TO:       HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM:      CITY MANAGER               DEPARTMENT: POLICE
           COMMUNITY SERVICES
           - HUMAN RELATIONS
           COMMISSION

DATE:      JULY 10, 2006               CMR:292:06

SUBJECT:   HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE POLICE DEPARTMENT’S 2006-2011 STRATEGIC PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) and staff recommend that the City Council approve the attached 2006-2011 Police Department’s Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Police Department undertakes a strategic planning process every five years. The following were the goals and associated accomplishments from the 2001-05 plan:

1. To improve internal and external customer service for the public.

   Based upon the Service Efforts and Accomplishments survey completed by the City Auditor, the Police Department has received outstanding ratings in this area. The Department redesigned its website, implemented on-line reporting to make it easier for citizens to report certain types of offenses, and instituted a community access line.

2. Acquire a site and obtain financing for a new police building.

   While this specific goal was not accomplished during the five years of the actual plan, the City Council formed a Blue Ribbon Task Force in 2005 to develop recommendations regarding the need, size, location, and cost estimates for a new facility.
3. Develop and implement a plan to upgrade the Department’s technology.

A considerable amount of work was done in this area including the following:
- Two major upgrades of operating systems for network computers (to Windows 98 and Windows XP) were completed.
- The public safety computer systems were isolated from main City servers to provide additional security and back-up redundancy.
- An off-site storage system for public safety computers systems (archived schedule for back-up tapes) was implemented.
- A major electrical upgrade in the Communications Center was completed, including the installation of a Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) system, connecting all critical public safety systems to the system.
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management (RMS) systems were installed and implemented.
- A major operating system upgrade to Windows 2000 for CAD and RMS software was completed.
- A hardware upgrade for mobile data computers (about to begin a second complete hardware upgrade) was completed.
- Public safety GIS applications for public safety were implemented.
- Palo Alto became the first city in California to take emergency calls 9-1-1 calls from all cell phone service providers.
- A new public safety recording system for logging telephone calls and radio traffic was procured and installed.
- A full transition of wireless cell phones for the department, including a change in service providers and adding cell phone capability to patrol officers was completed.
- A new regional Emergency Tracking System (ETS) for tracking money stolen from bank robberies was implemented.
- A third-party security application to enhance public safety security of mobile data software was implemented.
- A direct connection to the Department of Justice to access Megan’s Law and California Gang information was implemented.
- A new booking photo system was implemented.
- A new regional Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) hardware was deployed.
- Technology enhancements to the Crime Analysis Unit were made.
- A 24x7 on-call maintenance program for public safety computer systems was implemented.

4. Improve work relationships, recognition, training and career development for personnel.

A succession plan for civilian employees was developed. Succession plans for every employee, sworn and civilian, are reviewed on an annual basis with their immediate supervisor to ensure that they receive the training, guidance, and
mentoring towards achieving their goals. Greater efforts were made to recognize employees’ good work. Employee commendations from members of the public were shared with the entire organization.

5. Improve the physical work environment.

The men and women’s locker room bathrooms were steam cleaned for the first time in many years. New flooring was installed in the workout area. Sun Microsystems donated furniture that was put to use throughout many areas in the Department. In order to reduce clutter, more lockers were purchased and installed in the police garage for storage of officers’ additional equipment.

6. Achieve and maintain a full, diverse, highly motivated and qualified staff.

During the five years of the plan, 43 sworn and 39 civilian staff members were hired. Among those, 11 were Asian, six were Hispanic, and seven were African American. Of the 82 staff hired, 44 percent were female and 56 percent were male. Due to the difficulty in retaining and hiring police officers, the Department has not been fully staffed for a number of years. Currently there are nine vacant officer positions in the Department. The retention and hiring of officers has become more problematic throughout the country in the last few years. Fewer qualified candidates are available or even interested in the career for various reasons. Staff will continue working to achieve this particular goal.

DISCUSSION

In January 2005, a cross section of sworn and civilian employees of the Department began the process of developing a new Strategic Plan. They gathered information from external stakeholder groups including: neighborhood associations, City Council, Youth and Child Development groups, the business community, faith community, minority communities, Human Relations Commission (HRC), City department heads, and other individual community members. The employees held several meetings where discussions took place about what they wanted to Department to look like in five years based upon the feedback from the focus groups and their own visions.

The first order of business was to revise the mission statement for the Department. It is interesting to note that several people in the focus groups suggested that the word “proudly” should not be included in the mission statement as they felt it sounded arrogant. The committee discussed this at length and felt that it was very important to keep it in the mission statement because the sense of pride in the services the Police Department provides is a big reason why many people chose to enter the profession in the first place. It is not uncommon to see this word in other law enforcement organizations’ mission statement.

The organizational vision was developed after several discussions. The committee
determined that it was important that the core values be expressed in an actual statement rather than a list of words.

The next step in the process was to develop goals with corresponding strategies, action plans, target completion dates and responsible employees. Initially, the committee developed four short-term goals. However, after a discussion with the HRC on May 12, 2006, a fifth goal (To protect the public) was added to make the plan more comprehensive. The HRC also recommended that more strategies and action plans associated with diversity and improving relationships with the minority community be included. As a result, several additions were made. Staff presented the revised draft to the HRC on June 8, 2005. At that time, the HRC Chairperson entertained a motion that the HRC recommend to the Council that it adopt the Police Department’s plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Because it is staff’s intent to provide ongoing status reports to the HRC and Council on the progress the Department makes in accomplishing the goals, it was important to have measurable indices to monitor performance. The City Auditor provided valuable assistance in developing the performance measures.

Staff intends to develop strategies, action plans and timelines for the long-term goals that have been identified by the end of next fiscal year.

The Plan has been shared with Department personnel and will become an integral factor in many aspects of the organization. For instance, all managers and supervisors will have Strategic Action plans as part of their annual work plans. Included in all personnel annual evaluations will be reference to their ability and success in accomplishing the action plans, and most importantly, it will serve as the guide for setting priorities for the Department.

**RESOURCE IMPACT**

Police staff will absorb the costs associated with the strategies and actions plans.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This plan is consistent with City policy.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Draft Strategic Plan
Minutes from HRC Meetings of May 11, and June 8, 2006
DEPARTMENT HEAD APPROVAL:  
LYNNE JOHNSON  
Police Chief

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:  
EMILY HARRISON  
Assistant City Manager