \$ 1 million
- Senior Center - \$ 3-5 million. This could be included in a city hall building plan
- Sports Center \$ 3.5 – 4 million. Funded from FORA escrow bonds
- Aquatic Center \$ 8 – 10 million
- Arts Village \$ 3 – 5 million
- Hockey Pavillion \$ 3 million

Unmet Current Staffing Needs

While all city departments will need to add staffing as continued growth of the community and service demands increase, as established by city policy, new staff must be funded by ongoing revenue growth and not one-time revenues. This is why economic development and growth of our tax base is so critical to our city.

Currently, we have service level demands from the community that we are unable to meet due to lack of staffing and funding to support that staffing. These current needs include:

- Firefighters (3) to increase staffing from 2nd engine company from 2 firefighters to 3 per engine company - estimated annual cost \$500,000
- Deputy Chief/Fire Marshall – estimated annual cost \$125,000
- Affordable Housing/ Lease/ Grants Manager – estimated annual cost \$150,000
- Human Resources/ Risk Management/ Liability Manager/Director – estimated cost \$200,000
- Public works maintenance workers (4) – estimated cost \$100,000 each
- Associate Engineer – estimated cost \$155,000
- Code Enforcement Officer – estimated cost \$100,000

Street Infrastructure

The city has implemented a pavement management street repair program with a goal of getting the condition of all city streets up to a rating of 70. Under this system a brand new street has a rating of 100 and a street undriveable is rated 0. Currently, the city is allocating \$1.6 million annually from the General Fund, \$600,000 annually from measure X funds, and \$400,000 annually from State road maintenance funds for a total of \$2.6 million annually to repair streets. While we have made significant improvements to our streets with these additional funds to our street programs, with our current funding we are still unable to fix 26 identified streets in the city that over the next three years will need to be completely reconstructed.

To fund the repair of these streets the city will need to issue a bond and pledge the \$600,000 annually from Measure X funds to make the annual debt service payments of this bond. This bond will be approximate \$7 – 8 million dollars. This still will require that the city come up with approximately an additional \$4-5 million to repair these streets.

Additional Fund or Revenue Options

The State of California by law gives cities four primary tax revenue sources in order to operate and meet the service demands and infrastructure needs of their community; sales tax, property tax, transient occupancy tax (TOT, hotel tax) and utility users tax (UUT). The City of Marina has established its sales tax rate at the maximum allowed by State law, it has established its TOT tax at 14%, property tax is established at 1% of assessed value, and the city does not have a utility users tax.

Most cities in the State and every city in Monterey County except one, has a utility user tax. The utility user tax is a primary tax source that other cities use to meet service and infrastructure demands. The City of Marina previously had a utility user tax but the citizens voted this down years ago. The lack of this primary tax source (especially over time) certainly contributes to the unmet facility and infrastructure needs of the city.

The attached exhibit is an estimate of additional revenue the city could generate with a UUT. It also shows the bonding capacity if the city were to pledge this revenue source to a bond. All tax increases must be approved by the voters. With a 6% UUT, the City of Marina would generate another \$1.6 million annually in taxes.

Another revenue source would be issuing a General Obligation Bond. A general obligation bond is paid by increases to property taxes. School districts typically use this funding source to pay for new schools and maintenance and repair of schools. The library in Marina was built by a general obligation bond. The following shows the estimated property tax increase with different levels of a general obligation bond.

- \$30 million GO bond - \$5.25 per month (\$63 annually) per \$100,000 assessed property value
- \$40 million GO bond - \$7.00 per month (\$84 annually) per \$100,000 assessed property value
- \$50 million GO bond - \$8.75 per month (\$105 annually) per \$100,000 assessed property value.

If a home in Marina had an assessed property value of \$600,000 they would pay an additional \$31.50, \$42.00 or \$52.50 per month depending upon the size of the bond.

The city could look at bringing an issue like this to the voters as early as June in a special election or in November at a regular election. While it's difficult to tax about tax increases, especially as we are recovering from the COVID pandemic, if we are ever as a community going to address aging facility and infrastructure needs we must have this discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Layne P. Long
City Manager
City of Marina