



City of Woodland

REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: June 15, 2010

SUBJECT: Approval of the Visitor Attraction District (BID) Assessment Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011, Adoption of Resolution of Intention to Levy an Assessment for Improvements and Activities for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 within the Woodland Visitor Attraction District, and Scheduling of Public Hearing

Report in Brief

In July 2004 the City Council approved the formation of the Woodland Visitor Attraction District at the request of Woodland hoteliers. This action included the collection of a 1% assessment on room occupancy charges that was provided as an annual payment to the Yolo County Visitors Bureau. The hoteliers have remained supportive of the District since 2004 and the City Council has annually adopted Renewal of the District since its formation. The hoteliers remain supportive of the District and request that the City adopt its renewal for 2009-2010.

Staff recommends that the City Council approves the Visitor Attraction District Assessment Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011; adopt a Resolution No. _____, a Resolution of Intention to Levy an Assessment for Improvements and Activities for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 within the Woodland Visitor Attraction District; and schedule a public hearing for June 29, 2010 to consider any written or oral protests to the levy of the assessment.

Background

On July 6, 2004, the City Council unanimously supported the adoption of a Resolution of Intention to establish the Woodland Visitor Attraction District ("District") pursuant to the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989. On July 27, 2004, Council held a public hearing to approve Ordinance No. 1404 establishing the District. Ordinance No. 1404 authorized the levying of a 1% assessment on room occupancy, in addition to the Transient Occupancy Tax, upon all hotel/motels establishments in the City of Woodland. Council has annually adopted the Renewal of the District since that time.

A requirement of the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989 is that the assessment levy be renewed every fiscal year. In order to renew the assessment, the City Council needs to: (1)

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approve an assessment report; (2) adopt a resolution of intention; (3) conduct a public hearing; and (4) absent a majority protest, adopt a resolution confirming the assessment report.

The assessment is to be forwarded to the Yolo County Visitors' Bureau (Visitors' Bureau), which promotes tourism and visitor attraction. The Visitors' Bureau, which is governed by a Board of Directors, is a non-profit entity. The Visitors' Bureau is also supported by its partners-- the cities of Davis, Winters and Woodland, as well as the University of California at Davis.

The hoteliers have voted to assess themselves in order to provide the Visitors' Bureau with funds to assist in increasing travel, tourism and overnight stays in Woodland. As required, all of the hotels in Woodland participate, representing a total of approximately 600 rooms. To date, the work that the Visitors' Bureau has done has been productive. The Assessment Report (Attachment II) describes some of the activities and publications produced this year. Below is a list of some of the YCVB assisted activities:

- Amgen Bicycle Tour of California, hosted in May 2010
- Sacramento Valley Scottish Games (approx. 600 rooms)
- Renewal of Woodland Map & Guide Lexan Map to be placed in Heritage Plaza Kiosk in June 2010

Planned events/initiatives 2010-11

- Amgen 2011 Tour of California
- Yolo County Food & Wine Initiative
- Development of Agritourism Program
- Create more accessible/visible Visitor Center

Some media coverage included:

- "Good Day Sacramento" coverage of Stroll Through History during "talk back" segment
- Solano Magazine-Almond Festival
- Outgoing press releases for Woodland (in 2009)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station at Gateway Center--outgoing media
- Sacramento Parent Magazine inquiring about Stroll Through History, Dynamite Chili Cook-off and Woodland Farmer's Market

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- Events & festivals provided to Cean Burgeson-“Destination” Cache Creek Magazine

The recommended action will continue the 1% annual assessment for the Woodland Visitor Attraction District and maintain services at the current level for the District and the Visitor’s Bureau. Staff believes this action is consistent with the previous and current desires of Woodland hoteliers.

Discussion

Historically, the YCVB has helped the City increase its TOT year over year by approximately 5-7 %. The City’s attractions and events, such as the Scottish Games, the Ag History Museum and Community Center & Sports Park continue to benefit from greater regional exposure. The City is seeing a greater number of events, such as the planned Senior Softball World Cup Championships in August 2010. Over this past year, the total 1% assessment collected did not reach the projected amount due to the regional economy and fewer people traveling. As a result of reduced travel, the City’s annual TOT collected over the past 4 quarters has decreased by approximately \$100,000 effectively reducing the VAD contribution to the YCVB by \$10,000. With the addition of the weekly scheduled “sporting events”, the success of other annual events and the greater collaboration of the Woodland hotels, all parties are working to increase annual TOT in Woodland. The annual contribution (2009 Q1-Q3 and 2010 Q1) to the YCVB was approximately \$77,600.

It should be noted that the City Council will consider a separate item on the June 15 agenda to increase the 1% assessment to 2% annually with a portion of the funds being retained by the City to support community activities including the Downtown Holiday Parade. These items were presented separately in order to allow the Council the flexibility to maintain the 1% assessment without authorizing the increase.

Since Executive Director Diane Parro’s arrival in September 2008, the YCVB has implemented a more flexible, collaborative approach to the administration of the Bureau. The mission of the YCVB is to enhance the visitors’ experience by facilitating the integration of the community and regional resources and assets. Board meetings now rotate among the partner communities and regular updates are provided by Bureau partners in a constant effort to work together to make Yolo County a desirable visitor destination.

In addition to the past year’s activities, the YCVB has proposed the following additional activities to market Yolo County regionally.

New Publications –

1. Map of walking tour of historic buildings, to be a collaboration with the Stroll Through history
2. Winery Guide – This county-wide guide was extremely popular yet needs to be updated frequently. A new version is needed.
3. Restaurant Guide – Restaurants change often and this guide is the most requested piece provided by the Bureau. A new version is needed.

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PAGE: 4**ITEM:****Updated Web Site –**

1. Add landing pages to highlights special interests like wineries or historic buildings
2. Provide assistance to hoteliers with Trip Advisor and offer travel sites

Increase Sales Program –

1. Add part-time staff to generate leads on conferences, sports groups and other travelers to support increased hotel occupancy.
2. Provide greater support to hoteliers with outreach.
3. Increase collaboration between hoteliers and other groups such as restaurants and attractions.

Fiscal Impact

The renewal of the one percent (1%) assessment has minimal direct fiscal impact on the City. Hoteliers submit their 1% assessment to the City along with their ten percent (10%) Transient Occupancy Tax. City staff processes the 1% assessment as a “pass through” to the Visitor’s Bureau. Annual staff costs for the pass through of funds are estimated to be approximately \$1,500 and are included in the FY 2011 General Fund budget and considered an in-kind contribution to the YCVB.

As appropriate, the YCVB has agreed to produce marketing materials for partnering communities. The City of Woodland is currently updating the Woodland Map & Guide which has not been updated since 2005. Because the City is unable to contribute an annual assessment from the General Fund, work is completed on a fee for services basis.

Public Contact

On May 26, 2010, staff met with all of the Woodland hoteliers, Diane Parro, YCVB Executive Director and Reed Youmans, Chair of YCVB Board of Directors to discuss the YCVB completed activities and the proposed activities and marketing program for FY 2011.

The agenda for the June 15, 2010 City Council meeting was posted and the future public hearing on June 29, 2010 will be published in the Daily Democrat as well as sent to Woodland hotels based on the City Council’s action.

Alternative Courses of Action

1. Approve the Visitor Attraction District Assessment Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011; adopt a Resolution No. _____, a Resolution of Intention to Levy an Assessment for Improvements and Activities for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 within the Woodland Visitor Attraction District; and schedule a public hearing for June 29, 2010 to consider any written or oral protests to the levy of the assessment.

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2. Cease further consideration of the renewal of the Visitor Attraction District.

Recommendation for Action

Staff recommends that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1.

Prepared by: Wendy Ross
Economic Dev. Manager

Mark G. Deven
City Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution of Intention
2. 2010/2011 Annual Assessment Report

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF INTENTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF WOODLAND TO LEVY AN ASSESSMENT
FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2010-2011 WITHIN THE WOODLAND VISITOR
ATTRACTION DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, the City of Woodland (“City”) has the authority to levy assessments through a parking and business improvement area pursuant to the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989, California Streets & Highways Code section 36500 et seq.;

WHEREAS, on September 7, 2004, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1404 establishing a Woodland Visitor Attraction District (“District”) and levying assessments;

WHEREAS, the District’s area consists of the City in its entirety and is coextensive in its boundaries with the City;

WHEREAS, the mission of the District is to enrich the lives of the citizens by improving the economic resilience of existing Woodland businesses through promotion of cultural, athletic and educational events and programs that build upon the strengths of the region and the quality of community life;

WHEREAS, in order to levy an assessment for fiscal year 2010-2011, the City Council is required to approve an assessment report, adopt a resolution of intention, hold a public hearing and adopt a resolution confirming the report and adopting the assessment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has approved the Visitor Attraction District (BID) Assessment Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011, which is incorporated herein by reference.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WOODLAND DOES HEREBY RESOLVE that it intends to levy and collect assessments within the Woodland Visitor Attraction District for fiscal year 2010-2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the assessment to be levied for the District shall be used to fund: the general promotion of business activities and visitor-oriented programs within the District, including the development of program materials, visitor guides and the creation of linkages with event sponsors to support additional conferences and events; the promotion of and participation in conferences, activities and public events which are to take place on or in public places within the District; the furnishing of music in any public place within the District; and, the decoration of any public place within the District. The Visitor Attraction District (BID) Assessment Report for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 on file with the City Clerk is hereby referenced for a full and detailed description of the improvements and activities to be provided for fiscal year 2010-2011, the boundaries of the District and the assessments to be levied upon the businesses within the District for fiscal year 2010-2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council will hold a public hearing at 6:00 p.m. on June 29, 2010 in the City Council Chambers, 300 First Street, Woodland, California, on the levying of the assessment for fiscal year 2010-2011. At the public hearing, written and oral protests may be made. The form and manner of protests shall comply with California Streets & Highways Code sections 36524 and 36525. If written protests are received from and not withdrawn by the owners of businesses in the District which will pay fifty percent (50%) or more of the assessments to be levied, no further proceedings to levy the assessment, as set forth in this Resolution of Intention, shall be taken for a period of one year from the date of the finding of a majority protest by the City Council.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 15th day of June, 2010 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Marlin H. Davies, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Susan L. Vannucci, Director of
Administrative Services/City Clerk

Andrew J. Morris, City Attorney

Yolo County Visitors Bureau Annual Report

April 2009 – March 2010

Mission:

To enrich the lives of our citizens by stimulating the economic activity of Davis, Woodland, Winters and unincorporated Yolo County businesses and organizations through the promotion of cultural, athletic and educational events and programs that build upon the strengths of our region and the quality of our community life.

To enhance the visitors experience by facilitating the integration of the community and regional resources and assets.

To accomplish this mission, the Yolo County Visitors Bureau is committed to the following core objectives:

- To market the region in a way that maximizes the visitors experience while respecting the quality of life and environment in which we live
- To compete aggressively with destinations throughout the region in attracting visitors
- To offer exceptional customer service in all aspects of the organization
- To be a regional destination marketing organization that stresses partnerships, productivity and maximum return on investment
- To share expertise on industry issues, trends and product development with customers and stakeholders
- To measure and report the effectiveness of the organization in generating economic benefits for the community

Vision:

The Yolo County Visitors Bureau (YCVB) is the recognized leader of an integrated and influential tourism destination team representing three primary cities of Davis, Woodland, Winters and adjacent areas in Yolo County.

Increased Collaboration:

- Much success was realized due to solid effort on behalf of the Board members and the Executive Director in the area of cooperation.
- Joint projects are in progress with the following countywide organizations:
 - Davis Downtown Business Association
 - Stroll Through History Committee
 - Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
 - Yolo Arts!
 - Yolo Basin Foundation
 - Yolo Natural Heritage Program
 - Yolo County Wine Initiative
- Marketing efforts have been dramatically enhanced through opportunities made possible through membership in regional cooperative groups such as:
 - Central Valley Tourism Association
 - 80 on 80

This allowed YCVB to handle press relations at the LA and SF Media Travel Shows, represent our region at Go West Summit! and introduce international tour operators to our local wines.

Organizational Goals:

- 1 – Collaborate with local groups to provide attractions for visitors
- 2 - Promote our attractions and events to visitors
- 3 – Provide services that support local organizations tourism efforts
- 4 – Serve as a resource for travel industry perspective and knowledge
- 5 – Maintain a professional organization
- 6 – Strive to be positive and respectful in all aspects of our work

Strategies:

- 1 – Maintain a Board of Directors that represents different areas and types of attractions but operates for the good of the whole region
- 2 - Build and enhance cooperation with local entities
- 3 - Take an active role in planning events that draw visitors
- 4 - Market our attractions and events to visitors
 - Provide a Visitors Center
 - Produce and distribute visitor publications
 - Create and maintain a web site that is attractive to visitors and residents and promotes all regional attractions without bias
 - Participate in events & utilize the booth and publications
- 5 – Aggressive program of public relations to generate press coverage
- 6 – Maintain association and seek active cooperation with local and regional tourism organizations

2009/2010 Accomplishments

Active Event Planning & Participation

- Amgen Tour of California/Breakaway Ride
- Senior Softball USA California Cup Negotiation
- Special Olympics Summer Games
- Alternative Energy Fair (Heidrick Ag History Center)
- CA State Fair Booth

Conferences Planned

- UC Davis Atmospheric Chemists
- UC Systemwide Symposium on IT Security
- US Cycling Coaching Clinic
- Semisi Seed Company
- American Chemical Society
- CA Alliance of Child & Family Services
- Yolo County Agriculture Commission (2 conferences)

Publications Produced

- Winery Guide & Map
- Woodland Guide & Map (in cooperation with City of Woodland)
- Weekly Calendars of Events
- Media Kit – converted to electronic
- Monthly Electronic Newsletter for Media

Points of Distribution of Publications

1. Events & Festivals

- UC Davis Fall Welcome
- Celebrate Davis!
- Beat Generation & Jazz Festival
- Hoes Down
- Almond Festival
- Amgen Tour of California
- UC Davis EPE Vendor Fair
- UC Davis Picnic Day
- UC Davis Parents Welcome
- Decision UC Davis
- Ceramics Conference

2. Conferences

- UC Davis Olive Oil Symposium

- UC Davis Environmental Toxicology
- UC Davis Vet Med Conference
- BME Grad Studies Conference
- Engineers without Borders

3. Points of Ongoing Distribution

- YCVB Visitor Center
- Davis City Offices
- Davis Amtrak Station
- Davis Chamber of Commerce
- Davis Downtown Business Association
- Woodland City Offices
- Woodland Stroll Through History
- Heidrick Ag History Center
- Winters City Offices
- Winters Visitor Center & Chamber of Commerce
- Yolo County Offices
- UC Davis Visitor Center
- Various local places: restaurants, hotels, shops, attractions

Total Number of Printed Publications Distributed : 20,370

Yolo CVB website

An act of vandalism destroyed the web site in mid-February of 2009 and we were eventually forced to build an entirely new site. The result is a much-improved web site that maintains the visual design and beautiful photographs of our region but is much easier to navigate for both the user and the administrators.

1. Features Maintained

- Events calendar
- Listings, photos and links for all hotels
- Listings for all restaurants
- Details for every attraction
- Travel information

2. New Features

- Maps can now be downloaded from the web site and printed at a home or place of business
- The home page has an "Upcoming Events" bar to show the next few events
- Restaurants can be sorted by location, type of food, or both
- Restaurant page will have a "featured restaurant" which will change weekly
- There is a search feature that covers the entire site
- Office address, telephone number and email appears at the bottom of each main page
- There is a contact page with more information about us
- The RFP and Request for Information page has been streamlined
- Press room with story lines, photos, quotes and a form to request media assistance

3. New Features Planned

- Meeting planning tools including a comparison table option
- Landing Pages – landing pages will increase our search engine optimization which will lead to better exposure and more traffic to benefit all hotels and attractions. The objective is to capture a person searching the web for information on a specific subject. Once they navigate to our landing page, we offer enticing links to our web site and others web sites.
- First Landing Pages will cover –
 1. Wine tasting
 2. Information about Bicycling
 3. Feature Historical Registry (Woodland)
 4. Information for Students Interested in UC Davis

Public Relations

We are spearheading use of social media and have launched Facebook and Twitter pages on behalf of our organization.

Our efforts on behalf of other local events were also fruitful. Noted below is the coverage generated through our program not counting Amgen Tour Of California.

Television Segments – 9

Website Articles or Event Listings - 9

Regional Magazine Articles or Event Listings – 7

Via, Sacramento Magazine, CA Kids, Leisure Group Travel

Newspaper Articles or Event Listings – 15 (not including ATOC)

Davis Enterprise, Woodland Daily Democrat, Sacramento Bee, Los Angeles Times

2010/2011 Goals

- **Increase collaborative efforts with particular emphasis on:**
 1. Local hoteliers
 2. Area museums – create a guide
 3. New UC Davis Conference facilities
 4. Underutilized attractions such as River Cats and Cache Creek Resort

- **Take an active role in planning events & initiatives:**
 1. US Bicycling Hall of Fame Induction
 2. Yolo County Food & Wine Initiative
 3. Sacramento Area Alternative Energy Fair
 4. Yolo County booth at the CA State Fair
 5. Installation of a new Yolo County Exhibit at the State Capitol
 6. Creation of a Satellite Visitor Center at the Heidrick Ag History Center
 7. Celebration of California Native American Arts Committee

- **Continue to enhance the Visitor Center**

- **Provide service to partner Visitor Centers**

- **Increase public relations efforts**

- **Develop sources of funding**

- **Develop and maintain best practices for the organization**