

**REPORT TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL**  
*City of Salinas, California*

Agenda Item Number

Department Director Approval

Finance Review

Attorney Review

City Manager Approval

**DATE:** February 11, 2003

**FROM:** Jorge J. Rifa, Assistant City Manager

**BY:** Anna M. Velazquez-Melchor  
Neighborhood Services Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Neighborhood Engagement Strategy  
for Fiscal Year 2003-2004 and the remainder of  
Fiscal Year 2002-2003

**BACKGROUND:**

In January 2002 the Neighborhood Services Coordinator transitioned from performing full time duties as the Weed and Seed Coordinator to performing full time duties as the Neighborhood Services Coordinator. As a result of the transition, the Neighborhood Engagement Strategy was developed. In the process of developing the strategy, interviews were conducted with individual Councilmembers and the Mayor in order to obtain information regarding community priorities and concerns.

After compiling all the information, similar concerns and priorities were identified. The following is a list of the identified concerns and priorities;

- Implementing community cleanups throughout the City.
- Raising neighborhood awareness about the services available to Salinas residents by local government and other community based organizations.
- Providing the Councilmembers and the Mayor with an opportunity to have an on-going method of establishing community relationships and obtaining community input and dialogue.
- Assist residents to strengthen the social fabric of neighborhoods.
- Address district and citywide concerns.

Based on the above information, the following Neighborhood Engagement Strategy was developed;

- Coordination of 2 community meetings in each council district beginning fiscal year July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004.
- Coordination of 1 community cleanup in each council district beginning fiscal year July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004.
- Coordination of 4 Community Resource/Informational fairs beginning fiscal year July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004.

## **Overview of Community Meetings**

### **Purpose:**

To allow the council to maintain a continuous method of communication with residents and allow residents an opportunity to inform council representatives of concerns and needs in their neighborhoods. Meetings will usually be held in the evening hours during the weekday, unless the Council requests a special meeting during the daytime and on a weekend. The meeting place will usually at a facility within the neighborhood such as a school, church, recreational facility etc.

### **Meeting format:**

The meetings will attempt to include other city departments such as police, public works, code enforcement, recreation and parks and other departments on an ad hoc basis.

The community meetings will include a welcome by the councilmember, update on criminal activity, code violations, recreational opportunities, city projects, volunteer opportunities and other community events within the district. Meetings will have an open discussion period, next steps, and a conclusion.

### **Duties and responsibilities of the Neighborhood Services Coordinator:**

- Assist the Council in finding a meeting location.
- Develop meeting flyers and coordinate a community outreach plan.
- Notify appropriate city departments and confirm attendance.
- Assist Council in preparing the meeting agenda.
- Take notes and prepare meeting minutes.
- Make appropriate referrals for concerns addressed at the meeting. Obtain updates and provide information to the council and the neighborhood.
- Ensure that proper follow up information is provided to person(s) making requests such as councilmember, resident, neighborhood group etc.

### **Duties and responsibilities of the Councilmembers:**

- Be present at the community meeting.
- Identify community residents who can assist in distributing flyers.
- Meet with the Neighborhood Services Coordinator at least two months in advance to identify the target area for the community meeting and to provide information on agenda items and specific topics to be addressed.
- Assist in distributing information to the residents about the community meeting.

### **Overview of Neighborhood Cleanups**

#### *Purpose:*

Allow the Council to assist residents to beautify their neighborhoods, provide residents with a safe and healthy environment and provide residents with opportunities to become involved in their neighborhoods.

#### *Community Cleanup format:*

Community Cleanups will be conducted on Saturdays. Cleanups will have a two-pronged approach, (a) Identifying and correcting neighborhood problems (b) beautifying neighborhoods.

- (a) *Identifying and correcting neighborhood problems* will focus on removing garbage and blight from the neighborhoods, addressing code violations, removing abandoned vehicles, identifying empty lots that are used as dumping sites and working with absentee landlords and property owners.
- (b) *Beautifying neighborhoods* will include painting faded street curbs, cleaning parks in the surrounding area, replacing street light bulbs, pruning city trees, painting fire hydrants, posting city signs that have been removed, installing city signs that are needed and planting flowers and painting fences.

#### *Duties and responsibilities of the Neighborhood Services Coordinator:*

- Assist and provide recommendations to Councilmembers on potential cleanup areas.
- Contact BFI, A&S Metals and other appropriate agencies.
- Develop flyers and coordinate a community outreach plan.
- Notify other city staff and ensure that all neighborhood needs that fall within the city's responsibility are addressed.

#### *Duties and responsibilities of the Councilmembers:*

- Be present at the community cleanup.
- Identify community residents who can assist in distributing flyers.
- Meet with the Neighborhood Services Coordinator two months before the cleanup in order to select the target area. *(Council can use the Cleanup Request Form as a tool to help select the cleanup target area.)*
- Provide the Neighborhood Services Coordinator with any additional concerns that need to be addressed in the targeted neighborhoods.
- Assist in distributing information to the residents about the community cleanup.

### **Overview of Neighborhood Resource Fairs**

#### *Purpose:*

To allow residents to obtain information regarding services offered by city government as well as services offered by other community-based organizations. The community fairs will be held on Saturdays in a neighborhood street, local school gymnasium or cafeteria or a recreation and park facility if available.

Duties and responsibilities of the Neighborhood Services Coordinator:

- Coordinate interagency participation as well as outside agency participation.
- Assist and provide recommendations to Councilmembers on potential neighborhood locations for a resource fair.
- Develop flyers and distribute to residents.
- Publicize event in the media.
- Obtain all necessary permits.

Duties and responsibilities of the Councilmembers:

- Meet with the Neighborhood Services Coordinator two months before the resource fair in order to select the target area.
- Be present at the resource fair.
- Assist in identifying community residents who can distribute flyers.
- Assist in informing the residents about the resource fair.

**THE ISSUE:**

Shall the Council approve the Neighborhood Engagement Strategy?

**TIME CONSIDERATION:**

City Council approval is needed in order to continue implementing the Neighborhood Engagement Strategy for Fiscal Year 2002-2003 and plan for Fiscal Year 2003-2004.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Given the potential impact of budget reductions on the City's General Fund imposed by Sacramento, the Council may choose to reduce or eliminate budget appropriations for Neighborhood Services activities. The Neighborhood Services budget allocated \$9,000 in Fiscal Year 02-03 for costs associated with neighborhood cleanups. The remaining balance in this account is \$4,901.51. However, two cleanups have previously been conducted and two more are planned before June 30, 2003.

In Fiscal Year 03-04 a recommendation will be made to allocate \$12,000 for community cleanups. This will provide \$2,000 for each neighborhood cleanup.

The standard community cleanup costs the City anywhere between \$1,000 to \$2,000. The standard neighborhood cleanups provide 8 to 10 garbage dumpsters plus 1 to 3 scrap metals drop boxes. However, there have been occasions where 14 garbage dumpsters have been required.

The majority of the costs associated with neighborhood cleanups are as follows;

- Garbage Dumpsters (30 yard) \$148.00 plus disposal fees
- Disposal fees (*costs vary depending on weight of dumpster*)  
\$0-\$200

*\*\*\*The contracted garbage disposal company for Salinas (BFI) does not provide any discount rates for neighborhood cleanups.*

- Drop box for scrap metal material (30 yard) \$100.00

*For the past years A&S metals has provided the dumpsters for the removal of appliances and metal items free of cost to the City of Salinas.*

- Paint, brushes, gloves, garbage bags etc. \$100-\$250

**ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE TO COUNCIL:**

1. The City Council can approve the Neighborhood Engagement Strategy.
2. The City Council can reject the strategy.
3. The City Council can modify the Neighborhood Engagement Strategy.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council approve the recommended Neighborhood Engagement Strategy for the balance of FY 2002/2003 and all of year 2003/2004.

*Attachments:*

- *Proposed Neighborhood Engagement Strategy for Fiscal Year 2003-2004*
- *Proposed Neighborhood Engagement Strategy for remainder of Fiscal Year 2002-2003*