



**COUNCIL WORKSHOP RECAP:** The Visalia City Council's annual workshop was held Feb. 4-5 at the Visalia Convention Center. Council members, staff and community members heard updates on the dramatic drawdown in recent years of aquifers supplying the City's water, the challenges facing the City's budget, and the costs and benefits associated with a local Economic Stimulus Plan. Day 2 included discussions on land use planning, streamlining the permitting process, the General Plan Update and regional retail opportunities, and developing a signature event to draw tourists and bolster the local economy. The two-day workshop concluded with Council members listing priorities for 2011. Out of the 18 identified, the top seven are:

- Balance the City's budget. A mid-year report on the 2010-2011 Budget is scheduled for the March 22 Council meeting.
- Provide opportunities for more community input to the City's General Plan Update. Staff is presenting a plan for extended outreach at the Feb. 24 meeting of the General Plan Update Steering Committee.
- Expand educational efforts on the critical water issues facing the City and potential strategies to restore groundwater resources.
- Consider implementation of ordinance strategies to further streamline the City's permitting process and increase economic activity.
- Continue to work on gang suppression efforts.
- Develop a signature event.
- Infrastructure upgrades for Downtown and Mooney Boulevard.

## **COUNCIL APPROVES ZONING ORDINANCES FOR SUBDIVISION**

**SIGNS; ENDS KIOSK SIGN PROGRAM:** A lengthy and complex process concluded at Monday night's regular City Council Meeting with Council voting to approve changes to the subdivision sign ordinance and to terminate the Subdivision Kiosk Sign Program. Revisions were made to the allowable height and locations of subdivision signs and commercial messaging. In other Council action: The three-hour Downtown Parking and reduced rate for reserve spaces in the West Acequia Parking Structure will continue indefinitely; the Provost & Pritchard Engineering Group will provide on-going support for surface water and groundwater issues that impact the City's water supply; and the City Manager was authorized to negotiate a 54-month lease of the Oval Park Service Building with the Visalia Rescue Mission.

## **SANTA FE OVERCROSSING GETS FINISHING TOUCHES WITH**

**BRONZE PLAQUES:** The final touches of the Santa Fe Overcrossing were recently put in place with the installation of four bronze plaques on each pillar. The City of Visalia and the Arts Consortium sent out a call to artists inviting Tulare County residents to submit their concepts for the plaques in 2010. A committee comprised of visual artists and City representatives determined Dana Lubich to be the winning artist. The designs were sent to a bronze manufacturing company that made the four 36-inch diameter plaques that weigh more than 150 pounds each. Each plaque shows a unique attribute of Visalia. One entitled "Time Capsules" marks the bridge pillar with two time capsules sealed in it. The other three entitled "Highway 198-Santa Fe," "Valley of Plenty" and "Gateway to the Sequoias" showcase the railroad's and highway's joint history, agricultural heritage, and Visalia's nickname from those heading to our beautiful mountains. This has been more than an artistic endeavor. This effort has allowed Lubich to connect with his family's history in Visalia. He considers it a privilege to have put the

finishing touches on the Santa Fe Overcrossing.

**APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR CITY'S COMMITTEES:** The City of Visalia is accepting applications from interested citizens for six of its City committees. Applications are accepted on a continuous basis and kept for a period of two years. Visit the City's website at [www.ci.visalia.ca.us](http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us), under "Committees/Commissions" to view the informational handbook and application or contact the City Clerk's Office at 713-4512. The following committees currently have vacancies:

- **Citizen's Advisory Committee** – Acts as a liaison between the general public and the City Council concerning community issues. The Committee has a current opening for one regular member and is expecting three additional vacancies in June. The committee also has four vacancies for alternate members. Interested persons should file their applications immediately as interviews are expected to take place in March 2011.
- **Environmental Committee** – heightens environmental awareness and conservation in Visalia. Issues addressed include air quality, hazardous waste, recycling, water conservation and all other natural resources. The Committee currently has two regular member vacancies and one alternate member vacancy.
- **Historic Preservation Committee** – administers and carries out the standards and specifications of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and promotes historic preservation including encouraging building owners to initiate preservation efforts. The committee currently has vacancies for two regular members and two alternate members.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee** – serves as a liaison between the City and the North Visalia community. The Committee has openings for three regular members.
- **Transit Advisory Committee** – researches and analyzes the community's continuing transit needs, reviews operations, markets the transit program and makes recommendations about the business affairs of the transit system. The Committee currently has two vacancies for alternate members.
- **Waterways and Trails Committee** – advises on matters related to the Bikeway Master Plan and the Waterway and Trail Master Plan. The Committee currently has one vacancy for a regular member.

**CONFERENCES TAKE 'ROOT' IN VISALIA:** The Visalia Convention Center is the site of many conferences, trade shows and conventions in February. The two-day 2011 ROOTS National Conference kicks off on Feb. 17. Over 1,500 attendees will discuss building coordination and partnerships between K-12 education, after school, mental and public health agencies to address the social, emotional, and physical needs of youth and families. The annual Visalia Springfest Home and Patio Show opens Friday and runs through Sunday, Feb. 11-13. Over 2,000 are expected to attend the annual consumers show. These events boost consumer spending and local sales tax revenues.

**VICE MAYOR HOLDS OFFICE HOURS ON FEB. 9:** Vice Mayor Amy Shuklian will hold her regular monthly office hours on Wednesday, February 9. Office hours will be held from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the large conference room at City Hall, at 707 W. Acequia Ave. The first hour, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. will be a time for drop-in visits, and appointments can be scheduled in advance for the second hour, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. To schedule an appointment, contact Gladys Ruiz at 713-4314. Shuklian can be reached through 713-4400, then enter 8313, or by email at [ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us).

*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.*