

Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

VOLUME 11

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MOONEY STUDY GETS GREEN LIGHT: At Tuesday's City Council meeting, Council members voted 5-0 to move forward with a study of zoning policies along the Mooney Boulevard commercial corridor. The study, which costs \$30,000, is intended to take up to six months. "Specialty food stores", like Trader Joe's, are currently allowed along Mooney. A zoning change would allow the addition of discount market's like Fresh & Easy at the former Longs Drug Store behind Sequoia Mall. Members of the Mooney Boulevard Merchants Association favor the study.

PROPOSED MOBILE HOME PROGRAM GAINS COUNCIL SUPPORT: The City Council moved closer to adopting a Memo of Understanding and Master Lease Program for mobile home owners at Tuesday's public hearing. Council members will be asked in March to authorize entering into an MOU with the park owners, requiring them to offer a model lease. The City is inviting all of the City's 10 park owners to voluntarily participate in the proposed five-year MOU and master lease program, and expects that 8 of those parks will sign on. The program's limits annual space increases to the Social Security Index increase, with a minimum of 3.5 percent and a maximum of 7 percent. Two detailed studies indicate that space-rent increases, though steady since 2003, did not represent price gouging. Some park residents expressed concerns that park owners would not participate voluntarily, preferring a model used in Modesto which stipulates that any park owner choosing not to offer a master lease to tenants is subject to direct control by the city. But staff has negotiated improvements to the present MOU that are acceptable to the park owners and are intended to make the current program more enforceable without instituting a potentially costly and contentious rent control ordinance.

POLICE TO CONDUCT DUI CHECKPOINT: The Visalia Police Department will conduct DUI/Drivers License checkpoints on Saturday, Feb. 20. A DUI checkpoint is a proven effective method for achieving this goal. Traffic volume and weather permitting, all vehicles may be checked and drivers who are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs will be arrested. The public is encouraged to help keep roadways safe by calling 911 if they see a suspected impaired driver. Funding for this operation is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

NEW DAY FOR VICE MAYOR'S OFFICE HOURS IN MARCH: Vice Mayor Amy Shuklian will hold her March office hours on Wednesday, March 10 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 Office Assistant Gladys Ramirez at 713-4314. You also can receive information and updates from Vice Mayor Shuklian through Facebook, by email at ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us, or by calling 713-4400, then entering 8313.

The City's newsletter, Inside City Hall, is published after all regular City Council meetings. To self-subscribe, go to http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us/about/inside_city_hall_newsletter.asp. For more information, contact Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva at nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us.

CITY SEEKS APPLICATIONS FOR COMMITTEES, COMMISSION VACANCIES: The City of Visalia is accepting applications from interested citizens for its City committees. 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 and has openings for three alternate members.
- **Disability Advocacy Committee** advises the City on the needs of disabled people. The committee promotes physical, social, communication and attitudinal access for every citizen of Visalia and has openings for three regular members and two alternate members.
- **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 has vacancies for one regular and one alternate member.
- **Historic Preservation Committee** administers and carries out the standards and specifications of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and promotes historic preservation by encouraging building owners to initiate preservation efforts. The Committee has two regular member vacancies.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee** serves as a liaison between the City and the North Visalia community. The Committee has openings for two regular members.
- **Parks & Recreation Commission** advises the City Council and City staff in matters pertaining to parks, playgrounds and recreation centers. The Commission currently has one alternate vacancy.
- **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 regular members and two vacancies as alternate members.
- **Waterways and Trails Committee** advises on matters related to the Bikeway Master Plan and the Waterway and Trail Master Plan, and advocates for policies, programs, and projects that enhance bicycle and pedestrian opportunities, reviews projects, and advocates to secure additional resources. The Committee currently has four regular member vacancies.

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis and kept for a period of two years. For more information, go to the City of Visalia’s website at www.ci.visalia.ca.us “Committees/Commissions” to view the informational handbook and application or contact the City Clerk’s Office at 713-4512.

CITY ROAD PROJECT UPDATES

CENTER AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS: Work on the Center Avenue improvements has commenced. The work consists of installing new landscape curbs along the south side of Center Avenue, between Bridge Street and Conyer Street. There will also be irrigation mains installed along this area, to serve the planter islands. Generally, work will commence from Bridge Street, proceeding west in 2 block increments. The south travel lane (westbound) and adjacent parking will be impacted with this project. The project manager for the City of Visalia is Rebecca Keenan.

Timeline for the next two weeks:

- **Week of Feb 15-Feb 19:** Demolition work with asphalt sawcutting and street bores continues. This process will cut the pavement for future removal and bore under the intersecting streets for irrigation. This pavement will not be removed until each two block construction segment is reached. This work will be in addition to and outside of the two block construction segment, but will be limited to the hours between 4 AM and 8AM. This work will close off two block increments along Center, between Conyer and Bridge Streets. Parking spaces outside of the two block construction segment will be open by 8 AM each morning.
- **Week of Feb 22-Feb 26:** Work will continue in the first two block construction segment between Bridge and Church Streets. Pavement will be removed, and installation of new curb and

irrigation will begin. There may be some sawcut and bore work done. If the time allows, work will move to the area between Locust and Floral Streets this week, otherwise it will start the following week.

SANTA FE OVERCROSSING: Agee Construction is the General Contractor hired by the City of Visalia to do the work on the Santa Fe Overcrossing. The project manager for the City of Visalia is Fred Lampe.

Timeline for the next two weeks:

- **Week of Feb. 15-Feb. 19:** Miscellaneous concrete curbing and asphalt paving are scheduled to be installed at the approaches to the bridge. All work will be done in the daylight hours. Highway 198 ramp closures are scheduled from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Wednesday through Friday, for the eastbound Court Street onramp and the westbound Court Street offramp.
- **Week of Feb. 22-Feb. 26:** Construction of decorative concrete features, fencing and architectural trim are scheduled for this week. Highway 198 ramp closures are scheduled from 9 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday, for the eastbound Court Street on-ramp and the westbound Court Street off-ramp.

McAULIFF STREET: The project is located along McAuliff Street, south of Houston and Mineral King Avenue. It will complete the connection between the north and south sides of McAuliff Street. The project manager for the City of Visalia is Rebecca Keenan.

Timeline for the next two weeks:

- **Week of Feb. 15 – Feb. 19:** The Contractor will continue to work on the necessary electrical improvements for the street lights that are to be installed along McAuliff. Some signage work will be completed. This work will be between Houston Avenue and Murray Street.
- **Week of Feb. 22 – Feb. 26:** The Contractor will begin the striping modifications along McAuliff Avenue. The intersection at Mineral King and McAuliff will be converted to an “All Way” stop this week. The existing striping between Mineral King and Douglas will be modified to include bike lanes and the appropriate lane transition markings.
- **Look Ahead:** The City of Visalia anticipates that the crossing over Mill Creek will be open to vehicular traffic sometime during the month of March, depending on weather conditions. City staff will monitor McAuliff between Houston and Mineral King Ave. after the opening to re-view related traffic control measures.

HOUSTON ROUNDABOUT: Crawford Construction is the General Contractor hired by the City of Visalia to do the work on the Houston Avenue project. The project manager for the City of Visalia is Michael Carr.

Timeline for the next two weeks:

Week of Feb. 15 – Feb. 19: The connections to the roundabout from NE 3rd and Santa Fe Street are to remain closed. Traffic could be affected around the roundabout as work is done on the ADA crosswalks through the median islands. Work on the Ben Maddox median island near Sweet Avenue will continue with traffic shifted to the outside lanes while the median is filled and the lane striping is revised. Demolition work on the northwest and southwest corners at Ben Maddox could begin with the right-hand southbound lane closed.

Week of Feb. 22 – Feb. 26: The connections to the roundabout from NE 3rd and Santa Fe Street will remain closed. Curbs are scheduled to be poured on Ben Maddox early in the week and paving by the end of the week, requiring the right-hand southbound lane to be closed. The new traffic signals should also be installed at Ben Maddox and Houston. The final lift of asphalt paving could be put down on Houston and Santa Fe, weather permitting.

Together – We Count!

Census Day is April 1, 2010

IT'S IN OUR HANDS

Safe. The Census Bureau protects information that identifies respondents or their households.

Easy. 10 simple questions take just 10 minutes to answer and return by mail.

Why it matters: It brings money into our communities to improve our neighborhoods, our transportation, our schools, and helps provide services people of all ages need.

Coming soon. Census questionnaires will be mailed in March 2010.

To Learn More:

Visit www.ci.visalia.ca.us

or 2010census.gov.

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