

## 2008 Loveland budget again conservative

Stay the conservative course. That's the overall theme of the City of Loveland government's budget for 2008.

The City has been conservative in its budgeting for the past several years and that approach has been working well. Services to the community have been maintained at a quality level, facility and equipment improvements have been made and the City's financial reserves have increased. The 2008 budget shows a modest 5.3 percent increase over 2007's adopted budget for Loveland's growing community.

"The 2008 budget continues to focus on City Council's priorities for promoting economic development; improving transportation; providing open, accessible government and maintaining efficient, effective government," explained City Manager Don Williams.

Included in the budget is \$39.5 million in new or improved facilities and equipment, some that will be very visible—such as street construction projects—and some behind the scenes—such as improvements in the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

"The 2008 budget is conservative and intended to sustain our strong financial position over the 5-10 year planning



horizon," Williams said. The development of the budget included consideration of:

- A stable regional rate of inflation equal to the national rate.
- Low unemployment rates while recognizing underemployment in the northern Colorado area.
- The current residential construction slowdown, which is likely to continue.
- A probable increase in commercial development.
- A flattening of sales tax revenue growth now that Centerra and other retail centers are no longer new.

Williams noted the community's relatively stable economy while stressing the City's objective of always investing resources to maximize sustainable results. "The City will continue the conservative budget approach that has served the community well through recent economic cycles," Williams said.

*More 2008 budget info inside*

## Lovelanders help through HAND Project

When Mary's husband walked out on her and their three children, she was left with a substantially smaller household income and a pile of unpaid bills, including her Loveland utility bill.

Fortunately, Mary received a referral from the City of Loveland's Utility Billing Office to the House of Neighborly Service (HNS), a non-profit community service agency, where through a City program called Help-A-Neighbor-in-Distress (HAND), Mary was able to qualify for assistance with her utility bill. HNS also provided Mary with food assistance and helped her make connections with other area agencies that could provide additional support.

Donations from community members and Loveland Water and Power fund the HAND project. The City's Utility Billing Office refers customers-in-need to HNS, which provides vouchers for utility payments to applicants who qualify, based on HNS income guidelines and criteria the

City has established.

How can you help? Loveland residents can contribute to the HAND project in one of two ways: Residents can make a one-time contribution to the program by writing a check to the City of Loveland HAND project and mailing it with their utility payment. Or, they can contact the Utility Billing Office at 962-2111 or via e-mail to set up a recurring contribution on their utility bill.

Residents can pledge \$1, \$3, \$5 or any amount they choose. In 2006, Loveland residents gave approximately \$9,300 to the HAND project, which helped 371 local families and individuals. If every Loveland Water and Power customer contributed \$1 during the 2007 holiday season, the amount given in 2006 would triple.

For more information call 962-2111 or visit [www.cityofloveland.org](http://www.cityofloveland.org) and click on the Living in Loveland, Utility Billing Questions, Paying Your Utility Bill section.

### INSIDE

City money; coming in and going out  
Page 2

Reserves in place for stormy times  
Page 2

2008 Budget Highlights  
Page 3

Major projects planned for 2008  
Page 3

What to do when the leaves fall  
Page 2

Loveland celebrates recycling  
Page 3

City has lots on tap this holiday season  
Page 4

Give clean energy this holiday season  
Page 4

Exchange traded funds discussed  
Page 4

## Annual Loveland Lights Dec. 1 & 2

The Friends of the Loveland Public Library Foundation is presenting the annual Loveland Lights celebration. This multi-cultural event includes holiday displays from various traditions, musical performances, decorated trees, hands-on crafts and a bake sale.

The event runs 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 1 and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 2 at the Loveland Public Library, 300 N. Adams. It's free and fun for the whole family. For more information call 669-5201.



## City money; coming in and going out

The City's financial operation is similar to your household's—money comes in one door and goes out another. Except the City has more doors and they can be very large. In this oversimplified explanation, we'll take a brief look at the most often-used doors.

### Money In

By far, the City's largest money sources are utility fees and taxes. The fees you pay for electricity, stormwater management, water and wastewater treatment (sewage) utilities are the greatest source of City money. These fees are paid into Enterprise Funds that support only these services; utility fees pay for the utilities you use, not the library, police, etc. (BTW—Golf in Loveland is an Enterprise Fund. Only golfers' fees, not tax money, pay the bills for golf.)

Sales tax on purchases in Loveland is overwhelmingly the City's largest tax source. The City gets about half of the 6.7 percent sales tax buyers pay on everything from basketballs to Buicks purchased in Loveland. The state of Colorado gets 2.9 percent, Larimer

County gets .8 percent and the City 3 percent. The City's sales tax rate hasn't changed for more than 20 years.

The City also receives a relatively small portion of property taxes. About 12 percent comes back to the City, with the remainder going mainly to the school district and Larimer County.

Other doors through which money arrives are Impact Fees and User Fees. Impact Fees are monies paid by developers to offset City costs like streets, pipelines and services used in new developments. As the name implies, User Fees are the monies paid for using City services and facilities such as the recreation center or trash pickup service.

### Money Out

What comes in must go out. The City's Enterprise Funds—the utilities—spend their revenues to buy raw water and electricity, build treatment plants, lay pipes and cables, and keep everything running smoothly.

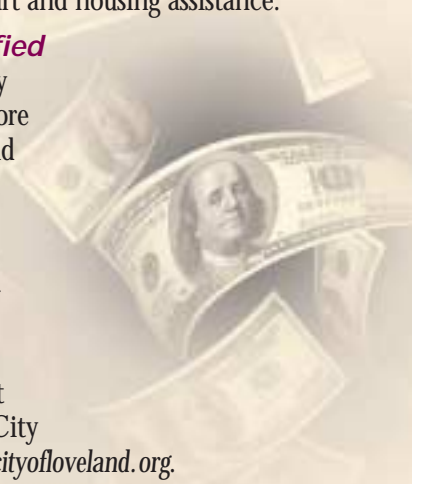
The City's broadest expenditures are through the General Fund. The General Fund provides the many City services we

use daily: police and fire protection, streets, traffic control, engineering, cultural arts, library, parks and recreation, and more.

Another category of expenditures is the Special Revenue Funds. Funded primarily by developer's fees, money from this fund includes improvements and expansion to roads, fire stations, utility equipment and other facilities needed as Loveland grows. The Special Revenue category also includes money collected and spent specifically on open space, the library, public art and housing assistance.

### Very Simplified

The actual City budget is far more complicated and detailed. The complete budget book—all 296 pages—is available in the Finance/Budget section of the City website, [www.cityofloveland.org](http://www.cityofloveland.org).



## Reserves in place for stormy times

The 2008 Budget is built on conservative estimates for both revenues and expenditures. A conservative approach is especially important due to some clouds on the economic horizon that could affect Loveland.

Limited sales tax growth is anticipated, and it is expected that the slowdown in residential building will continue. Significant downturns in the state or national economy could impact our local economy as well, making the outlook stormy for meeting revenue estimates.

The good news is that due to the foresight of Loveland City Council and the Citizen's Finance Advisory Commission (CFAC), the City has put aside reserves for dealing with economic slowdowns. Following advice from CFAC, the City Council has maintained a policy of keeping 6 percent of all General Fund revenue in a reserve fund to provide a cushion against economic downturns.

For 2008, City staff has suggested taking an even more conservative approach and will keep nearly twice the amount

required in reserve. Reserves totaling \$7.3 million are budgeted for next year.

These reserves will give the City the flexibility to weather an economic storm and time to adjust the City's budget appropriately should a significant economic downturn occur.

### Sales Tax Flattening? (see chart at right)

Loveland's revenue from sales tax has increased consistently during the past several years thanks to all the new retail stores in the city. The 2008 budget takes a conservative approach to future sales tax growth.

## What to do when the leaves fall

Autumn is here and that means those beautiful red and gold leaves on the trees will soon be on lawns and sidewalks. The Solid Waste Division recommends that residents bag their leaves and take them to the City's Recycling Center at 400 N. Wilson Ave. for recycling.

"Recycling is the best and most environmentally responsible solution," said Bruce Philbrick, solid waste superintendent.

Recycling leaves also keeps them out of the storm water system, said Philbrick. "We want to remind residents that it is a violation of municipal code to sweep or rake leaves from the yard into the street. It clogs stormwater collection systems and also negatively affects stormwater quality."

Another option is to sign up for the City's weekly curbside yard waste collection service that runs through the end of



November. These 96-gallon carts, delivered to residents' homes, can be filled with leaves and other clean yard wastes. The carts are emptied on residents' trash collection day.

Cost for curbside yard waste collection is \$6 per month. The service is offered April through November. Cart customers who plan to use the cart again next spring are asked to keep the carts during the winter months.

(continued on page 4)



**Permanent Signs** - Recently installed automated signs on Hwy. 34 near Wal-Mart give motorists information on what's ahead. Thanks to a federal grant, the signs display information on what may be encountered on the way to Estes Park or I-25.

## 2008 Budget Highlights

### Revenue

Continuation of annual 1 percent increase in water rates providing funding for future storage.

Final year of 8 percent annual increase in wastewater rates to fund operations and capital improvements.

\$1 per month rate increase for recycling fee; \$1.50 per month increase for yard waste collection fees.

Electric rates for both consumption and demand will increase by 3 percent. Monthly base charges will remain unchanged.

### Expenses

Equip the single stream recycling program.

Enhance snow removal capabilities.

Maintain current service levels in all departments.

Continue commitment to Transportation Program.

Continue funding of Building Maintenance Program.

Plan parking improvements downtown.

Design for Chilson Recreation Center expansion.

Hire additional police personnel.

Plan for next phase in downtown redevelopment.

Traffic signal, sign and markings technology enhancements.

Replace necessary large equipment.

Operate new Fairgrounds Park opening in autumn, 2008.

## Major projects planned for 2008

Loveland's 2008 budget calls for \$39.5 million in expenses for capital projects for the community. Capital projects are new, long-duration undertakings such as buildings and equipment, not operating expenses such as salaries and supplies.

Some capital projects take several years from beginning to end. A new building, for example, typically involves purchasing land, initial design and final design before construction begins and the project's progress becomes visible to passers by.

Some of 2008's \$39.5 million projects will be invisible while the projects begin during the land acquisition and design phases. Others will remain invisible to community members because they are improvements installed within existing buildings or constructed underground.

All of Loveland's capital projects are funded on a pay-as-you-go basis. Either the money already exists or the revenue comes in as the project moves forward. Money isn't borrowed to pay for the project. Millions of dollars are already in the bank from fees paid by commercial

developers to be used for funding City capital projects.

Some of the major Capital Projects either already in progress or beginning in 2008 include:

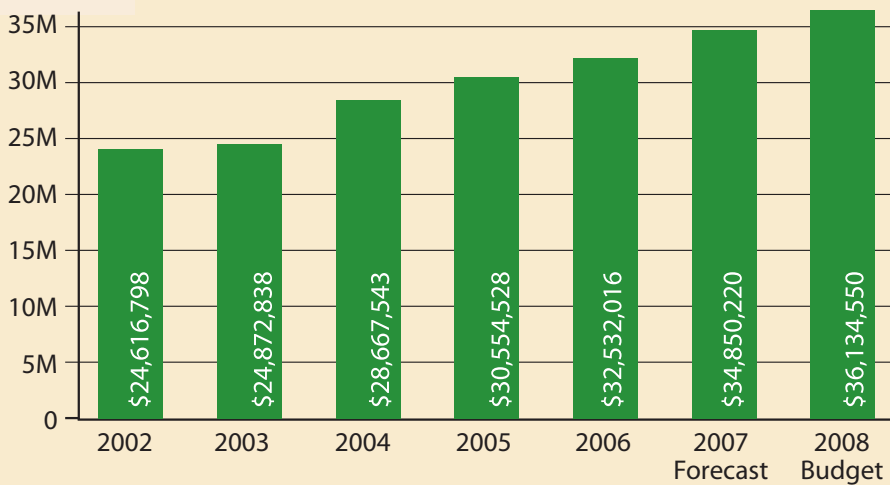
- Downtown parking structure study and land purchase.
- Right-of-way acquisition and design for road improvements.



- Annual street rehabilitation program.
- Open lands purchases.
- Chilson Center renovation/expansion design.
- New recreation center land purchase.
- Golf course improvements including design for new Mariana Butte clubhouse.
- Storm water system improvements and design.
- Water storage, delivery and treatment plant improvements.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements, expansion and odor control projects.
- Electric power distribution improvement and expansion projects.

Numerous other capital projects—costing \$25,000 or more—are included in the 2008 budget. The entire budget document is available on the City's website at [www.cityofloveland.org](http://www.cityofloveland.org).

### Sales and Use Tax



## Loveland celebrates recycling

November 15 is America Recycles Day, designed to increase awareness of the importance of recycling throughout the country. Recycling saves energy, natural resources and landfill space, reduces greenhouse gases and creates jobs.

The City of Loveland Solid Waste Division offers weekly curbside pickup of the following materials:

### Blue Bin:

- Newspaper: remove bags, strings and rubber bands.
- Magazines and catalogs: remove plastic bags.
- Junk mail & office paper.
- Phone books: remove bags and magnets.
- Paperboard (cereal, shoe and gift boxes, etc.): remove box liners and flatten.

- Corrugated cardboard: flatten and cut into pieces no larger than 2 ft. x 2 ft.

### Green Bin:

- Glass bottles and jars: beverage and food glass only.
- Aluminum cans, foil and pie tins: rinse.
- Steel cans: rinse – empty aerosol and paint cans are acceptable too.

- Plastic bottles: only plastic bottles – bottles must have an opening that is smaller than the base of the container.
- No tubs, trays, Styrofoam or plastic bags are accepted.

For bins or information call 962-2529 or visit the Solid Waste section of the City web site at [www.cityofloveland.org](http://www.cityofloveland.org).



## City has lots on tap this holiday season

Whether you're 2 or 62—whether you want to make your own Christmas cards or attend a discussion on military service—the City has a bevy of holiday activities to choose from.

### **Museum's Tree Lighting Ceremony**

Bundle up and head downtown to the Loveland Museum/Gallery, 503 N. Lincoln, to kick off the holidays with the lighting of the Community Holiday Tree at 5 p.m. on Nov. 25. This free, outdoor event features the Déjà vu Quartet singing well-loved holiday carols as hot chocolate and cookies are enjoyed by all. Info: 962-2410.

### **Chilson Recreation Center Holiday Clay**

Meets T/W, 11-27-12/11, 4:30-5:30 p.m. This class, for children grades 3-6, is a fun opportunity to make holiday ornaments and do projects using clay hand-building techniques. Glazes will be added for that colorful touch. \$27 plus \$7 supply fee.

### **Reindeer Roundup**

For Parents & Tots age 2-3, meets T, 11/20-12/11, 9:15-10 a.m.

Children age 3-5 meets T, 11/20-12/11, 10:30-11:15 a.m.

Activities include reading holiday stories, singing carols, and making holiday decorations and crafts. \$23 plus \$5 supply fee.

### **Toddlers Christmas Party**

For Parents & Tots age 2-3, meets Th, 12/13, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Children age 3-5 meets Th, 12/13, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Ring in the holidays making Christmas cards, crafts, reading stories and enjoying festive snacks. \$8.

### **Preschool Christmas Arts & Crafts**

Age 3-4 meets M, 12/3-12/17, 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Age 4-6 meets M, 12/3-12/17, 10:45-11:30 a.m.

Participants, age 3-6, will make Christmas decorations, pictures, ornaments and keepsakes using a variety of art materials. Ornaments can be given as gifts. Parents are encouraged but not required to attend. \$21 plus \$5 supply fee.

Info on Chilson Center events: 962-2383.

### **Chilson Senior Center A Tribute to Freedom**

In honor of our U.S. men and women in uniform, a U.S. soldier who has served in Iraq and Afghanistan will discuss his own military experience and talk about some of the leadership, bravery and camaraderie he's witnessed during his service. A Veterans of Foreign Wars representative will also make a Veteran's Memorial Sculpture presentation. A Tribute to Freedom will be held 1 to 3 p.m. on Nov. 15. \$4, free with activity card.

### **Holiday Afternoon Dance**

Dick McColl will play great dance music with holiday spirit from 2 to 5 p.m. on Dec. 12. \$4, \$3.50 with activity card.

### **Luke-Ham-Sandwich Family Band**

The Luke-Ham-Sandwich Family Band entertains audiences with their unique combination of fiddle, bass, mandolin, and piano playing. Band members range in age from 7-18 years old and bring down the house every time they play. The performance, 1 to 2:30 p.m. on Dec. 16, is a special holiday show. \$7, \$4 with activity card.

Senior Center info: 962-2783.

### **Rialto Theater**

#### **'Tis the Season Community Sing-Along**

The Rialto Theater is hosting the 'Tis the Season Community Sing-Along. This special free event features the vocal talent of local performer Sharon Sheets as she leads the crowd in holiday songs and shares heart-warming stories of the season at 2 p.m. on Dec. 9 at the Rialto, 228 E. 4th St.

#### **Miracle on 34th Street**

The original 1947 film classic "Miracle on 34th Street" will be shown at 7 p.m. on Dec. 19. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$5 for seniors and students.

Info on Rialto events: 962-2120.

## Give clean energy this holiday season



We all love celebrating with family and friends over the holidays. But the season can present some anxiety, such as what to give that impossible-to-shop-for someone. This year, instead of neck ties and fuzzy slippers, consider giving the gift of clean, renewable energy.

Since 1999, the GreenSwitch program through Loveland Water and Power has been available for Loveland power customers who are interested in using and supporting clean, renewable energy. GreenSwitch is sold in blocks of 100 kilowatt-hours (kWh) for a premium of \$1.50 per block and for a minimum of 12 consecutive months. The gift of clean energy can be given for as little as \$18, or the average northern Colorado home's electricity use can be covered for a year for just \$120.

Renewable energy can also be given to friends and family outside Loveland. Just as Loveland's GreenSwitch customers have enthusiastically joined a growing number of citizens nation-wide who are committed to offsetting carbon emissions and greenhouse gases, you can offset the energy consumption of a friend's or relative's home as a holiday gift.

When purchasing GreenSwitch as a gift, Loveland Water and Power will provide a special holiday certificate for the recipient stating who has purchased renewable energy on their behalf. This year, give a gift that's novel, meaningful and beneficial to the future health of the planet—give the gift of GreenSwitch—the gift that keeps on giving to the receiver and the earth.

To take advantage of this special opportunity, visit the Utility Billing Office at 500 E. Third St., Mon.-Thurs. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### **What to do when the leaves fall** (continued from page 2)

The City's Recycling Center is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. – Fri., and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the weekends. Residents may dispose of leaves at no charge.

For more information call 962-2529. To request a yard waste cart call 962-2111.

### **Exchange traded funds discussed**

Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) are some of the fastest-growing investment vehicles in the financial market today. For the December "Money Talks" presentation, Rey Liss, certified financial planner and registered investment advisor, will discuss how ETFs differ from stocks and mutual funds and look at how they fit into investment portfolios.

This lunchtime program is part of the Loveland Public Library's monthly "Money Talks" series. The program is Dec. 13 in the Gertrude B. Scott room in the library and begins at noon. Sack lunches are welcome and beverages are provided. For more information call 962-2402.

*City Update* is a monthly publication of the City of Loveland. Residents receive *City Update* on various dates throughout the month depending on their utility billing cycle. Timeliness of the information may be affected by recipients' bill distribution schedule. Your comments are encouraged and welcomed at 962-2302, hillea@ci.loveland.co.us. Visit the City's website at [www.cityofloveland.org](http://www.cityofloveland.org).