

A Comprehensive Fiscal Plan

Fiscal Responsibility

Fiscal Responsibility is the overall theme of this plan. This does not increase taxes. This does not change any law or municipal code. Tough decisions would be made and over time maintenance expenses would disappear. The future savings of the General Fund would then be put in reserves. In addition to tightening our belts throughout all departments a few % points we would collectively save large sums of money. Once we have demonstrated fiscal responsibility and only then would Hanford Citizens entertain some sort of Sales Tax to meet other needs, such as Parking Structure, Parks Improvements, Downtown infrastructure and Public Safety

Basic Problem Solving

The first step in solving problems is to identify the problem. In identifying the problems of Hanford, we can conclude the following:

- Poor Air Quality
- Extreme Heat in the Summer, Freezing Temps in the Winter
- Minimal Downtown foot traffic
- Dilapidated buildings: Courthouse, Bastille, Longfield, Police Station, Carnegie
- Substandard park amenities South of Grangeville
- City wide need for more recreational opportunities
- Rising homeless population
- Limited Capital Funds
- Poor Decision Making

In looking for solutions, the focus of a city should be to solve as many problems (for the most citizens) with available funds.

City Property Management Business

The city owns the old Post Office (Rabobank). It generates \$50,000 per year. It appraised for \$800,000. The city owns the Bastille. It generates \$0 per year. The seismic retro fitting alone costs \$1,000,000. The city owns the Courthouse. It will generate a loss this year because of the improvements we made. The HVAC unit costs have double since original projections and are now \$1,000,000. Carpet and other interior renovations could run up to \$250,000.

Our most recent audit indicates that “Courthouse Square” carries a negative balance over \$1,000,000. This means repairs and other items have been coming from the general fund over a multi-year span, accumulating over \$1,000,000

The Police Department and Longfield Center need new roofs.

The city owns 60% of the Kings County Library. One day it will need maintenance and the County will force us to pay our portion.

The city owns the Carnegie Museum. The building has a crack in the foundation.

Privately owned buildings downtown include:

- The Fox Theatre,
- The Telephone Building,
- The Old Hotel (Griswold LaSalle)
- Lyman Griswold's old house (Maciel Mortgage)
- The Vendome Building
- The Laundry Building

The downtown buildings in the best condition are privately owned and generate property tax revenue for the city. The downtown buildings owned by the city, cost tax payers money while generating nothing in return. Costs are rising, reserves are not. The people of Hanford deserve better.

Property Management Fix

The very first thing we should do is file a quit claim deed on our portion of the Library

Secondly, we need to reinforce that our current city code prevents the demolition of historic buildings designated in the historic zone.

The Old Post Office is the only city-owned building that is actually worth something, approx. \$800,000. By selling this building and contributing upwards of \$450,000 of ACO the combined proceeds could fix the Courthouse which currently has tenants. Upon full renovation, we could then sell the Courthouse and get it off our books and put the proceeds from the Courthouse into downtown infrastructure. We could purchase the Ormonde property on 7th Street for additional parking, an aesthetic downtown amenity, or possibly mixed used development. We should examine purchasing the old dilapidated building on the SW corner of 7th and Green and knock it down for development as well.

ACO should be used to repair the roofs of the Police Station and the Longfield Center.

The Carnegie Building would remain a future issue for discussion. Non-profit fundraising would be needed.

The investment of downtown assets into the downtown itself will inspire other Downtown building owners to renovate their buildings. The activity will be a visual example of the city investing in downtown

Educational Opportunity for the Bastille

This idea will need to take a long time to develop. We should give up on the idea of renovating the Bastille for a bar and restaurant. That will be an unfair advantage to current brick and mortar restaurants. Leasing it out to a tenant at a discounted rate is unfair to the downtown building owners who lease to restaurants. Instead we should seek to transform the Bastille into an attraction that generates foot traffic for other downtown bar and restaurants. The most effective thing would be a partnership with educational institutions. Potential partners are:

- CSU Fresno
- COS
- Hanford High
- Hanford Elementary
- Kings County Office of Ed
- Bitwise Industries
- P.L.A.N.T Foundation
- E.A.T Foundation
- Burris Park Foundation

The city would offer the building as its share to the partnership. The downtown square is a frequent drop off point for many students on field trips. Turning the Bastille into a public owned attraction (like a museum) near a carousel and the future site of the Story Book garden, would make it an even better field trip opportunity for elementary schools.

The willing partners could evaluate their educational needs in terms of both infrastructure and curriculum. If a museum were not the ideal (cost effective) partnership, perhaps a multi grade level facility could help many children and young adults advance in various subjects. Willing partners could use their funds and grant writers to assist in costs. Perhaps a few entities with overlapping needs/specialties would want the Bastille to serve as a specific focused resource center i.e. Agriculture, Civil Engineering, Public Policy etc.

The Vacant 18 Acres

Not a single blade of grass or grain of sand of Hidden Valley Park is being subject to sale or demolition. Any suggestion that the park is in danger and need of “saving” is a lie and socially irresponsible. No formal plans were sent to Community Development for a Parks project on the vacant 18 acres. The “blueprints” and ideas discussed on social media have no cost figures attached to them and to simply say, yes to a “Forest” is fiscally *and* environmentally irresponsible.

The land was purchased in 1967 and council minutes indicate the intent was to develop a Storm Water Basin and sell the remainder. 50 years later, a small group of citizens failed in gathering enough support for a referendum on the entire Zoning Ordinance in the name of adding a “forest” to our park. 607 signatures were complete. The city of Hanford has 56,000 people. The failure to gather support opens up an old wound, a 50 year old wound. Let’s be the council to put an end to the debate and sell the property.

An Indoor Recreational Facility located at the former Goodwill Site.

City staff has calculated enough green space to meet state requirements and currently there is 21 acres in park space being developed. The General Plan has a policy promoting neighborhood parks in new developments. The philosophy behind neighborhood parks is close, walkable access for citizens. This reduces emissions of having people drive to one big park at a further location. Rather than passive green space that exposes kids to bad air and extreme weather, we should build an indoor recreation facility at the former Goodwill site.

It does not have to be the same exact size and model of the Lemoore Cinnamon Municipal Complex. It can be used in conjunction with the skate park and the Plunge. The entire block could be transformed into a Recreational Hub for the youth of Hanford. Potential activities could include Rock Walls, indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball and track; in addition to rooms for art, fitness classes and board games.

The indoor facility limits exposure to extreme weather conditions as well as the poor air quality. The location is South of Grangeville, thus a central location for all citizens to enjoy and increase downtown foot traffic as the users of the facility would be in closer proximity of downtown amenities.

The city would first look at design. In fitting with the historic theme of Hanford, I suggest an Art Deco design as a tribute to the Old Lacey Fire Station. I would also suggest the name of Fire House Square. The old firehouse would cost \$2 million to make inhabitable, the council has discussed demolishing it for additional parking at the Plunge (and in theory the Indoor Facility). The Art Deco design and Fire House Square name are a tribute to the former building.

Lastly the city would have to look at the financial cost of such a project. It would easily be in the millions. I would suggest we budget upwards of \$2,000,000 in Parks/Rec Impact Fees in addition to selling the vacant 18 acres next to Hidden Valley for at least the appraisal price of \$1,800,000. This is \$3,800,000 for both recreation and downtown. Using the design build method, used to build Firestation #3, we can set a cost ceiling with design requirements, when the project goes to bid. The downtown area would make the project eligible for CDBG grants and with a nexus to Air Quality issues could potentially be eligible for grants from the Air Pollution Control District. Having a minimum of \$3.8 million in matching grant funds, means the total project could be \$7,600,000.

Summary

- We rehab old buildings
- We invest in downtown
- We stimulate downtown activity
- We create more downtown foot traffic
- We don't change a single law
- We don't increase taxes
- We build an indoor rec facility
- We regain the public's trust