



*City of Arts & Innovation*

## News Release

---

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Tuesday, May 07, 2013

#### **Contact:**

Cindie Perry, Intergovernmental & Communications Officer  
(951) 826-5975; (951) 203-1066 (cell)

### **Voters' decision on Measure A to affect essential City services**

**Riverside, Calif.** – With residents poised to vote on Measure A, the ballot initiative that will determine whether the City of Riverside should continue transferring water revenues to its General Fund, City Manager Scott Barber outlined some of the potential cuts the City could face if the measure is not approved by voters.

The informational report to the City Council was given to show how the City could absorb the loss of about \$6.7 million from its General Fund if Measure A does not receive a majority level of support. If Measure A passes, that \$6.7 million will be included in the 2013-14 city budget and be available to pay for the services now targeted for possible cuts.

The \$6.7 million represents about 3 percent of the City's General Fund, which pays for most City services. In his report, Barber attempted to show what a 3 percent cut -- more or less in some departments -- would look like. The report includes the cutting of more than 79 full-time equivalent positions, including 21 in public safety.

"We are taking this very seriously" said Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey. "Measure A provides a critical source of revenue for essential city services -- and if that revenue is off the table, the City Council will need to be prepared to make some difficult decisions."

Ballots were mailed to voters on Monday, and voting will continue through June 4. The election is being conducted by mail; there is no polling place voting. Voters have approved the water fund transfer on three previous occasions. If Measure A were to fail, the exact cuts would be determined by the City Council in June.

Possible cuts include police officers who patrol area schools, two squads of firefighters, all the school crossing guards, the popular 311 call center, the Office of Neighborhoods and half the budget of the Janet Goeske Senior Center, impacting services to seniors.

Other potential cuts include two of the six animal control officers who patrol the City, the citywide free Wi-Fi program; half the funding for the City's graffiti abatement program, and fireworks at area parks on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Overall, the Police Department would see \$1.4 million in cuts. In addition to eliminating seven school resource officers saving \$621,000 -- additional cuts would include a \$500,000 cut to the department's aviation program and another \$260,000 in cuts to be determined by Police Chief Sergio Diaz.

The loss of two Fire Department squads, totaling 12 firefighters, would save \$1.8 million. The cuts would be phased in through the use of the City's reserves, and would take full effect in the 2015-16 fiscal year. That would give the City time to renegotiate labor agreements with the Riverside City Firefighters Association.

Of the non-public safety departments, Public Works and Parks, Recreation and Community Services could be especially hard hit. Public Works could lose nearly 30 positions (full-time equivalents) and Parks, Recreation and Community Services could lose more than 12.

Proposed cuts, and the amount proposed for reductions, include:

- \$770,000 to eliminate the citywide Wi-Fi program that provides free Internet access to most parts of the City, including to low-income families participating in the SmartRiverside program.
- \$70,000 in funding for the Office of Neighborhoods and \$70,000 to Code Enforcement.
- \$306,000 to the General Services Division to eliminate the Broadcasting Division, leaving only \$50,000 to pay contractors to broadcast the City Council meetings.
- \$421,000, from the City Manager's budget, including a staff member who focuses on the "Seizing Our Destiny" community visioning project.
- \$270,000 to eliminate two of six animal control officers.
- \$25,000 for books and other materials in the Library Department. Further cuts to the Library are prohibited by Measure I.
- \$428,000 to the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department, including \$189,000 at the Janet Goeske Senior Center, which is half the center's budget; \$149,000 cuts to swimming programs; \$65,000 for fireworks at Mt. Rubidoux and La Sierra parks and \$25,000 to the Mariachi Festival.
- \$806,000 to eliminate the program that provides crossing guards at busy intersections near schools.
- \$470,000 to the graffiti abatement program, which would cut the program's budget in half.
- \$250,000 to landscape maintenance, a 7 percent reduction.
- \$713,000, the 311 call center program, which residents use to request city services, including pothole repair, graffiti clean-up, etc.

The cuts also would include \$54,000 for the Mayor and City Council; \$112,000 to the City Attorney, representing one Deputy City Attorney position; and \$37,000 for the City Clerk, which reduce by half the amount available to fund the front desk receptionist position. The Mayor and City Council would determine how to implement their \$22,000 and \$32,000 respective cuts.

###