

# Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

MARCH 22, 2011

## **MID-YEAR BUDGET REPORT SHOWS \$2.6 MILLION DEFICIT FOR GENERAL FUND IN 2010/11; \$1.3 MILLION FOR 2011/12:** City Finance

Manager Renee Nagel presented the City's FY 2010/11 financial report on the General Fund, Measure T, Transportation Funds and Enterprise Funds and gave preliminary projections for FY 2011/12. Council members approved eight recommendations designed to deal with a projected \$2.6 million General Fund deficit for FY 2010/11, and \$1.3 million in FY 2011/12. For the last three years, City staff has worked to reduce costs in the General Fund.

- In FY 2008/09, the City overcame a \$2.8 million deficit by holding positions vacant, monitoring expenses, and using \$1.8 million in reserves.
- In FY 2009/10, the budget deficit was projected at \$5.7 million, requiring the City to make larger cuts in operations including limited layoffs, an early retirement incentive for police management, holding additional positions vacant, operational changes such as outsourcing senior meals, and using \$2.3 million in reserves.
- In July 2010, Council adopted the City's biennial budget with a deficit in FY 2010/11 of \$2.1 million and \$1.6 million in FY 2011/12. Since the budget was adopted, the Council implemented fees for police towing and fire inspections and negotiated reductions in employee compensations.

The City's revenues are projected to be lower than the budget by \$1.7 million, due in part to decline in sales tax and interest earnings, and the discontinuation by the County of the Teeter Plan for delinquent city property taxes—estimated to be \$1 million annually. City expenditures are off budget by \$1.2 million. Savings from changes in compensation are fully realized in FY 2011/12. Click [here](#) for more information on the recommendations approved by Council.

**REVENUES DROP IN MEASURE T FUND:** With a drop in City revenues, staff recommended to Council that changes be made in order to avoid, over time, reducing the number of Public Safety personnel funded by Measure T. Staff is returning to Council in June to present a plan that will align the expenses with the revenues in the Measure T fund. It was incorrectly reported that the Police Department would have to reduce, through attrition, 22 of the current 27 Measure T positions as of Fiscal Year 2011/12. In fact, one scenario offered of what action could be taken to balance the Measure T fund was to reduce the number of sworn officers, through attrition, from 27 to 22 in Fiscal Year 2011/12. The General Fund currently has one vacant position, so four positions would need to be left vacant through attrition.

## **WEEKEND STORM BRINGS NEAR-RECORD 24-HOUR RAINFALL**

**FOR CITY:** Visalia Fire Chief Mark Nelson told City Council members that the City received 1.38 inches of rainfall over a 24-hour period through Sunday night, March 20, one of the largest amounts in that time frame for the City. There were some reports of minor flooding, but ponding basins held the rainfall amounts.

During the December downpours, the Mineral King-Linwood basin overflowed with storm water pumped from depressed sections of State Highway 198. Public Works crews excavated a channel from the north side of the basin to Persian Ditch that drained water out of the basin and allowed the freeway pumps to be operated. The basin was full again on Sunday night, but the overflow channel prevented any water from overtopping the banks. No homes or businesses were flooded in the December event or in last Sunday's storm due to the efforts of the Fire Department and Public Works crews. The City has submitted a FEMA request for \$50,000 to put a permanent pipe in place.

The City has submitted a request for FEMA funds for the following:

- \$75,000 for repairs to Lower Mill Creek east of Road 88;
- \$650,000 to permanently repair pavement depressions at Ferguson and Shirk.
- \$100,000 to permanently repair Linwood and Mineral King Basin,;
- \$50,000 for permanent repairs in Evans Ditch at Woodland.

Council also approved \$65,000 to move its Emergency Operations Center to Fire Station 55 in northwest Visalia. The City also applied for a \$5 million grant from the State Department of Water Resources Flood Corridor Program to expand four ponding basins—Goshen Ocean, Jennings, Oakes Basin West and Peoples Basin—throughout the City. Sand bags are still available at Visalia Fire Stations and at the City Corporation Yard on Cain Street in case late season storms cause any localized flooding.

**OTHER COUNCIL NEWS:** The City Council authorized the Healthy Visalia committee to apply for “Let’s Move City” status. The committee, which includes the City, Kaweah Delta Health Care District, Visalia Unified, Family Healthcare Network, College of the Sequoias, and Tulare County Health & Human Services, feel becoming a *Let’s Move City* would demonstrate community commitment to health & wellness and potentially provide future grant opportunities to further community causes.

**MAYOR LAUDED AS ‘LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR’:** At the March 22 annual Visalia Chamber of Commerce meeting, Visalia Mayor Bob Link was honored as Legislator of the Year. Other honorees were: Developer Craig Mangano as Business Advocate of the Year; and Consultant Vicki Stasch received the Chairman’s Award. The awards were presented by Chamber Executive Director Glenn Morris to volunteers for their efforts on behalf of the Chamber and its members.

**NASCAR REVS UP GREAT LAKES WEEKLY SEAT TALLY:** Busy week for Great Lakes Airlines in Visalia. Great Lakes Airlines offers daily flights to Southern California out of Visalia. The short check-in lines and free parking bring travelers from all of the Central Valley and this week is especially busy. This weekend's NASCAR event at the California Speedway has resulted in a 100% increase in average daily bookings for the airline. With 30 day advance purchase fares starting as low as \$59, it just makes *plane* sense to Fly Visalia.

**LEARN ABOUT DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION STUDY AT PUBLIC MEETING:** A public meeting will be held at the Visalia Convention Center to kick off the City’s Downtown Sustainable Transportation Study on Thursday, March 24, at 6 p.m. in San Joaquin Room D of the Visalia Convention Center, 303 E. Acequia Ave. Downtown business and property owners, employees and community members are encouraged to attend. The meeting will provide an overview of the study’s scope and intent and hear community member’s concerns. The study will analyze traffic patterns, biking, walking, parking and how to improve traffic flow in the 70-block area bounded by Oak Street on the north, Santa Fe Street on the east, Noble Avenue on the south and Conyer on the west. Among the items to be studied are: Integration of future development with a balanced street/transit/ bicycle network; level of service for vehicles on downtown streets; transit ridership; existing bike routes and bike facilities; walk-ability of Visalia’s downtown and how downtown streets will handle growth into 2020 and 2030; and parking accommodations to meet future demand. The study will also consider the option of closing Willis and West streets, extending Burke Street, and widening Santa Fe Street to four lanes between Noble and Race streets.

**FUN TIMES AHEAD THROUGH PARKS & RECREATION:** Don’t miss out on all the good times with these fun events offered through the City’s Park & Recreation Department:  
**Mother/Son Campout:** This campout at Sunset Park on Saturday and Sunday, April 16 and 17 from 4

p.m. to 9 a.m. is a great opportunity for mothers to spend some quality time with their sons. If you love the idea of camping, but dread the drive, camp with us. Mothers and sons will play games, work on craft projects, learn about the outdoors, roast marshmallows and share stories. Dinner and breakfast included. Tents and sleeping gear not provided. Cost is \$20 per couple, and \$5 for each additional child.

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Eggstravaganza:** The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Eggstravaganza on Saturday, April 23 from 10 a.m. to noon at Riverway Sports Park Baseball Complex is a great family event to celebrate spring. Activities include an egg hunt, entertainment, raffle prizes, photos and a visit from the Bunny! Egg hunts will be divided into four age categories; Bunny Hop ages 2-4 (children may be accompanied by an adult), 5-6 years, 7-8 years and 9-10 years. Admission is free, but some activity fees may apply.

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Vi-Tri:** This year's event, to be held Sunday, April 3, beginning at 8 a.m. will feature 2 course options. The ½ course option includes a ¼ mile swim (400 yards), 9 mile bike ride and 2 mile run. The full course option includes a ½ mile swim (800 yards), 18 mile bike ride and a 4 mile run (participants will complete the short course twice). The swim will take place at El Diamante pool, followed by a bike ride to Plaza Park and back and a run around El Diamante High School. Refreshments will be served and awards will be given after the race. To register online visit: [www.onyourmarkevents.com](http://www.onyourmarkevents.com). Cost is \$59 in advance or \$69 after March 31 for the 1/2 course; \$69 in advance or \$79 after March 31 for the full course.

**NORTH VISALIA NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOSTS TOWN HALL MEETING:** The meeting will be held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 14, at the Wittman Village Community Center. Representatives from the Visalia City Council, Police, Fire, Code Enforcement, Community Development, the Visalia Rescue Mission and Proteus will be there to answer questions and provide information to the public.

**WALK WITH VIPs:** Healthy Visalia is encouraging Visalia residents to grab their walking shoes and take a stroll with some very important people. The Walk with a VIP series gives participants a chance to get some exercise and discuss what's happening in the community. The Walk with a VIP series schedule, which began on March 12, is below:

- **8 a.m., Saturday, March 26:** Phil Cox, Tulare County Supervisor, Mooney Grove Park, Pillars Square.
- **8 a.m., Saturday, April 2:** Harry Foster, President and Chief Executive Officer of Family HealthCare Network, Stonebrook Park Playground, Hemlock Avenue and Martin Street.
- **8 a.m., Saturday, April 9:** Mayor Bob Link, St. Johns River Trail, Lovers Lane Trailhead.
- **8 a.m., Saturday, April 16:** Duncan Graham, Vice President, Academic Services at College of the Sequoias, West Main Park at West Main Street and Millcreek Drive.

The Healthy Visalia Committee was formed to promote healthy opportunities in the Visalia area and join forces to combat obesity. Committee members include: Kaweah Delta Health Care District, City of Visalia, Visalia Unified School District, Family HealthCare Network, Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, and College of the Sequoias. For more information on Healthy Visalia, visit [HealthyVisalia.com](http://HealthyVisalia.com).

**'TIP-A-COP' ON MARCH 26 AT RED ROBIN:** The Visalia Police Department will participate in Red Robin's state wide Tip-a-Cop event on Saturday, March 26, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Tip-a-Cop event brings together local law enforcement personnel and Special Olympics athletes for a day of food, fun and awareness. Every year, law enforcement volunteers as celebrity wait staff, help deliver food and refill drinks, all for tips for the Special Olympics. This event raises money to help provide local athletes with free year-round training and competition in 12 sports.

*You can now self-subscribe to receive issues of “Inside City Hall”. Go to the City’s website at [www.ci.visalia.ca.us](http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us), click on About Visalia and go to Inside City Hall Newsletter. For information, contact Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva at [nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us) or call 713-4535.*