

# Concord City News

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITY OF CONCORD

Summer 2010

## News Corner



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### Housing Element Update

The City is updating its Housing Element, which guides the future development of housing in the city. The Planning Commission will review the Draft Housing Element document this summer, and the City Council will consider the document in the following months. For more information, contact Principal Planner Phillip Woods, 671-3284.

### Spring Cleaning

Remove small weeds now while they are easy to pull. Recycle grass clippings, leaves, weeds and yard trimmings in the greenwaste Toter for convenient disposal.

## More service cuts necessary to address \$13 million deficit

Sacramento takeaways of \$33 million over the last 10 years and the current recession have resulted in a \$24 million dollar decline in City revenues, jeopardizing the Concord community's essential public safety, 911, maintenance and other services.

### What has been done

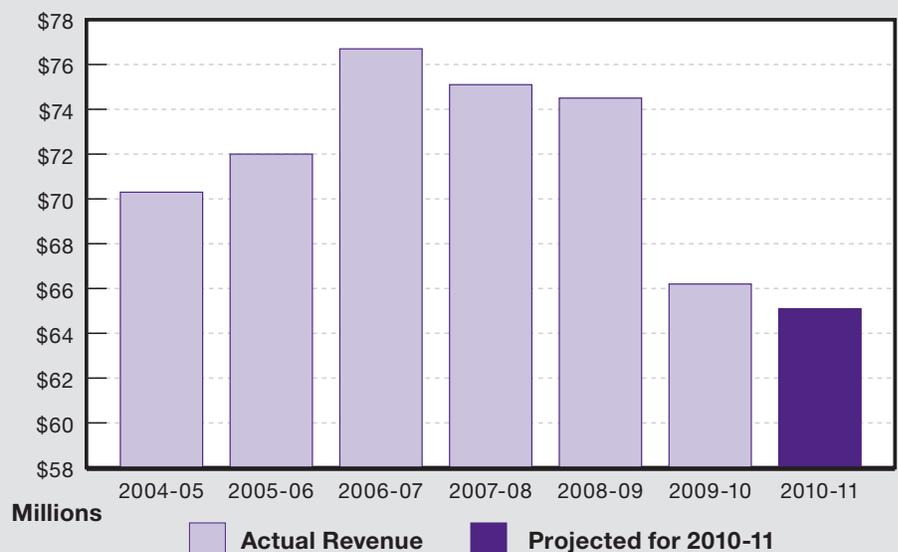
The City is doing everything possible to reduce expenses and maximize revenues. Since 2008, the City has cut \$16.7 million in expenditures, through mandatory furloughs for all non-police employees, by cutting 25% of the City workforce, and by reducing many programs and services. Unfortunately, these cuts are still not

See **Deficit** page 2

## Services at risk

- Police services such as neighborhood and downtown patrols
- School crossing guards
- Youth and teen summer and after-school programs
- Maintenance of City parks, playfields, and medians
- Street and traffic signal maintenance
- Senior Center programs
- Inspections of rental apartment buildings
- Classes for children and adults

## Drop in General Fund Revenues



## Deficit from page 1

enough to address the budget deficit. *The City must make an additional \$6.6 million in cuts unless new revenue is identified.*

### Without new revenue, additional cuts needed

Drastic cuts, beyond those already in place, are needed to balance the budget unless additional revenue can be found. A total of 35 City positions would be eliminated, affecting all City services. The impact of these cuts would be felt in *fewer police officers, longer 911 response times, lower levels of street and park maintenance, reduced code enforcement, reduction in pool hours and in drastically reduced recreation programs for youth, seniors and adults.*

### Potential cuts would include:

- Significant reductions in public safety, such as:
  - Reducing neighborhood police patrols, and eliminating the District Command Program and Downtown Officer, decreasing the department's capacity to provide community policing
  - Eliminating Police Officers from Special Enforcement and Special Victims Units, slowing down response time to major crimes and reducing the ability to investigate crimes
  - Eliminating School Resource Officers, reducing gang/drug prevention programs and eliminating all crossing guards at local schools
  - Reducing traffic signal maintenance, pothole repairs and street maintenance activities
  - Suspending code inspections of rental apartment buildings
- Reducing maintenance of City parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and street medians
- Reducing youth and teen after-school/summer programs that serve the City's youth
- Reducing programs at the Senior Center, including recreation and nutrition services



*Severe reductions in public safety would mean fewer officers on the street*



*Maintenance of City streets will be reduced if proposed budget reductions are enacted*

- Eliminating fee-based classes and programs for adults and children
- Closing or severely reducing hours at Cowell Pool

### Community feedback

Over a thousand Concord residents have become informed participants in this year's painful budget process. Among other activities, the City has hosted three "Living Within Our Means" community

workshops, reached out to the Chamber of Commerce and senior citizens, and solicited viewpoints from hundreds of residents via telephone and on-line surveys.

During this process, the City found that as many as 76% of residents surveyed were interested in considering a local emergency revenue measure as one strategy, in addition to service cuts, to balance the budget.

**Deficit** from page 2

A voter-approved measure would generate a reliable source of local revenue that can't be taken by Sacramento.

Even with a local revenue measure, the City would still have to maintain the cuts that have already been made, and make additional cuts.

New revenue would, however, prevent the devastating service cuts that were described above, and build a foundation for restoration of essential services in the future.

**New revenue could protect services**

Public safety services that would be protected with new revenues include:

- Maintaining 911 response times and crime investigation services
- Maintaining community policing by keeping the Neighborhood District Command program
- Maintaining neighborhood and downtown police patrols



*Summer camp and after-school programs are threatened by the reduction in City revenue*

- Supporting gang prevention programs by avoiding cuts to School Resource Officers and protecting kids by maintaining the school crossing guard program.

Other essential services would be protected from severe cuts. The City could continue to:

- Maintain traffic signals and repair streets and potholes, and prevent additional cuts to storm drain maintenance
- Protect after-school and summer sports and recreation programs and maintain programs and services for senior citizens
- Continue inspections that ensure that rental apartment buildings meet building and safety codes

- Maintain city parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, public restrooms and street medians at current levels

**Stay informed**

To learn more about this important community issue, visit the City's website at [www.cityofconcord.org](http://www.cityofconcord.org) and click on the "Budget Update" link in the "News and Events" section of the home page. Find out about upcoming meetings and sign up for eNews updates.

City staff is available to make presentations on the budget to community groups and organizations. For information, contact the City Manager's Office at 671-3150. ♦

# Concord crime rates fall for third consecutive year



*By  
Police Chief  
David Livingston*

As Contra Costa County's largest city, Concord often receives recognition for its civic events, robust downtown and famous motto, "Where Families Come First." Another area where Concord is receiving attention is in dropping crime rates. For three years in a row, Concord has experienced reductions in most major crime categories.

As reported by the California Department of Justice, Concord's violent crime rate dropped by 6.6 percent in 2009 over 2008, and larceny (grand and petty thefts) dropped 17 percent. These reductions are on top of similar drops in 2008 over 2007.

Specifically, robberies were down 2 percent, aggravated assaults were down 14 percent, petty thefts were down 23 percent and motor vehicle thefts were down 12 percent.

These dropping crime rates occurred even in the face of budget cutbacks in the Police Department. Like all City departments, the Police Department has been forced to reduce expenditures and seek out new efficiencies as the City struggles with a major budget deficit.

Police department staffing numbers have been reduced. However, the department minimized impacts to front line law enforcement services and has not reduced sworn police officers in Patrol, Traffic Enforcement, the School Resource program or Narcotics Enforcement.

Special programs such as Crime Analysis and the Street Smart cable television show have been cut back or eliminated, and reductions in overtime, conference attendance and other miscellaneous expenditures have been imposed.

Residents can help keep crime down by locking their doors, keeping valuables out of sight in vehicles and calling the Police Department when there is suspicious activity. ♦

## Street projects continue in spite of budget crisis

Residents may notice several street projects proceeding in spite of the City's budget crisis. These projects can go forward because the money to complete them comes from an outside source, and not the City's General Fund. The City received \$1.9 million in Federal stimulus dollars for a number of projects.

For example, the project to reconstruct sidewalks and install American with Disabilities Act (ADA)-related improvements in the Monument Boulevard area is funded by Federal stimulus dollars.

The project will improve sidewalks on Monument Boulevard between Oak Grove Road/Meadow Lane and Carey Drive, and on Meadow Lane between Monument Boulevard and Johnson Drive.

Additional work includes the replacement of some trees on Monument Boulevard and Meadow Lane, and the installation of pedestrian-level lighting on Monument Boulevard. A traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Meadow Lane and Robin Lane. The current project schedule calls for completion of all work in September 2010. ♦



*Clayton Road medians before*



*Clayton Road medians after*

## Street medians revamped for more efficient maintenance

The City's street medians have been hard hit by recent water-reduction measures imposed by the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD). Rather than spend resources on turf renovation, City staff has opted to replace the grass with new flowering shrubs and plants that require less water, eliminate mowing, and make medians more attractive and better able to survive future droughts.

The medians along Clayton Road, from Cape Cod Way to Ygnacio Valley Road, were selected as a pilot project for

the conversion. The project will include an upgrade to the irrigation system to increase water efficiency, allowing the City to apply for CCWD's rebates for turf conversion and irrigation upgrades. These rebates will cover 90 percent of the costs associated with the median renovations.

After completion of the Clayton Road renovation, the same process will begin on the Concord Boulevard medians from Kirker Pass Road to the Concord city limit.



## Announcing a new drop-off site for expired medications

The Concord Police Department at 1350 Galindo St. is now a drop-off location for expired or unused prescription medications.

Medications can be deposited in the bin in the Police Department lobby, which is marked "Pharmaceutical Disposal Only." Syringes or needles cannot be disposed of in the bin.

To dispose of unwanted medications, pour pills into a quart-size sealable plastic bag. Liquids should be left in their bottles, but should be put into a sealed plastic bag to prevent leakage.

Recycle the empty containers as appropriate, but first black out any personal information on the labels.

Some pharmacies offer a take-back program for non-controlled (non-narcotic) prescription drugs.

For more information, contact Concord Disposal Service at 682-9113.

# How can you help? City welcomes volunteers

In light of the ongoing budget crisis and staff reductions, many residents at the recent Living Within Our Means workshops suggested that the City publicize its volunteer opportunities and seek assistance from the community. The following programs would welcome support from residents with time to contribute.

## Reserve Police Officer Program

Residents who serve in the volunteer Reserve Officer Program primarily work at special events or ride with regular police officers and serve as back-up. Volunteers are required to undergo extensive law enforcement training and must complete Basic Academy or Reserve Module III and Reserve Module II training prior to being assigned as a reserve officer. For more information, visit the City's website at [www.cityofconcord.org](http://www.cityofconcord.org) and enter Police Reserves in the Search window or contact Sgt. Kristin Coupar, 671-3336.

## Administrative Services

The Administrative Services Division in the City Manager's Office, 1950 Parkside Drive, is in charge of the City's records, contracts and agreements. Volunteers are needed to assist with converting microfilm to a different format, and with a variety of tasks concerning Records Management. To volunteer, contact City Clerk Mary Rae Lehman, 671-3495.



*While seeking a job as an administrative assistant, Connie Lum volunteers in Records Management*



*VIPS (left to right, back row) Michael Baird, Doug Schuster, Janet Johnson, Karen Vetterli, Teri Bloebaum, Ben Hornstein, (front row) Rod Scheer, Gina Scheer, Kim Soibelman, Lola Hampton and Carol McKenna join more than 50 VIPS who contribute thousands of hours annually to the City*

## Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)

The City's Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) perform hundreds of jobs in the Police Department and other City offices. They work in Neighborhood Patrol, Neighborhood Watch, and with the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and provide person-power for special events. To find out more, visit the City's website at [www.cityof.concord.org](http://www.cityof.concord.org) and enter VIPS in the search window, or contact Volunteer Coordinator Margaret Romiti, 671-3184.

## Public Works

For residents who like to work outside, Public Works at 1455 Gasoline Alley has many opportunities available. A few of the many volunteer tasks include monitoring local creeks, maintaining parks, graffiti patrol, looking for malfunctioning street lights, washing City vehicles and painting curbs. For more information, contact Administrative Analyst Shannon Griffin, 671-3068.

## CARES

Members in the Concord Auxiliary Emergency Radio Services (CARES) program are ham radio operators volunteering to assist the Police Department. The group meets monthly and conducts drills to test their system weekly. To volunteer, contact Volunteer Coordinator Margaret Romiti, 671-3184.

## Camp Concord at South Lake Tahoe

Camp Concord is looking for volunteers for spring and fall work weekends at the City's camp at South Lake Tahoe, and to help with the annual benefit golf tournament, a fundraiser that helps send underprivileged children to camp. To volunteer, contact Program Manager Christopher Roke, 671-3319.

## Concord Senior Center

The Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle, has need for many volunteers to assist with everything from answering phones and working in the computer lab to helping with special events and excursions. To volunteer, contact Senior Center Director Avis Connolly, 671-3419.

# Music, movies and the farmers' market bring summer crowds downtown

Downtown Concord's Todos Santos Plaza is humming along this summer with two weekly music programs, two weekly farmers' markets and a variety of family-friendly events planned through the fall. Last year, events in the plaza drew over 200,000 people downtown.

The Thursday Night Music and Market series offers performances on the Todos Santos stage beginning at 6:30 p.m. and a Farmers' Market in the park from 4 to 8 p.m. Musical highlights include, Celtic legends The Young Dubliners on July 15 and the Beatles tribute band The Sun Kings on Aug. 5. A classic car show on July 1 and family films after the music in August extend the fun.



*The Young Dubliners*

The summer series will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the comic strip "Peanuts." The salute recognizes community and national support last December for Concord's "Charlie Brown" tree when budget cuts required the use of a small tree in the park instead of an expensive cut tree. Two of the movie nights will feature the Peanuts gang. On Aug. 12, look for "Bon Voyage, Charlie Brown (And Don't Come Back)" and on Aug. 26, families will enjoy "Race for Your Life, Charlie Brown."

The two additional movie nights will feature "Rock 'n Roll Classics" with Elvis, The Beatles, Jerry Lee Lewis and others on Aug. 5 and the Michael Jackson showcase "This Is It," footage from rehearsals for his concert tour shot shortly before his untimely death.



*Eyewitness Blues Band*

## Tuesday music series

In July, Tuesday Night Blues is in the Plaza from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Highlights of the series include a performance by Bay Area blues legend Maria Muldaur on July 6 and a special performance by the Eyewitness Blues Band, CBS Channel 5's musical troubadours on July 13.

## Summer and fall special events

On Tuesday, Aug. 3, it's National Night Out, saluting residents' efforts in the downtown district to keep neighborhoods safe. The event includes a free concert, Farmers' Market and food booths.

Families are encouraged to attend the Thursday, Sept. 2 Emergency Preparedness Fair from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Representatives from the City and other public and private agencies will be on hand to teach participants how to respond to earthquakes, public health issues and disasters of many kinds.



*Steve Tyrell*

## Special guest for symphony pops concert

The California Symphony will perform in Todos Santos Plaza on Saturday, Sept. 11 with special guest vocalist Steve Tyrell. A producer, composer and singer, Tyrell reinvented and re-popularized classic pop standards for a modern-day audience. His album "A New Standard" was on the top five jazz charts for several years, and his concerts sell out nationwide. The symphony's program will also include a special 9/11 tribute and a hometown salute to the Concord Horseman's Association 75th Anniversary.

## Free parking

Todos Santos Plaza is located in downtown Concord on Willow Pass Road between Mt. Diablo and Grant streets. Free parking is available in two municipal garages.

For more information about downtown events, visit [www.concordfirst.org](http://www.concordfirst.org) or call the hotline at (925) 671-3464. ♦

# Concord provides safe and positive programs for youth and teens this summer

Through its beautiful parks and superior recreational programs, the City of Concord provides safe and positive indoor and outdoor experiences for children and teens that allow for constructive use of their free time. Summer is the time when youth have the most leisure time. Concord Community & Recreation Services offers a variety of summer camps and programs for every interest that conveniently fit into a family's summer plans.



*Lifelong friends are made at pre-teen camp*

## Camp Concord

Recognized by *Bay Area Parent Magazine* as the Family Favorite for 2008 and 2009, Camp Concord at South Lake Tahoe offers an affordable family vacation destination.

Family Camp at Camp Concord allows parents and children to reconnect and enjoy time together away from distractions of home. Families play together while being provided all the conveniences of a private cabin, delicious meals, organized excursions and hours of organized activities for the kids so parents can have a little free time of their own.

Camp Concord also offers week-long youth and two-week teen camps through July. To check for availability and for more information about camp, visit [www.campconcord.org](http://www.campconcord.org) or call (925) 671-3404.



*AWESOMEngineering is popular with future builders*

## Day camps

It's not too late to give your child an amazing summer experience at one of Concord's local day camps. Concord has a day camp for every age including Camp Littlefoot (ages 2 ½ to 5), Backyard Explorers (ages 6 to 11) and All That and Then Some (ages 11 to 14). These day camps are packed with age-appropriate activities providing positive and safe places for children and teens to experience nature, healthy movement and to thrive.

Throughout the summer and when most day camps have ended, Concord is offering an assortment of specialty and sports camps to complete a youth or teen's summer experience. Cultural arts and music are featured in Art & Soul Music Day Camps, Young People's Performing Arts Camp, Young Rembrandts Camps and Freshi Game Design and Stop Motion Animation.

Learning while having fun is always a priority for parents and kids these days and Concord offers day camps that do



*Middle schoolers have a blast at "All That and Then Some" day camp*

both. Whether a child is interested in learning about how things work in the AWESOMEngineering and Mad Science's Flight Academy, or a teen wants to explore 3D Game Modeling and Design, there is a camp for every interest.

Skyhawks Sports Camps are in full force this summer offering sports enthusiasts full week camps in tennis, basketball, flag football, lacrosse, soccer, golf and mini-hawk multi-sport camps. There are half-day and full-day options available. Full-day programs include swimming and water games in the afternoon.

## Register online

For more information about these and other exciting summer camps or to register, visit [www.concordreg.org](http://www.concordreg.org) or the department web site at [www.cityofconcord.org/recreation](http://www.cityofconcord.org/recreation).

Registration and the Summer Activity Guides are available by calling Community & Recreation Services at 671-3404. ♦

## ACTIVITY REGISTRATION

[www.concordreg.org](http://www.concordreg.org)

or call

**Community & Recreation  
Services at 671-3404**

# Concord City News

**City of Concord**  
 1950 Parkside Drive MS/01  
 Concord, CA 94519-2578

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Helen M. Allen	Vice Mayor
Laura M. Hoffmeister	Councilmember
Mark A. Peterson	Councilmember
William D. Shinn	Councilmember
Mary Rae Lehman	City Clerk
Thomas J. Wentling	City Treasurer
Daniel E. Keen	City Manager
Leslye Asera	Community Relations Manager and Editor

## Postal Customer

## City Meetings

All meetings are held at Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Dr., unless otherwise noted and are open to the public. Dates are subject to change. For information, visit the website at [www.cityofconcord.org](http://www.cityofconcord.org) (see Civic Center Meetings on the home page), check the meeting notices in the Contra Costa Times or call 671-3000.

City Council	First, second, fourth Monday, 6:30 p.m.*
Commission on Aging	Third Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle
Community Services Commission	Third Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. City Manager's Conference Room
Design Review Board	Second, fourth Thursday, 5:30 p.m.
Human Relations Commission	Second Tuesday, 7 p.m.*
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Commission	Second Wednesday, 7 p.m.*
Planning Commission	First, third Wednesday, 7 p.m.*
Zoning Administrator	Second, fourth Wednesday, 9 a.m.

\* Broadcast live on Concord Cable TV channel 28 (Comcast), 29 (Astound), AT&T U-verse Channel 99 and online at [www.cityofconcord.org](http://www.cityofconcord.org). Past City Council meetings are also available online.

## Boards & Commissions

For detailed information about the City's Boards and Commissions visit [www.cityofconcord.org](http://www.cityofconcord.org) or call one of the contact numbers below.

Board of Appeals	671-3119
Commission on Aging	671-3419
Community Services Commission	671-3327
Design Review Board	671-3152
Human Relations Commission	671-3327
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Commission	671-3440
Personnel Board	671-3310
Planning Commission	671-3152

## Need an Answer?

**Web site:** ..... [www.cityofconcord.org](http://www.cityofconcord.org)  
**Events:** ..... [www.concordfirst.org](http://www.concordfirst.org)  
**Classes:** ..... [www.concordreg.org](http://www.concordreg.org)  
**E-mail:** ..... [cityinfo@ci.concord.ca.us](mailto:cityinfo@ci.concord.ca.us)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator .....	671-3031
Building .....	671-3107
Business Licenses.....	671-3313
Cable TV	
Astound Broadband .....	459-1000
Comcast.....	1-800-945-2288
Camp Concord .....	671-3273
Centre Concord.....	671-3466
City Council .....	671-3158
City Manager .....	671-3150
Community and Recreation Services	
Class registration.....	671-3404
Concord Community Pool.....	671-3480
Concord Naval Weapons Station	
Reuse Project .....	671-3001
Downtown Hotline .....	671-3464
Economic Development .....	671-3355
Engineering.....	671-3361
Flood Zone Inquiries.....	671-3425
Garbage Collection .....	682-9113
Graffiti Hotline.....	671-3080
Housing.....	671-3364
Mayor .....	671-3158
Neighborhood Services Hotline.....	671-3282
Park Reservations .....	671-3404
Permit Center.....	671-3454
Planning .....	671-3152
Police and Fire Emergencies .....	911
Police Field Offices	
Southern Office .....	671-3483
Police/Information .....	671-3220
Pothole Hotline .....	671-3228
Public Works.....	671-3448
Park Maintenance.....	671-3444
Recreation/Registration .....	671-3404
Senior Center.....	671-3320
Sewer Problems .....	671-3099
Shopping Cart Hotline.....	671-5080
Sleep Train Pavilion	
Hotline.....	363-5701
Information.....	676-8742
Street Light Outages Hotline .....	671-3213
Street Sweeping .....	671-3448
Street Trees.....	671-3444
Traffic Signal Malfunctions.....	671-3132
Willow Pass Center.....	671-3423

