

**Staff Paper #7:**

**City Hall at the Mall**

**ISSUE:** Closure of City Hall at the Mall

City Hall at the Mall (CHATM) is now in its sixth year of operation. It provides a convenient location to obtain many services during non-traditional government hours of operation. Services at CHATM include acceptance of: registration forms for City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Department recreation classes, programs and adult sports leagues; utility payments for Modesto Irrigation District, City Water/Sewer/Garbage, Comcast (Cable), AT&T Long Distance (\$1.00 fee), AT&T Wireless (\$1.00 fee) and PG&E; payment for City of Modesto Business License Mill Tax, City Employee Retiree Insurance and City Parking Citations; and, purchase of U.S. Postal Stamps, City of Modesto Golf passes and Gift Certificates, Modesto MAX monthly bus passes and ticket books, Modesto MAX to BART passes and Dial-A-Ride tickets. Staff is also available to provide information on current City of Modesto job openings; bus routes, fares and schedules; and City Council agendas and minutes. Blue recycling bags are also available to City residents. Many customers who do not have checking accounts use CHATM as a pay station, since it accepts cash.

One of the Fiscal Year 04-05 budget reductions proposed by staff includes closure of City Hall at the Mall (CHATM). Two full-time and twelve part-time staff are assigned to CHATM. The full-time employees would be reassigned to other functions within the department; one would fill a vacant support position, and the other would oversee Guest Services. The part-time employees would be terminated.

**CURRENT PRACTICE:**

CHATM is open 73 hours each week (longer hours during the holiday season). All of the services available at CHATM are offered each hour that the facility is open. CHATM is currently seeing over one-half million dollars in gross receipts monthly, and is providing service to over 5,000 customers.

In addition to general government services, the Police Department's Northwest Area Office is located at this facility. Services offered by the Police Department would remain as they are presently.

**COUNCIL OPTION #1:** Support the staff recommendation to close City Hall at the Mall.

**RAMIFICATIONS:** Closure of CHATM would mean that patrons would need to find other pay stations for their non-City bills and would either have to mail their City utility bills or come to Tenth Street Place during normal business hours. The closest pay stations are on Coffee and Paradise Roads. There is currently no other location for MAX to BART passes, but this function could be handled through another site. As stated above, the twelve part-time staff would be laid off; the two full-time staff would be reassigned to duties at Tenth Street Place.

**COUNCIL OPTION #2:** Reduce the number of hours CHATM is open.

**RAMIFICATIONS:** Staff would need to determine the hours/days of the week/month when the least number of customers are paying utility bills, which is the greatest method of revenue collection. The savings would result from lower part-time payroll expenditures. Each hour that CHATM is reduced equates to approximately \$15.00 in part-time staffing.

**COUNCIL OPTION #3:** Keep City Hall at the Mall open.

**RAMIFICATIONS:** Leaving CHATM open would result in a continuation of the services currently provided at this location. The Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Department has been given a budget reduction requirement of \$601,000, which has been achieved. Removing CHATM from the list of reductions would decrease the department's proposed reductions by \$113,000.