



# laguna hills CITY VIEWS



## LAGUNA HILLS MALL NEW OWNER NEW LOOK



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Major Changes at the Mall  
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**CITY HALL HOURS:**

8 am – 5 pm Monday – Friday

**ENGINEERING, PLANNING AND BUILDING COUNTER HOURS:**

1 pm – 5:30 pm Monday – Thursday

1 pm – 5 pm Friday

Regular City Council Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

Traffic Commission Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of January, March, May, July, September and November.

Parks and Recreation Commission Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of February, April, June, August, October and December.

All meetings begin at 7 pm in the City Council Chambers. Closed session at 6 p.m. (When Scheduled)



**LAGUNA HILLS CITY COUNCIL:**

**Barbara Kogerman**  
Mayor

**Andrew Blount**  
Mayor Pro Tem

**Randal Bressette**

**Melody Carruth**

**Dr. Dore Gilbert**

*A Message*  
from the **CITY**

A Change of Seasons

Fall is traditionally a time of harvest, and although it's been decades since Laguna Hills was a ranching community, this time of year continues to mark the time when the City reaps the results of hard work and good decisions.

The Biennial Budget approved by the City Council in recent weeks shows revenues again exceeding expenditures, a bounty brought on by years of prudent planning and careful spending.

Where the Moulton-La Paz plaza was, the Village at Nellie Gail Ranch will soon sprout. And the owners of the Laguna Hills Mall, long withering under the previous ownership, have announced exciting new plans to create a public gathering place and Main Street feel in the heart of the City's Urban Village area. That project will go hand-in-hand with the previously announced redevelopment of the Oakbrook Village Shopping Center immediately south of the Mall and will create a mix of residential and commercial spaces with pathways and green areas.

laguna hills  
**CITY VIEWS**

City Views is an award winning quarterly magazine published by the City of Laguna Hills and is distributed as a public service to City residents and businesses. We welcome your suggestions and feedback and value your involvement in the community. Please send or call in any comments or questions to:

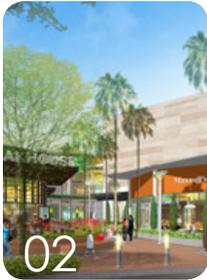
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## ON THE COVER

**B**ig changes are in store for the Laguna Hills Mall, which was purchased by Merlone Geier Partners this past May. The San Diego-based firm plans on creating a Main Street type of experience for shoppers with more cafes and restaurants, an upscale movie theater, fitness center and public plaza.

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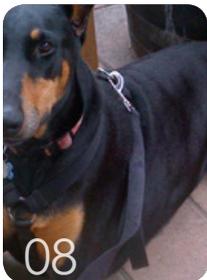
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# LAGUNA HILLS MALL: *NEW OWNER, NEW LOOK*



**Just weeks after taking over the Laguna Hills Mall, new owners Merlone Geier Partners have unveiled plans for a new look that better caters to the experience shoppers are looking for today. The plans include an open courtyard and a new, 14 screen movie theater that will offer a top-flight menu and drinks.**

"We're turning the mall inside-out on the western portion facing the hospital," said Jeremy Meredith, Project Manager for Merlone Geier. "There will be great cafes and restaurants. It will feel like a great American Main Street."

San Diego-based Merlone Geier acquired the 68-acre mall in May. Built in 1973, the mall is in need of a major redevelopment to bring it into line with the modern shopping experience. Merlone Geier has a long-standing reputation of working closely with cities and neighboring stakeholders to gather input in the development and design of their properties, and City officials say they're excited to have the new owners on board.





The mall will serve as the backbone of Laguna Hills' Urban Village plan to create a public space that provides not only shopping, but also a pedestrian experience and public-gathering space. Just south of the mall, Oakbrook Village will undergo a redevelopment, replacing the strip-mall center with a residential and commercial area that will ultimately connect to the mall with walking paths.

"We want to be very responsive to the City's Urban Village plan," Meredith said.

The City itself has already taken many steps as it works towards realizing its Urban Village plan widening El Toro Road and Avenida de la Carlota to accommodate more traffic, building the Civic Center and working with property owners to create the vision.

"Aside from the Urban Village plan", Meredith said, "Merlone Geier is excited to be part of Laguna Hills for many reasons".

"It's a great demographic," he said. "South Orange County is a great demographic, a very desirable location. Finding a property as large as this with the upside potential is quite rare... It's perfectly positioned to serve the region as a whole."

In addition to a new open-air plaza, Merlone Geier is in talks with an upscale theater operator for a second-floor cinema that would include reserved seating, meals, beer, and wine. A fitness center will also be added.

The property is the largest in Merlone Geier's portfolio. Merlone Geier Partners is a private real estate investment company focused on the acquisition, development and redevelopment of retail and retail-driven mixed-use properties on the West Coast. Merlone Geier Partners and their predecessor firm have been actively investing in West Coast retail property for more than 20 years.

Meredith said Merlone Geier is looking forward to a long-term partnership with the City. "We're cautious in our investment opportunities," Meredith said, "and we hold on to our investments for the long term."

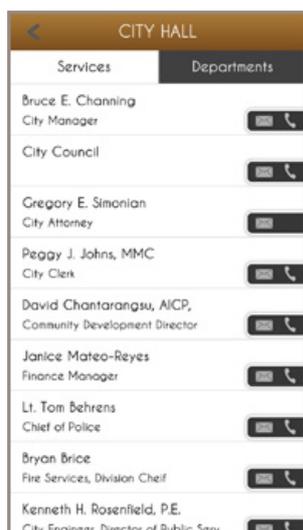
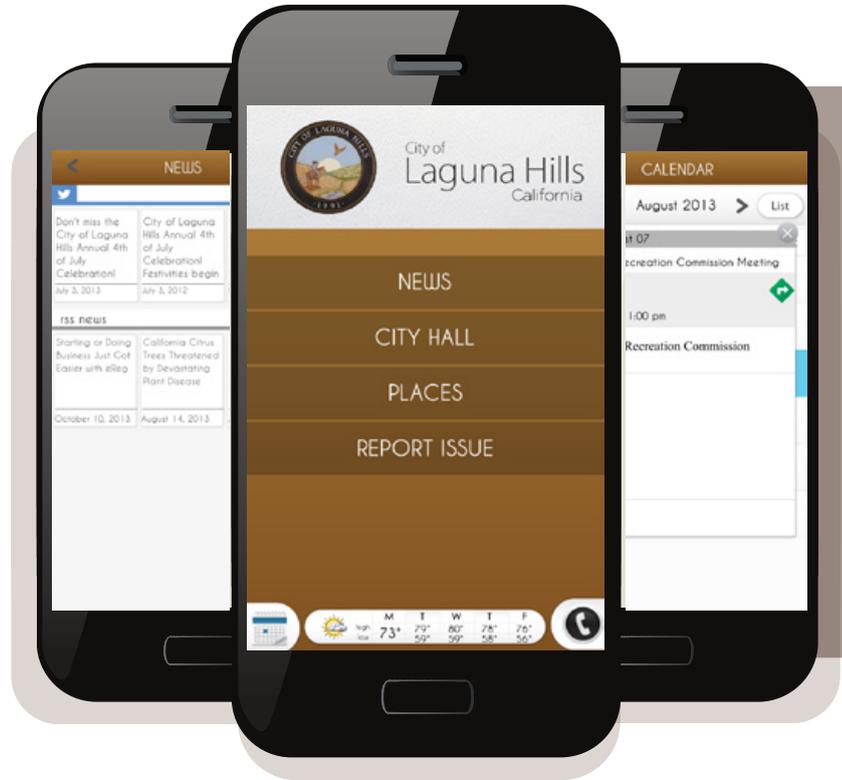


# GOING MOBILE

## Laguna Hills Now Offers a Mobile App

### A new mobile application is available to download for all Laguna Hills residents!

In pursuit of its goal to stay up to date with the new technology that has become part of everyday life, the City has developed a smart phone application to give individuals direct access to City Hall. From being able to access the City's calendar to reporting any issue with a click of a few buttons to finding great new places to eat and shop, users who download this great new app will be able to stay more connected.



### Once downloaded, users will have instant access to citywide information and services.

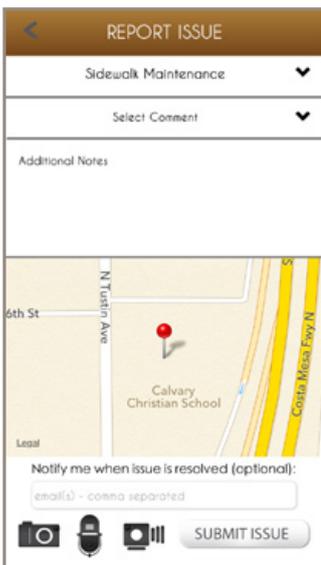
The simple-to-use mobile app features five tabs on the home screen: "News," "City Hall," "Places," "Report An Issue" and "Shop and Dine." From the "News" tab, users can view the City's news feed as well as any important updates as they arise. By using the "City hall" tab, users can quickly get in contact with any City department or use a new service. By selecting the tab, a user can simply scroll through the list of all of the City's services and departments, find what they are looking for and press the icon to either send an email or call instantly.

# GOING MOBILE



## Looking for something to do locally?

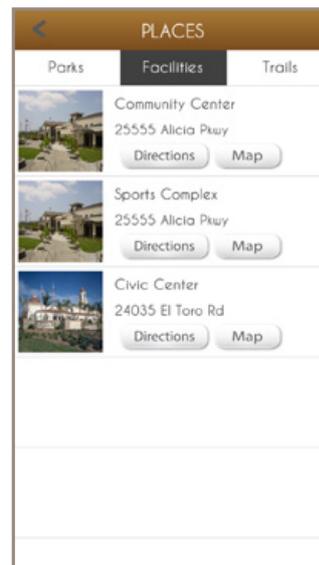
Check out the "Places" tab, where users can find the locations and maps for all of the City's parks, facilities, and even hiking trails, complete with everything from lists of local park amenities to hiking trail lengths and pictures. There's also a "Shop and Dine" tab with a convenient list of places to shop and dine, separated into categories, located right in Laguna Hills. Whether a user is looking for a place to eat or shop, just scrolling through the list provides many great local options. Not only that, but with the application, users can easily call, get directions to, and view the business website!



## Another great feature is the "Report An Issue" function.

Users selecting this tab will be given instant access to a list of potential issues to report, from graffiti to sidewalk maintenance. Once chosen, users have the ability to select a comment as well as provide any additional notes they may wish to add. If a user is

reporting the issue right where it is taking place, the GPS on the smartphone will be able to notify City officials of its exact location. The app also allows uploading photos, videos or voice recordings, as well as entering a reply email in case the user wishes to be contacted once the issue has been resolved!



## To stay connected and keep up to date,

download this free app now. The application is available in both iPhone and Android formats. Simply search for "Laguna Hills" in the respective app stores.

# BUDGET BREAKDOWN



## Every two years, the City sets aside approximately six months to focus on budget preparations.

The City completed its 2013-15 Biennial Budget process in July and is looking forward to the next two years. One of the key goals during this process was to manage costs while maintaining a high level of service for City residents.

Laguna Hills' budget picture is strong and poised to gain even more strength as the economy continues to improve and major projects in the City come on line.

Operating revenues are projected at \$19.6 million in fiscal year 2013-14, while expenditures are projected at \$17.3 million. In fiscal year 2014-15, revenues are expected to climb to \$20.6 million, while expenditures are expected at \$17.8 million.

The single-highest contributor to City revenues is property tax, providing 44 percent of the City's revenues. Sales tax is the second, at 28 percent. Over the next few years, several key projects are expected to come on line that would boost property and sales tax: the Laguna Hills Mall renovation, the Oakbrook Village redevelopment and The Village at Nellie Gail Ranch.

Public safety continues to be a priority and is the single-highest expense for the City, accounting for 40 percent of

the City's General Fund budget. Public Services accounts for 24 percent of the spending, and Community Services 10 percent. The City continues to carefully manage its resources, as demonstrated by the fact the 2013-14 General Fund spending is .08 percent less than the previous year. The savings came through a concerted effort to limit expenditures across all departments.

The 2013-15 Biennial Budget includes a 6-year Capital Improvement Program that includes 18 projects at a cost of 18.3 million. For the 2013-15 Biennial Budget cycle, the City has allocated \$6.6 million toward 14 capital projects for streets, parks, open space and more.

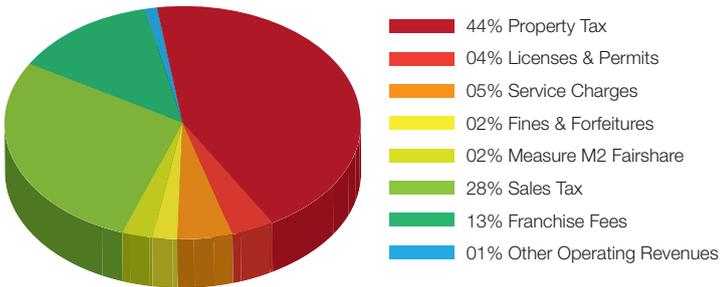
## Eight Year Financial Plan

The City puts a large emphasis on long-term planning. One useful tool is the Eight-Year Financial Plan, which evaluates long-term implications of current financial decisions. Adhering to its Eight-Year Financial Plan keeps the City from using gimmicks or "quick fixes" to solve short-term financial challenges. The plan, while conservative, allows a glimpse into a strong financial future for the City.

The City's 2013-2015 Biennial Budget is online at [www.ci.laguna-hills.ca.us](http://www.ci.laguna-hills.ca.us).

# BUDGET BREAKDOWN

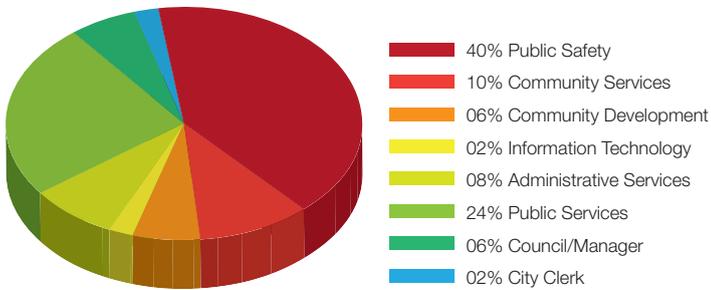
## Fiscal Year 2013-14 Operating Revenues



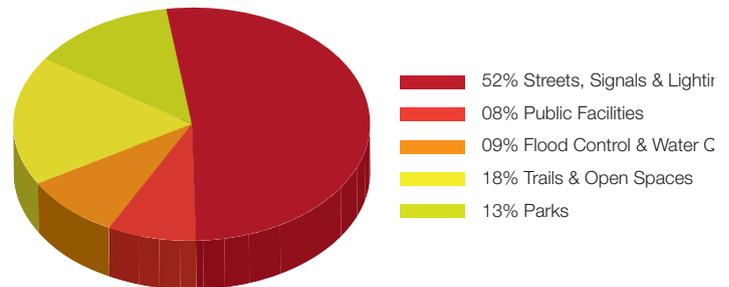
## Capital Improvement Projects

\$2 million	Annual Street Maintenance
\$1.28 million	Ridge Route Drive and El Toro Road Pavement Rehabilitation
\$1.2 million	La Paz Open Space Riparian Habitat
\$402,000	Sports Complex Renovations
\$375,000	Water Quality Program
\$300,000	Stockport Park Playground Renovations
\$200,000	Sports Complex - Softball Field Improvements
\$200,000	Community Center and Sports Complex - Sports Field Renovations
\$175,000	General Park Renovations

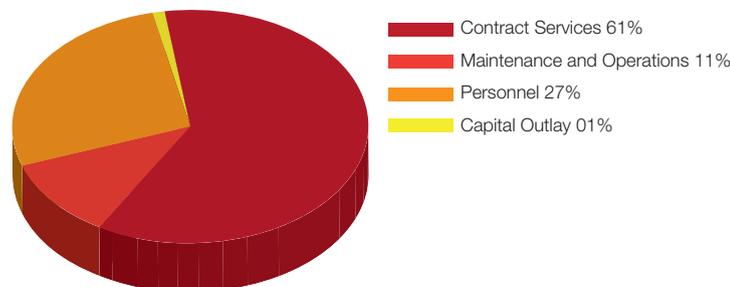
## Percent of Total General Fund Operating Expenditures by Department (FY 2013-14)



## 2013-14 Capital Improvement Projects by Categories



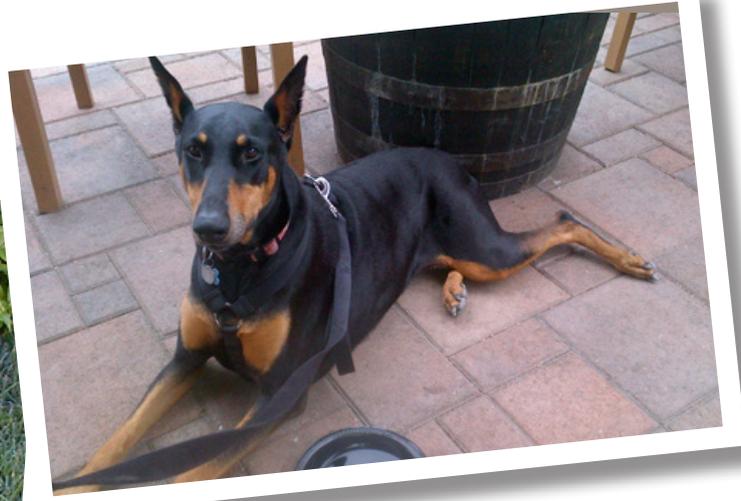
## Classification Percentage of Total General Fund Operating Expenditures (FY 2013-14)



# ENVIRONMENT

## Help Prevent POollution

Protect Our Waterways by Picking up After Your Pets



**Did you know that pet waste is a contributor of bacterial contamination to our local waterways? Picking up after your pet is not only polite, it also protects our creeks, rivers, bays, and ultimately, our ocean.**

When pet waste is not picked up, it can travel with urban runoff (water from rain, sprinklers or hoses) into storm drains flowing untreated through our local waterways to the ocean. Accumulation of bacteria from waste poses not only a serious threat to our water, but also to our health. Fecal bacteria increases nutrient levels in our waterways, causing an imbalance in our water's chemistry resulting in toxic algal blooms. Also, several pet products such as shampoo and flea control can have detrimental chemical effects on our water quality if they enter the storm drain system.

Help reduce the quantity and improve the quality of runoff from your neighborhood by:

- Taking a bag with you on walks and always picking up after your pet.
- Disposing of pet waste in the trash or in a toilet.
- Bathing your pet indoors using less-toxic shampoos or having your pet professionally groomed. Follow instructions on the products and clean up spills.
- If bathing your pet outside, wash him or her on your lawn or another absorbent surface to keep the wash water from running into the street, gutter or storm drain.
- Using oral or topical flea control products.
- Disposing of shampoos, sprays, collars, and other products at a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center. For locations, call 714-834-6752 or visit [www.oilandfills.com/hhwcc.asp](http://www.oilandfills.com/hhwcc.asp).

Remember, the ocean begins at your front door. To learn about what you can do to prevent urban runoff pollution or to report a water pollution problem, contact the City of Laguna Hills Public Services Department at (949) 707-2657 or visit the Orange County Stormwater Program at [www.ocwatersheds.com](http://www.ocwatersheds.com).

# PUBLIC ART

## LAGUNA HILLS ART AVAILABLE ONLINE



### The City is now offering reproductions of three murals depicting early Laguna Hills and the Saddleback Valley for sale through a newly established online store.

The online public art store features the murals created by muralist Robert Evans found in the City Council Chambers: "Discovering Orange County," "Mining Pecten Reef" and "War Brings Change."

The online public art store features 11 purchasable items that range from \$8 to \$429, depending on size. The reproductions are available as post cards, a Civic Center public art collage poster and mural reproductions on canvas of various sizes. The store can be accessed through the City's website homepage under the "Public Art Store" on the "Quick Links." Transactions can be completed via Paypal. The proceeds from these sales will help fund future public art projects.

## ALERT OC

Ready in an Emergency

The City of Laguna Hills is part of AlertOC, a mass notification system designed to keep Orange County residents and businesses informed of emergencies and certain community events. By registering with AlertOC, time-sensitive voice messages from the City or County can be sent to your home, cell or business phone. Text messages may also be sent to cell phones, e-mail accounts and hearing impaired receiving devices.

Sign up for this free service at <http://bos.ocgov.com/alertoc>. Public safety officials use the system to quickly send out messages when there is a perceived, upcoming or imminent situation that may require community action.

With the AlertOC partnership between the City and County, residents and businesses only need to provide their contact information once to receive emergency messages from either the County or City in which they live and/or work, regardless of the nature and scale of the incident.