



Memo

City of Pacific Grove

To: Commission and Board Chairs
From: Carmelita Garcia, Mayor
Subject: Project Plans and Commission Restructuring
Date: December 1, 2009

As you know, the City Council held its annual planning session on November 7. Facilitated by Bob Sadler, a Pacific Grove resident, this session had added urgency and importance, given the economic challenges our community is facing and the two-year window we have before the City faces a new round of financial challenges.

At the session, the Council updated its goals and established priorities for the next one, three, and five years. We identified over 50 projects (e.g., downtown improvements, updated Measure C, etc.) the successful and timely completion of which are absolutely vital for our community's future (attached).

Staff is developing project plans for each of these high-priority projects. These plans will be presented for Council's review and approval at a special Council meeting on Thursday, December 17.

At the meeting, firm milestones and completion dates for each project will be established. We cannot afford to let their completion slip, a problem that has been all-too-common in the recent past. We will not be able to complete these projects, however, without significant contributions from the City's volunteer boards and commissions.

As a result, I am formally inviting all board and commission chairs to attend the December 17 special meeting. It will be held at the Community Center, from 5 to 9 p.m. Please be sure to read the project plans prior to the meeting. These will be distributed to the Council on Friday, December 11 by Sheila Randazzo, Acting Deputy City Clerk. Sheila will have a copy available for each chair as well.

Pacific Grove now has 20 boards and commissions on the books. There has been no reduction in the number of commissions, or their size, even though we have significantly reduced our budget and staffing. The ADA Committee voted to go to quarterly meetings; little else has been done to reflect recent changes. Some of our boards and commissions have too much to do; others have been hampered by a lack of meaningful agenda items for their consideration. Some boards align well with our current structure and needs; for others, keeping a full roster of members has been difficult and their charter puts them at slight variance with the City's direction.

We have significantly downsized our City government due to fiscal realities. We also are working hard to streamline operations in order to be more effective and efficient in our responses to the needs of our community and citizens. Our efforts to become more responsive and agile will continue. As one step, the Council will consider placing a ballot measure on the November, 2010 ballot to downsize the Council from 7 to 5 members.

We also need to rethink the number, structure, and charters for our boards and commissions. We just cannot continue to support 20 boards. Having so many diffuses their responsibilities and authority. It is imperative that we streamline the commission structure so that all of us who serve Pacific Grove can focus on those projects and ongoing efforts most vital to our community's future. As a result, in January I will recommend changes in the number and structure of our boards and commissions, and formally charge them to assist the staff and Council in the completion of the 50+ projects.

I ask you, as the Chair of your board or commission, to think about changes you believe to be most appropriate. Please forward your thoughts to the Council and me through Sheila, by e-mailing her at srandazzo@ci.pg.ca.us within the two weeks following the December 17 session. On January 4, Sheila will aggregate your suggestions and share them with the Council, the City Manager, and me.

We cannot take enough time or expend enough effort to thank each of you for all the service and contributions you provide to the City. Pacific Grove is entering an exciting time, with opportunities for all of us to contribute to our future, based on the experiences and expertise we have already gained. I look forward to working with each of you in the coming months. I am sure I can count on you to continue to help us do what is best for the City.