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## **CITY OF BEAUMONT TAKES COST-SAVING STEPS**

### **Measures are Response to Steep Decline in Sales Tax Revenue**

The City of Beaumont has taken a number of cost-saving measures in response to a sharp drop in sales tax revenue for the five-month period from October 2009 through February 2010.

Sales tax revenue makes up more than 35 percent of the City's general fund revenue. Despite conservative budgeting, that revenue is down 14 percent, or \$2,300,000.

In order to decrease operating expenditures, the City Manager and department heads have taken steps including, but not limited to the following:

- Elimination of 11 vacant positions across city departments since Oct. 1: City leaders performed a thorough review of unfilled positions to determine which ones could be eliminated with minimum disruption to services.
- Comprehensive fee review: The City is reviewing the fees charged for services such as EMS and facility rentals to ensure they are in line with comparably sized cities.
- Restriction on travel and training: City employees are limited to travel and training that is related to critical business or required certification.
- Adjustment of staffing levels in the Fire Department: In order to reduce overtime expenditures in Fire operations – overtime increased from \$215,000, in fiscal 2003 to \$1,336,000 in fiscal 2009, more than a 500 percent increase – the department will decrease the "minimum daily staffing" level from 47 to 44. When staffing falls below the minimum due to sick leave, vacation, training and other factors, the department must call in staff, which triggers overtime expenses. The department has taken a strategic look at equipment, station locations and geographic coverage to ensure that essential services are maintained citywide.

"The updated minimum staffing plan being instituted by the Fire Department was developed by our Fire Management Team in response to the sales tax shortfall that the City is currently experiencing," said Fire Chief Anne Huff. "The contingency staffing plan is based on the possible number of available staff on any given day, and makes adjustments in the placement of both personnel and apparatus so that essential services are maintained citywide."

The City's fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30. The fiscal 2010 operating budget is available at [www.cityofbeaumont.com](http://www.cityofbeaumont.com).

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