

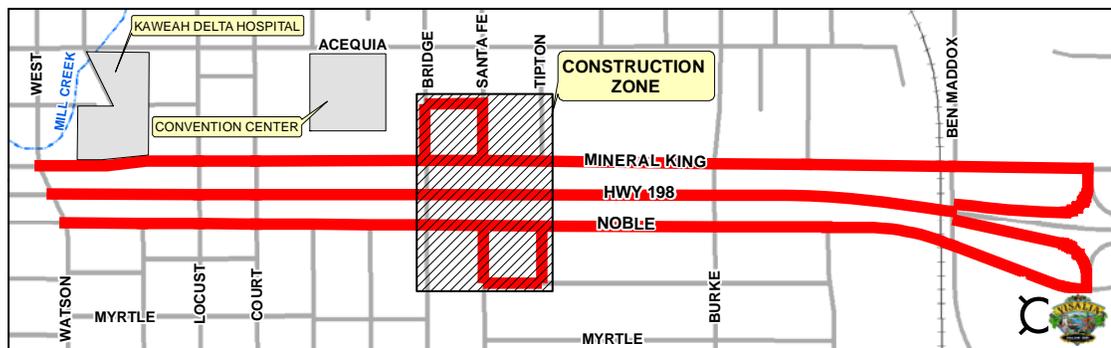
Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

VOLUME 10

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EPA INSTALLING SIX GROUNDWATER MONITORING WELLS: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began installing six groundwater monitoring wells in Visalia this week to test for a chemical commonly used for dry cleaning. EPA is working with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control to investigate possible soil and groundwater contamination from perchloroethylene (PCE). California Water Service Company has been monitoring, testing and removing PCE from the water since it was first detected in 1990. Cal Water has worked cooperatively with the DTSC since the agency began their investigation two years ago. All water delivered by Cal Water has met and continues to meet water quality standards for PCE. Monitoring wells will be installed at the following locations: 215 N. Locust St., 51 W. Main St., 520 W. Main Street, and 225 W. Oak Avenue. The sampling will occur between March 2-13.



WORK ON SANTA FE OVERCROSSING BEGINS: The project is expected to take about 15 months to complete, barring any unforeseen delays. Regular updates will be provided as work progresses and significant aspects of the project occur. Agee Construction is the General Contractor hired by the City of Visalia to do the work on the Santa Fe Overcrossing. The resident engineer is David Vallejos with Mendoza and Associates. The project manager for the City of Visalia is Fred Lampe.

Timeline for the next three weeks:

Week of March 2-6: Construction signs will be installed along Mineral King Avenue from Ben Maddox Way to Bridge Street and along Noble Avenue from Watson Street to Tipton Street. Construction signs will also be placed on State Highway 198.

Week of March 9-13: Abandoned railroad signal poles will be removed along the west side of Santa Fe Street from Mineral King Avenue to Center Street. Agee Construction will begin to set up job trailers and fencing on the northwest corner of Mineral King Avenue and Santa Fe Street.

Week of March 16-20: Concrete traffic barriers will be installed on Noble Avenue, restricting through traffic to one lane on the south side of the street between Bridge and Tipton Streets. Concrete traffic barriers also will also be installed on Mineral King Avenue between Tipton Street and Bridge Street, restricting traffic to one lane on the north side of the street. The barriers will remain in place throughout the bridge construction portion of the project. In addition, the eastbound on-ramp from Noble Avenue to

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Highway 198 at Court Street and the westbound off-ramp from Highway 198 to Mineral King Avenue at Court Street will be closed nightly from about 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. to install concrete traffic barriers along Highway 198.

Construction of the City of Visalia's Santa Fe Overcrossing Project is completely funded by Measure-R, a Tulare County tax initiative which provides local funding for transportation projects. For more information concerning this project, please contact City of Visalia Project Manager Fred Lampe at (559) 713-4270.

CITIZENS IN THE KNOW RETURNS: The City's "Citizens in the Know" program returns this Spring. The six-week sessions begin Wednesday, April 15, from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Visalia City Hall, 707 W. Acequia Ave. "Citizens in the Know" features Council members and City staff who will present information on Visalia's history, planning, public safety, services, and the Council's vision for the future. The program will run for six consecutive Wednesday nights through May 20. An optional city tour and session on organizational management will be offered on May 27. To participate, citizens must be a resident of Visalia, be at least 18 years of age, and commit to attending all six weeks of the program. Enrollment is limited to up to 25 eligible applicants. Applications are available on-line at www.ci.visalia.ca.us, and are due by Friday, March 13, by FAX at 713-4800 or by mail or hand-delivered at 425 E. Oak St., Suite 301, Visalia, CA 93291. Contact Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva at 713-4535 or by email at nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us for more information.



BUILDING PERMITS UP IN FEBRUARY: The total number of building permits for February is up over the previous month—256 compared to 231 in January. The total value of all permits rose from \$9,938,607 in January to \$22,121,703 in February. Other increases: Permits for new single family dwellings up from 19 to 44; new commercial permits up from 5 in January to 8 in February; and commercial additions, alterations and signs up from 33 to 56.

VISALIA'S 'STAGE 5 START' MAKES LATEST ISSUE OF SPORTS ILLUSTRATED: Grab this collector's item while you can—the March 2 issue of Sports Illustrated magazine features a two-page photo of Lance Armstrong joining the other riders in the peloton for the Stage 5 Start of the Amgen Tour of California Cycling Race, which pedaled past 18,000+ fans on Feb. 19 in the streets of our city.

LINCOLN OVAL RENDERINGS AVAILABLE ONLINE: Renderings of two suggested alternatives for the Lincoln Oval area are now available to view on-line at <http://www.tpgconsulting.net>. On the left side of the page, you will find a link entitled "Lincoln Oval Traffic Study and Needs Assessment – Alternatives 1 & 2." You must have Adobe Acrobat to be able to view the drawings. The renderings are the result of the community visioning workshops that have taken place recently toward preparation of a Caltrans funded Traffic Study & Community Needs Assessment for the Lincoln Oval area. The two designs are reflective of feedback collected from community stakeholders through outreach, the community needs and priorities survey, and from "Idea Generation" drawings created at past workshops. The purpose of this project is to outline improvements to be made on Highway 63 to improve vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle travel and strategies to revitalize the Lincoln Oval Park and surrounding neighborhood of the study area. The City of Visalia and Caltrans, in partnership with its

Lead Consultant TPG Consulting, Inc. of Visalia and together with TPG's associate consultants: CSET (Community Services Employment Training, Visalia Office), and RRM Design Group of San Luis Obispo, have hosted three community visioning workshops so far, with a fourth planned for some time in May.

CITY'S LOOP BUS TO RECEIVE AWARD OF

EXCELLENCE: The City of Visalia's Loop Bus system will be recognized by the California Park and Recreation Society as a 2008 Award of Excellence recipient at this year's conference in Santa Clara. The Loop is a youth transportation system that connects children to youth centers and programs. The Loop is a product of the Multi Agency Gang Task Force Committee which is comprised of partners from multiple agencies in Tulare County focusing on reducing gang involvement in Visalia.



GREAT LAKES TO ADD FLIGHT TO ONTARIO: Great Lakes Aviation, Ltd., has announced they will add a round-trip flight between Ontario and Visalia, effective April 7, bringing their number of weekday flights to three each day. The new flight schedule is as follows: Visalia to Ontario—Flight 5045 departs at 6:17 a.m. and arrives 7:12 a.m. Monday-Friday; Flight 196 departs at 9:10 a.m. and arrives at 10:05 a.m. daily; Flight 5045 departs 10:22 a.m. and arrives at 11:17 a.m. on Saturdays; and Flight 5198 departs at 5:30 p.m. and arrives at 6:25 p.m. Sunday-Friday. New service from Ontario to Visalia is as follows: Flight 5196 departs at 8 a.m. and arrives at 9 a.m. Monday-Friday; Flight 5045 departs at 9:12 a.m. and arrives at 10:12 a.m. on Saturday; Flight 5198 departs at 4:20 p.m. and arrives at 5:20 p.m. daily; and Flight 5061 departs at 7:45 p.m. and arrives at 8:45 p.m. Sunday-Friday. To purchase tickets on Great Lakes Airlines, visit www.flygreatlakes.com, call the Great Lakes reservation center at 800-554-5111 or visit your travel agent.

MOW THOSE WEEDS DOWN BY APRIL 15: That's when the City will begin to fine property owners who haven't mowed down their weeds. "It's a date we all can remember," said Battalion Chief Charlie Norman with the Visalia Fire Department. Rules also apply to weeds, debris, litter, garbage or rubbish on the property, including any building, entranceway, courtyard, vacant lot or open space. For more information, call the Weed Abatement Hotline at 713-4207.

HIGH SPEED RAIL IN THE VALLEY BY 2015?: City Council officials learned at their March 2 work session that high-speed rail could be operational in the Central Valley as early as 2015. Representatives from the High-Speed Rail Authority say plans call for the 800-mile system to be built in eight phases, one segment of which would be a 175-mile stretch from Merced to Bakersfield and include four stations—one proposed in the Visalia area. State voters approved \$10 billion in bond financing for the project in last November's election. An additional \$8 billion was included in the recently passed federal stimulus bill. Intensive lobbying by Visalia officials led the rail authority to consider five possible stations in the Visalia-Hanford-Tulare area. The Burlington Northern railroad company, which owns the railroad right-of-way, has expressed interest in partnering with the High-Speed Rail Authority. A scoping session set for March 24 at the Visalia Convention Center will garner public input and help with the assembly of a draft environmental impact report.

CENSUS DAY IS APRIL 1, 2010: It's a little more than a year away, but the City of Visalia has already begun developing strategies for Census 2010. An accurate census count is vital to the City and its residents. More than \$300 billion per year in federal and state funding is allocated to states and communities based on census data, and an accurate count is essential to a full and fair distribution of funding to the City. Working with Census Bureau Representative Dolores Gallegos, the city's Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva will chair the Complete Count Committee and will oversee representation from government, education, faith- and community-based organizations, media, and business. City staff representatives from Planning, Parks & Recreation, Code Enforcement and Public Safety will also participate in the work of subcommittees to reach populations where access is an issue. The first meeting is scheduled for April. If you are interested in participating in one of these subcommittees, contact Nancy Loliva at nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us or at 713-4535.

PASSPORT DAY: On June 1, U.S. citizens must begin presenting a passport book or passport card approved by the U.S. Government to enter the United States from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda at land borders and sea ports of entry. City Hall West, at 707 E. Acequia Ave., in Visalia, will join other passport service providers in the U.S. for "Passport Day in the U.S." On Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., City Hall West will be open to provide our citizens an opportunity to apply for a passport card or passport book. For more information, call 713-4300.

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