

'Maintenance budget' for City in 2007

Preparing and approving the annual City of Loveland budget for the upcoming year is an essential process for the City Manager, City staff and City Council. The 2007 budget, which can be characterized as a maintenance budget, offers no major additions or reductions to City services.

"The budget continues to focus on City Council's priorities of promoting economic development, efficient government, accessible government and transportation improvements," explained City Manager Don Williams. "It's a maintenance budget, with increases related primarily to growth and funded from revenue generated by growth."

Overall for 2007, the budget is smaller than last year's. The City expects to spend less money and collect less money.

On the revenue side, the decrease is small. It comes primarily from the reduction in construction of new residential properties and the building permit fees and building material use tax these projects pay to the City. However, increases in sales tax collections offset most of the decrease.

On the expenditure side, there are some increases required to maintain the City's current high level of services for a larger community, but major project expenses are down.



A larger Loveland brings with it the need for a few additional public safety employees—police officers, firefighters and dispatch personnel. Additional police department focus on methamphetamine drug use and related problems is planned.

Easily offsetting those increases in personnel and other operating expenses are major reductions in capital projects costs—buildings, equipment, pipelines, etc.—throughout town.

More budget info on pages 2-3

Partnering with Power:

Make a difference without feeling a difference

In past years, summer headlines have been full of power blackouts and outages across the nation. This past summer's news followed suit. Why is this happening? As more and more homes and businesses install central air conditioning, the demand on the power grid increases; Loveland is no exception. Not only does this high demand for electricity in the summer cause inconveniences and safety hazards in the form of brownouts and blackouts, it also increases the cost of electricity and polluting emissions. That's why Loveland Water and Power is asking you to Partner with Power!

Partnering with Power is a voluntary program that helps manage high demands for electricity by cycling your air conditioner for brief intervals during critical periods at no cost to you. When you sign up to Partner with Power, the power department will install a small



device on the outside of your home which is connected to your air conditioning compressor. It works just like your home thermostat and will not harm the air conditioning unit, according to major air conditioning manufacturers.

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Tree lighting kicks off holidays

Head to the Loveland Museum/Gallery, 503 N. Lincoln, 5 p.m., Sun., Nov. 26 for the lighting of the Community Holiday Tree.

The event will feature caroling by the Déjà Vu Quartet, hot chocolate and holiday cookies.

The lights for this year's tree were donated by the Winter Holiday Council.



On Sun., Dec. 11 at 2 p.m., the Rialto Theater, 228 E 4th S. will host the 'Tis the Season Community Sing-a-Long. Local performer Sharon Sheets will lead the audience in celebration of songs of the holidays. There is no charge and advance tickets are not necessary. For more information, call 962-2120.

City money; coming in and going out

The City's financial operation is similar to your household's—money comes in one door and out the other. 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 these and 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 your home's 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 a new development will use. As the name implies, User Fees are the monies paid for using City facilities and services 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 due to Loveland's growth. 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 316 pages—is available in the Finance/Budget section of the City website, www.cityofloveland.org.

The little bus system that could...and did!

The City of Loveland Transit System (COLT) was recently recognized as the 2006 Small Transit System of the Year by the by the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies at their 2006 conference in Grand Junction. COLT was chosen for providing innovative and creative services to the community, being responsive to customers' and community needs, and for effectively supplying safe and reliable service.

"This is a very exciting and prestigious honor, especially in view of the numerous challenges COLT has faced in recent years," said Loveland Transit Manager Marcy Abreo.

COLT was started as a special needs service in 1973 with a couple of vans, a few drivers and modest ridership. From these rather meager beginnings it has grown into a transit system which today consists of a 17-person team, two regular or "fixed" routes and three to four daily paratransit buses serving elderly and disabled riders.

Becoming the agency COLT is today has been a bit of an uphill climb, so to speak. After many years of service, former Transit Manager Wayne King died suddenly in the spring of 2005, temporarily delaying COLT's growth.

In May, 2006, Abreo took the wheel as transit manager and improvements resumed. After taking a complete inventory of the operation, administrative changes were made including:

- Moving the transfer station to improve transfers between Loveland and Fort Collins

- Designing and producing a new and improved transit schedule
- Serving a larger geographic area and stopping at more popular destinations
- Enhancing advertising and printed materials to "get the COLT word out"
- Researching, designing and implementing a new paratransit scheduling system and improving services to riders
- Improving the communications system to deal with en-route emergencies
- Purchasing a brand new, 24-passenger bus
- Instituting monthly training sessions to enhance drivers' skills

Since these improvements were instituted:

- Ridership is up by 48 percent
- Highly trained drivers are providing safe, reliable transportation and improved customer service
- COLT is serving a larger geographic region than ever before, including the new Promenade Shops at Centerra
- Buses are now clean and well-maintained
- Convenient, customer-requested and safer bus stop locations have been added, including new shelters

"It's always nice to be recognized for your work, but this doesn't mean we can sit back and relax," Abreo said. "We will continue to work hard to meet the public transportation needs of this growing community."

City shows appreciation to local business community

"The purpose of the event was to celebrate and recognize the important role that the business community plays in Loveland," said Business Development Manager Betsey Hale of the City's 4th annual Business Appreciation Luncheon. Nearly 400 attendees at the Ranch enjoyed a delicious buffet luncheon and heard speakers look toward the future of business in Loveland.

Hale introduced the City's new business development brand identity; 'Loveland, Colorado: Supporting the Art and Science of Business.' "This campaign will differentiate Loveland as a community that recognizes artists as business owners and business owners as artists," said Hale.

Hale also introduced the Advancing Loveland Program, a partnership of all business development agencies and organizations that offer services to Loveland business owners. This coalition seeks to create, attract and add new jobs to the Loveland marketplace by working together in a unified and targeted fashion.

Keynote speaker Ron Magnus, managing director for FMI, a management consulting firm for the construction industry, discussed leadership, the changing workforce and how businesses can recruit and keep high-performing employees.

2007 Budget Highlights

Revenue

A continuation of the annual 1 percent increase in water rates to provide funding for future storage;

The second year of a three-year program of 8 percent annual increases in wastewater rates to fund operations and necessary capital improvements;

A 10 percent increase across all categories to the Street Maintenance Fee to keep up with cost increases. The fee increase will generate approximately \$174,000.

Expenses

Maintain current service levels in all departments;

Continue the General Fund commitment to the Transportation Program;

Continue funding the Building Maintenance Program;

Continued commitments to the Economic Gardening and Engaging Loveland programs;

Additional police patrol officers and a detective to keep up with growth and help address the methamphetamine problem within the City;

Additional dispatchers due to growth in number of calls;

Additional firefighters to improve staffing at a fire call, or provide backup to areas of the city during a call;

Construction of a burn building to increase safety during fire crew training;

Technological improvements to improve Development Services processes;

Replacement of necessary large equipment;

Complete funding for Fairgrounds Park.

Looking ahead to 2007 and beyond

Planning ahead is valuable for almost everything, and is essential for the City's capital projects that often cost millions of dollars, are used by tens of thousands of citizens and may have a lifespan of decades. These projects, such as roads, parks, pipelines and other facilities are addressed for the coming year and for the next five years in every City annual budget.

It's necessary to look ahead so that money is available for future projects, some of which like the Taft Avenue expansions or future reservoirs take many years to plan, engineer, fund and construct. The annual budget's Capital Program offers revenue and cost expectations for the single year ahead plus four additional years.

Capital expenditures planned for 2007—structures, equipment, pipelines, etc.—are about half of what was planned for 2006 but still big dollars; about \$40 million.

There are numerous projects ahead for 2007. Some are relatively small such as \$6,000 for a replacement heating/cooling unit at the recreation center. Larger projects include:

- Street construction program; \$4.4 million
- Old Fairgrounds/Barnes Park project; \$2.9 million
- Police vehicle replacements; \$842,000
- Open lands acquisition; \$550,000
- Recreation trail; \$250,000
- Stormwater Utility projects; \$2.5 million
- Water Treatment Plant tank; \$3.2 million
- Water rights; \$1.1 million
- Wastewater projects; \$3.1 million
- Electrical generator; \$1.2 million



Comfortable? Yes In the clover? No



Loveland's economic development efforts over the past several years have been very successful. Existing businesses have expanded, new businesses have arrived, the construction industry has flourished, new jobs have been created and the unemployment rate is very low. All this has resulted in healthy City revenues from sales taxes on purchases in Loveland and fees generated by all the new construction.

So is Loveland rolling in dough? No. Loveland is healthy, thank you, but not wealthy, according to the 2007 budget.

Taxes and fees from new construction will decrease next year. Residential

construction in Loveland has changed from a gushing stream to a trickle. Commercial construction, too, is no longer at peak levels.

Sales tax revenues continue their strength and are expected to increase again next year. But the revenues Loveland and northern Colorado have enjoyed from all the residential growth are no longer in high gear.

The bottom line: The City's wallet remains very healthy and able to continue to pay for the high quality of services and amenities Loveland residents enjoy and appreciate. But the City must continue prudent planning and sensible spending.

Don't backup your festivities

The last thing a family needs during the holiday season is a sewer backup. You can help prevent an uncomfortable and messy situation by paying attention to what you put down the drain.

Holiday meals generally consist of turkey, chicken, ham and other tasty treats, many of which contain a good bit of fat, oil, and grease (FOG). Please do your part during the holidays and all year long to keep FOG out of the sewer system.

Here are some things you can do to prevent a sewer backup:

- Do not put any FOG down the drain.
- Place waste FOG from pots and pans into an acceptable waste container after it has cooled.
- Consider purchasing a \$3 Fat Trapper for your FOG. You can purchase a Fat Trapper and replacement bags at the Utility Billing office, 500 E. 3rd St., or at the City's Service Center, 200 N. Wilson Ave.
- Do not use hot water or soap as a degreasing solution. When soapy/greasy water comes into contact with cool pipes grease comes out of the solution and adheres to the sewer pipes.
- Scrape all plate waste into a lined garbage can.
- Use a paper towel to wipe oil and grease from plates, pots and pans.
- Pre-wash plates, pots and pans by spraying them off with cold water while a screen is placed over the sink drain. Put waste collected by the screen into the garbage can.
- Absorb a large oil and grease spill with dry material such as cat litter, wood shavings, paper towels or newspaper. Place in plastic bag and discard with regular trash.
- Be careful when using drain cleaners. Excessive use can damage your sewer line resulting in costly repairs.
- Watch the Two Minute Max video "Trap that Grease" on the City's website: www.cityofloveland.org

For more information call 962-3719.

Channel 16 expands programming

In an ongoing effort to provide more diverse, interesting and informative programming, the City of Loveland has been expanding programming on cable TV channel 16. New series offer a broad range of programming, including the arts, science and personal protection.

In November, a Public Safety Hour begins. New programs focusing on issues such as disaster preparedness, fire prevention, protecting oneself from identity theft and avoiding various illegal scams will be broadcast.

The programs are being provided by law enforcement agencies, fire prevention agencies and other first-line response agencies.

Also on Channel 16 is NASA's "Destination Tomorrow"—a collection of 30-minute educational programs focusing on NASA research including new technologies, advanced aerodynamics, past achievements and medical breakthroughs. A new program is broadcast every month and viewers have four opportunities per week to view it.

For those who prefer art to cutting-edge technology, Channel 16 is also running a feature on "Loveland Area Artists," hosted by author, tour guide and lecturer Kenneth Jessen. This multi-part series of slide show style presentations highlights the work of approximately 60 individuals whose work places Loveland in an elite group of cities known internationally for their artists, art shows and public art displays.

In addition to being shown on Channel 16 the series will also be offered on the City website: www.cityofloveland.org; follow the links from the News Desk section.

If current local issues are more your speed, "Loveland's Talking," the city's local monthly news show, covers a wide variety of topics such as housing, health care and transportation. "Loveland's Talking" is part of the Tapes of Interest series shown monthly on Channel 16.

Finally, channel 16 also offered four candidate forums prior to this month's election. The shows were produced by the League of Women Voters of Larimer County in cooperation with Ft. Collins City Cable Channel 14.

Showtimes:*

Public Safety Hour

Sundays at 7:30 p.m.

Thursdays at 5 p.m.

Saturdays at 8 a.m.

Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

NASA's Destination Tomorrow:

Tuesdays at 8 a.m.

Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Thursdays at 8 a.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.

Loveland Area Artists Series:

Tuesdays at 9 a.m.

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Thursdays at 9 a.m.

Sundays at 3 p.m.

Tapes of Interest:

Mondays and Fridays at 8 a.m.

Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m.

Wednesdays and Sundays at 4 p.m.

* (broadcast schedules are subject to change)

A complete listing of all Channel 16 Programs can be found at the Living in Loveland button at www.cityofloveland.org.

Firefighting goes beyond Loveland

Every summer Loveland firefighters get called out to assist other departments and agencies with wild land firefighting.

According to Fire Engineer Ron Hill, who spent 15 days near Rock Springs, Wyo. fighting a wildfire, participating as a member of this coalition not only helps protect our natural areas but also provides excellent opportunities for Loveland firefighters to gain hands-on experience.

"In a structure fire you have definite parameters but in wild land fire, there are times when you don't know exactly where the fire is. Wild fires can move and transition very quickly. You have to constantly strategize and devise tactics to fight the fire and at the same time, make sure the fire doesn't trap you," Hill said.

Participating in this coalition allows fire departments along the Front Range to help each other in the event of a wild land fire while maintaining adequate fire coverage at home. "It's hard work. It can be very exciting but it's also exhausting. If you don't have the right attitude you shouldn't be out there," said Hill.

Partnering with Power

(continued from page 1)

Your furnace fan will continue to circulate cooled air and maintain the comfort in your home. The only difference will be a minimal 1 to 2 degree change in temperature. If you ever feel that using the device has made your home uncomfortable, notify the power department immediately and we will try to resolve the issue. If you are still unsatisfied with the program, you can opt out at anytime.

You must be a homeowner with a central air conditioning unit and purchase your electricity from the City of Loveland to participate.

Partnering is easy!

- **Learn all about it.** Log onto www.cityofloveland.org and navigate to the Water and Power homepage or call 962-3720 and tell them you want to know how to Partner with Power.
- **Sign up to Partner with Power.** Shortly after you sign up online or by mail we will give you call. You don't have to be home for the installation, we just want to get some information and answer any questions you may have.
- **Make a difference without feeling a difference.** After you sign up you don't have to do anything else but live your life! It's free and an easy way to lower your electric rates as well as help protect the environment.

Public Safety Hour begins

Loveland's first responders—police, fire and ambulance crews—would rather prevent incidents than respond to them. Together, they are offering a Public Safety Hour of prevention programs on cable TV channel 16.

The programs are being provided by law enforcement agencies, fire prevention agencies and other first-line response agencies. The series debuts this month with the following programs:

"Identity Theft"—One day you discover that someone has your number...or rather, all of your numbers—your bank account numbers, your Social Security number and all your credit card numbers. The program offers important tips on how to protect yourself against identity theft and what to do if you fall victim to this all too common problem.

"Fire's Fury"— This show tells the story of one family who barely escapes a devastating fire due to one small oversight caused by a candle. This program drives home the importance of having working smoke alarms in homes and the lifesaving practice of having a family fire-escape plan in place.

"Long Shot"—It's illegal to play foreign lotteries in the U.S. but crooks don't care about that. This United States Postal Inspection Service film tells the story of a lottery fraud victim. It aims to help viewers avoid becoming duped by this type of fraud.

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.