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July 2024// Issue 25



BUDGET ADOPTED

FY 24/25 CITY BUDGET

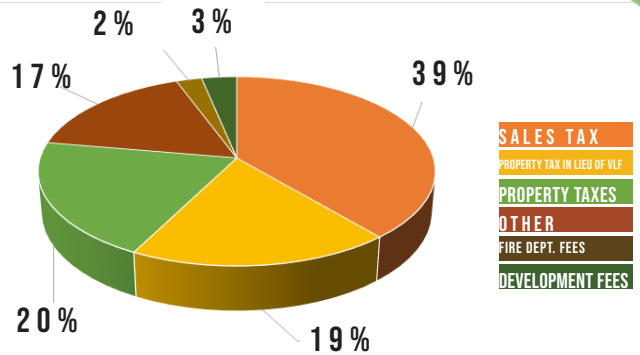
Building on previous budget progress, we enhanced our efforts during the creation of the FY 2023/24 budget. Led by the Finance Department, four public meetings were held in an effort to maintain open communication about the City's general fund revenues and expenditures. Each meeting explored different topics, including budget process education, specific fund revenues and expenditures, fund types, and department expenditure costs.

Over the last several years, city staff worked to diversify and grow General Fund revenue.

The General Fund is the City's main operating fund, accounting for 54% of the City's financial activity. It primarily receives revenue from sales and property taxes, both of which are expected to grow between FY 2023/24 and FY 2024/25. Overall, General Fund revenue is projected to be 2.2% higher in FY 2024/25 than in FY 2023/24. The City is also exploring new revenue sources to reduce dependence on economic factors. In a nutshell, 78% of revenue comes from sales and property taxes.

The City is working to expand revenue options and build on previous projects like the digital billboard and the cannabis business tax. Under governmental accounting requirements, revenues are recorded when known, and expenditures are recorded when incurred. Some projects and programs funded in previous fiscal years have not yet incurred expenditures, so revenues will carry forward in the fund balance, and expenditures will be recorded in FY 2024/25. This timing mismatch may make it seem like there is a surplus in FY 2023/24 (when the revenue was received) and a deficit in FY 2024/25 (when the funds are spent).

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THE PROPOSED FY 2024/25 BUDGET TOTALS \$54,061,178 OF EXPENDITURES, WITH \$20,918,174 OF THAT AMOUNT DESIGNATED FROM THE GENERAL FUND.

FAST FACT
LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE, AND ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES THE CITY PROVIDES REPRESENTS 66% OF TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES.



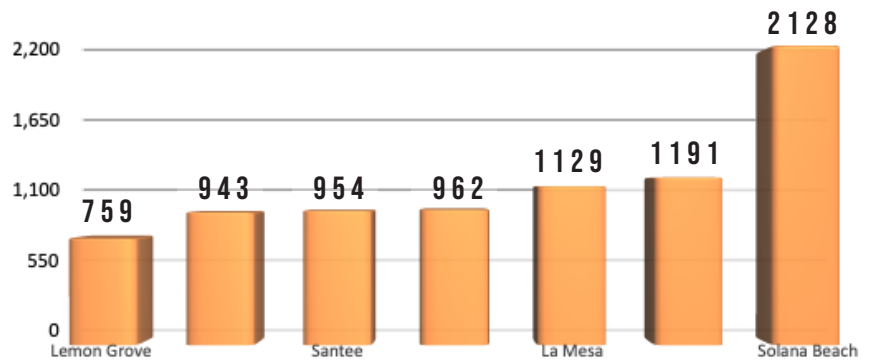
CITY OF LEMON GROVE
3232 Main Street,
Lemon Grove, CA 91945
619.825.3200

Find us on these social networks!

Over the last several years, city staff worked to diversify and grow General Fund revenue. These efforts are beginning to bear fruit with the long term lease with Outfront (electronic billboard) and the fully implemented cannabis tax. With the increases in tax revenue and the expansion of revenue stream options, the picture is looking balanced for FY 2024/25.

Lemon Grove receives less General Fund revenue per resident than neighboring cities and still provides our residents with municipal services similar to other communities, just at a much lower cost per capita than nearby cities of a similar size. This is illustrated in the chart to the right.

FY 2023/24 General Fund Revenue per Capita



[Click here to view the FY 2024/25 Annual Budget](#)

CITY COUNCIL WORKPLAN FY 24/25

The City Council Workplan is a policymaking document established by a majority vote of the City Council to provide policy direction for implementation by the City Manager. Amendments to the plan may occur throughout the year by a majority vote of the City Council, with a major update following each Municipal Election Cycle.

The City Council Workplan for FY 24/25 focuses on key areas dedicated to improving the quality of life for the residents of Lemon Grove. Public streets, economic development, and public safety are at the forefront of concerns for citizens. Other priority areas include homelessness, housing, and community life.

Sales tax revenue is expected to benefit voters by increasing the overall funds available to address the City’s essential needs. Ongoing efforts to improve streets near schools and parks aim to create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly atmospheres and transit-oriented neighborhoods covering approximately 58.3 gross acres.

The City is committed to implementing best practices in addressing homelessness and recognizes the community’s concerns on this issue. As part of the City Council Workplan, the City is exploring partnerships with the County of San Diego and East County cities. These discussions are focused on top strategies such as wrap-around services via short-term housing solutions and procuring contracted services that act as both project managers and advocates.

In a developing initiative, the City is preparing a report for the City Council detailing the ongoing costs and implementation of live-stream broadcasting of City Council meetings. Live streaming public meetings promotes transparency and accountability by allowing residents to witness discussions and decisions in real time while ensuring the City complies with evolving accessibility standards.

CITY COUNCIL WORKPLAN **fy24/25**

- Public Streets, Storm Drains & Sidewalks** Strategic Focus Area:
 - Street Repair & Traffic Calming:** Continue to repair streets and implement traffic calming strategies and seek additional revenue to address the City's priority needs and address the measure tax over competing sales tax measures.
 - Storm Drains:** Seek federal, state, and regional monies to replace the worn storm drains and those with the highest repair and maintenance costs.
 - Sidewalks:** Continue to repair sidewalks and remove obstacles (e.g., utility boxes) in walkways to help create safe and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and parks that will improve walkability and bicycle access.
- Revenue & Economic Development** Strategic Focus Area:
 - Take the Measure for the 2024 Budget:** Explore ways on the benefit of providing a sales tax in FY 2024 that will increase revenue to address the City's priority needs and address the measure tax over competing sales tax measures.
 - Village Downtown Plan:** Seek grant funding and resources for the Village Downtown Improvement Plan by identifying for all, convey and on-going funding sources.
 - Economic Development Plan:** Seek a 20% for an Economic Development Plan that includes business engagement strategies, encourages walkability and local employment.
 - Connect Main Street:** Expedite completion of the Connect Main Street project which supports economic development and that encourages walkability and local employment.
- Public Safety & Homelessness** Strategic Focus Area:
 - Homelessness:** Implement best practices and top strategies to address homeless issues, to include short-term housing solutions, with wrap-around services, partnering with our county cities and the County, and being a leader in how we protect our people.
- Community Life** Strategic Focus Area:
 - Council Meeting Enhancement:** Prepare a report to the City Council detailing ongoing and ongoing costs and implement maximum accessibility of City Council meetings.
 - Housing:** Report and respond for Senior Centre while exploring the feasibility of senior housing and identify strategies to assess interest and development to youth housing that is affordable for all economic class.

FY 24/25 City Council Priorities and Work Plan

“The City is committed to growing budget engagement each year in an effort to improve resident and understandability in the budget development process. It is the goal of this resident engagement to create greater understanding between community wants and needs and budget allocation.” —Lydia Romero, City Manager



WEED ABATEMENT WITH HEARTLAND FIRE



Weed abatement is a critical practice to reduce the risk of wildfires. Traditional methods often involve heavy machinery, chemical herbicides, and significant labor. However, Heartland Fire and Rescue has embraced an eco-friendly approach.

The Challenge

Weeds are not just an eyesore; they are a fire hazard. In a dry climate, overgrown

vegetation can act as fuel for wildfires, putting communities at risk. Traditional weed abatement methods, while effective, have their drawbacks:

- **Environmental Impact:** Chemical herbicides can harm the environment, affecting soil health, water quality, and non-target plant species.

- **Cost and Labor:** Mechanical removal requires substantial manpower and can be expensive, especially for large areas or difficult terrains.

- **Accessibility:** Steep slopes, rocky areas, and dense brush can make it challenging for machines and workers to clear weeds effectively.

Recognizing the limitations of convention-

al methods, Heartland Fire and Rescue turned to a time-tested, natural solution: goats. This approach harnesses the natural grazing behavior of goats to manage overgrown vegetation efficiently.

Benefits of Using Goats for Weed Abatement

1. **Eco-Friendly:** Goats naturally graze on various types of vegetation, including weeds and brush, without the need for chemicals.
2. **Cost-Effective:** While there are initial costs associated with managing a herd of goats, they can be more cost-effective in the long run compared to mechanical and chemical methods.
3. **Accessibility:** Goats can easily navigate difficult terrains that are hard for humans and machines to reach, such as steep hillsides and rocky areas.
4. **Continuous Grazing:** Goats can be moved from one area to another, providing continuous weed control throughout the year.



Staying informed is essential to your successful preparedness during an emergency.

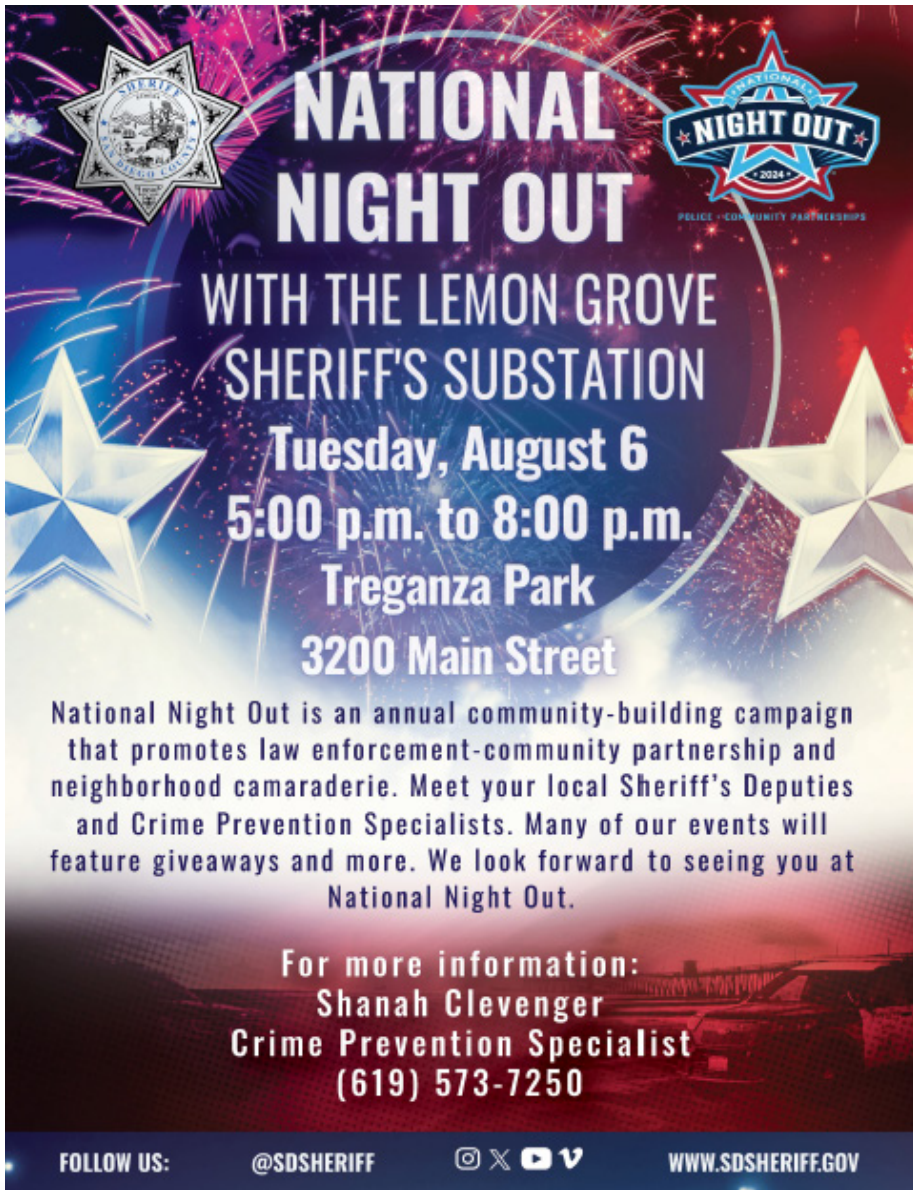
Sign up for Alert San Diego today to get safety information delivered directly to your phone. The County adopted the emergency notification system to assist in the safe evacuation of area residents and businesses.

Make Alert San Diego a part of your personal disaster preparedness plan. Wildfires, flooding, power outages, and earthquakes are among the many

concerns of residents county-wide. Everyone should have emergency supplies on hand if a disaster strikes. Your emergency supplies should be sufficient to sustain you, your family and pets for a minimum of 72 hours. A two (2) week supply of prescription and necessary over-the-counter medications is recommended.

To download an emergency preparedness kit, visit <https://www.alertsandiego.org/>





NATIONAL NIGHT OUT
WITH THE LEMON GROVE SHERIFF'S SUBSTATION
Tuesday, August 6
5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Treganza Park
3200 Main Street

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes law enforcement-community partnership and neighborhood camaraderie. Meet your local Sheriff's Deputies and Crime Prevention Specialists. Many of our events will feature giveaways and more. We look forward to seeing you at National Night Out.

For more information:
 Shanah Clevenger
 Crime Prevention Specialist
 (619) 573-7250

FOLLOW US: @SDSHERIFF @ X YouTube WWW.SDSHERIFF.GOV

MOVIES IN THE PARK
 @BERRY STREET PARK

KUNG FU PANDA
 FRIDAY, AUGUST 9

FREE

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL EVENT

CONTACT
(619) 287- 5696 X 4270

EVENT DATE
JULY 27, 2024

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LEMON GROVE CITY COUNCIL
 Mayor Racquel Vasquez
 Mayor Pro Tem Jennifer Mendoza
 Councilmember George Gastil
 Councilmember Alysson Snow
 Councilmember Liana LeBaron

Let us know what you think of *The Zest!*
 Email us at

