CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS . 11465 WEST CIVIC CENTER DRIVE . AVONDALE, AZ 85323

WORK SESSION
April 14, 2008
6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR ROGERS

1 ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2 MARICOPA COUNTY "MAKE THE CLEAN AIR COMMITMENT" CAMPAIGN

Representatives of Maricopa County will be presenting information on the County's "Make the Clean Air Commitment" campaign and the RunningOutofAir.com website. For information and discussion.

3 NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Staff will update the Mayor and City Council regarding activities during the first six (6) months of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). For information, discussion and direction.

4 AMENDMENT OF SECTION 1, ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Staff will present a proposed amendment to Section 1, Administration and Procedures of the Avondale Zoning Ordinance. For information, discussion and direction.

5 TEXT AMENDMENT FOR SECTION 2 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE - RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Staff will present proposed amendments to the Avondale Zoning Ordinance, Section 2, Residential Districts. For information, discussion and direction.

6 TEXT AMENDMENT FOR SECTION 4 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE - INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS.

Staff will present a proposed text amendment to Section 4, Industrial Districts of the Avondale Zoning Ordinance. For information, discussion and direction.

7 SOUTH AVONDALE SPECIFIC PLAN INTRODUCTION - SP-08-3

Staff will provide the City Council with an introduction to the study area and planning process for the South Avondale Specific Plan and General Plan update. For information, discussion and direction.

8 EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

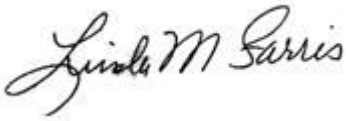
Staff will update the council regarding the activities of the Employee Retention and Recruitment Committee since its creation in November 2007. For information, discussion and direction.

9 EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Council may hold an executive session pursuant to ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 38-431.03 (A)(4) for discussion or consultation with the City's attorney in order to consider its position and instruct the City's attorney regarding the council's position regarding pending economic development agreements.

10 ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Farris, CMC
City Clerk

Any individual with a qualified disability may request a reasonable accommodation by contacting the City Clerk at 623-333-1200 at least 48 hours prior to the council meeting.

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

SUBJECT:
Maricopa County "Make the Clean Air Commitment" Campaign

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Sammi Curless, Assistant to the Mayor and Council (623)333-1613

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

PURPOSE:

Representatives of Maricopa County will be presenting information on the County's "Make the Clean Air Commitment" campaign and the RunningOutofAir.com website.

BACKGROUND:

The public education effort which includes the RunningOutofAir.com website has the goal of encouraging all residents of the County to take action and make the commitment to cleaning the air we breathe.

The RunningOutofAir.com website is designed to create a network of residents who are committed to taking action to help reduce their effects on air quality.

With the simple suggestions outlined on the website, Maricopa County hopes to meet its goal of reducing dust particulates by five percent each year for the next three years as outlined in the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) five percent plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendation as this is a worksession item presented by Maricopa County.

ATTACHMENTS:

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No Attachments Available

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

SUBJECT:
Neighborhood Traffic Management Program Update

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Dave Fitzhugh, P.E.,Interim City Engineer, 623-333-4211

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

PURPOSE:

Staff will update the Mayor and City Council regarding activities during the first six (6) months of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP).

BACKGROUND:

On June 18, 2007, City Council adopted Resolution No. 2658-607 establishing the City of Avondale Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). The Neighborhood Traffic Management Program establishes policy and procedures for residents to request traffic calming features in order to address excessive vehicle speeds and traffic volumes on residential roadways in their neighborhoods.

Staff began administering the NTMP on August 15, 2007. To kick-off the program, mailings were sent to all residents who had expressed an interest in traffic calming prior to and since the kick-off date. The mailings included an information booklet on the NTMP and a Traffic Action Request Form. This information was also made available on the City's website and a press release was issued notifying the public of the program.

Since program kick-off, staff has had the opportunity to work with residents in several neighborhoods in the different stages of the process outlined in the program policy. Staff will present the activity that has transpired and the status of requests received between August 15, 2007 and February 29, 2008.

DISCUSSION:

Neighborhood Activity

Since the inception of the NTMP, staff has received 16 completed Traffic Action Request Forms (TARF) from residents in 14 different neighborhoods throughout the City (see attached map). A total of 142 traffic counts have been conducted in 13 neighborhoods. Traffic counts for one (1) neighborhood have not yet been conducted and are currently being scheduled by the consultant. Based on program criteria, of the traffic counts conducted and results received, eight (8) neighborhoods qualify to participate in the program and two (2) neighborhoods did not meet the minimum criteria and therefore do not qualify to participate in the program at this time. Three (3) neighborhoods are currently being reviewed for eligibility.

Of the eight (8) eligible neighborhoods, residents in four (4) neighborhoods have requested petitions. A brief summary of the neighborhoods is provided below.

Coldwater Ridge: Two (2) petitions for speed humps were returned to the City complete and approved. A petition for Cocopah Street was returned 95% complete and a petition for Pima Street was returned 87% complete. In addition, residents were able to obtain signatures from the property owners of rentals without difficulty. Installation of the speed humps on the two (2) streets is currently being coordinated with a contractor for installation within the next six (6) weeks.

Palm Gardens: Four (4) petitions for speed humps and one (1) petition for speed tables were prepared and sent

at the request of residents for five (5) streets throughout the neighborhood. Residents are currently circulating the petitions and have four (4) months per NTMP policy, to return the petitions. The petitions are due in May 2008.

Old Avondale (north of Main Street): Four (4) petitions for speed humps were prepared and sent at the request of residents for four (4) streets throughout the neighborhood. Residents are currently circulating the petitions that are due in June 2008.

Old Avondale (south of Main Street): Recently, staff met with residents to measure for speed humps on Elm Lane. The petition is currently being prepared by staff for residents to circulate. Due to the diverse nature of this neighborhood, staff is also preparing a flyer in Spanish. The flyer will be circulated throughout the neighborhood to inform all residents what streets qualify should other homeowners choose to request additional petitions. Circulation of the flyer and the petition will be done concurrently.

Three (3) additional neighborhoods, Los Arbolitos Ranch/Pecan Groves, Harbor Shores, and the Sanctuary, have been notified that they qualify to participate in the NTMP based on results of traffic studies conducted. These neighborhoods chose to coordinate a neighborhood traffic calming committee to develop a comprehensive traffic calming plan and will then request the corresponding petitions be prepared by the City. These committees are using the traffic study results along with suggestions from Engineering Staff to come up with their traffic calming plan.

Demonstration Project Status

The goal of the demonstration projects is to install different types of traffic calming features as examples in various locations throughout the City. The following locations were selected based on commonly requested locations received from residents, Police Department records, and feedback from community meetings:

1. Six (6) speed humps on 5th Street and 6th Street between Riley Drive and Western Avenue south of Agua Fria High School
2. A traffic circle at the intersection of 113th Avenue and Durango Street

The speed hump project on 5th and 6th Streets received 100% approval from the immediately adjacent property owners. The speed humps were constructed in April 2007 and no complaints have been received to date. Staff has conducted an additional traffic study to measure the effectiveness of the speed humps. The below table summarizes the results.

Avondale Demonstration Project

Street	Volume Reduction	Speed Reduction
5th Street -Western Avenue to Riley Drive	24%	15%
6th Street - Western Avenue to Riley Drive	11%	7%

The design of the traffic circle at 113th Avenue and Durango Street has been completed. This project is currently being prepared to be advertised for construction bidding with a schedule of construction to begin in early Summer 2008.

Program Costs

The NTMP is primarily funded through the City's Capital Improvement Program except for staff management and administrative costs. Council approved a budget of $300,000 for expenditure in FY 2007-2008. This includes costs for conducting traffic studies, materials, mailings, design and construction. In addition, an amount of $169,027 was carried over from FY 2006-2007 in order to complete the design and construction of the demonstration project. This results in a combined current NTMP budget of $469,027. A summary of

program costs to date is provided below.

Traffic Studies	$10,082
Printing and Mailings	$1,339
Signs	$4,827
Traffic Circle Design	$36,615
Traffic Circle Construction	$340,000
Speed Hump Installation (Estimated cost of upcoming Coldwater Ridge project)	$ 10,692
TOTAL	**$403,555**

After the above total costs are applied to the current budget, $65,472 remains for FY 2007-2008.

If the nine (9) petitions currently being circulated by residents and due to the City in the next few months are all returned complete and approved, the cost of the additional speed hump projects is approximately $47,022. This will leave a balance of approximately $18,450 for any additional mailings, supplies, materials, traffic counts, and/or installation of additional speed humps between now and the end of FY 2007-2008.

Conclusions

During the first six (6) months of the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, staff had the opportunity to work with 14 neighborhoods to address concerns with excessive traffic volumes and vehicle speeds according to the goals set forth with the adoption of the NTMP. During that time, residents have been successful in returning two (2) complete petitions for approval. Completion of these petitions included obtaining signatures from eight (8) property owners of rental properties, and obtaining more than the minimum signatures required three (3) months ahead of their petition deadline date. Staff was able to assist by providing additional materials and information to complete the petitions requested. Several more neighborhoods are at various points in the NTMP process.

In addition, the results of the speed humps demonstration project shows the project is a success with a marked reduction in both traffic volumes and vehicle speeds. Staff will continue to manage the traffic circle demonstration project through to completion as well.

At this time, staff recommends maintaining the 80% signature criteria for petition approval. This requirement has been demonstrated to be obtainable through joint efforts of residents and staff on petitions thus far, and no issues or complaints have been received by staff. However, because the program is still in its infancy, staff will continue to assist residents wherever possible.

Looking ahead, staff has explored alternative methods of reducing costs in light of the recent citywide budget challenges. The proposed NTMP program in the 2009-2013 CIP is held at $200,000 per year. The demonstration projects and current rate of petitions for speeds humps appear to be adequately supported by the current budget. However, in the future, offering additional features besides speed humps through the NTMP to neighborhoods will significantly increase costs because most other features are more expensive, such as traffic circles and median islands. In addition, there will be more impact to staff time with the additional public meetings, community contact, and petition administration that will be required.

Given the current and projected status of the budget, staff considered the following program options:

1. Keeping the NTMP as is, which currently allows neighborhoods to request additional features besides speed humps after their first year.
2. Extend the speed hump only requirement for an additional year (or longer) until more resources are available.
3. Put the NTMP on hold altogether for a year (or longer).

Staff recommends temporarily modifying the program by implementing Option No. 2. This option will ensure

that some form of the NTMP program can continue to be implemented given the status of the budget.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

There is no immediate financial impact. However, if the NTMP expands, demand on the budget, staff time and resources could require additional funds.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is presented for information, discussion and Council direction.

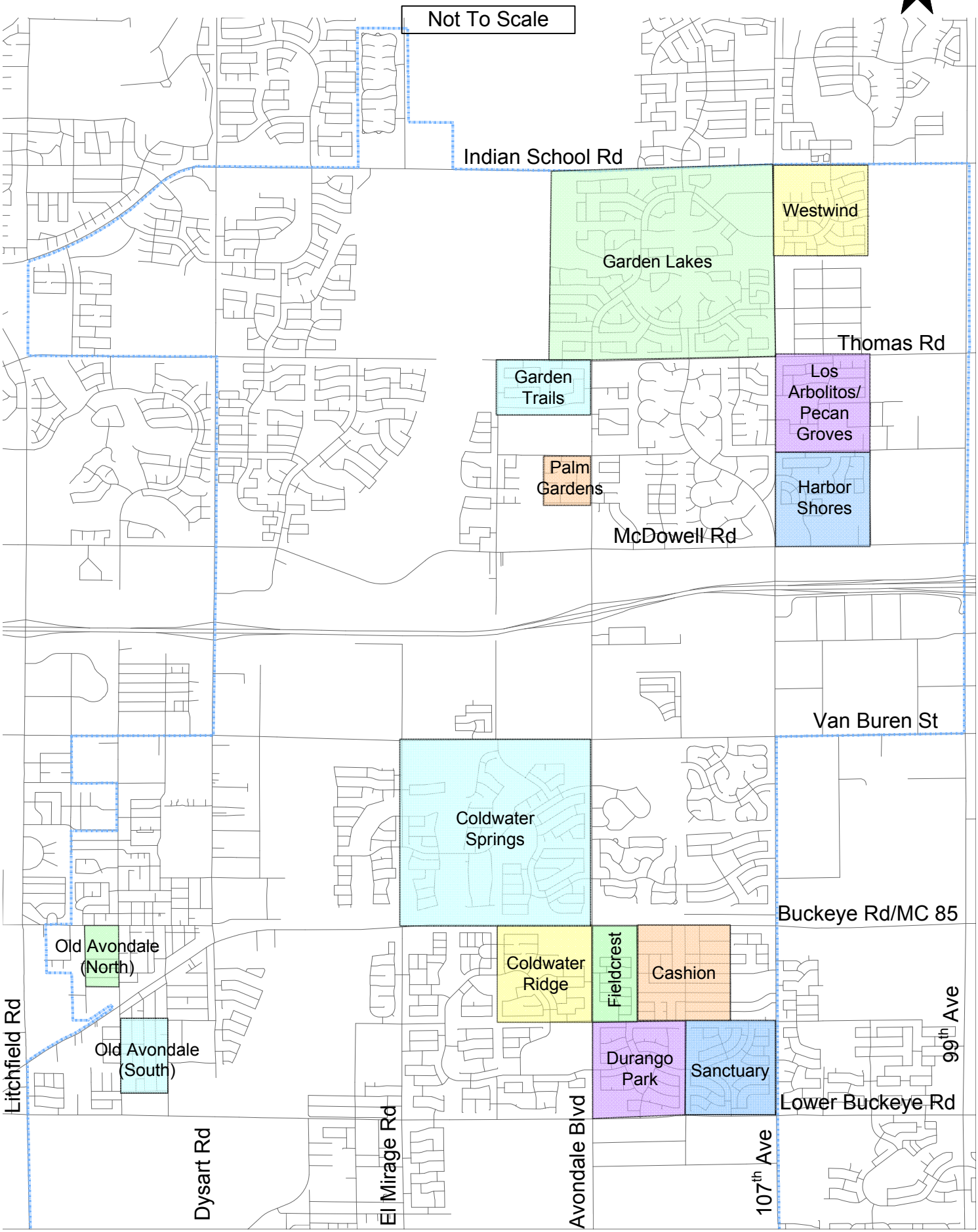
ATTACHMENTS:

Click to download

- NTMP 6-Month Map

NTMP Map *

*The City has received Request Forms from the 14 Neighborhoods indicated
(*As of February 29, 2008*)



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

SUBJECT:
Amendment of Section 1, Administration and Procedures of the Zoning Ordinance

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Brian Berndt, Development Services Director (623)333-4011

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

REQUEST: Staff is recommending an amendment to Section 1, Administration and Procedures of the Avondale Zoning Ordinance.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Section 1 of the Zoning Ordinance encompasses definitions of terms; defines the structure, powers and duties of the City's administrative bodies; outlines the City's development processes; and details the procedures for enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance. As part of a comprehensive update to Avondale's Zoning Ordinance, staff is proposing to make amendments to Section 1, Administration and Procedures in the following areas:

1. Amend and expand upon the existing definitions.
2. Amend the Establishment of Districts to correspond with the recent adoption and proposed changes to the other portions of the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Reorganize and clarify the development processes and procedures such as: Permitting, Pre-Application Conferences, Appeals of Decisions of the Zoning Administrator, Enforcement, and Public Participation process for ease of use.
4. Introduction of new processes and procedures for administrative relief from required development standards, request for site plan extensions, and the approval process for major site plan amendments.
5. On going maintenance of approved site plans.

PARTICIPATION:

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 at 3:00 pm in Council Chambers. The suggested changes to this Section of the Zoning Ordinance were discussed. Staff will present the details of that meeting at Council Work Session on April 14th.

ANALYSIS:

The amendments to this section are intended to further clarify these processes and procedures and to organize the content of this section in such as way that it is easier to understand by the reader. Staff is examining the existing definitions for clarity, applicability and thoroughness are proposing new terms as necessary. Staff is also performing a comprehensive review of the development processes and modifying as needed to present the City's policies and procedures in a logical manner.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff will provide a presentation that proposes portions of Section 1 that could be amended and suggestions for improvements. The Council may pose questions to staff, offer comments and provide direction for the

amendment of Section 1 of the Zoning Ordinance. No action is required.

ATTACHMENTS:

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No Attachments Available

PROJECT MANAGER:

Wendy Turner, Planner I, 623-333-4015

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

SUBJECT:
Text Amendment for Section 2 of the Zoning Ordinance - Residential Districts

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Brian Berndt, Director of Development Services (623) 333-4011

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

REQUEST: Staff is preparing proposed amendments to the Avondale Zoning Ordinance, Section 2, Residential Districts. The Residential Zoning Districts include: Single Family Residential Districts; AG, R1-35, R1-15, R1-8, R1-6, and R1-5, Multi-Family Residential Districts; R-2, R-3, and R-4, Mobile Home Park (R-5), and Rural Residential (RR-43).

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Section 2 of the Avondale Zoning Ordinance regulates all single-family residential (attached and detached), multi-family residential, agricultural, and manufactured home park developments, uses, development standards, and design standards. As part of a comprehensive update to Avondale's Zoning Ordinance, staff is proposing to amend Section 2, Residential Districts. The staff is soliciting input and direction from the Planning Commission and City Council regarding improvements to the regulation of the residential districts of the City in the following areas:

1. Incorporate a statement requiring developments to adhere to the recently adopted Design Manual.
2. Incorporate text amendments previously adopted to include group homes and RR-18 Zoning Districts.
3. Provide a table indiciating which zoning districts are comparable to each of the General Plan land use categories.
4. Allow guest houses as a permitted use in AG, consistent with the RR-43 and RR-18, keep guest houses as a Conditional Use in the remaining single family districts, and provide six requirements.
5. Move private schools to Conditional Use in all single family and multi-family districts, and add charter schools as a permitted use with public schools - in conformance with state statutes.
6. The term "Churches" is replaced with "Place of worship" and is allowed as a Conditional Use in all single family districts (currently allowed in AG, R1-35 and R1-15) provided that the property is located on an arterial street or at the intersection of two collector streets.
7. Temporary trailers for construction or sales, as well as model home complexes, regulations are relocated to Section 7 Supplemental Regulations.
8. Public facilities are relocated from Conditional Use to Permitted Use in all districts.
9. Delete cemeteries, mausoleum, crematoriums, country clubs and golf course uses since they are more appropriate in a Special Use District and are already covered by those regulations.
10. Development standards for single family and multi-family family lots are modified for some districts, including lot area, setbacks, maximum building coverage and minimum area per dwelling unit (R-2 only).
11. Open Space is increased to 20% for multi-family and 15% for single family platted subdivisions.
12. Introduce minimum site requirements for both multi-family and single family platted subdivisions, including garage parking, variety in lot sizes, perimeter landscaping, minimum number of floor plans and elevations, neighborhood themes, etc.

PARTICIPATION:

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers. The

suggested changes to this section of the Zoning Ordinance were discussed. Staff will present the results of that meeting at the Council Work Session on April 14th.

ANALYSIS:

The regulations in Section 2 are summarized into three main divisions:

- Uses - permitted, permitted with conditions and requiring a conditional use permit;
- Development Standards - lot area, lot dimensions, lot coverage, setbacks; and
- Design Standards - applicable to individual dwellings within a platted subdivision and multi-family developments.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff will provide a brief presentation that suggests portions of Section 2 that could be amended and suggestions for improvements. The Council may pose questions to staff, offer comments and provide direction for the amendment of Section 2 of the Zoning Ordinance. No action is required.

ATTACHMENTS:

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No Attachments Available

PROJECT MANAGER:

Eric Morgan, Planner II (623) 333-4017

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

SUBJECT:
Text Amendment for Section 4 of the Zoning Ordinance - Industrial Districts.

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Brian Berndt, Director of Development Services (623) 333-4011

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

REQUEST: Amend Section 4, Industrial Districts to include Commerce Park (CP) and General Industrial (A-1) of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Section 4 of the Zoning Ordinance regulates the Commerce Park (CP) and General Industrial (A-1) zoning districts' uses, development standards and design standards. These districts have a broad range of uses that include office, warehousing, assembly, light and heavy manufacturing, storage indoors and outdoors, etc. As part of a comprehensive update to Avondale's Zoning Ordinance, staff is proposing to make amendments to Section 4, Industrial Districts in the following areas:

1. Change the Industrial District to Employment District, consistent with the General Plan.
2. Amend the permitted and conditional uses so that Commerce Park is for offices, light indoor manufacturing and support retail, while General Industrial is for heavier manufacturing and storage.
3. Introduce an "incidental/support retail" concept for Commerce Park, in which some stand alone commercial uses are allowed that typically service offices and surrounding employment uses - such as restaurants, banks, retail less than 5000 square feet, etc.
4. Increase the percentage of gross floor area allowed for retail uses directly associated with a primary use (in the same building) from 10% to 25%.
5. Solicit direction regarding outdoor storage.
6. Solicit direction regarding sports complex facilities in the Employment land use category.
7. Require consultation and guidance in site design and architecture from the Design Manuals.
8. Increase the setback requirement for industrial uses developing adjacent to residential.

PARTICIPATION:

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers. The suggested changes to this section of the Zoning Ordinance were discussed. Staff will present the results of that meeting at Council Work Session on April 14th.

ANALYSIS:

The regulations in Section 4 are summarized into three main divisions:

- Uses - permitted, permitted with conditions and requiring a conditional use permit;
- Development Standards - lot area, lot dimensions, lot coverage, setbacks; and
- Design Standards - applicable to site layout and building architecture.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff will provide a presentation that suggests portions of Section 4 that could be amended and suggestions for improvements. The Council may pose questions to staff, offer comments and provide direction for the amendment of Section 4 of the Zoning Ordinance. No action is required.

ATTACHMENTS:

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No Attachments Available

PROJECT MANAGER:

Eric Morgan, Planner II (623) 333-4017

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

SUBJECT:
South Avondale Specific Plan Introduction - SP-08-3

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Brian Berndt, Development Services Director 623-333-4011

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

BACKGROUND:

The City of Avondale General Plan was ratified by voters in 2002. Since this time, the area south of Lower Buckeye Road has not been amended or updated. With increasing development pressures affecting this area of the City, the City Council has expressed a desire to establish a clear vision for the growth of this area. Staff is proposing to draft a Specific Plan for South Avondale, and to update the General Plan for this area.

The proposed South Avondale Specific Plan covers that portion of the City generally bordered by Lower Buckeye Road on the north, Estrella Mountain Regional Park on the south, and Avondale's municipal planning boundary on the east and west (roughly 107th Avenue and Avondale Boulevard on the east and Litchfield Road on the west). A map of the boundaries of the study area is provided as Exhibit A.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

With new development and construction anticipated in the South Avondale area, as well as a new state highway planned to be built through the area, existing land use patterns and General Plan land use designations will be significantly affected. The City's 2002 General Plan is in need of updating in order to reflect these new land use patterns. Staff has analyzed the land use patterns in this area, and as part of the plan will propose that a Specific Plan be created for South Avondale to complement this update and help facilitate future development opportunities in this area.

South Avondale is a large, diverse area with many opportunities and constraints, a distinct character and heritage, and potential opportunity for future development. The South Avondale Specific Plan will attempt to balance these aspects of the area, to help facilitate future development, while maintaining the traditional character of the area.

Staff has identified the following primary constraints within South Avondale:

- Land within the floodplain from the Gila River and Agua Fria River;
- Power line and other utility corridor easements;
- Lack of adequate infrastructure; and
- Uncertainty surrounding the location of the final alignment of State Route 801.

For all the constraints in the area, there are plenty of opportunities, often even utilizing the constraints themselves. Staff has identified the following as the primary opportunities within the study area:

- Possibilities for area, city-wide, and regional trails through existing and planned utility corridors;
- Natural trails and recreation opportunities within known floodway areas, particularly along the Gila River, where multi-jurisdictional improvement projects will create new regional trail connections;
- Large farms that provide the opportunity to develop new homes with new water and sewer infrastructure, improved streets, new schools, and new parks;

- Established neighborhoods with strong ties to the community;
- Proximity to such entertainment destinations as Phoenix International Raceway, Festival Fields, and the planned Avondale City Center; and
- Proximity to the Phoenix-Goodyear Airport, which can help spur employment opportunities in the area.

South Avondale currently contains a number of existing neighborhoods, some within the City's corporate limits, and some in unincorporated Maricopa County. Many of these neighborhoods contribute to the rural character of the area. The South Avondale Specific Plan will be drafted with these neighborhoods and this rural character in mind, and will include development guidelines to ensure that new development is compatible with this existing character, and that any adverse impacts of new development is mitigated as much as possible. The plan is intended to guide the future land and development patterns in this part of the City, while preserving areas for open space, trails, and other natural and recreational areas.

PARTICIPATION:

The planning process for the South Avondale Specific Plan will involve substantial public involvement. Staff is creating a comprehensive public outreach program, which will include at least three public meetings: a visioning meeting intended to solicit the opinions of residents and property owners on their vision for South Avondale; presentation of alternatives based on public input and staff analysis; and presentation of drafts of the Specific Plan to solicit public opinion about the draft plan. Additionally, staff is planning to utilize a public opinion survey and neighborhood outreach, in order to help ensure that as many people as possible in the area are able to express their opinion during the planning process.

ANALYSIS:

The South Avondale Specific Plan will address each of the following elements:

- land use;
- transportation;
- open space and parks;
- trails;
- utilities;
- housing; and
- public facilities.

A technical advisory committee has been established to collaborate and ensure that these elements incorporate and complement other plans adopted throughout the City such as the Transportation Plan and Parks Master Plan. Staff will also be working closely with a number of agencies, utility providers, governmental entities and other stakeholders who have a vested interest in South Avondale.

Staff is planning on hiring a consultant to assist with portions of the planning process. Particularly, a consultant will be brought on board to assist with much of the public outreach portion (discussed above), including mailings, public notification, and facilitation of public meetings. A consultant will also be hired to assist with the economic modeling portions of the Plan, including:

- analyzing population, retail, and employment projections;
- analyzing real estate and development trends;
- analyzing land absorption rates;
- projecting market shares for potential future land uses; and
- analyzing the economic impact of State Route 801.

Staff will gather data, meet with various stakeholders, and conduct the public participation process over the next several months. This will be followed by work sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council to prepare alternatives and a final draft of the Plan. The General Plan amendment and Specific Plan will go through the required public review process starting in January 2009, with a target adoption in August 2009.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is presented for information and direction. No action is needed.

ATTACHMENTS:

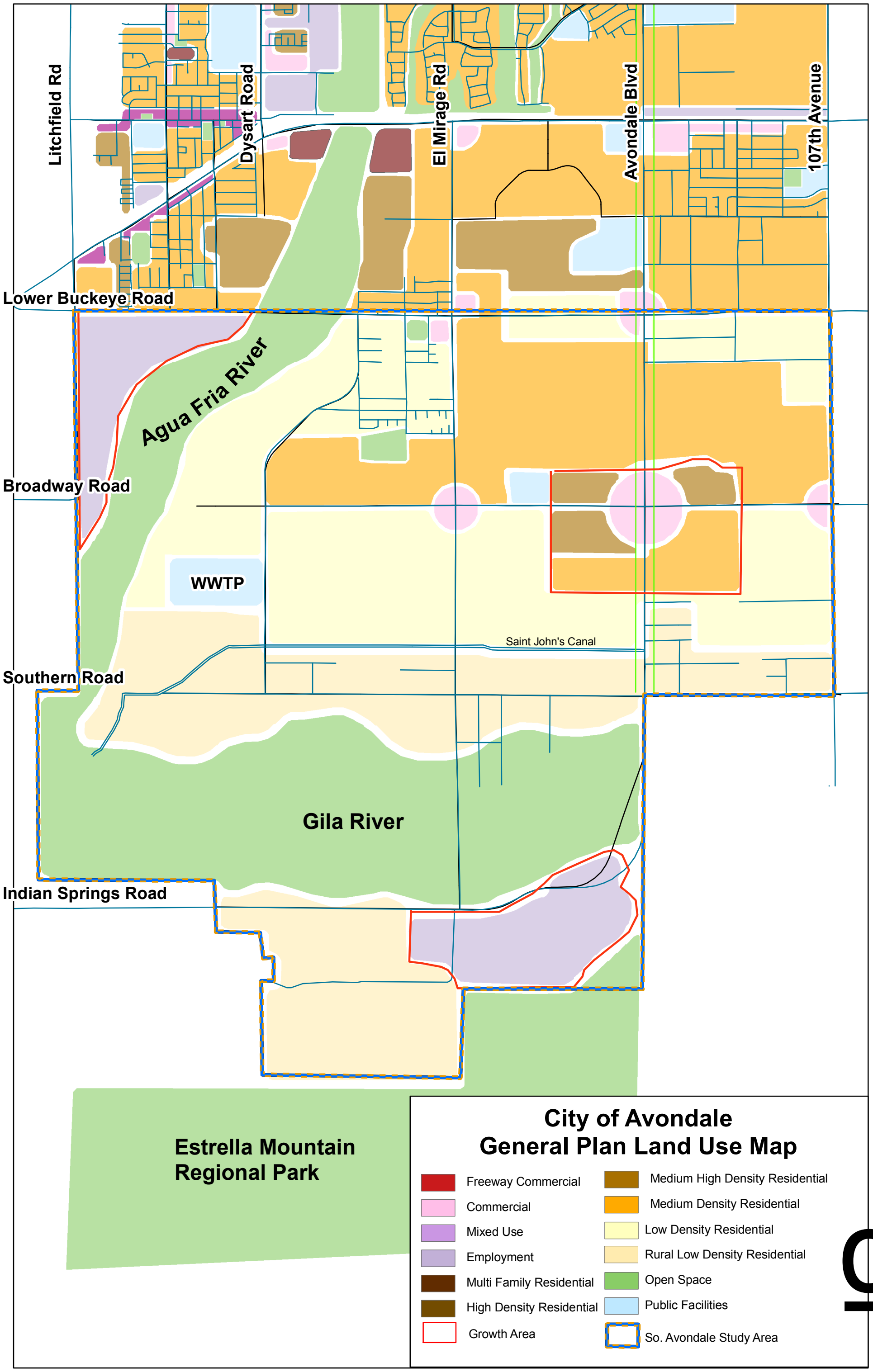
Click to download

- Existing General Plan Land Use within South Avondale study area

PROJECT MANAGER:

Scott Wilken, Senior Planner 623-333-4016

South Avondale Specific Plan Study Area



CITY COUNCIL REPORT

SUBJECT:
Employee Retention and Recruitment Committee Update

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Sammi Curless, Assistant to the Mayor and Council (623)333-1613

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

PURPOSE:

Staff will update the Council regarding the activities of the Employee Retention and Recruitment Committee since its creation in November 2007.

BACKGROUND:

City Administration convened the Employee Retention and Recruitment Committee in late fall 2007. The Committee, chaired by Sammi Curless, represents most City departments and includes the following members:

- Les Miller & Raul Duran, Field Operations
- Tracy Stevens, Development Services
- Kristen Taylor, Transit
- Ben Avitia & Leo Gardunio, Fire Department
- Frances McCoy & Joseph Hurtado, Parks, Recreation & Libraries Department
- Al Bates, Police Department
- Barb Kirkland, Water Resources
- Kathy Reyes, Human Resources

The purpose of the Committee was to explore opportunities for the City to recruit and retain the employees in the competitive environment of public service. The City Manager's Office allowed the Committee the flexibility to arrive at a list of ideas that are both large and small in scope but all have a positive impact on our employees, both current and future.

DISCUSSION:

At the Council Goal Setting Retreat in December 2007, one of the council's action items was "complete the work of the Employee Retention and Recruitment Committee." The Committee met seven times and spent considerable time discussing, and then formulating recommendations to the City Manager's Office. As part of the Committee's activities, a survey tool was developed to guage employees' interest regarding alternative work scheduling and to get their feedback on the concept of "Green Friday." Typically known as "Black Friday" or "Dark Friday" in other organizations, the innovative members of the Avondale Recruitment and Retention Committee have chosen instead to call it "Green Friday" because of the environmental and postential cost-savings benefits associated with the concept.

The "Green Friday" concept proposes the closure of City Hall and some selected outlying facilities every Friday. In exchange, the hours of City Hall would be extended Monday through Thursday, for an aditional two hours or more, for the convenience of our customers who are not able to come in during the typical 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. business hours. "Green Friday" is practiced in some cities around the country, including North Las Vegas, and in several cities in California. In Arizona, the City of Yuma has been practicing Green Fridays every other week for the past three years, without significant impact to its customer service delivery.

The results from the employee survey suggested that employees are open to the Green Friday concept. The

Committee subsequently interviewed department directors to solicit feedback on the impact that Green Fridays would have on their operations. Based on the level of interest throughout the organization, the Committee is seeking Council's input and direction with regard to continuing to explore Green Fridays in Avondale. The committee identified the following advantages associated with Green Fridays.

- Closing City Hall every Friday would ensure that the City meets state/county-mandated trip reduction requirements, associated with the county's air quality efforts
- Residents and business customers would benefit from extended City Hall hours Monday through Thursday
- Cost savings could also be accrued to our employees as they would be driving to work one less day a week
- Potential savings in energy consumption and corresponding energy costs

The Council may wish to consider the following:

Impact on the public: The City of Avondale prides itself in oustanding customer service delivery. One of our primary concerns would be how Green Fridays would impact our residents and customers. The public's opinion is important to us. Depending on Council's direction tonight, the Committee would seek to engage the residents as a next step in this process.

The Committee also realizes that not every City Department can be closed every Friday. The Committee recommends that for those departments, the Director can customize flexible schedules for his/her employees during other times of the week.

Other Recommendations from the Committee: In addition to flexible schedules, the Committee formed a list of other recommendations consisting of several items, some of which can be implemented administratively through the City Manager and some which require feedback from the City Council.

The items which will be completed administratively in the near future include:

- Explore partnerships with existing childcare providers to offer discounts for City employees
- Establish a cross departmental Fun Committee which would devise quarterly activities
- Create comment/suggestion boxes and hold quarterly drawings of those who submitted comments/suggestions
- Encourage department heads to create a recognition program that is meaningful and specific to their department
- Encourage the creation of reward and recognition days for departments, project or work teams
- Establish a progressive planning program which allows employees to work with other departments for one week
- Increase the maximum amount of the healthcare flexible spending from $1,500 to $2,000 (no cost - this is an employee contribution)
- Create training opportunities so internal candidates are better prepared to compete for promotional positions within the City
- Create college colors/sports day or other appropriate theme days throughout the year
- Recommend not scheduling employee events on days off (weekends)

Given the current budget situation, two of the Committee's recommendations have been considered by City Administration but will not be implemented at this particular time. The two recommendations are the following:

- Allow additional time off in the event of minimal pay raises
- Add one additional personal day

City Administration requests Council feedback on the following recommendations as they are policy questions which require further consideration prior to implementing:

- Allowing employees 30 minutes during the day to exercise on-site
- Establish a program which would allow employees to do one hour of volunteer work per month during work hours. Volunteer work must be associated with an Avondale agency such as the Food Bank, schools, SW lending closet, etc
- Modify the bereavement policy to allow for one day of leave for extended family, i.e. uncle, aunt, cousin
- Recommend that City Hall close at noon on Christmas Eve. Those employees who desire to take the full day off will only be charged four hours of vacation
- Increase vacation buyback for an additional 40 hours and offer buyback opportunities one additional time per year. Employees are currently able to buy back a maximum of 40 hours each year usually in the November/December timeframe

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

While some of the recommendations of the Committee to assist in retention and recruitment have minimal costs associated with them, there are also those that do have costs, some significant, associated with them. Those with costs associated are the following:

- Recommend closing City Hall for ½ day on Christmas Eve. The cost to the City would be approximately $23,000 in overtime costs
- Increase vacation buyback for an additional 40 hours and offer buyback opportunities two times per year. Non-fire employees are currently able to buy back a maximum of 40 hours each year usually in the November/December timeframe. Fire personnel can buy back 80 hours per year. The cost to the City to pay for the additional 40 hours to be bought back is approximately $70,000 dependent upon the number of employees who opt for it. The vacation buy back option does eliminate the cost liability of the accrued vacation time taken off the books.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Council provide direction regarding the recommendations of the Employee Retention and Recruitment Committee.

ATTACHMENTS:

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CITY COUNCIL REPORT

SUBJECT:
EXECUTIVE SESSION

MEETING DATE:
April 14, 2008

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Linda Farris

THROUGH: Charlie McClendon, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

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No Attachments Available