

City Manager's



Weekly Update Friday, July 18, 2008

EU bonds: Interest rates are continuing to climb in the two days after \$60.7 million in Lodi Electric bonds were sold. We are pleased we were able to obtain the total-interest cost of slightly more than 5.1 percent in this unstable economic environment. The refinancing is scheduled to close on Thursday, either in Los Angeles or Sacramento.

Granicus online: Lodi continues to take steps to make government more transparent to the public. The latest step is the new link to the Granicus site, which broadcasts the City Council meetings live. Following meetings, web visitors will be allowed to jump to a particular point in the meeting by clicking on the appropriate agenda link.

State budget update: State leaders can't compromise on passing a budget, but the one thing they seem headed for agreement on is they can solve their financial problems on the backs of local government. The League of California Cities is warning that the Legislature may "borrow" local property tax or transportation funds from local government, by declaring a "severe state fiscal hardship" as allowed under 2004's Proposition 1A. Our position is that local governments have already been harmed by the state's inability to balance its budget with state funds. Lodi already passed its 2008-2009 budget, trimming costs in light of reduced revenue. That budget was adopted even with \$2.86 million in property tax diverted to the state as part of the ERAF shift. The state's financial deficit is somewhere from \$15.2 billion to \$17 billion.

Street maintenance: A \$1 million street maintenance project begins Monday. It will include the major north-south streets of Ham Lane, Mills Avenue and Crescent Avenue, among others. The nine-day project will result in nearly 28 acres of pavement coated with a rubberized chip seal, more than doubling the life of the underlying asphalt. Contractors working on the project have gone door-to-door to notify residents and businesses on the affected streets, the local media have been notified, and the schedule is being broadcast on Radio Lodi, 1250-AM.

New interim DCM: Rick Oakley, formerly city manager in Adelanto and Placerville, will begin Tuesday as interim deputy city manager.

Firefighters return: The second crew of firefighters has returned from wildfires to the north. Crews were part of strike teams in Trinity and Butte counties. Our costs will eventually be reimbursed by the state Office of Emergency Services. Fire Chief Mike Pretz received a note from a grateful Butte County resident for the Lodi crew's service.

Weed abatement: The railroad has cut the weeds along its rails in Lodi after local media pointed out residents' fears of a Stockton-like fire.

Police computers: The Police Department is scrapping its expensive, unproductive service agreement with Data911, which provides computer-assisted dispatching, and plans to find an alternative system. Data911's service was lacking, but the system will continue to work until it's replaced.

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