



# 'Shift' Happens – Leading in the New Normal

ANNE AMBROSE

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE  
SERVICES

CITY OF PALMDALE

# Presenter

**Anne Ambrose**

Director of Administrative Services

City of Palmdale

661-433-0624

[aambrose@cityofpalmdale.org](mailto:aambrose@cityofpalmdale.org)



# AGENDA

- ▶ INTRODUCTION
- ▶ WORKPLACE SHIFT
- ▶ SERVICE SHIFT
- ▶ ENGAGEMENT
- ▶ FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
- ▶ LESSONS FROM THE TRENCHES



# City of Palmdale, CA

157,000  
population

104 square miles

Over 50% Latinex

Contract City

Council/Manager

202 staff



## Workforce Shift

"We've always done it this way..." is dead.

- ▶ Open by appointment only
- ▶ In-office to work from home
- ▶ Technology solutions
- ▶ Negotiating with labor union
- ▶ Changed service delivery

# Service Shift

Innovation – Engagement – Calculated Risks

- How we communicated
- How we provided core services
- Did things we'd never done before



# Keys to a Successful Shift

- ▶ High Performing Organization training
- ▶ Tools and technology
- ▶ Rethinking staff roles
- ▶ Focus on core services that helped the community most
- ▶ Employee-focused leadership
- ▶ Addressing mental health and fatigue
- ▶ Support risk taking and allowing failure
- ▶ Tell your story – internal and external



# Engagement Was Key to Address Community Needs

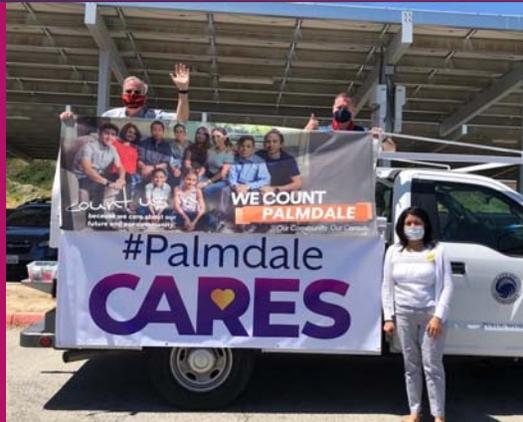
- ▶ Townhall meetings with local business, faith-based organizations, and community leaders (medical, schools, first responders, non-profits, chambers, military, state and county representatives)
- ▶ Surveys
- ▶ Advocacy



# #PalmdaleCares

## Community

- First Responder Child Care
- SAVES
- Letter writing to Seniors
- Census Outreach
- Mental Health Townhalls



## Business

- Take Me Home Tonight
- AI Fresco Dining
- Small/Microbusiness Grant Program
- Operation Jumpstart
- Business PPE Program



## Housing

- Mortgage Assistance Program
- Rental Assistance Program



## Recreation

- Virtual Recreation
- Play Kits
- Virtual Storytime
- Opened pools
- Drive thru ice cream non-social





“

The command post should not be the first place you meet someone during a crisis.

”

FORMER FIRE CHIEF

Do the legwork with your community regularly – not just in emergencies.

# Racial Unrest and the Death of Robert Fuller

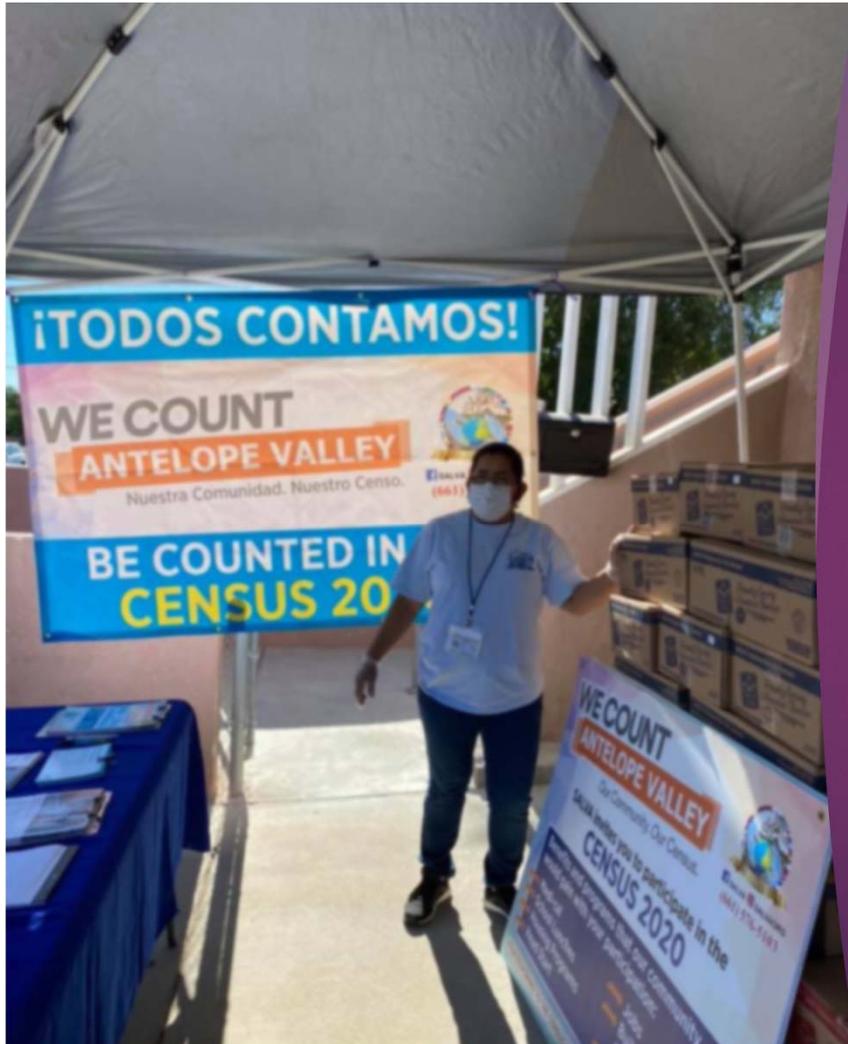
- ▶ June protests over George Floyd
- ▶ June 4 – African American man found hanged from a tree in Poncitlán Park behind City Hall
- ▶ Press conference
- ▶ Malcolm Harsch – Victorville
- ▶ June 17 – Terron Jammal Boone killed



Twitter screen grab



Investing in our relationships



Investing in our  
relationships

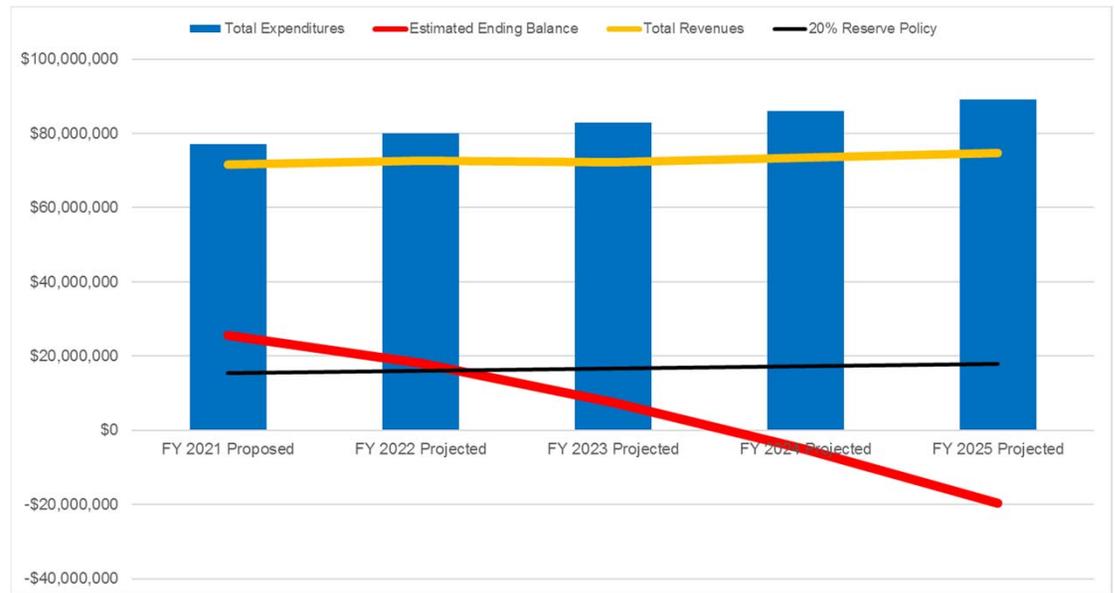
CENSUS 2020

# Successes

- ▶ Mobilized 50% of staff to work remote
- ▶ 75 laptops put into use within 2 weeks
- ▶ Facilitated COVID-19 testing for 16,000 individuals - staffed 7 days/week
- ▶ Provided over 2 million pounds of food to residents in need
- ▶ Provide childcare for over 80 first responder families
- ▶ Implemented PPE purchase program for essential businesses
- ▶ Operation Jumpstart – 1,630 cards issued/\$671,000 investment
- ▶ Business Grant Program – 100 applicants
- ▶ Mortgage Assistance Program 294 applicants
- ▶ Census Outreach – opportunity drawing & outreach- response up to 63%
- ▶ Computer loan program for staff

## Future Challenges and Opportunities

- ▶ Budget challenges
- ▶ Sales tax measure
- ▶ Increased transparency
- ▶ Economic development initiatives
- ▶ Community support
- ▶ Staff



# Lessons From The Trenches

## Take advantage of the urgency of the crisis

- Let crisis drive innovation
- Take calculated risks
- Build on your successes
- Adaptability



## Build and maintain strong community relationships

Today, tomorrow, and on the bad day (or year)



## Rethink your workplace and staff

- Be Flexible
- Over-communicate
- Break down the silos
- In it together



## Make your investments count

- In core services
- In your staff
- For impact



Questions?



ANNE AMBROSE  
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
CITY OF PALMDALE  
661-433-0624  
[AAMBROSE@CITYOFPALMDALE.ORG](mailto:AAMBROSE@CITYOFPALMDALE.ORG)  
CITYOFPALMDALE.ORG  
PALMDALECARES.COM