



UPDATE FROM MAYOR DEBRA JONES

July 2021

A few weeks ago, the Victorville City Council adopted our City's annual budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1. This budget aligns well with our strategic goals for improving the quality of life here. It includes enhancements to public safety, improvements to our City's infrastructure and services, and park improvements.

Park & Recreation Improvements

We're excited to have budgeted for several park improvements. Lighting will be installed at the track in Hook Park, which will benefit those who not only like to walk there in the evenings but also enjoy nighttime sports. We also budgeted for additional shade structures, a new rectangular sports field, added walking paths, and a dog park. These upgrades were specifically identified in the community workshops held when developing our Parks Master Plan. Upcoming site surveying and planning will help us determine the best locations for these new amenities.

Road Improvements

We plan to undertake several road-improvement projects in the coming fiscal year. We'll widen the Bear Valley Road Bridge and add turn lanes from Bear Valley Road to Ridgecrest Road to alleviate congestion in this busy area. Arrowhead Drive from Green Tree Boulevard to Nisqualli Road and Bear Valley Road between Amethyst Road and US 395 will be rehabilitated. We also plan to improve Seventh Avenue between Bear Valley Road and Nisqualli Road. We'll widen this stretch of Seventh Avenue from two to four lanes; reconstruct the pavement; and add sidewalks, access ramps, and bike lanes. Funds were also allocated to the Green Tree Extension, which began June 2. We'll extend Green Tree Boulevard about 1.5 miles from Hesperia Road to Ridgecrest/Yates Road, to both connect the communities of Victorville and Apple Valley and provide another East/West corridor to benefit the Victor Valley. This project is expected to take two years to complete.

Measure P Expenditures

This budget includes our first-ever expenditures from the revenue generated by Measure P. Measure P went into effect April 1, and we expect this one-cent sales tax will generate \$18.95 million in revenue this fiscal year. With certification from our Citizens Oversight Committee, we budgeted \$14 million of this projected revenue for several enhancements to benefit our community. Public safety enhancements include the addition of eleven police personnel and the opening of Fire Station 315 with six full-time firefighter/paramedics. We'll also purchase two new Type 1 fire engines to aid in our emergency response. In order to implement a more proactive code compliance effort, we will add five new code enforcement officers and one support staff member. This effectively doubles our code enforcement presence and increases our ability to more effectively address issues of blight, illegal dumping, and other nuisance behaviors that impact our quality of life. As part of our broader strategy to reduce homelessness in Victorville, we budgeted Measure P funds for the operation and maintenance of our new interim homeless shelter at Westwinds Sports Center. The nonprofit Illumination Foundation began its operations there on the first of June. Our City Library will also get a boost with the addition of a children's librarian, two library aides, self-service kiosks, books, furniture and multimedia supplies. Measure P revenue will be used also to make facility upgrades at our recreation centers. We will continue to provide regular updates to our community about Measure P and how this revenue is being used to benefit our community. I invite you to learn more about Measure P on our website at VictorvilleCA.gov/MeasureP.

I'm pleased to provide these quick highlights from our annual budget, which is available in its entirety on our website at VictorvilleCA.gov.

**This column was originally submitted to HDdailynews.com for publication in June 2021 and has been updated.*

