

City of Visalia expecting \$3.94 million federal grant

The City of Visalia is just a speed bump away from a new 5-story parking structure downtown, Rep. Devin Nunes announced recently.

The Department of Commerce has asked the city to apply for a \$3.94 million grant to help pay for the parking structure. The invitation—a strong indicator that the federal agency wants to fund a project—came after weeks of talks between the congressman, city and Commerce officials.

The city committed to build the new parking structure to alleviate traffic congestion near the hospital and nearby businesses. The hospital will likely be the greatest benefactor of the structure as it undertakes the first stages of a 30-year improvement and expansion plan at the health care center. The parking structure will be built on Acequia Avenue north of the hospital.

“The city has dedicated itself to preserving and building on the vitality of its

downtown, of which the hospital has been an integral component for more than 30 years,” Mr. Nunes said. “I



am happy to be able to serve the needs of the city and the hospital district at the same time.”

Visalia Mayor Bob Link welcomed the news.

“We’re very pleased to have been invited to formally apply for an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to help fund the West Acequia Parking Structure,” said Visalia Mayor Bob Link. “This parking structure will provide nearly 700 parking spaces and will provide some much-needed parking relief downtown, and pave the way for the expansion of the hospital, as well as accommodate new business.”

The grant is expected to pay for more than 43 percent of the construction costs of the structure. The city is expected to use additional funds toward the project, including parking in-lieu

fees and funds from the Property and Business Improvement District, among other sources.

“This outstanding news is an example of how a Congressman that is from this county and is committed to this area can make a significant difference in the economic success of Tulare County,” Mayor Link said. “We’re deeply indebted to Congressman Nunes for his efforts on behalf of the city, the hospital and downtown.”

City Manager Steve Salomon said he appreciated the collaborative effort toward getting the grant.

“The city, Kaweah Delta Health Care District, the Downtown PBID and Congressman Devin Nunes all worked very hard on the preliminary application and it’s exciting to see that the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce has recognized the merits of this project and the positive impacts it will have on the economic health of Visalia and Tulare County,” Mr. Salomon said.

Nunes seeks applicants for fall/spring Page program

Rep. Devin Nunes is looking for an outstanding high school student in Fresno or Tulare County to spend the fall or spring as a Page in the House of Representatives.

This unique program gives students the opportunity to meet students from around the country, attend special classes and seminars at the Page School, and serve the country’s leaders while working in the House of Representatives.

The fall and spring sessions are Sept. 5, 2004-Jan. 8, 2005 and Jan. 31, 2005-June 10, 2005. The application can be obtained online at <http://www.nunes.house.gov/congressionalpage.htm>.

The application must be received no later than May 5 at 5 p.m. Applications will be reviewed and a successful candidate will be forwarded to the Speaker of the House for consideration in either session. The Speaker’s office will select 72 Pages for

each program on a competitive basis from the pool of nominees.

To be eligible for the page program, applicants must:

- Be 16 years of age at the time of their appointment
- Have a ‘B’ average or better
- Be willing to serve as a Page before or after their junior year of high school.