

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: August 12, 2002

FROM: Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

SUBJECT: 2002 PASADENA/ALTADENA QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is for information only and provides an update on the new 2002 edition of the *Pasadena/Altadena Quality of Life Index*.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Pasadena has been engaged in measuring quality of life as a means to inform decision makers for the past decade. Pasadena has been a founding participant in the California Healthy Cities Project since 1989 and has focused on (1) identifying and prioritizing quality of life issues in Pasadena; (2) measuring and updating quality of life indicators via the *Quality of Life Index*; and, (3) using quality of life indicators for planning, policy development and resource allocation.

The first edition of the *Quality of Life Index*, originally published in December 1992 under the leadership of the Pasadena Public Health Department, assessed Pasadena's baseline status on 55 indicators which reflect a broad interpretation of health. The *Index* covers areas ranging from the economy to community safety. The *Index* was developed with considerable community input in (a) defining and prioritizing quality of life issues, and (b) operationalizing the "quality" issues into measurable indicators.

Since its initial publication in 1992, and revision in 1998, the *Quality of Life Index* has (1) guided the development of health policy in the areas of tobacco control, alcohol availability and black infant health; (2) provided a framework for planning and priority setting within local organizations and agencies; (3) served as a priority-setting document for the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds by the Northwest Commission; (4) assisted city departments and community organizations in grant writing and resource development efforts; and (5) provided a base for initial work on developing a performance-based budget.

UPDATE:

In 1999, the Healthy Cities Project staff and steering committee members began a three-year process of evaluating the original 55 indicators developed for the *1992 Quality of Life Index* for relevancy, usefulness and understandability. They also gathered community insight about the content and design of the *Index*.

Staff invited a large cross-section of community members to a two-day discussion session. Approximately 60 participants studied the definition of indicators and ways in which they can facilitate change. In addition, staff and members of Healthy Cities Steering Committee conducted 54 focus groups and spoke with almost 800 people about their areas of community pride and concern. Participants ranged from elementary school children to senior citizens, including various ethnic groups, residents, city government workers, department heads, social service professionals, and members of the business community.

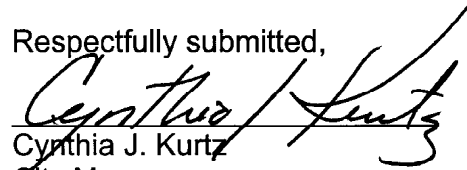
Staff and steering committee members sorted through the results, highlighted the most often repeated issues, and used them to develop a broad list of goals and indicator areas. As a result, 18 categories of indicators, with multiple measures in each, were developed. Indicators from the previous *Index* that did not fit into these categories were still tracked and are presented in the publication's Appendix.

The *Quality of Life Index* is both locally and internationally recognized as a tool for discussion and community planning. The new *2002 Quality of Life Index* adds indicators, emphasizes the interconnection between all the categories, and examines the impact of the community's actions and decisions on the future. Staff will begin implementing a distribution plan for the new edition that will include hosting community workshops that introduce the new publication.

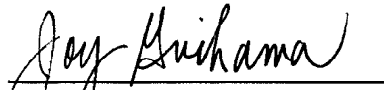
FISCAL IMPACT

There will be no fiscal impact associated with these activities.


Respectfully submitted,


Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:


Joy Guihama
Division Manager
Health Promotion & Policy
Development Division

Approved by:


Wilma J. Allen
Director
Public Health Department