



NEWS RELEASE

BUDGET LAYS FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE, ENCOURAGES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The proposed fiscal year 2014/2015 budget is focused on providing the highest service levels possible while setting the foundation for future progress and investment in the community.

LAKE ELSINORE – (May 28, 2014) – On Tuesday, the City Council held a special study session to review and discuss the City’s preliminary fiscal year 2014-2015 operating budget and Capital Improvement Plan that will go before the City Council for formal approval on June 10, 2014.

The proposals presented to the City Council included a general fund operating budget of approximately \$37.7 million for fiscal year 2014-2015 and a CIP of \$18.4 million. While still recovering from the economic downturn, the City did see increases in its sales and property tax revenues of three and eight percent, respectively. The City expects these numbers to increase in the coming years. A common theme for both proposals is the City’s interest in allocating resources to prepare for future growth with planned expenditures for several master plans, fee studies and critical first steps for future road improvements.

“The City of Lake Elsinore is the fastest growing City in the state, and we expect this trend to continue,” said Mayor Natasha Johnson. “Our budget is focused on meeting the needs of our community today while investing in our future by laying the foundation to ensure responsible and positive development within our City.”

Some of the new projects proposed as part of the CIP included \$4.4 million for several local Interstate 15 interchange projects within the City. The projects include the addition of a deceleration lane on the southbound off-ramp for Railroad Canyon Road, the first phase of the ultimate Railroad Canyon Interchange project and funding for preliminary analysis and studies of the Hwy 74/Central Avenue and Main Street interchange areas to get ahead of future transportation needs in the City. Other key projects announced included a new traffic signal at Riverside Drive/Hwy 74 and Grand Avenue, turn pocket changes on Railroad Canyon Road and repaving of Gunnerson Avenue.

In addition, the general fund operating budget proposes funding for several new or updated planning activities that will facilitate growth, economic development and investment in the City including updating the East Lake Specific Plan, a new Drainage Master Plan, a Facilities Master Plan, Nexus Studies, a Parks Master Plan Update and an Alignment Study of two high growth areas in the City.

While the City once again will reinvest a portion of its available resources to balance the budget, the economic uncertainty reserve remained at 17.5 percent and staff is currently working on a five-year financial plan to set expectations and ensure the financial sustainability of the city in the years to come. The budget was developed through a highly collaborative and comprehensive review process among the City’s departments and the Budget

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Subcommittee, which includes Mayor Natasha Johnson, Councilmember Bob Magee and City Treasurer Allen Baldwin.

"This year, our focus has been on redesigning our fiscal year budget to make it more transparent and easier to understand," said City Manager Grant Yates. "This is the first step to ensuring the long-term financial health and sets us on the right path to better prepare for and provide the services and projects needed as the community grows."

Currently, the City Council approves the budget annually and expects the addition of a comprehensive five-year plan sometime later this year. Following Tuesday's study session, staff will prepare to present the budget to the City Council for final approval and adoption at the next City Council meeting on June 10, 2014.

For more information, please contact: Nicole Dailey, Management Analyst, (951) 674-3124 ext. 314

About the [City of Lake Elsinore](#): *The City of Lake Elsinore features Southern California's largest natural freshwater lake. It is the second oldest and fastest growing city in Riverside County, celebrating its 125th Year of Incorporation on April 9, 2013. The City's current population is estimated at approximately 56,718. The City's brand and slogan, "Dream Extreme," exemplify the scenic beauty and active lifestyle of this 126-year old boomtown. Visitors and residents enjoy water sports such as skiing, power boating and fishing, a world-class sky diving drop zone, a regional motocross track, professional baseball, an 18-hole golf course, outlet shops, plus dining and entertainment in Historic Downtown. Visit www.Lake-Elsinore.org for more information.*