

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2015**

A. Call to Order / Roll Call

The Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and the Recreation Committee of August 5, 2015, was called to order by Mayor Pro Tempore Chandler at 8:17 p.m.

Present: Council Member Kuehne, Council Member Mounce, Council Member Nakanishi, and Mayor Pro Tempore Chandler

Absent: Mayor Johnson

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and City Clerk Ferraiolo

Also in attendance from the Lodi Recreation Commission were the following: Mike Carouba, Mark Hamilton, Larry Long, and Jeffrey Palmquist.

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Presentation by PROS Consulting, Inc., Related to Strategic Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services (PRCS)

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director Jeff Hood introduced the attending Recreation Commissioners and explained that the purpose of the presentation was to receive the strategic plan results, which is a culmination of data collecting, surveys, and meetings, and to discuss the meanings behind the information. The Recreation Commission will formulate and present its recommendations to Council in the near future.

Neelay Bhatt of PROS Consulting, Inc., provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Strategic Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services. Specific topics of discussion included levels of service, equity maps, priority rankings, and next steps.

In response to Council Member Kuehne, Mr. Bhatt explained that indoor recreational spaces include multiple uses, such as rentals, gymnasiums, fitness spaces, boys and girls clubs, walking and jogging tracks, and activities of that nature. In further response, Mr. Bhatt stated that spraygrounds are flat pads with water features that children run through and are typically visually appealing, safe, and allow water to be recycled.

Council Member Mounce suggested that an indoor fitness and exercise facility would likely compete with privately-operated exercise gyms, which may not be viewed favorably in Lodi. Mr. Bhatt stressed that an indoor recreation facility is a multi-use gathering place, not solely a gym setting, that would be a venue for special events, walking and jogging, tournaments, and activities for the entire family to do in one space. Council Member Mounce questioned if Hutchins Street Square, with its pool, track, and field, could be utilized as an indoor recreation facility as she believed it is underutilized. Mr. Bhatt responded that the outcome of the plan is to prepare a feasibility study, which would help answer that question. If the desire is to pursue a new site, partnerships are an option to fund the project. His concern with Hutchins Street Square is there is inadequate storage to handle multiple uses and programs in a single day; however, he believed the facility offerings could be expanded. The feasibility study would determine viable options. At the request of Council Member Mounce, Mr. Bhatt stated he would provide Council with examples of indoor recreational facilities in other communities and how they were funded.

Mayor Pro Tempore Chandler requested a matrix on who wanted programs versus facilities, what types, and where there are gaps. Mr. Bhatt responded that he would provide the background data.

Council Member Nakanishi expressed concern that there are insufficient revenues to fund the wants and needs of the community and questioned how other communities have handled this, whether it was with grants or fee increases. He further stated he was uncertain about spending money on studies if a revenue stream does not exist. Mr. Bhatt stated that some communities fund through program fees; other options include selling naming rights to a facility; and the next step in the process will delve deeper into funding possibilities and which options have the lowest and highest feasibility. Council Member Nakanishi expressed support for a trail at Lodi Lake from the Nature Area to the other side of the Lake.

Mr. Hood stated that staff is working with an engineering firm and soliciting grant funding for a trail along the river at Lodi Lake, which was the driving force behind hiring PROS Consulting to do this study. The Department has a fixed amount of revenue, and his focus is to spend that money responsibly, identify areas that can be scaled back in order to target areas of greater neglect, and to better direct funding to areas of greatest interest to the community. This study will help the Department better target its funds.

Council Member Kuehne questioned if the idea of installing bike trails along Highway 12 to Lockeford where the railroad tracks once existed has been explored. He further suggested there may be opportunities to build more trails in Lodi, such as on the overpass over Highway 99, that could connect all around the City. Mr. Schwabauer responded that the future of the property on Highway 12 is questionable as Caltrans may use it to widen Highway 99. In further response, Mr. Schwabauer confirmed that the Harney Lane Grade Separation project does incorporate space for a pedestrian and bike passage.

Council Member Nakanishi, who covered a recent San Joaquin Council of Governments meeting, confirmed that the money is in place for the overpass at that location.

At the request of Council Member Mounce, Mr. Bhatt provided his overall assessment that Lodi needs to invest in its future and, if it does not do so now, it will be left behind. He added that the community meetings and survey results indicate the community is willing to support this effort with 70 percent stating they would pay extra fees and taxes for the important issues from the survey. In his experience, he has never seen a bond fail if more than two-thirds of the community is willing to support such a measure, and in this tough economic climate, that speaks volumes in moving forward with this opportunity.

Jeffrey Palmquist, Recreation Commissioner, expressed strong support for the Department, which consistently makes ends meet during tough economic times, but he cautioned that the Department cannot continue operating with inadequate revenues, especially with aging facilities and public demand for services and programs. He encouraged Council to take action to protect the future of its facilities, programs, and services.

Mark Hamilton, Recreation Commissioner, pointed out that a 70 percent return shows that citizens want to help support its facilities and program. He stated that he also serves on the Chamber of Commerce Vision 2020 committee regarding health and activity, and he believed it was possible to create a plan and find the revenue needed to accomplish the goals, including community project and volunteer participation opportunities.

Larry Long, Recreation Commissioner, commended staff for continuing to maintain City parks at a consistent level and Mr. Bhatt for his report. He stated more work is necessary to determine funding sources, as well as ideas to generate money that is self funding, and he looked forward to seeing the outcome of that discussion. Mr. Long suggested that the Woodbridge Irrigation District canals be considered for bike paths, if that is feasible. He further informed Council that the Commission will soon meet with Council to discuss Lodi Lake and potentially closing sections of the park to perform necessary repairs.

Mike Carouba, Recreation Commissioner, stressed the importance and necessity of spending money on feasibility studies because it identifies the community's needs and the costs associated with them. He believed the City has a public relations problem and it needs a mechanism to

demonstrate to the public what the desires and expectations are, whether or not the City can afford them, and how the City will fund them. He used the example of keeping the Hutchins Street Square pool open for only five people.

Council Member Mounce pointed out that the City has ten-year-old studies and plans on file for a water park and indoor sports complex that it could never afford to construct.

C. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Ferraiolo  
City Clerk