



Mayor Russ Wall

Mayor's Message – June 2010

There has been much talk about the City's budget during the last several months. In an effort to inform the residents of Taylorsville about the budget constraints we face and the responsibilities we have to provide services, I would like to dedicate this month's Mayor's Message to that end.

One of my top priorities in managing our City has been to optimize performance and streamline our departments in order to limit waste and improve efficiency. Taylorsville has always limited its size of government. That was a core value of the original incorporators and it still is! In these tough times, the gains made in the past four years have paid off. In spite of the progress we have made, the City is still experiencing difficulty in balancing service delivery versus revenue. The "great recession" has placed a burden upon all of us in our personal lives, at our places of business, and in our local government.

I have presented the 2010 budget with several options, one of which included a property tax rate increase of 10 percent. This would amount to an average annual increase of \$24 per household (or \$2 per month).

It is very difficult to propose a tax increase at any time, as the City has always been very frugal in spending. But life does not stop during a downturn in the economy. Roads still need to be paved and plowed; Police and Fire calls continue and in some cases actually increase during tough economic times.

Over the last two years, our efforts limiting the size of government have become more vigorous as the City has made changes to limit the cost of services. The City has reduced its expenditures from the original budgeted amounts by 8.2% in 2008, 5.2% in 2009, and in 2010 the City is projecting a reduction of 12% below its adopted budget. The City has reduced its expenditures on vital services to the point where we are at risk of no longer living up to the expectations and demands of our residents. We must not be derelict in our duties to provide services to the residents and we must do so in a manner which is safe and productive for our residents and employees.

Realistically, if tax revenues continue to decline, services will have to be decreased. Public works and maintenance projects have and will continue to be put off, and reinvestment in the City, shopping areas, and our neighborhoods will not occur. The City needs to invest in itself and its future. Facts and figures show that the more a community invests in economic development, the more money it makes from non residential resources. If we invest now, residents will pay less in the future. Recent budgets have been limited in their investments, as the City has been devoting all its resources to essential services such as police, fire, and daily operations.

The proposed budget plan is designed to invest in the City's future and provide services commensurate with the needs of the community. I believe the citizens of Taylorsville will agree that streamlining government, reducing costs, and investing in critical services are in the best interest of our City. These themes are the hallmark of my administration and the cornerstone of the proposed 2010-2011 budget.

Some questions that are being asked in this discussion....

What do our tax dollars to the City provide for you?

The average household in the City pays \$196 in property tax per year or \$16 per month. The City accounts for about 15% of your total property tax bill. The City combines your property tax dollars with sales tax, fees, fines and grants to provide services. City property taxes were last increased in 2006 by approximately 15% per household (in 2006 this was approximately \$21 year). Utility franchise fees were also adopted and a storm water utility fee was imposed to finance a bond to repair our aged storm water system.

How does Taylorsville compare to the other Cities in the Valley?

- Taylorsville has the 2nd lowest property tax burden per capita income. Even with the proposed 10% increase, Taylorsville would still be the 2nd lowest in the County.

Property Tax				
City	Property Tax \$ / Capita	Per Capita Income	Tax Burden % / Capita Income	
South Salt Lake	\$ 212	\$ 19,884	1.064%	
West Valley	\$ 166	\$ 17,267	0.959%	
Riverton	\$ 141	\$ 20,098	0.700%	
Herriman	\$ 134	\$ 20,715	0.648%	
Midvale	\$ 116	\$ 20,815	0.560%	
South Jordan	\$ 125	\$ 23,420	0.532%	
Cottonwood Heights	\$ 184	\$ 34,745	0.528%	
Murray	\$ 127	\$ 24,629	0.515%	
Draper	\$ 140	\$ 28,864	0.484%	
West Jordan	\$ 87	\$ 19,897	0.436%	
Layton	\$ 91	\$ 24,740	0.366%	
Taylorsville	\$ 71	\$ 20,407	0.350%	
Sandy	\$ 75	\$ 27,375	0.275%	

- Taylorsville has the second lowest amount of employees per capita, including fire, police and public works.

Per Staffing (full time) / per capita		
City	Employees	
South Salt Lake	9.95	
Murray	8.74	
Midvale	6.01	
South Jordan	5.87	
West Valley	5.61	
Herriman	5.37	Incl. UFA & UPD
Sandy	4.84	
Layton	4.43	
Riverton	3.90	Incl. UFA & UPD
West Jordan	3.83	
Draper	3.82	Incl. UFA
Taylorsville	2.48	Incl. UFA & SLCOPW
Cottonwood Heights	2.36	Incl. UFA & SLCOPW
Taylorsville	0.75	Without UFA, SCLOPW and PD

- Taylorsville has the 9th lowest expenditure per lane mile on roads and public works. This means that we spend above the average city to keep our roads maintained at a higher level.

Public Works		
Rank	City	Expenditures / Lane Mile
1	Layton	\$ 44,816
2	Cottonwood Heights	\$ 18,278
3	West Jordan	\$ 16,011
4	Riverton	\$ 13,591
5	South Jordan	\$ 12,787
6	Herriman	\$ 11,638
7	Draper	\$ 11,544
8	West Valley	\$ 11,533
9	Taylorsville	\$ 9,813
10	Murray	\$ 8,611
11	Midvale	\$ 7,598
12	Sandy	\$ 5,677

- Taylorsville spends substantially less on local parks and recreation programs. The average expenditure is \$39 per person; Taylorsville spends less than \$2 per person.

City	Per Capita Parks & Rec.
Murray	\$ 111.0
Herriman	\$ 70.0
Draper	\$ 51.3
Layton	\$ 42.2
South Jordan	\$ 41.1
Sandy	\$ 38.4
Riverton	\$ 32.1
West Jordan	\$ 21.1
West Valley	\$ 12.1
Midvale	\$ 10.4
Taylorsville	\$ 1.8
Cottonwood Heights	No Data Avail.

- Taylorsville Economic Development expenditures are the 3rd lowest at \$5/capita; growing communities are spending on average \$48 per capita. The average sales tax received per capita is \$185. Taylorsville collects \$122. Those spending more on economic development are making more.

Sales Tax			
City	Population	Sales Tax	Sales Tax \$ per capita
South Salt Lake	21,607	\$ 8,965,692	\$ 415
Murray	46,201	\$ 12,600,000	\$ 273
Draper	42,317	\$ 9,700,000	\$ 229
Midvale	28,129	\$ 5,516,600	\$ 196
Layton	65,514	\$ 11,688,000	\$ 178
West Valley	123,447	\$ 21,480,000	\$ 174
Sandy	96,660	\$ 16,568,065	\$ 171
South Jordan	51,131	\$ 8,201,239	\$ 160
West Jordan	104,447	\$ 14,435,250	\$ 138
Cottonwood Heights	35,418	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 130
Taylorsville	58,785	\$ 7,150,000	\$ 122
Herriman	17,689	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 113
Riverton	39,751	\$ 4,400,000	\$ 111

- Taylorsville is 9th out of the 13 comparison communities in expenditures for its police protection. Taylorsville has the second lowest average of officers per 1,000 in population.

City	\$ Per Capita on Police
South Salt Lake	\$320
Murray	\$223
Midvale	\$212
West Valley	\$166
Layton	\$139
West Jordan	\$134
Sandy	\$128
Cottonwood Heights	\$126
Taylorsville	\$118
South Jordan	\$102
Riverton	\$98
Draper	\$89
Herriman	\$0

City	Sworn Officers	Sworn Officers per 1,000 Population
South Salt Lake	63	2.92
Midvale	45	1.60
West Valley	197	1.60
Murray	73	1.58
Layton	78	1.19
Sandy	112	1.16
West Jordan	101	0.97
Cottonwood Heights	34	0.96
South Jordan	49	0.96
Taylorsville	54	0.92
Draper	34	0.80
Riverton	NA	NA
Herriman	NA	NA

- Taylorsville has the 3rd highest call volume per officer.

City	Sworn Officers	Calls per Officer
Draper	34	921
Midvale	45	860
Taylorsville	54	722
Layton	78	701
Sandy	112	699
South Salt Lake	63	689
South Jordan	49	684
West Jordan	101	645
Murray	73	616
Cottonwood Heights	34	556
West Valley	197	533
Herriman	NA	NA
Riverton	NA	NA

- Taylorsville is 12th out of the 13 comparison communities in expenditures on fire protection. Taylorsville imports assistance from other departments for 15-18% of its calls. Taylorsville has the lowest Firefighter per capita ratio with .55/1,000. The average is 1.05/1,000.

Expenditures / Capita	
City	\$ for Fire Department Per Capita
South Salt Lake	\$ 204
Murray	\$ 157
Midvale	\$ 150
Herriman	\$ 110
Riverton	\$ 98
Cottonwood Heights	\$ 87
West Jordan	\$ 83
South Jordan	\$ 83
Draper	\$ 81
Sandy	\$ 81
West Valley	\$ 72
Taylorsville	\$ 65
Layton	\$ 56

City	FF per 1,000 Population
South Salt Lake	2.41
Midvale	1.74
Murray	1.36
Layton	1.05
Herriman	1.02
Riverton	0.91
South Jordan	0.90
West Jordan	0.79
Sandy	0.78
West Valley	0.75
Cottonwood Heights	0.72
Draper	0.67
Taylorsville	0.55

Why a tax increase now?

- City services are at a breaking point and demand for services are on the rise
- There is no "fat" left to trim
- The benefit of the slow economy is construction costs are low and interest rates are low
Therefore, long term, this investment really makes a lot of sense for the City

What services do we receive from the City?

- Police Protection
- Fire Protection
- Snow Plowing
- Road Maintenance
- Sidewalks
- Justice Court
- Criminal Prosecution
- Ordinance Enforcement
- Building Inspection (Life Safety)
- Planning and Zoning
- Parks and Trails
- Senior Center
- Community Recreation Center
- Economic Development
- Emergency Preparedness Services
- Street lights
- Neighborhood Clean up dumpsters
- Landfill vouchers
- Senior Housing
- Community Programs such as Taylorsville Dayzz
- Animal Control

What are elected officials doing to plan for a sustainable future for our City?

At the beginning of this year, Taylorsville elected officials asked residents to take part in meetings envisioning the future of Taylorsville. Many of you participated in that exercise, either in person or in other communications. The overwhelming theme from the meetings was to keep Taylorsville a great city and not to let the City deteriorate.

Participants of those discussions asked for the following:

- Preservation and revitalization of existing neighborhoods and an increase in community pride
- Economic development to revitalize older and empty shopping centers
- Parks and trails
- Increased police presence
- Increased fire and paramedic services
- Youth centers and activities
- Reduction of traffic congestion
- Performing and Visual Arts Center
- Increased Ordinance / Code Enforcement

As the Mayor and a fellow resident, I have listened to the desires of my community and believe that all of the ideas are important components in building a strong, successful, and desirable community. Some requests are for increased basic services, some are for amenities that enrich our daily lives, but nearly all of them require funding sources.

In prior years' budgets I have attempted to respect the wishes of the community, to responsibly and efficiently deliver services and propose tax increases only when necessary to maintain or improve levels of service. My 2010-2011 budget would simply maintain the current levels of service.

I feel it is incumbent upon the Mayor and City Council to look at the near term finances of the City, while at the same time looking to invest appropriately in the future of the community. The time to invest is now! I believe that the City must invest into projects that will bring future dividends in economic development which will take the tax burden off of residents.

Cost effective installation and repair of infrastructure should occur when costs are low. The City should act to preserve its neighborhoods before they deteriorate and harm the residents' and businesses' life-long investments and property values. Taylorsville residents and businesses deserve to have public safety protection from well run and appropriately funded and staffed police and fire departments.

In my experience, the residents of Taylorsville have always been thoughtful, well reasoned and willing to stand up and face a challenge. We are in the midst of many challenges this year, but with wise decisions, the City can emerge stronger, have adequate services, and be prepared to seize opportunities for economic growth and vitality by making the right investments today. Please take time to consider where we are and where we should plan to be. Whatever your position on the budget, it is important to let your voices be heard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russ Wall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.