



INSIDE GARDNER

Your Community

September — October 2010

City Council Approves Budget for 2011 –Declining Revenues Cause Challenges

On August 16th, the City Council approved the 2011 Budget that begins January 1, 2011. The City Council approved the 2011 Budget with an increase in property taxes for the City's Bond and Interest Fund. The Bond and Interest fund pays for debt on projects such as Moonlight Road and Center Street widening, construction of City Hall and Public Safety Station No. 2.

General Fund

The 2011 Budget for the General Fund includes the elimination of nine vacant positions, including Community Development Director, Planner, Permit Specialist, Code Enforcement Officer, Plans Reviewer, Planning Specialist, two Public Safety Officers, and one Administrative Assistant in Parks and Recreation. The first 6 listed positions were laid off in May due to decreased activity in the Community Development department caused by the economic downturn. The City's staffing in the General Fund has decreased from 99 to 80 employees since 2008.

Over the last few years, the City has reduced its yearly costs in all areas - including significant reduction in personnel costs - and also utilized reserves to offset the declines in major revenue sources. Major revenue sources for the General Fund

are property and sales tax, which support the main operations of the City including Public Works, Planning and Code Enforcement, Public Safety, and Parks and Recreation as well as financial services, human resources and general management.

General Fund expenditures from 2008 to 2009 were decreased 8%. In 2011, the City anticipates another decrease in expenditures of approximately 5% over 2009 expenditures. The decreased expenditures in 2009 were primarily due to vacant positions and a combination of deferred purchase of capital items and reduced employee benefits. The 2011 Budget does provide a one-time payment of \$300 to employees as recognition by the City Council of the continuing wage freeze and reduced benefits which began in 2009.

Bond and Interest Fund

Due to decreased valuation of both residential and commercial properties and delinquent collections due to foreclosures in several commercial benefit districts, a 6.5 mill increase was approved for 2011 by the City Council to cover debt payment obligations. Current forecasts show that an additional mill increase may be needed for 2012 with mill reductions forecasted in later years as the economy improves and the debt is paid off.

With the approved City mill increase, a homeowner of a \$160,000 house would

pay an additional \$120 per year to the City. However, due to decreasing valuation, the average amount could be less.



Prior to approving an increase in the mill levy for the Bond and Interest fund, the City Council took several steps to avoid the mill levy increase including restructuring the City's debt to reduce annual debt payments and refinanced debt to reduce interest costs. However, these changes did not cover the decrease in revenue caused by the drop in valuations or delinquent payments from benefit districts.

Water/Wastewater Funds

Included in the approved 2011 budget are rate increases for both water and wastewater consumption. The Water rate is forecasted to increase 5%, and the Wastewater rate is forecasted to increase 8%. The impact to an average homeowner for both increases would be approximately \$83 a year, or \$6.90 per month. Council will consider approval of the rates at a later Council Meeting. The proposed rate increase creates revenue to cover increased operating and maintenance costs as well as infrastructure payments. The City Council also approved the elimination of one vacant Line Maintenance Worker position to provide savings in these funds.

The City also had to delayed a variety of other projects for streets, parks and public safety due lack of funds.



Identity Theft Tips from Gardner Public Safety

Consider these tips to reduce your risks...

- Do not carry your extra credit cards, Social Security card, birth certificate, or passport in your wallet/purse except when necessary. Photocopy everything in your wallet so if it is stolen you know exactly who to call.

- Do not click on links in any emails you receive from financial institutions - even if you're 100% sure they're legitimate. Instead, go to the browser and type address (e.g. www.wellsfargo.com or www.paypal.com). Some emails you receive about your financial accounts are actually fake and are called "phishing" emails.

- Install a lockable mailbox at your residence to reduce mail theft.

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A newsletter published for the residents of
the City of Gardner
City Hall • 120 E. Main St.
Gardner, KS 66030 • 856-0939

Mayor's Message to Gardner Residents



To my fellow residents,

We have just finished one of the most challenging budget sessions in our City's history. The end result is a budget that resulted in cuts to the general fund that allow the general fund reserve balance to remain consistent, but does have a 6.5 mill increase to the bond and interest fund. It was a very difficult decision for the Council and was made after much deliberation and review of many options. The plan has the mill rolling back after several years, and then any remaining mill increase eliminated in 2017.

This increase did not come before significant reductions were made in spending including the first lay off in Gardner's history. We also recognized that the downturn is not permanent, and we needed to maintain our existing assets and quality of service to meet the needs of our citizens.

I am sure the first question you have is "What does this mean to me financially?" The resulting increase will cause most residential property tax bills to return to the amount paid in 2008. This translates to approximately a \$10 per month increase over 2010 for the average home.

I am confident that we will see recovery. This step will ensure that we remain strong as we manage through the downturn.

This action by the Council is not a stopping point for us. In October we have scheduled a Saturday to work on visioning for the future of our community. This will be one step in establishing a plan for recovery and growth. We will also be discussing ways to grow our commercial base. The beginning of a plan for economic development has already begun and will reviewed and discussed by Council this fall.

City Staff and Council will continue to look for ways to save expenses and identify efficiencies. We will accomplish this through deliberate, well thought out actions that do not adversely impact the quality of service that our community has come to expect.

Sincerely,

David C. Drovetta, Mayor

Calendar of Meetings and City Hall Closures

Sept	2	Electric Utility Board Meeting—7:00 PM
Sept	6	City Hall Closed in Observance of Labor Day
Sept	7	City Council Meeting—7:00 PM
Sept	13	City Council Work Session—6:30 PM
Sept	18	Mayor's Town Hall Meeting—10 AM
Sept	20	City Council Meeting—7:00 PM Electric Utility Work Session—7:00 PM
Sept	28	Planning Commission Meeting— 7:00 PM
Oct	4	City Council Meeting—7:00 PM
Oct	7	Electric Utility Board Meeting—7:00 PM
Oct	11	City Council Work Session—6:30 PM
Oct	18	City Council Meeting—7 :00 PM Electric Utility Work Session—7:00 PM
Oct	23	Mayor's Town Hall Meeting—10 AM
Oct	26	Planning Commission Meeting—7:00 PM

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 913-856-7256

Messages may also be left for any
 Council Member or the Mayor at
 913-856-0939

Items of Note and Project Updates

175th & Waverly Rd. Intersection

The week of August 9th, the City of Gardner installed additional signage at the intersection of 175th St. and Waverly Rd. to convert this intersection to a four-way stop. An engineering analysis that warranted additional traffic control at this important intersection. Additionally, flags were installed on the stop ahead signs and flashing beacons installed on all four stop signs for a 30-day period to alert the public to this road change.

Old 56/US 56 Intersection

At the end of August, construction consisting of a traffic signal, medians, signage, and pavement markings, was completed at the intersection of Old 56/US 56 Highway. The intersection and traffic signal have been designed to allow westbound traffic on US 56 to flow freely without stopping (i.e., westbound traffic will have a green light at all times). All other traffic movements such as traffic from Old 56 turning westbound (left) on US 56, traffic turning southbound (left) from US 56 to Old 56, and traffic on eastbound US 56 are controlled by the traffic signal. Concrete medians were installed on US 56 at the intersection to channel traffic from Old 56 turning left onto US 56 into a westbound lane that allows drivers to merge onto westbound US 56. This design was implemented because this intersection is in close proximity to the westbound ramp from New Century Boulevard and there is inadequate distance for drivers to merge and stop at a traffic signal.

Moonlight Road Construction

Construction is progressing on the Moonlight Road project despite a rainy year and extremely hot temperatures in

August. By the beginning of September, construction will be completed on the two lanes located on the east side of Moonlight, and traffic will be diverted to the eastern lanes while construction begins on the west side of Moonlight Road.



The schedule has been delayed due to weather (primarily rain earlier in the year) and shallow bedrock encountered during storm sewer excavation along Madison Street and Moonlight Road. If weather is favorable, construction could still be completed by the end of this year, which was the original completion date for the project. The City appreciates continued patience during construction and would like to remind residents to visit the many businesses located in this area while the road projects continues.

Parma Stormwater Improvements

The City is using a \$100,000 grant (from federal Community Development Block Grant funding) to partially fund stormwater improvements in the Parma Subdivision. This project is generally located at Moonlight Road and Valerie Lane, and includes installation of approximately 800 feet of storm sewer with inlets and junction boxes and grading to improve rear yard drainage in the Parma Subdivision. This project is scheduled to begin in September 2010 and be completed by October 2010 and will reduce standing water from major rain events.

Upcoming Gardner Parks and Recreation Activities and Events

Check out these and many other activities as well as parks and recreation facility information at www.gardnerkansas.gov

14th Annual Halloween Boo Bash

Gardner Parks and Recreation is holding our 14th Annual Halloween Boo Bash at a *NEW* location, **Celebration Park**. Join us for an evening of ghoulish games, spooktacular activities, lots of candy, prizes, a hayrack ride through the trails and much more. \$2 wristbands for kids 12 and under gets you unlimited access to all the games and activities. Event will be on October 27th from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm. See you at Celebration Park!



Youth Programs:	Date:	Registration Deadline:	Age/Grade:	Costs:
Youth Flag Football		September 3 rd	Grade 1-8	\$50
Youth Cheerleading		September 3 rd	Grade K-6	\$30-\$50
Youth Volleyball		September 3 rd	Grade 3-6	\$50
Little Buckaroo	October 10 th	October 1 st	Age 7 - 12	\$60
Babysitting Clinic	October 23 rd	October 15 th	Age 11 and Older	\$50
Youth Basketball		October 22 nd	Grade 1-6	\$55
Adult Programs:				
Women's Indoor Volleyball		September 1 st	18 & Up	\$150 team
Men's Fall Basketball		September 24 th	18 & Up	
Just ONCE Piano	October 5 th	October 1 st	HS - Adult	\$25 - class/+ \$29 - materials
Martial Arts (Family/Youth)		September 17 th	5 & Up	\$35-\$50
Ju Jitsu	On Going	Anytime	16 & Up	\$50 - \$160
Fit Moms	Starts October	Friday before session	Adult	\$40

NEW CUSTOMER SERVICE HOURS STARTED IN AUGUST

Beginning Monday, August 23rd, Parks and Recreation Customer Service Center located inside City Hall at 120 E. Main St. is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The lobby will be open until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, where a registration drop off box is available at the Parks and Recreation window. Also consider using the online registration for activities available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.gardnerkansas.gov. Providing excellent customer service is very important, so please let us know how we can assist you in the future, and please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

**POSTAL PATRON
GARDNER, KS 66030**



Energy Savings Tip from Gardner Energy

This has been a long and hot summer and electric customers are probably wondering what they can do to

reduce energy consumption year around. The “Smart” Power Strip is an electronic device that can do just that and be easily installed and starts paying dividends immediately.

Smart Strip monitors power consumption and can sense when your computer, television or other devices plugged into it are switched off. Upon accessing this information and finding out the device is off, it automatically cuts power to these devices to eliminate their “phantom load”, eliminating the idle current drawn.

There are a couple of different models and options. They run from \$30 to \$40. The Smart Strip claims it will pay for itself in as little as six weeks. Check your local home improvement or hardware store for various brands and more information.

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- Take credit card receipts with you. Never toss them in a public trash container.
- Never leave your purse or wallet unattended at work or in church, restaurants, health fitness clubs, parties, or shopping carts. Also never leave your purse or wallet in open view in your car, even when your car is locked.
- Do not have your bank send your new checks to your home address. Tell the bank that you prefer to pick them up.
- Never give any credit card, bank, or Social Security information to anyone by telephone, even if you made the call, unless you can positively verify that the call is legitimate.
- Minimize exposure of your Social Security and credit card numbers. If the numbers are requested for check-cashing purposes, ask if the business has alternative options such as a check-cashing card.
- Keep a list or copy of all your credit accounts and bank accounts in a secure place so you can quickly call the issuers to inform them about missing or stolen cards. Include account numbers, expiration dates, and telephone numbers of customer service and fraud departments.

Upcoming Opportunities with Gardner Community Theatre

“Schools Out Spot Lights On” camp is “Ghoul School”; it is for children grades 2nd-8th, the week of October 11th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; camp tuition is only \$50. Children will work on all aspects of a stage production from make-up and hair to set design, choreography and acting.

Registration forms will be sent home through schools and are also available through Gardner Parks and Recreation located at City Hall. There will be a free public performance Friday October 15th at 7:00 p.m.

Auditions for Gardner Community Theatre’s holiday show, “Miracle on 34th Street”, will be October 10th from 1-5pm at Sunflower Elementary School; it will be a come and stay event. Performances are the weekends of December 3 and 10. For more information visit: gardnercommunitytheatre.org



Gardner Historical Museum Upcoming Special Exhibits

Sept. 25th 3-4 p.m. – Enjoy music and dancing, reminiscent of the USO Shows of WWII. Outside, at the Museum. Music provided by the Olathe Civic Jazz Band.

October – Military Tribute & Exhibit– featuring artifacts and memorabilia from the Olathe Naval Air Station.

For Special tours, call: 913-856-4447
Admission is FREE (donations are appreciated)
www.gardnerhistorymuseum.org

Yard Signs cannot be placed in City rights-of-way

During election season, the City sees a proliferation of yard signs placed in rights-of-way or other areas that are not approved by City ordinance.

Signs placed illegally or those that exceed the maximum size limits will be removed. Signs may not be placed in rights-of-way, and they must be set back at least 10 feet from the edge of the street. **Signs cannot be placed between the sidewalk and the street.** Property owners must give permission for sign placement, signs must be self supporting, they cannot obstruct traffic visibility, and they must be removed after 90 days. For more details, visit www.gardnerkansas.gov.



Upcoming Town Hall Meetings –Hosted By Mayor Drovetta

Mayor Drovetta will host town hall meetings on **September 18 and October 23, 2010 at 10 a.m. at Gardner City Hall.** Topics for each session will be placed on the website the week of the meeting. Sessions are informal and allow for question and answers related to issues concerning the City. Please consider taking time to join the Mayor to discuss issues affecting Gardner.