



**CITY OF MODESTO
COMMITTEE REPORT**

MEETING DATE: March 10, 2008

February 25, 2008

TO: Economic Development Committee
FROM: H. Brent Sinclair, AICP, Community & Economic Development Director
SUBJECT: Progress Report for Organizational Assessment and Development Review
CONTACT: Laurie Smith, Administrative Services Officer, lsmith@modestogov.com

RECOMMENDED COMMITTEE ACTION:

Receive and accept Progress Report.

BACKGROUND:

In July 2006 Jay Corey of Citygate Associates was hired as the Interim Planning Division Manager. Mr. Corey was very familiar with the department and organization because he conducted a performance review of the Community and Economic Development Department in 2001. As part of his appointment as interim Planning Manager, the Acting CEDD Director asked Mr. Corey to conduct an organizational assessment of the Planning Division, which was then broadened to include the overall development review permitting process. Mr. Corey interviewed all city staff with a role in the planning process including staff from Public Works, the City Attorney's office and Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods.

Citygate Associates completed the report entitled Organizational Assessment of the Development Review Permitting Process in December 2006. The report was reviewed by the Economic Development Committee on December 11, 2006 and January 8, 2007. Upon review and comment, the Committee forwarded the report to the City Council for consideration of acceptance. On February 6, 2007, the City Council accepted the report and directed staff to commence implementation.

The report contained 27 separate recommendations, each assigned with a priority ranking and person(s) responsible for implementation. Of the total 27 recommendations, 26 were listed as priority level "A" or "B" with varying implementation dates. Though the priority levels and timetables were helpful guides, they required some refinements with real time expectations.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Upon acceptance of the report, the new incoming Director of Community and Economic Development began assembling a formal Implementation Plan. At the time of the report was generated, 15 vacancies existed within the 56 person Community and Economic Development Department. Therefore, the primary focus of implementation centered on filling vacancies with key people to establishing stability.

Attached to this report is the Implementation Plan with an up-to-date status of all 27 recommendations. The Plan is updated on a continual basis as achievements are realized. In addition, quarterly reports are provided to the City Manager.

Of the 27 recommendations, 25 have either been completed or have been initiated. Although all are recommendations are important, the following stand out as key successes that have made an immediate positive impact.

- ❖ Filling key positions within the Department
- ❖ Formation of a new and effective interdepartmental Development Review Team (DRt)
- ❖ Breaking down formal and informal walls between departments
- ❖ Instituting and encouraging “unanticipated service” to customers
- ❖ Programmatic approach to Zoning Code amendments

FISCAL IMPACTS:

Only three of the 27 recommendations included costs that would have resulted in significant fiscal impact. Two of these, addition of four new Planners and one Deputy City Manager are not recommended. Together, the fiscal impact to the General Fund would have been over \$600,000 in reoccurring expenses. The only remaining recommendation with significant fiscal impact is the physical movement of Land Development Engineering to third floor and relocation of Fire Marshall Staff to fourth floor. This would require the relocation of over 30 staff and the accompanying work related spaces, furnishings and appurtenances. After careful study and consideration, this relocation is not recommended. Instead, minor adjustments and relocations are being considered that will better “group” people together.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

Implementation of the recommendations will require the participation and cooperation of most departments within the City.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

The public was invited to participate through the public notification process during the plan preparation portion of this project.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This item is an administrative project, which is exempt from environmental review. No environmental documents must be filed.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL:

Staff is currently providing quarterly progress reports to the City Manager. These reports can also be forwarded to the Economic Development Committee and/or City Council if desired.

Approved by: _____
H. Brent Sinclair, AICP
Community & Economic Development Director

Reviewed by: _____
James E. Niskanen, Interim City Manager

Attachments: 1. Organizational Assessment of Development Review – Final Report
2. Implementation Plan

