



## NEWS RELEASE

### Board of Supervisors

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## Board approves productive and responsible budget

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The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved a balanced 2016-17 county budget that includes funding to improve security for county employees and facilities, construct and maintain county infrastructure, fund negotiated raises for county employees, and pay for ongoing mental health and medical services for county residents.

“This budget will move the county forward toward achieving the Countywide Vision and making our communities safer, healthier, and overall better places to live,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos.

The \$5.5 billion budget acknowledges the likelihood of another economic downturn in the near future and contributes an additional \$62.8 million to reserves. Besides being available for emergencies, potential liabilities and as a “rainy day” fund, reserves serve as a savings account to pay for capital projects such as new buildings, computer systems, and public safety communications systems outright rather than fund them by incurring debt.

Healthy reserves are also essential to maintaining the county’s superior credit rating. Tuesday’s action by the board sets county reserves at \$422.3 million.

Highlights of the budget include:

- \$10.2 million in funds towards improving the security of county employees, including \$2 million to conduct a security assessment of all county facilities and \$8.2 million in immediate improvements to facilities, such as expanded security guard services, upgraded security cameras and key card access installations
- The County Fire Protection District budget is increasing as a result of the pending annexation of fire prevention and suppression services from the City of San Bernardino (\$29.6 million) and Twentynine Palms (\$1.7 million).
- A \$40.7 million increase in Capital Project Funds is primarily due to the planned construction of two Department of Behavioral Health funded Crisis Stabilization Centers and four Crisis Residential Treatment Centers totaling \$36.5 million. This will enable Community Crisis Response Team clinics throughout the County to be expanded to provide 24 hour services and to respond to requests by law enforcement for support during the night hours.



- The County Museum’s budget of \$3.8 million demonstrates the county’s commitment to support the museum through a time of transition. The budget includes \$1.1 million in one-time Discretionary General Funding including bridge funds to support current operations and funding for activities related to re-accreditation. The County Museum continues to implement a consultant study recommendations as approved by the Board of Supervisors to address organizational and financial challenges.
  
- The County continues work on a complete overhaul of the County’s General Plan, referred to as the Countywide Plan. This Countywide Plan will be a comprehensive web-based system to document land use planning and organizational governance policies. It will be comprised of three basic components: The Policy Plan (a comprehensive general plan); the County Business Plan (a system that defines and guides how the County government operates and manages itself); and the Regional Issues Forum (web-based resource center where information regarding shared Countywide issues exists). Additionally, the County is updating and expanding the community plans. When completed, 27 communities will have a web-based Community Plan.
  
- The Public Works Transportation budget includes more than \$35.0 million in major infrastructure projects, funded in part with Discretionary General Funding. Budgeted activities include design, right of way and/or construction for major projects, including:
  - Bridge replacements on: Glen Helen Parkway, Baker Boulevard, Garnet Street, Rock Springs Road, Dola Ditch Bridge, Lanzit Ditch Bridge, Yermo Road and Arrowbear Drive;
  - New bridge on Shadow Mountain Road;
  - Widening of Slover Avenue in the Bloomington area;
  - Installation of raised pavement markers on National Trails Highway in the Amboy area;
  - Reconstruction of Institution Road to improve access to the Sheriff facility in San Bernardino;
  - National Trails Highway Bridges: Bridge management plan for the repair, rehabilitation or replacement of 127 bridges on National Trails Highway and starting the design phase for replacement of 10 bridges;
  - Rehabilitation and re-profiling at various locations on Needles Highway in the Needles area;
  - Improvements to alleviate congestion and improve circulation of the interchange on Interstate 10 at Cedar Avenue
  
- Land Use Services Planning budget includes \$150,000 of Discretionary General Funding for the preparation of a Morongo Basin Cultural Plan.
  
- The Special Districts Department’s budget includes \$45.3 million of capital improvement projects including the design and construction of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo relocation, and rehabilitation of the Lake Gregory Dam.
  
- Community Development & Housing is constructing Phase 2 of the Bloomington Community and Neighborhood Revitalization. A total of 190 multi-generational affordable housing units include 120 family units and 70 senior units and the Bloomington Branch Library. The Bloomington Branch Library and the first phase of housing are completed. The second phase is currently under construction and will be completed by Spring 2017.

- The County is expanding efforts to provide homeless support to County residents through the following allocations included in the 2016-17 budget:
  - The Department of Behavioral Health is investing \$4.0 million by providing for basic needs, case management, outreach services, and additional built and supportive housing opportunities.
  - The Sheriff/Coroner/Public Administrator is continuing to fund the Homeless Outreach Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) program (\$620,000), which provides services to the homeless population by connecting them to the appropriate agencies for much needed services that help in the transition from homelessness.
  - The Probation Department has included \$3.2 million towards transitional housing for adult offenders requiring Probation Department supervision.
  
- Land Use Services Code Enforcement is continuing to pilot various strategic initiatives to address issues with short-term rentals, particularly in the mountain areas. For 2016-17, a pilot program for a short-term rental hotline will be established where the public can report illegal or disruptive activities at short-term rental properties.
  
- The Department of Aging and Adult Services budget of \$8.3 million will supplement programs such as the Elderly Nutrition, Supportive Services, Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act, and Family Caregiver.
  
- The Department of Children's and Family Services is implementing an After Hours Response Center in June 2016 to provide optimal customer service to our community partners, children and families. The Center will enhance the departments critical after hour function of responding to child abuse, neglect and exploitation referrals called into the Child and Adult Abuse Hotline.