

Management and Policy Recommendations of the IFT

Management and Policy Recommendations

1. Make the funding of a new Police Station and adequate Fire and Emergency disaster facilities the highest capital infrastructure priorities for the General Fund.
2. Designate the Waterfront Department as responsible for the operation, maintenance and support of all recreation, boating, and harbor activities to the east of Cabrillo Boulevard – including the operation of the Cabrillo Bathhouse, East Beach and associated facilities – thereby freeing up the General Fund to pay for other infrastructure improvements in the Parks and Recreation Department.
3. Reduce the City's operating costs and free up funds for infrastructure financing by: "sun-setting" underutilized and outdated programs; initiating a "zero based" budgeting process at least once every four to five years, closing, or leasing, or selling any of the 500,000 square feet of General Fund facilities that are not needed; and disposing of any surplus property that might have utility value and generate income if sold or leased. (An example where the City does this successfully is the leasing of City-owned property at the airport providing a stream of revenue to help the airport be self-sufficient.)
4. Renew and update Resolutions No. 95-156 and No. 95-157, which have provided guidance to the City's financial policy for more than a decade, to reflect current economic realities.
5. Implement a Management Information Report to enable the City Council to track and review progress on; reducing the deferred maintenance backlog, progress on securing financing for unfunded capital needs, and maintaining Capital Reserves, as well as monitoring progress on other recommendations in this report.
6. Upgrade the City's capital infrastructure budgeting process by developing a budget report similar to the University of California Santa Barbara reporting system for State Capital Improvements.
7. Enforce existing panhandling ordinances and develop a program (similar to other successful cities) to overcome the City's growing gang problem – both of which are a threat to the civility of Santa Barbara and its viability as a destination resort, which is key to maintaining the revenues which support infrastructure.
8. Develop an ongoing program that will educate the public on the fundamental importance of a well-maintained and adequately funded infrastructure – and ensure support for these policies.
9. Develop a detailed implementation plan for these recommendations by January 20, 2009, and report back to the Council twice a year.