



# CITY OF LODI

## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**AGENDA TITLE:** League of California Cities Grassroots Network Update

**MEETING DATE:** January 15, 2003

**PREPARED BY:** Deputy City Manager

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** That Council welcome Debbie Olson, League of California Cities Regional Representative, and listen to an update regarding the League's Grassroots Network effort.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** Debbie Olson, League of California Cities Regional Representative, requested an opportunity to update Council Members and City staff regarding the League's Grassroots Network effort. Attached for Council's information is an outline of Ms. Olson's presentation accompanied by additional handouts.

Funding: None

Thank you,

Janet S. Keeter  
Deputy City Manager

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Dixon Flynn -- City Manager



# League of California Cities

1400 K Street, Suite 400 • Sacramento, California 95814  
Phone: (916) 658-8200 Fax: (916) 658-8240  
[www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org)

## Grassroots Network Update

Lodi City Council Meeting  
January 15, 2003

- I. League of California Cities
  - a. Brief Overview of Organization and Services
  
- II. Grassroots Network
  - a. Self-Introduction of Central Valley GRN Representative: Debbie Olson
  - b. Briefly discuss accomplishments of GRN program in first legislative season
    - i. Prop 42-gas tax/transportation dedication
    - ii. 2002 Budget/LOCAL (Leave Our Community Assets Local) Coalition
    - iii. AB 680-revenue sharing
    - iv. SB 910-housing element overreach
    - v. Prop 46-affordable housing bond
  
- III. Goals and Strategies for 2003
  - a. LOCAL Coalition – the sequel
  - b. Housing
  - c. Legislation and Budget 2002-3
    - i. Bad Legislation never dies –it’s recycled
    - ii. Budget Fight 2003
  
- IV. Requests of Lodi’s City Council
  - a. Participation
  - b. Letters/Resolutions
    - i. SOS-voluntary check off
  - c. Opportunities to Educate the Community

# "Save Our Services" (SOS) Fund

**They Did It Before.** Over the last 12 years the cities of California have witnessed massive reductions in vital city services as the state government has taken over \$6 billion in city property tax funds to pay the state's bills. This raid of local tax dollars by the state is still going on. Today it costs city residents over \$800 million a year.

**They Can Do It Again.** With the state facing its most brutal budget crisis in a decade and state deficits forecast for the next few years, city services may again be sacrificed to protect the state's budget and services. If that happens, families, children, seniors and city employees will be the big losers.

**How Cities Can Fight Back.** We can fight back by lobbying at the grassroots level and in Sacramento and by preparing to support or oppose measures on the 2004 statewide ballot and beyond. The only way we do that is to raise funds to help pay for the cost of campaigning for and against measures that affect city services and revenues. The League of California Cities created Action for Better Cities (ABC) to lead this effort. ABC has established the separate "Save Our Services" (SOS) Fund to pay the typical costs of these campaigns such as polling, signature gathering, brochures, etc. City officials and employees are invited to contribute to the separate "SOS" Fund by check or voluntary payroll deduction. These donations will only be used for League-approved statewide ballot measure advocacy to protect city services and revenues. If the League sponsors a ballot measure to constitutionally protect city revenues, the "SOS" Fund will support a major part of the expenses of that campaign.

## How Can You Get Involved?

- Inform your city colleagues about the threat to city services and revenues and about the important role of the "Save Our Services" (SOS) Fund in reducing the threat.
- Urge your city council to pass a resolution establishing a voluntary payroll deduction program for elected officials and employees. We strongly recommend that city officials meet and confer with all city employee organizations prior to establishing such a program.
- Personally contribute to the SOS Fund by payroll deduction or check and forward contributions to:

The "Save Our Services" (SOS) Fund  
c/o Action for Better Cities  
1400 K Street, Suite 307  
Sacramento, CA 95814

It's as simple as that! Direct any questions about the SOS Fund directly to Mike Madrid at Action for Better Cities at (916) 658-8272 or to Chris McKenzie (916) 658-8275 or Dwight Stenbakken (916) 658-8213 at the League of California Cities.

RESOLUTION # \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF \_\_\_\_\_  
ESTABLISHING A VOLUNTARY PAYROLL DEDUCTION PROGRAM

**WHEREAS**, as a general rule, city leaders are in a better position than State government to make decisions governing local affairs, educate the citizenry as to the benefits of strong local government, and advocate on behalf of cities; and

**WHEREAS**, measures enacted through the legislative process, as well as by statewide ballot initiatives, over the past 20 years have produced the unintended consequences of destabilizing city finances and have weakened the ability of city residents to govern local affairs through their elected community representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the state of California is currently using over \$800 million each year in city property tax funds to balance the state budget; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Legislative Analyst's Office has projected that the state is facing a structural budget deficit of over \$10 billion per year over the next five (5) years, and city services and revenues are at risk of further state raids; and

**WHEREAS**, the League of California Cities is currently conducting research on various ways to secure constitutional protection of city services and revenues and may sponsor a statewide ballot measure for this purpose in 2004 or thereafter; and

**WHEREAS**, Action for Better Cities was created by the Board of Directors of the League of California Cities to advocate voter approval of constitutional protection of city services and revenues and opposition to ballot proposals that reduce local democratic control of local services and revenues; and

**WHEREAS**, Action for Better Cities has established the "Save Our Services" (SOS) Fund to finance the cost of any statewide ballot measure campaign to preserve and protect city services and revenues; and

**WHEREAS**, elected and appointed city officials and employees have the opportunity to provide leadership in Action for Better Cities through voluntary financial contributions to the "SOS" Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, the expenditure of monies in the "SOS" Fund by Action for Better Cities shall be limited and dedicated to ballot measure campaigns that are designed to specifically strengthen the services and revenues of city governments.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ that:

**Section One.** There is hereby established the Voluntary Payroll Deduction Program of the City of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Section Two.** Any unrepresented employee or member of the City Council of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ is eligible immediately to participate in the Program. Represented employees may participate after their representative has met and conferred with the city representatives about the program.

**Section Three.** The purpose of the Program is to allow an employee or a member of the City Council to direct the City of \_\_\_\_\_ to remit a portion of the salary payable pursuant to city ordinance or resolution to charitable, educational, governmental, or other purposes for which non-profit mutual benefit corporations are organized.

**Section Four.** Participation in the Program is completely voluntary.

**Section Five.** The City Manager is directed to do all things necessary and proper to implement the Program established by this Resolution including, but not limited to, preparing appropriate forms to be completed by participating employees and city council members, informing city council members of the full range of charitable, educational, governmental, or other purposes for which non-profit mutual benefit corporations are organized, carrying out the direction of the participating employees or city council members by remitting a portion of their salary as stated in the appropriate forms.

**Section Six.** In establishing this Program, the City Council specifically wishes to make its support known for a voluntary payroll deduction to protect city services and revenues through contributions to the "Save Our Services" (SOS) Fund, administered on behalf of the League of California Cities by Action for Better Cities.

(Upon approval, please send or fax a copy of this resolution to:  
Action for Better Cities, 1400 K Street, Suite 307, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Fax: 916-658-8289; Telephone: 916-658-8272)



**LOCAL**

**LEAVE OUR COMMUNITY ASSETS LOCAL**  
*Dedicated to Protecting Funding for Police, Fire, Health  
and other Essential LOCAL Services.*



## 2003 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

*Leave our Community Assets Local (LOCAL)* has united around the growing imperative to protect our local services. The *LOCAL Coalition* will again be actively involved in this year's state budget process to ensure that funding for essential local services is not compromised. Following are some key principles that will guide the coalition in 2003:

### 1. Essential Local Services Should Not Be Sacrificed to Solve State Budget Problems.

Police and fire protection. Emergency medical services. Hospital trauma care. Public health services. Road repair and maintenance. Clean drinking water. Parks. Libraries. Senior Services. These are just a few of the important local services that are provided by local governments in California. Sacrifices will be necessary to help close the State Budget gap, but essential local services should be protected from further cuts or reductions. The coalition believes the State should balance its budget...

- ✓ **Without taking or cutting** sources of revenue that fund essential local services.
- ✓ **Without imposing** more of the financial responsibility on cities, counties or special districts for the cost of programs jointly funded by the state and local governments. Cuts in certain joint programs may be necessary, but the State should avoid shifting revenues or the responsibility for providing services from one local government to another.
- ✓ **Without mandating** additional programs or services on local governments without reimbursing them for the costs.

### 2. Local Governments and Local Revenues Are Already Part of the State Budget Solution.

Already, large portions of taxes paid by local residents are used to fund state-controlled programs. Only a small portion of these revenues is left under local control to fund essential services such as fire, police and health services. And since 1992, the last time the State incurred a major budget deficit, billions of these local tax dollars have been diverted from local governments to the State – now totaling approx. \$5 Billion annually. As a result, local services are stretched thin at a time when population and demands for services are soaring and local revenues are also down from a slowing economy. Our local services cannot and should not withstand further cuts. The LOCAL coalition will continue to be an active partner with the State to seek budget solutions that do not further erode funding from local services.

### **3. Revenue Enhancements and Spending Cuts Will Be Required – Both Should Place Emphasis on the Protection of Local Services.**

Given the magnitude of the State Budget deficit, a combination of spending cuts and revenue enhancements will likely be required to balance the budget. LOCAL and its 300+ members stand ready to work with the State to ensure that cuts to high priority programs are avoided and to support the revenue enhancements needed to protect high-priority programs.

- ✓ LOCAL will support reasonable revenue enhancements as an alternative to cutting funding for essential local services. In particular, LOCAL supports returning the Vehicle License Fee (VLF) to previous levels, as was guaranteed in law when the VLF was originally reduced.
- ✓ When forced to make difficult and unavoidable spending cuts, LOCAL encourages State Lawmakers to spare high-priority programs. LOCAL encourages the state to work with those that provide and those that depend on local services before making any cuts or reductions that could jeopardize the local services that all California residents rely on.



**CENTRAL VALLEY  
MEMBER CITIES**

ANGELS CAMP  
ATWATER  
CERES  
CHOWCHILLA  
DOS PALOS  
ESCALON  
GALT  
GUSTINE  
HUGHSON  
LATHROP  
LIVINGSTON  
LODI  
LOS BANOS  
MANTECA  
MERCED  
MODESTO  
NEWMAN  
OAKDALE  
PATTERSON  
RIPON  
RIVERBANK  
SONORA  
STOCKTON  
TRACY  
TURLOCK  
WATERFORD

Please Join the League of California Cities  
Central Valley Division  
For a Dinner

In Honor of Our  
**Central Valley Legislators**

**Thursday, January 9, 2003**

**6:30 PM Cocktails and Nibbles  
7:00 PM Dinner and Short Program**

**Hutchins Street Square, Krist Hall  
125 South Hutchins Street  
Lodi, California 95240**

**Division Officers**

President  
SUSAN HITCHCOCK, MAYOR  
CITY OF LODI

First Vice President  
TIM FISCHER, COUNCIL MEMBER  
CITY OF MODESTO

Past President  
DAVID REED  
CITY OF NEWMAN

**League Staff**

Debbie Olson  
dolson@cacities.org  
REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE  
CENTRAL VALLEY DIVISION

No Host Cocktails  
Dinner: \$30 per person

RSVP  
Phone: 209 365-1156  
Fax: 650 292-2152  
Email: dolson@cacities.org