

Monthly Show Low News



September 2008

www.showlowaz.gov

City keeps close eye on conservative budget

Like any household, organization or business, the City of Show Low operates successfully by living within its means. A major tool is the City's annual budget, built around the concept of fiscal responsibility to our taxpayers and residents. And, despite the gloomy economic outlook faced by all of us Arizonans, we have created a conservative budget that will meet our citizens' needs.

The budget estimates revenues and the expenditures we plan to make from July 1 through June 30. The money we collect is spent on projects, community programs, public safety, partnerships for economic development, and the cost of providing services. In June 2008, the Show Low City Council approved the final budget for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2009.

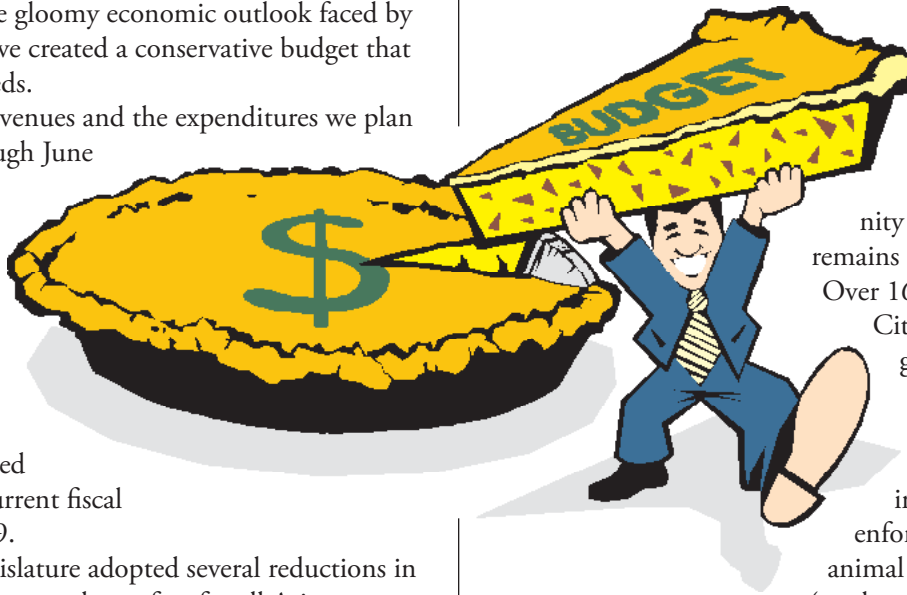
Since June, the state legislature adopted several reductions in state-shared revenues and enacted new fees for all Arizona counties and municipalities that will affect our already-adopted local budget. These reductions and fees are designed to help balance

the state's struggling economy. In response, City management and department heads are meeting on an ongoing basis to adjust our budget accordingly without sacrificing the high quality of service for which City employees are known to deliver. The

Mayor and Council are committed to retaining Show Low's charm and quality of life, while providing the amenities of a well-run community and ensuring the City remains fiscally sound.

Over 165 employees provide the City's many services and programs to our local citizens, residents from neighboring communities and tourists. Departments include public safety (law enforcement, dispatching, animal control), public works (road maintenance and improvements, sewer and water services, airport), community develop-

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Show Low welcomes new police chief

Chief J. Jeffrey Smythe joined the City of Show Low as its new police chief in late June. Chief Smythe spent the last 19 of his 22 years in law enforcement working for the City of Scottsdale Police Department. For the last four years, he served as a lieutenant and, most recently, managed the department's personnel development and training.

"Chief Smythe brings a wealth of experience in public safety leadership and proactive community response programs," said City Manager Ed Muder. "We welcome him to Show Low and know he will be another exceptional addition to our dedicated police department."

High on Chief Smythe's list of priorities for his new position is community policing. "I am a strong advocate for public outreach and engaging the community in law enforcement," said Chief Smythe. "I'm also look-

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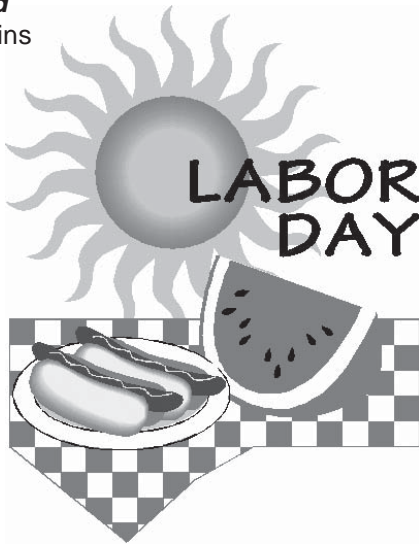


Calendar of Events

Family Aquatic Center & Recreation: 532-4140

Public Library: 532-4070

- 09/01** Labor Day (City offices closed, except Aquatic Center with special holiday hours: **12–5 p.m., Open Swim**)
- 09/02** **Start Smart Basketball** registration begins (ages 3 to 5)
- 09/02** **7 p.m.**, Council Chambers
City Council Regular Meeting
- 09/08** **Fall Lifeguard Training** begins (ages 15+)
- 09/08** **Swimming Lessons** (fall session) registration begins
- 09/11** **10 a.m.**, Public Library (public welcome)
Show Low Library Friends meeting
- 09/09** **7 p.m.**, Council Chambers
Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
- 09/13** **10 a.m.**, City Park, Senior Field
Punt, Pass & Kick (boys & girls, ages 8-15)
- 09/16** **7 p.m.**, Council Chambers
City Council Regular Meeting
- 09/17** **1:30 p.m.**, Public Library
Book Discussion Group (*Slaughterhouse Five*)
- 09/18** **3:30–4:30 p.m.**, Public Library
Cool Kids Book Discussion Group (for ages 8+; bring favorite funny story)
- 09/18** **7 p.m.**, Show Low Historical Society Museum
Show Low Historical Society Meeting ("Top o' the Pines," Gene Luptak)
- 09/23** **7 p.m.**, Council Chambers
Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
- 09/29** **Fall Swimming Lessons** begin



Check out City 4 TV & showlowaz.gov for more information

Show Low Monthly News is produced by the City of Show Low, 550 North 9th Place, Show Low, AZ 85901. Direct comments to the City Clerk's office at 532-4061. For general information, call 532-4000. Office hours are Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Council adopts changes to utility ordinances

The City of Show Low provides water, sewer and refuse collection services (through a contract with Waste Management) to our residents. Over the past several months, City staff developed changes to the City Code relating to collecting water, sewer and refuse charges that are owed to the City by the users of these services. Changes to the City Code are adopted by ordinance by the Show Low City Council.

These amended ordinances do not change or raise any utility rates or fees from current levels. Rather, the changes are designed to strengthen collection methods and allow staff to collect the funds that are owed to the City by all utility customers. The City Council adopted these changes at a regular meeting on August 19, with the changes effective September 18, 2008.

The major change requires the owner of each residential property with utility services to place the account in the owner's name. This revision will allow for the improved collection of unpaid utility bills. Currently, utility accounts can be placed in a renter's name. Collection staff is experiencing more and more situations where renters are leaving a rental property with unpaid utility bills and the City is suffering significant monetary losses that cannot be recovered from the actual property owner.

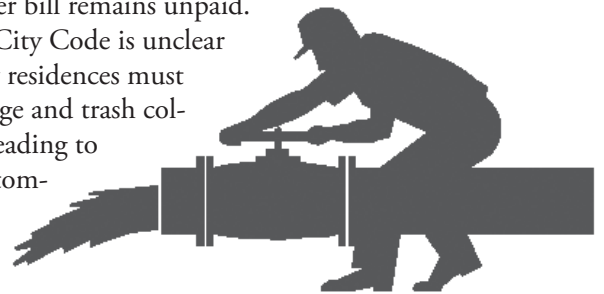
The new ordinances require the property owner to be responsible for paying the total utility bill. Thus, if a utility bill goes unpaid, the owner of the property will have to make payment within the specified time or have utility services to the property disconnected by the City. In cases where only City sewer service is provided (in areas served by private water companies), the sewer would be plugged and the home declared uninhabitable by the county if the sewer bill remains unpaid.

Currently, the City Code is unclear that single-family residences must accept City garbage and trash collection services, leading to confusion by customers and staff. The Council clarified the policy and

all consumers will be required to pay for their refuse collection each month regardless of water usage.

The majority of these chapters of the City Code were written and adopted in 1976. Much of the wording is dated, such as references to 30-gallon containers being used for refuse collection. Mechanized machinery and PolyKarts didn't exist in Show Low in 1976. Consequently, additional changes deal with definitions, collection procedures, account termination procedures, turn-on/turn-off fee requirements, the appeal process, and a variety of notification requirements by both City staff and the utility consumer.

If you wish to read the ordinances and the changes that were adopted in their entirety, please contact the city clerk's office at 532-4060 or 532-4061.



2008-09 budget...continued from cover page

ment (building, planning and zoning, code enforcement) and community services (parks and recreation, aquatic center, library, City 4 Television, information systems), finance and budget, and administration.

Whether you live within the city limits or are visiting from afar, whenever you travel our roadways, swim in our pool, read a book in our library, drink our water, seek police assistance or need a building permit, you are using City services. For example, our police officers respond to traffic accidents within the City whether the involved parties reside in Show Low or not. Likewise, many of our patrons holding library cards live in other communities. All are served equally.

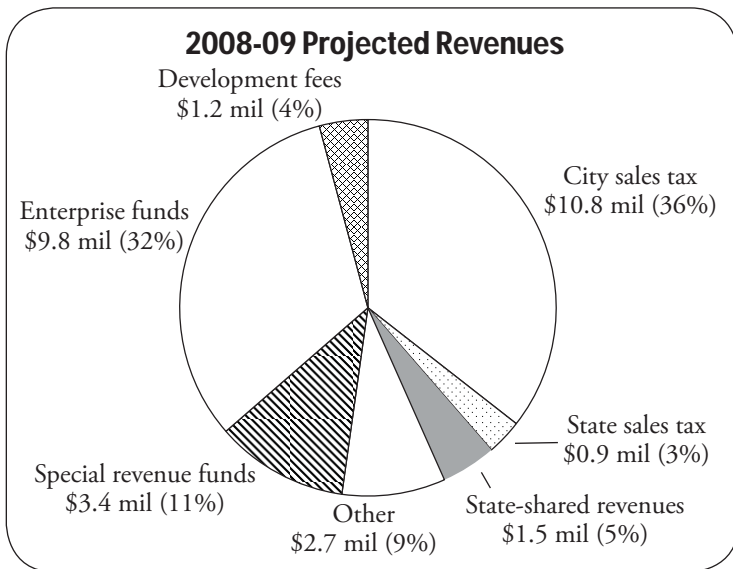
Our employees take great pride in ensuring that Show Low is a great place to live, work and play. Like our Council, we are committed to nurturing and supporting our community's livability and the safety, health and well-being of those who live and work here.

OVERVIEW

Because our Council and staff recognize the absolute importance of maintaining our City's infrastructure, it continues to be the major focus of the current budget. Approximately \$9.6 million have been appropriated to maintain, repair, improve and construct roadways, water lines, sewer lines and the wastewater treatment plant.

REVENUES

We began the 2008-09 fiscal year with \$13.3 million in reserves. To that, we anticipate collecting \$30.3 million in revenue, of which over half comes from various taxes. Almost \$10.8 million is generated by sales taxes paid by everyone who shops at our



local stores. Most residents in Show Low pay no property tax, although we do pay property taxes to Navajo County for schools, fire services, electricity for street lights, etc. The exception is the master-planned, 3,500-home Show Low Bluff development at the east edge of town. The developer initiated a community facilities district, a special taxing district that allows the collection of property taxes to pay for infrastructure.

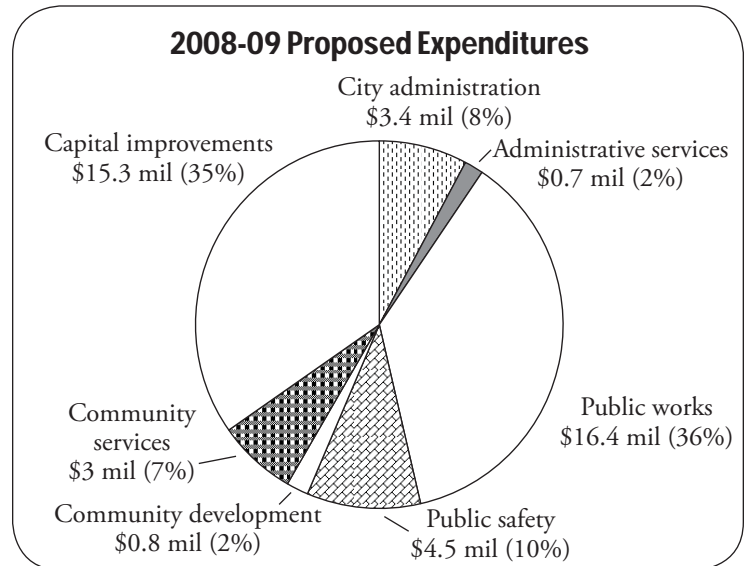
The rest of our revenue comes from state-shared funds, based on our population; development fees; utility payments and charges for airport and aquatic center programs (called Enterprise funds); special revenue funds (state and county money from gasoline and property taxes, lottery proceeds, etc.); fees for building permits, business permits and dog licenses; interest earned on our investments; and fines collected from violators cited in magistrate court and overdue library books.

Our employees regularly pursue federal and state grants to help pay for projects and improvements. Last year (fiscal year 2007-08), staff sought and received almost \$2.5 million. This money was spent on a range of eligible projects, including police equipment, upgrades to the Show Low Regional Airport, reimbursing private property owners for thinning their properties and operating the *Four Seasons Connection* rural transit system. Because it is impossible to predict what grants will be awarded when we prepare the budget, we estimate an amount we know will never be exceeded. This year we included \$10 million as our maximum.

In addition, our employees seek creative partnerships to supplement City revenues. For example, the City entered into an agreement with a developer to beautify the entryway at the intersection of SR260 (Clark Road) and US60 (Deuce of Clubs). Primarily using the developer's funds, the City's and others' partial contributions and help from volunteers created this appealing entry into Show Low.

EXPENSES

On the other side of the ledger, we anticipate spending about \$44.1 million this year. The majority of it will pay for capital improvements, public works projects and equipment, public safety and community programs. This amount does not include



a maximum \$10 million the City would spend on grant-funded projects to equally offset grant monies we anticipate receiving. In the chart, "City administration" includes budgets for the City Council, management and community promotions and "administrative services" includes the finance and budget divisions.

2008-09 budget...continued from page 3

Every year, we include money to fund special events and community activities for the enjoyment of our families, friends and visitors. These community events are part of the reason people love living in Show Low. The spectacular annual Fourth of July fireworks display, with spectators from across the White Mountains, is financed by the City. The award-winning Show Low Shines for the Holidays, when our parks, businesses and homes are aglow with millions of sparkling lights, is financed through public-private partnerships. Other notable programs supported by the City include the award-winning Show Low DEAL after-school program, the popular summertime Concert in the Park series and library activities.

MAJOR PROJECTS (completed last year)

- ❖ Waterlines on Whipple from 6th Drive to the Deuce of Clubs and Owens from the Deuce of Clubs to 16th Avenue were replaced.
- ❖ New sewer lines constructed on 24th Drive and North 9th Place.
- ❖ A new General Plan, which guides Show Low's future, addressing elements such as land use, housing, economic development, transportation needs, water resources, trails and environmental planning, was developed and subsequently adopted by Show Low's voters in March 2008.
- ❖ A waterline on Meadowview Place from SR260 (South White Mountain Road) to 11th Street was replaced.
- ❖ Central Avenue from Whipple to McNeil was overlaid.
- ❖ Airport waterline improvements.

MAJOR PROJECTS (completed or proposed for completion this year)

- ❖ New lights at Frontier Park on North 9th Place. The sports fields boast state-of-the-art lights for after-dark play.
- ❖ Beautifying the Clark Road and Deuce of Clubs entryway, adding a sidewalk, trees, decorative rock and shrubbery.
- ❖ A City-owned, 24,000-square-foot hangar, which will be leased to commercial tenants, was constructed at the airport. The three-bay hangar each has a separate entrance.

Police chief Smythe...continued from cover page

ing forward to advancing the professional caliber of an already respected department to an even higher level."

Since joining the City, he has used the City website to deliver his message. An excerpt from his welcome message reads, "I had some idea that I might receive a warm welcome from folks in a small town, but I had no idea how warm! Everyone has taken the time to educate this mostly city boy about how it works up here on 'the Mountain.' Thank you for the wonderful reception and great advice; I hope it all continues.

"I would like to share with you my perspective on the Show Low Police Department. Prior to my arrival I had over 22 years of very diverse law enforcement experience that included many interactions with police agencies nationwide while instructing police classes and inspecting agencies for accreditation. Those experiences allow me to quickly assess an agency. My assessment

- ❖ Improvements to Old Linden Road from Clark Road to 8th Street, including widening the roadway, adding bicycle lanes, building a sidewalk on the north side of the road and building a bridge across Fools Hollow Wash.
- ❖ Taxiway overlays, new airfield lighting and sign installation, and new pavement markings at the airport.
- ❖ Construction of a state-of-the-art library facility in the historic downtown area.
- ❖ Improvements to Whipple from the Deuce of Clubs to Whipple Wash, including widening the road and adding sidewalks and bicycle lanes.
- ❖ Waterline replacements on McNeil from 16th Avenue to the Fox Canyon subdivision and in Fairway Park from Willis to Mogollon Drive.
- ❖ Reconstruction of Owens from the Deuce of Clubs to 16th Avenue, McNeil from 16th Avenue to the Fox Canyon subdivision, and Central Avenue from Old Linden Road to the Central Park Estates development.
- ❖ Expanding our City's trail system.
- ❖ Show Low Lake Park improvements, including a new sewer line and restroom upgrades.
- ❖ Sewer line replacements on 6th Street from the wastewater treatment plant to Thornton and at the site of the former Pat's Place Pizza, from North 9th Place to Cooley and North 9th Place to the Deuce of Clubs.
- ❖ Overlay of 16th Avenue from McNeil to Old Linden Road.
- ❖ Designing an extension to Scott Ranch Road. This multi-phased project will extend Scott Ranch Road east to Penrod Road, enabling travelers living north and east of Show Low to access the hospital more quickly in an emergency.
- ❖ Improvements to Nikolaus Homestead Park, including adding restroom facilities, sports fields and walking paths.
- ❖ Streetscaping and beautifying Show Low's downtown.
- ❖ A wall on Central Avenue adjacent to the Country Lane Trailer Park will be constructed.

A copy of the final budget is available online at the City's website. Direct questions to Administrative Services Director Mike Urie at 532-4024.

here is that you have a top-notch police department that cares deeply about your safety and quality of life. They are great folks who work diligently every single day on your behalf.

"My last comment is an invitation to join us, work with us and partner for a better community. No police agency can effectively perform the law enforcement function without the respect, trust and assistance of the community. The best way for us to gain your trust and respect is for you to become involved. Help us decide what problems we should be working to solve and where to focus our energy to create the type of community that is both fun and safe to live, work and play in."

Chief Smythe is interested in hearing from any resident. If you wish to be added to the e-mail list, open his welcome message on the home page and click the link to subscribe. The e-mails provide opportunities to meet with department members, work with them, identify wanted individuals or ask questions.