TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER   DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER’S OFFICE

DATE: JANUARY 22, 2007   CMR:117:07

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE OF UP TO $85,000 FROM THE CITY COUNCIL’S CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT FOR PUBLIC POLLING FOR THE MITCHELL PARK LIBRARY/COMMUNITY CENTER, PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING AND ENHANCED LIBRARY OPERATIONS

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that Council approve the use of up to $85,000 of the City Council’s contingency account to hire a polling firm in order to test public support for a Public Safety Building, Mitchell Park Library and Community Center design options, and enhanced library operations.

BACKGROUND
On December 4, 2006, staff presented the results of the Mitchell Park Library Space Study (CMR: 434:06). The item was continued to December 11, 2006, at which time the Council directed staff to secure the services of a polling firm in order to test public support for a new Mitchell Park Library, combined Mitchell Park Library and Community Center, enhanced library operations and a new Public Safety Building. The polling consultant would be retained for supplemental polls up to the time of any bond election for the projects. The City Council contingency account contains $85,000 that staff recommends using to fund the polling activities.

DISCUSSION
In order to meet the timelines for both the Mitchell Park Library/Community Center and the Public Safety Building, staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to provide polling services in late December. Although the $85,000 amount is within the City Manager’s contracting authority, authorization is needed to utilize funds from the City Council contingency.

After a consultant has been selected and the contract is finalized, the polling language will be developed and polling of the public will take place in late February. Staff is also working with library and public safety stakeholder groups as part of the polling firm selection process. There will be representatives from each group participating in the selection interviews. Results of the preliminary poll will be presented to Council on March 5 or March 12, 2007, and design work on the Mitchell Park Library/Community Center could begin shortly thereafter. Design work on the Public Safety Building is already in progress.
RESOURCE IMPACT

Funding for polling on the Mitchell Park Library/Community Center and Public Safety Building projects is available in the City Council contingency. The polling consultant will be retained throughout the preliminary design process for both projects so that subsequent polls could be completed if needed. If the fee for the consultant exceeds the $85,000 requested, staff would return to Council to request additional funding from the City Council contingency account or from the General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve. As a result of this request, the balance in the City Council contingency account will decrease from $212,000 to $127,000.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS
This recommendation is consistent with Council’s direction to the Library Advisory Commission and consistent with the establishment of the Library as a Top 3 priority for 2006.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
This is not a project requiring environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

PREPARED BY: _________________________________
KELLY MORARIU
Assistant to the City Manager

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL: _______________________________
EMILY HARRISON
Assistant City Manager