***Library Strategic Plan FAQs***

FAQs

**Why is the City doing this Strategic Planning effort? What is the history?**

* The City began a Strategic Planning process in 2008/09, but canceled it due to the budget shortfall at the time. In November, 2009 the City took action to close Wright Library due to City and County funding shortfalls. In October of 2010 the City explored what process it would need to comply with should the City withdraw from the County Library system. In November of 2010 City Council directed staff to solicit proposals from consultants to restart the Library Strategic Planning effort. The Library Commission and the Steering Committee will govern a consultant lead process to determine what the community priorities are for Library Services.

**How is this being funded?**

* There are funds available in the Westside Library Contribution trust account, to support this planning effort. The account currently has approximately $540,000 available. The fund was established as part of the Sycamore Village development, as an in lieu payment to fulfill the developer’s obligation to fund a library in the Westside. These funds may be used for library services anywhere in Ventura based upon ongoing subsidy of Westside library services at the Avenue Library by a Community Development Block Grant for annual operations in the amount of $90,000. The trust funds allowable uses include planning, design development, capital contributions, and maintenance.

**How will the process work?**

* The Strategic Planning process began on April 13th with the first meeting of the Steering Committee in the Topping Room at EP Foster. All meetings are open to the public and meeting agendas will be posted on the City's website, at City Hall and at the Library. The Steering Committee will meet once a month over the next 5 months to steward the process. Jim Friedman will Chair this committee and Debbie Giles will serve as the Vice-Chair. The Committee work closely with the consultant to engage the community in this process and will provide monthly updates to the Library Advisory Commission. The consultant will provide an update to City Council on the progress of the project at a special joint meeting of the Library Advisory Commission and City Council on June 16th. It is anticipated that the planning process will conclude in the fall of 2011.

**What's the first step?**

* In early May we will launch a widespread community assessment process that will aim to outreach to all segments of the community. We will launch a survey on Sunday, May 8th to determine the community priorities with regards to the service roles the library serves. The survey will be available in English and Spanish in electronic and hard copy versions from May 8th -May 23rd. The Steering Committee will be instrumental in outreaching to the community and their stakeholder groups to secure the greatest  number of participants possible. Brochures and survey links will be widely distributed and will be made available to all Committee Members for distribution.Today marks the beginning of a 60 day community wide assessment process which will inform the update to City Council in June.

**Who can participate?**

* Anyone who lives or works in Ventura. All groups and all ages NEED to participate. Every voice, library users and non-users alike NEED to be heard.

What to do now? We encourage each of you to send us the community group/organizations that you would like us to reach out to. Next week please email us the names of the groups and organizations along with any contact information you have. MaryEllin will be scheduling a week long set of meetings May 9th -12th to meet with as many groups as possible. We are also looking to you to volunteer to take the message forward during this two week stint. If you are willing to speak with groups please let us know your schedule and we will work to get the Library Strategic Plan on meeting agendas.

Questions please contact Kathy Thomson, 658-2248 or Berta Steele, 647-7442

 City of Ventura, Library Strategic Plan Steering Committee

