

COUNCIL SUPPORTS FLOOD INSURANCE LEGISLATION WITH

REVISIONS: The Visalia City Council—on a 4-0 vote (Council Member Warren Gubler was absent) - approved support of the House-approved Flood Insurance Reform Priorities Act of 2010 with some revisions. Council members will meet with local representatives for Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer urging their support of the legislation, with language modifications. The comprehensive legislation has several provisions that are favorable to the City and citizens who were placed in the Special Flood Hazard Area after FEMA revised the City’s flood plain maps, which took effect June 16, 2009. The bill, in part, authorizes a new program that would delay for a period of five years the implementation of flood insurance requirements for properties newly designated as within a Special Flood Hazard Area in maps adopted on or after September 30, 2007 But, in order to qualify for the delay, the city must have developed an evacuation plan and implemented an outreach and communication plan to advise affected citizens of potential flood risks, the opportunity to purchase flood insurance and the consequences of the failure to purchase the insurance—all prior to the effective date of the revised maps. These requirements were not in place at the time the City’s maps were revised in 2009. Therefore, to take advantage of the legislation should it pass the Senate, the language must be modified to enable all communities with maps adopted after Sept. 30, 2007, to participate in the 5-year delay program.

RENEGOTIATION OF HAZ-MAT RESPONSE CONTRACTS

APPROVED: On a 4-0 vote, the City Council approved the renegotiation of existing Haz Mat Response Contracts with local agencies. City officials will work with the County and the other seven cities over the next six months to renegotiate a contract that includes a provision for local participating agencies to pay a proportional share of the ongoing operational costs of the program. Non-participating agencies would pay a higher fee in the event the Team is needed to respond to their jurisdiction for service. Visalia currently has the only fully trained Team in the County that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond to Haz Mat releases throughout the County; however, the City currently bears the full financial cost of this program. The Tulare County City Manager’s Group will work on the details of an amended agreement for Haz Mat Services in Tulare County, including options for recouping costs through a fee on businesses that have a reportable quantity of hazardous materials. Options for funding other programs in the County will also be considered, including a regional rescue team and a regional decontamination team. City staff also will work with participating agencies to assist with training needs to ensure Federal, State and local laws and regulations are followed.

OTHER COUNCIL ACTION: The City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a professional services agreement for \$99,082 with Omni-Means, Ltd., to prepare plans, specifications and estimates for street improvements to State Route 63 and city streets adjacent to the Lincoln Oval Park; approved an amendment to zoning ordinance text for the Business Research Park development standards, project review and approval process; and adopted a resolution supporting a High Speed Train rail alignment and station for the Kings/Tulare region located on the east side of Hanford, near the juncture of State Highway 198 and State Highway 43.

BUILDING PERMITS SEE SLIGHT INCREASE IN JULY: A slight bump in the number of permits for residential additions and alterations and miscellaneous permits led to a 1 percent increase in the total number of permits issued for 2010 over 2009. A total of 1,872 permits have been issued through July of 2010, compared to 1,846 for the same period in 2009. The total valuation of all permits was down 14%. Decreases were seen in the number of permits for new single family dwellings, multi family permits, new commercial and commercial additions and alterations and signs.

DUI CHECKPOINT NETS 6 ARRESTS: Members of the Visalia Police Department DUI Team, Traffic Unit, Reserve Unit, Volunteer Unit, and Patrol Division conducted a DUI checkpoint in the area of Mineral King and Bridge on Friday and Saturday, July 30-31. Six DUI arrests were made among the 393 vehicles checked. Thirteen Field Sobriety Tests were administered, and 15 citations for unlicensed driving, 4 for driving on a suspended license and 14 additional citations for other offenses were issued. In addition, 23 vehicles were towed during the checkpoint. The DUI Enforcement Team and other units of the Visalia Police Department will conduct additional details aimed at deterring drinking and driving. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

COMMERCIAL COMPOSTING PROGRAM SAVES ON REFUSE

COLLECTION COSTS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES: Restaurants, grocery stores, schools, hospitals and other facilities can participate in the City of Visalia’s Commercial Composting program. Composting not only helps to reduce the amount of waste going to landfills, it can also *decrease* refuse collection costs for participating businesses. It’s a real “**Win-Win**”!

Typical materials currently being accepted in the composting program include:

- * Vegetables: raw and cooked, including peelings, husks and tops
- * Fruit: includes pits, peels, rinds and cores
- * Grains: breads, crusts, etc.
- * Coffee and Tea: includes leaves, grounds, filters and tea bags

Businesses in Visalia are encouraged to contact the City of Visalia’s Natural Resource Conservation Division at 713-4531 to schedule a FREE waste assessment in order to develop a more streamlined solid waste service that will incorporate new or expand upon existing recycling and composting measures.

VICE MAYOR TO HOST SECOND TOWN HALL MEETING: Vice Mayor Amy Shuklian will host the second of four City of Visalia Town Hall Meetings at 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 12, at the Oak Grove School Multi-Purpose Building at 4445 West Ferguson Ave., between Linwood and Demaree. This meeting is specifically for citizens in northwest Visalia, but is open to the general public. Vice Mayor Shuklian will provide a brief update of efforts in the northwest quadrant of the City, including the areas of Public Safety, Transportation and Economic Development. The meeting is designed to allow sufficient time to hear and respond to citizen’s concerns.

