



# Town of Apple Valley

14955 Dale Evans Parkway • Apple Valley, California 92307

## **2014 STATE OF THE TOWN – Delivered August 20, 2014 by Mayor Art Bishop**

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, and sometimes that line takes the form of a bridge.

Our challenge, according to Earl Nightingale, renowned speaker and philosopher, is to “bridge the gap between where you are now and the goal you intend to reach.”

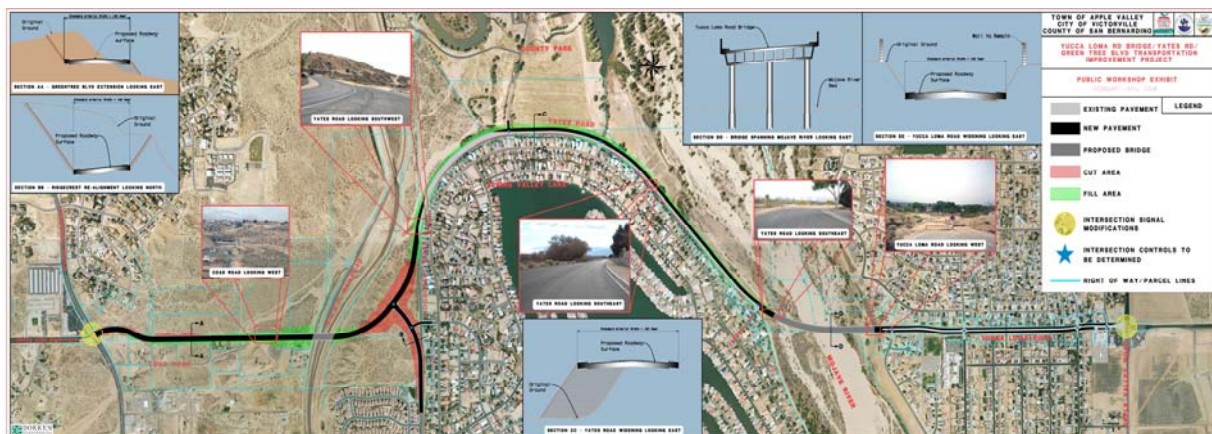
The Town of Apple Valley has become an expert on bridging gaps in our 25 years as an incorporated Town. From bridging our past to the present .... from goals to reality .... from challenge to success.

We create a vision...We set a goal...We build a bridge to get us there.

## **YUCCA LOMA BRIDGE**

And after decades of such planning, we are finally building an ACTUAL bridge! In less than two years, we will have the long-awaited third access over the Mojave River at Yucca Loma Road.

As motivational speaker Harvey Mac-Kay says, “The bridge between wishing and accomplishing is discipline.” Our discipline is evident in our determined pursuit of Vision 2020, including our number one transportation goal – the Yucca Loma Bridge.



### *Yucca Loma Bridge video segment :*

*The Yucca Loma Bridge broke ground on January 10, 2014. Apple Valley has taken the lead role in this joint effort that includes the County of San Bernardino and the City of Victorville. Stretching more than 1600 feet, crews have sunk 60 foundation piles as much as 90' in the ground to support this vital link across the Mojave River. Phase I includes the 4-lane bridge with a barrier protected Class I bike path and sidewalk. It also includes widening of Yates Road to 4 lanes with bike paths on both sides....and reserves space for the future Riverwalk project. Over a mile of sound wall will feature 8 feet of block topped by a 4 foot transparent panel. The next phase will widen and improve Yucca Loma Road from Apple Valley Road to the bridge, and is expected to start in the summer of 2015.*

In May, a team of 20 High Desert officials traveled to Washington D.C. to draw attention to the needs of the High Desert.

Apple Valley, Victorville and San Bernardino County made our case for Federal funding for the last phase of the Yucca Loma/Yates/Green Tree corridor project, which will connect to Hesperia Road.

After narrowly missing the cut last year, we have submitted an application for the current cycle of TIGER Grants. We were able to meet with Peter Rogoff from the Department of Transportation.

We were very encouraged when he told us... "Collaboration usually indicates a well-thought out project. That's what we like to see."

We also just received word from Senator Feinstein AND Senator Boxer that they are issuing letters of support for our project, support which is offered to a very small percentage of the requests they receive.

In other late breaking news, we also just learned we have been recommended for approval for a \$1 million dollar Safe Routes to School grant that will help complete the sidewalk, bike path and traffic signal on the south side of Yucca Loma Road, serving students of Rio Vista Elementary School. As well as \$960 thousand dollars for a one mile segment of the Riverwalk Project, south of Bear Valley Road next to Jess Ranch.

### **OHD - REGIONALISM**

The joint trip to Washington D.C. is just one example of a new spirit of regionalism in the High Desert. We are not only building concrete and steel bridges between communities, we are spanning divides with common goals.

With the continued support of First District County Supervisor Robert Lovingood, and a \$75,000 grant from his office, the past year has allowed the five High Desert cities to further a regional economic development agenda under the umbrella of Opportunity High Desert.

The history of competition between our cities...is truly water under the bridge.

Here is a brief overview of the award-winning Opportunity High Desert effort, taken in part from a video produced for the 2014 High Desert Economic Summit, hosted by the Victor Valley College Foundation.



*Opportunity High Desert – Regionalism video segment:*

*"Opportunity High Desert consists of the Victor Valley's five municipalities, the city of Adelanto, the Town of Apple Valley, the City of Barstow, the City of Hesperia and the City of Victorville. With a population of approximately 450,000 city managers and economic development managers can capitalize on their strengths and pool their resources to attract new businesses to the area. Continuing this effort is also a priority of San Bernardino County's first district supervisor, Robert Lovingood.*

*"Collaboration is the only way we are going to succeed. We have too many valuable resources with 442,000 people vs. any one component of our unincorporated or incorporated city. So we see this one of the success and growing the success that the cities have had in our interaction supporting that."*

*Each municipality has made an extraordinary contribution to Opportunity High Desert investing their own resources and time. This motivated group of city and town managers and their staff are committed to creating a more vibrant community and improving their resident's quality of life."*

## **ECONOMY**

As part of Opportunity High Desert and Team California, Town staff attends conventions for retail and light industrial site selectors, encouraging companies to "get their slice of the Apple."

Here at home, we can also work to build our economy by keeping our money local.

Apple Valley's economy has seen a slow but gradual improvement over the last few years. The latest sales tax revenue report shows a 3.9% increase over the same time last year. However when you compare us to the other cities in the High Desert and California, it shows we still have some serious retail gaps to bridge.

With \$4.3 million in sales tax revenue, our per capita revenue is \$75 per person. This is just half the statewide average, and fourth out of the five High Desert cities.



Of the 482 cities in California, Apple Valley is 236<sup>th</sup> in total sales tax revenue, but only 406<sup>th</sup> when you compare per capita figures.

What this means is that while our economy is on the upswing, we still experience sales tax leakage when citizens spend their tax dollars elsewhere.

It's more important than ever to Shop Local! If you can FIND it in Apple Valley, BUY it in Apple Valley!

Some of our newest retailers include restaurants such as Jersey Mike's, Guiseppe's Italian Restaurant, Two Bros Fish Fry and Spirit River Café, along with new locations for Subway and Juice It Up. Fat Jack's just opened last week, bringing new life to the building that formerly housed Guys House of Pancakes, Drapers and Amy's.

This year also brought us Ulta Beauty, Fantastic Sam's and T-Mobile.

Coming very soon will be the first high desert location for Osh Kosh and Carter's children's clothing stores.

In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, we launched a business visitation program this year, meeting business owners and learning more about the challenges they face. Did you know we have manufacturers here in Apple Valley, such as Reid Products and Telexca, which supply components for aerospace, aircraft and military vehicles? Boeing and Lockheed are just two of the industry powerhouses that contract with Apple Valley companies.

And our industrial flagship – the highest volume Walmart Distribution Center in the entire nation – just celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Local economic development is helped also by a stable and growing population, and we are seeing evidence of this in our housing market.

*Sun City/Housing video segment:*

*In fiscal year 2013/2014 we issued 113 single family building permits, our third straight year of growth and the highest in seven years. And that's holding fast to current permit fees. Many of these are in the Sun City community. In October 2013, Pulte Homes received approval for 406 additional lots, with nearly 50 homes currently under construction. Serving the 55-and-over population, the Sun City development also includes clubhouses, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and a golf course, and is located next to the Jess Ranch Marketplace.*

## **WATER**

To insure stability in our economic development and housing arenas, the Town Council has decided it is more important than ever that we look at ways to control our destiny in the delivery of water to our citizens.

In light of the latest rate case filed by Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company, the Town has taken a number of steps in this direction:

- We filed opposition to the requested increase with the California PUC
- We hosted two public hearings, attended by more than 400 citizens
- We authorized staff to seek an appraisal of the water system
- We met with our counterparts in Missoula, Montana, whose water provider shares a parent company with Apple Valley Ranchos.
- And we were just granted an audit of water rates in Apple Valley and surrounding areas by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee



On behalf of our citizens, we are committed to exploring all options available to us to acquire the private water system ... to provide accountability to our citizens, rather than their shareholders.

It is also extremely important to continue our efforts to provide reclaimed water for irrigation purposes. The subregional waste water treatment plant, to be built at Lenny Brewster Sport Center, is moving forward. Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority is expected to bid the project this fall and could open as soon as 20-16.

Providing reclaimed water for irrigation at Brewster Park, Civic Center Park and the Apple Valley Golf Course will save us tens of thousands of dollars.

After almost four years as a town operated facility, the Golf Course subsidy has decreased by 414%, from 1.2 million, to less than \$270 thousand this year.

We expect that reclaimed water for irrigation, in addition to revenue from a cell tower under construction, could be enough to put the golf course budget solidly in the black, several years ahead of schedule.

### ***FACTS AND FIGURES***

The decrease in the subsidy of the golf course is due in part to an increase in the number of rounds of golf from 14,000 to 16,000 last year.

And now let's look at some other good news in Apple Valley.

Graffiti is down 62% in the last two years, from 2400 cases to less than 900, and 80% of those were opened proactively by our Code Enforcement Officers.

In June, the aquatic center had over 17,500 users – our highest month ever.

Animal Services had 40,000 visitors through the door – an increase of 156%

Our Citizens on Patrol volunteered 12,000 hours, a value of \$260,000

And here are a few more impressive statistics...

- *Issued 950 passports through the Town Clerk's Office*
- *Processed 2,600 business licenses in Finance*
- *Issued 756 permits for residential solar installations*
- *Helped 46 low-income households with home repairs, down payments and closing costs*
- *Increased Social Media followers by 75%, to nearly 12,000*



Is it any wonder Daily Press readers voted Apple Valley “The Best City to Live In” in the High Desert for the third year in a row?

All of this information and more is available in the Town of Apple Valley Annual Budget Document. In 2013, the Town earned the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association, an award bestowed upon less than one-and-a-half percent of the 90,000 eligible agencies.

The file is available online, with details on our budget of \$105 million dollars across all funds. Our budget builds a bridge between our expenditures and outcomes, and directly connects our goals to our accomplishments, improving accountability and transparency to those we serve.

## **LIFESTYLE**

A balanced budget is just one sign of a healthy, growing community. In Apple Valley we also focus on opportunities to be active and make connections with family and friends.

Our high quality amenities are known across the desert. The Aquatic Center is filled with swimmers ... Civic Center Park is filled with walkers ... the dog park with our four-legged friends.

And on Thursday nights in the summer, the Amphitheater is filled with thousands of music lovers.

We were very excited to take first place for “Best Live Entertainment” for our Sunset Concert Series, presented by Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group!

And new this year was the first ever live music theater production at the amphitheater with “The Music Man”. Spearheaded by Councilman Curt Emick, this event was a tremendous success, and you can bet we will be offering another musical next year!



It's important to note that The Music Man was 90% funded by private donations, from individuals such as Richard Rorex as well as local businesses.

As a matter of fact, private donations and grants played an important role in many of our programs, from the VAN-tastic mobile play van to community clean up days to special events. We work hard to bridge funding gaps through our SAVE Campaign – Support Apple Valley Events.

## **STAFF AND COUNCIL**

As mayor, I'm just the one lucky enough to be standing on this stage and telling you about our accomplishments. But it's the whole community that is fortunate to have the most talented and professional team of employees and elected officials working for them.



Under the leadership of Town Manager Frank Robinson, may I ask Town Staff in attendance to please stand. On behalf of the council, we all thank you for your hard work and dedication.

I would also like to thank the Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce – president Janice Moore and Chairman of the Board Sam Pulice, and the rest of the board of directors. We appreciate your support of the Town’s efforts to create a healthy business community, and thank you for once again hosting the State of the Town address.

And now it is my pleasure to introduce the Town Council. Would the Council please join me on stage –

- Mayor Pro Tem Larry Cusack
- Council members Curt Emick, Scott Nassif and Barb Stanton

It is my pleasure and honor to serve with this Council – one that is active and committed to the Town of Apple Valley, as you can see by this short video:

You often hear that we can’t cross a bridge until we come to it, but success is achieved by those who have “crossed bridges” in their imagination far ahead of the crowd.

Through continued planning and the aggressive goal setting that has characterized our growth as a community, I can safely say that whatever gaps we may be required to forge, the Town of Apple Valley has a track record of success when it comes to building bridges.

