



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 30, 2012

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### **City of Vallejo Launches Online Public Forum: First question invites residents to comment on Measure B proposed expenditures**

The City of Vallejo has launched Open City Hall, an online program to solicit citizen input and feedback on important city topics. The program is accessible on the main page of the City's website at [www.ci.vallejo.ca.us](http://www.ci.vallejo.ca.us) and allows individuals to make comments and read what other people are saying. City officials will read the statements and incorporate them into their decision process. "We believe this will be a cost effective, convenient way for citizens to learn about and provide input on city issues," said City Manager Daniel E. Keen.

The first Open City Hall topic in Vallejo asks the question: What do you think about the staff recommendations for using Measure B funds in Fiscal Year 2012-13? With the passage of Measure B in November 2011, the City Council will have additional revenues to appropriate in FY 2012-13. The tax was effective beginning April 1, 2012; staff anticipates that approximately \$11,875,000 will be collected in the 15 month period from April 2012 to June 2013. Staff recommendations regarding the use of these funds include projects such as rebuilding reserves, preserving and enhancing public safety and quality of life and enhancing and reconstructing infrastructure. The City Council is scheduled to discuss the budget at its meetings on May 22, 2012 and May 29, 2012 and approve an expenditure plan on June 12, 2012. Input obtained through Open City Hall will be available on the website and presented to the City Council.

Open City Hall is one element of the City's efforts to provide more opportunities for citizen communication and engagement. The City has produced a weekly newsletter (Vallejo News) since October 2011. The City will also implement a participatory budget process with its residents beginning in summer 2012 as another component of its engagement efforts.

The program was developed by Peak Democracy, [www.peakdemocracy.com](http://www.peakdemocracy.com), a non-partisan company based in Berkeley, CA, whose mission is to broaden civic engagement and build public trust in government. About 40 other cities across the country are using Open City Hall.