



## The County Passes a Balanced Budget for 2010-11

In July the Board of Supervisors approved the FY2010-11 County Budget. This completed a year-long process of closing a \$20 million shortfall in the General Fund, necessitating reductions to all departments in the county. This budget continues our tradition of making tough choices to live within our means, as we face an increasingly difficult economic reality. A budget summary is shown below with links to our website.

**Employee impacts:** For the first time in many years, we have had to enact layoffs. Almost 11 full-time equivalent (FTE) filled positions will be eliminated, resulting in layoffs for 15 employees and 3 others being affected through a reduction of hours, transfer or bumping. These reductions become effective August 7<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to 40 employees taking advantage of the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program, a significantly larger number of layoffs were avoided. We appreciate the work all these employees have given to the County and thank them for their service. Overall, we've reduced 180 vacant positions in the last 3 years.

**Waiting for the State:** We are still awaiting progress on the state budget. The state faces a \$19 billion shortfall and most of the Governor's proposals include cuts (rather than raising revenue). Potential impacts to programs could include a reduction of funding for mental health

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## Update on Smart Meters in Novato

Are Smart Meters the smart way to go in Marin? Many people in this County would answer "No" or at the very least, "Not Yet".

The Board of Supervisors authorized sending a letter to Michael Peevey, President of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), asking that the CPUC immediately suspend deployment of the Smart Meter system in unincorporated Marin until: the CPUC ordered independent investigation is complete, all elements of the system have been deemed to be working properly and it has been determined that the system is fair and accurate to energy users for which it is being installed.

The Supervisors' concern dealt with billing accuracy and reported device malfunction concerns dating back to 2006 when PG&E received CPUC approval to begin the statewide deployment of Smart Meters throughout its 5 million rate payer service area. The Smart Meter is considered by the CPUC as an integral part of the State's "demand response" energy management Smart-Grid.

In October 2009, in response to a high volume of ratepayer complaints filed with the CPUC regarding Smart Meter billing accuracy, the CPUC ordered an independent investigation by The Structure Group to evaluate Smart Meters and PG&E's deployment of the system. The accuracy of meters came about from numerous complaints from the Bakersfield area where Smart Meters were installed and high energy bills resulted. That investigation is currently ongoing and expected to be completed in September. The CPUC did not require suspension of deployment during the current investigation.

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### OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMART METER INFO AND INPUT

**August 24th ~ Novato City Council Meeting**

PG&E Presentation to Council

**Early September (date TBD)**

PG&E is planning to hold a Community Workshop for Novato residents. Check "Upcoming Events" on my website for date and time once it is announced by PG&E.



## Budget Update (continued from page 1)

and social services, particularly Cal-WORKS and in-home Support Services, as well as a shift in responsibility to the County for housing non-violent felons. There are currently three competing state budget plans being discussed in the State Legislature, so we will need to prepare and wait for resolution. We have \$2 Million in contingency to give us time to adapt to the expected losses.

**Our Plan for the Future:** We will continue with our long-term initiatives to ensure financial sustainability and will continue working toward the goals of our Long-Term Restructuring Plan, such as:

- Reducing pension costs of new employees
- Ensuring health care affordability with plan design changes
- Improving management practices and systems to increase organizational efficiencies

Due to our financial discipline and long-term planning, we were largely able to mitigate impacts on staffing levels critical to delivering services, compared to many of our surrounding jurisdictions. We hope to continue this practice, but much will depend on the economy, contract negotiations, and the State budget.

**Thank You County Staff – and You:** Our value as public employees is shown in our commitment to the community and the results we achieve in support of the County's mission and values. As I have said during our many public budget hearings and workshops, hard financial times can bring the people that make up an organization closer, or drive them apart. I am proud of how our county employees have pulled together, and the creativity, flexibility and sheer hard work all our departments have shown in balancing the budget. I would like to thank all of our county workers for their hard work this past year.

I am also very grateful for the thoughtful input we received from the public during the process, including last year's Community Survey, the first-of-its-kind Community Budget Forum held in Novato last December, our new online Budget Input form, and of course all who wrote or came to meetings to provide suggestions.

I am confident that we can continue to provide quality services while adapting to and meeting the challenges we face in the coming year and beyond.

### BUDGET SUMMARY FISCAL YEAR 2010-11

**General Fund:**

FY 2010-11: \$374,005,211  
(change of -1.5% from FY 2009-10 Approved Budget)

**All Funds:**

FY 2010-11: \$443,761,715  
(change of 0.8% from FY 2009-10 Approved Budget)

**Budget Reductions:**

\$30 M Net County Cost over last 3 years

**Position Reductions:**

180 FTE over last 3 years

**County Budget Online:** <http://mine/mine/AD/main/budgetPrep.cfm>

**FY 2010-11 Final Budget Presentation:**

<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/AD/main/budgetinfo/FY201011FinalBudgetPres.pdf>



## Smart Meters Update (continued from page 1)

PG&E began deployment of the Smart Meter system in Marin this July and expects to complete installation by spring of 2011. As of July 20, PG&E had completed approximately 3% of Marin installations. System-wide installation is anticipated to be completed by spring 2012. The total cost of installation in Northern California is reported to cost 2.2 billion dollars. PG&E has received approval from the CPUC to recover those installation costs from the ratepayers.

Smart Meters allow PG&E customers to access their energy usage on a real time basis instead of the end of a billing cycle. The system also incorporates a remote connect/disconnect device on all meters, eliminating the need for PG&E to visit the location every time a customer moves in or out of their home. This reportedly provides significant operational savings for the company, which ultimately gets passed on to consumers.

The CPUC has stated that a resolution from a city, town or county prohibiting the installation of Smart Meters is not legal and will not be adhered to.

Given the unusually high rate of reported device failures, the cost of installation (\$2.2 billion), the concern and uncertainty expressed by the public regarding Smart Meter operational accuracy and the wireless technology employed by the system - it seems not only fiscally prudent, but appropriately protective of the public trust to suspend installation of the Smart Meter system until the CPUC's independent investigation is complete and, if warranted, remedies implemented.

In speaking with Joshua Townsend, PG&E's Public Affairs Representative for Marin, Sonoma and Napa, PG&E is planning on holding well publicized town hall meetings for the public to answer all questions and demonstrate how Smart Meters work. Please check my county website under "Upcoming Events" at [www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/BS/main/sups/sdistr5/events.cfm](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/BS/main/sups/sdistr5/events.cfm) for dates and times once they are announced by PG&E. I encourage you to join me in attending to ask questions and share any concerns you may have.

For those who are concerned over the potential health hazards of the wireless technology in Smart Meters, the PUC directs those concerns to the Federal Communications Commission in care of the Chair Julius Genachowski at [julius.genachowski@fcc.gov](mailto:julius.genachowski@fcc.gov). I recommend copying Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (contact info can be found at <http://woolsey.house.gov>) and/or our Senators Boxer (<http://boxer.senate.gov>) and Feinstein (<http://feinstein.senate.gov>).



## FALL NEWS AND EVENTS

The Fall newsletter from County Parks & Open Space is scheduled to be posted by Monday, August 23 — and is chock full of FREE activities to take full advantage of Marin's natural wonders during the Fall season. Visit: [www.maringov.org/Depts/PK/Main/Newsletter.aspx](http://www.maringov.org/Depts/PK/Main/Newsletter.aspx)

- News
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Naturalist-led Walks
- Naturalist-led Family Walks
- Ranger Events
- Dog-friendly Hikes

view map  
of all lands



At: [www.maringov.org/Depts/PK.aspx](http://www.maringov.org/Depts/PK.aspx)

## New Parks & Open Space Website

Parks & Open Space have launched [www.marinparks.org](http://www.marinparks.org)!

We hope you find the navigation more intuitive, the site more useful, and the overall experience more enjoyable.

As the seasons change throughout the year, the website will change too, reflecting the colors and natural cycles of Marin County's parks and open space system.

Check out new features, including an interactive activities and amenities database, an enhanced interactive map (expanded to include parks and recreational facilities), and a new online calendar of naturalist walks, family walks, volunteer days, and ranger events. We'll continue to roll out more features and pages over the next few weeks and months. Thank you for visiting!



## New Bike Lanes and Street Improvements on Alameda del Prado



Judy joins the Marin County Bicycle Coalition to celebrate the first ride on the new Alameda del Prado Bike Path.

I am delighted to announce the completion of the Alameda del Prado bike path project - which includes new Class 2 bicycle lanes, utility undergrounding, and road resurfacing.

The bicycle lanes connect the existing lanes on the City of Novato segments of Alameda del Prado to the north and south of the project area, closing a key gap in the North/South Bikeway. Previously, riders had to switch back and forth between the east and west sides of Highway 101 in southern Novato to have the safety of riding in standard 5-foot-wide bike lanes.

The project is part of Marin County's WalkBikeMarin initiative to help make Marin more healthy, livable, and environmentally sustainable by encouraging walking and bicycling as everyday transportation. Local residents also receive the

benefits of underground utility lines, a repaved roadway, new landscaping in the medians, and improved safety for pedestrians, drivers, and bicyclists alike.

A \$25 million federal grant from the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program in 2007 made the project possible. Marin was fortunate to be selected as one of only four communities in the United States for the program to improve bike paths and increase biking and foot traffic.

This project is the culmination of a complex 3-year effort involving numerous stakeholders. It truly has been a collaborative effort of local government, the Marin County Bicycle Coalition, and the cooperation of the neighbors along Alameda del Prado that helped make the project reality. Thank you to everyone who helped make this project a success!



**Above:** Cutting the ribbon  
**Right:** Thanking County Department of Public Works for their excellent work on the project



## City of Novato Launches New 'Our Town' E-Newsletter

If you live in within the Novato City limits, you may be interested in subscribing to the new e-newsletter just launched by the City of Novato, to keep up to date on City issues, meetings, workshops and more.

You can get information and subscribe to 'Our Town' (as well as sign up for other types of e-notifications) by visiting the City of Novato website at:

<http://www.cityofnovato.org/index.aspx?page=640>

You can also view the most recent e-newsletter at:

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs077/1103540043517/archive/1103618131033.html>



## Marin Community Clinics to Open New Novato Dental Clinic This Fall

This Fall, Marin Community Clinics' dental services will extend to Novato, adjacent to the Novato clinic on Redwood Boulevard. Currently available only in San Rafael, essential oral health services will be available to more children and adults in a new, six-chair dental clinic.

This project, currently under construction, is the result of collaboration between the Marin Community clinics and the County Department of Health & Human Services, who have been working to leverage resources and federal stimulus funds for facility construction for this needed service, one that I have been focused on bringing to Novato for some time.

The opening is targeted for early October — please check my website for updates!



## Gross Field Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Last Saturday proved to be a great day at Gross Field's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event, Wings over Marin. The event was open to the public and included many family-fun activities including antique and military aircraft displays, fly-bys, and seminars with special guest speakers including astronaut Millie Hughes-Fulford who did her private pilot training at Gross Field!



Judy with Tom Phillips, Farhad Mansourian and Ken Robbins at the Wings Over Marin event. **Photo by Bob Minkin, Minkin Design**—find more photos from the event at [www.minkindesign.com/photo/gross50th](http://www.minkindesign.com/photo/gross50th)

The event was made possible by the hard work of the Gross Field Community Association (a private organization of pilots, aircraft owners, businesses and residents who are interested in aviation) and the Marin County Department of Public Works.

Marin County is fortunate to have a County-owned airport. Gross Field supports many infrastructure needs of the County: medical air transfers, law enforcement flights, fire-fighting helicopter support, as well as business and traveling needs of many residents. Gross Field is also home to several businesses including Aeroclub Marin, Above and Beyond Aviation, Air Ward Inc., Civil Air Patrol, Direct Avionics, Scanlon Aviation, James Simon M.D. (Senior Aviation Medical Examiner), and T.J. Neff Aircraft Sales.

## Back to School: Check Out SchoolPool Marin

It's hard for busy families to find ways to save both time and money — let alone reduce traffic and emissions at the same time!

As schools all over Marin start the new school year, it may be the perfect time to check out the SchoolPool Marin website at [www.schoolpoolmarin.org](http://www.schoolpoolmarin.org).

The SchoolPool Marin program helps families find others in their neighborhood to carpool, walk, bike or take the bus together to and from school.

Once you register, you will automatically receive a match list of other families who travel a similar route to school. The list will provide you the opportunity to join or form a new school pool.

Even if you don't need a list right now, you can help your school win up to \$2,000 in the "Green Ways to School" Challenge! Visit the website to find out more.

### Reduce Traffic

Up to 26% of Marin's morning traffic consists of parents driving their kids to school

### Save Time & Money

Benefit from spending less time and money driving every day

### Reduce Emissions

Transportation accounts for 62% of Marin's greenhouse gas emissions — compared to 40% statewide

### Provide Exercise

Walking and biking provide kids much needed exercise to start the day — and it's FUN!

**SchoolPoolMarin.org**



carpool / walk / bike / bus together



Judy Arnold, Marin County Supervisor

DISTRICT 5 COUNTY CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

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September 2010

Calendar grid for September 2010 with color-coded days (yellow, cyan, green, orange).

October 2010

Calendar grid for October 2010 with color-coded days (cyan, green, orange).

Schedule of Events

- Sept 6—Labor Day (County offices closed)
Sept 14— Board of Supervisors Meeting
Sept 15—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
Sept 20—10am, Transit District Meeting
Sept 21— Board of Supervisors Meeting
Sept 23—7pm, Transportation Authority of Marin Meeting
Sept 28— Board of Supervisors Meeting
Oct 5—Board of Supervisors Meeting
Oct 12—Board of Supervisors Meeting
Oct 18—10am, Transit District Meeting
Oct 20—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
Oct 26—Board of Supervisors Meeting
Oct 28—7pm, Transportation Authority of Marin Meeting

All Board of Supervisors, Transit District, and TAM Meetings are open to the public and are held in the BOS Chambers in the Marin Civic Center at 3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 329.

Meeting locations for SMART Board meetings vary; visit www.sonomamarintrain.org, then click on "Documents", then "Board Archive" for details.

Start times for BOS meetings can vary. For start times and agenda packet materials for upcoming as well as minutes of prior meetings:

Go to the County of Marin website at www.co.marin.ca.us
Click on "Board of Supervisors"
Click on "Meeting Archive" near the top of the page

BOS meetings are also webcast live. To watch:

Go to the County of Marin website at www.co.marin.ca.us
Click on "Boards"
Click on "Live Video Broadcast" near the top of the page

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