



# TOWN OF VALDESE

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

## FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Dear Valdese Citizens,

This July, we join communities across the nation in celebrating America's 250th Independence Day anniversary honoring freedom, resilience, and progress. As we look back on 250 years of American liberty, I am thrilled to share how our town is building toward its own prosperous future.

True prosperity requires a strong foundation of safety and security. Providing reliable emergency response is one of our most vital responsibilities, which is why the long-awaited Public Safety Facility Project must move forward. After careful evaluation, we have determined that our aging facilities no longer meet modern operational standards. A sizeable portion of the aging facilities that once housed our police and fire operations have been condemned by inspectors and can no longer be occupied due to safety concerns. Since 2024, administrative operations have been displaced including temporary setup in current Town Hall (police) and a mobile trailer (fire).

Postponing this project is no longer a viable option. Further delays do not simply pause the project; they dramatically increase our town's exposure to severe liability issues. Operating out of deficient structures compromises the safety of our personnel, puts specialized equipment at risk, and limits our compliance with modern emergency management standards. To protect our community effectively, a plan is being pursued for a combined, police and fire facility at 200 Massel Ave. This project ensures our emergency personnel have the tools and space they need to serve Valdese well into the future.

A capital project of this magnitude requires careful budgeting and direct financial adjustments. Rising infrastructure and construction costs mean that our previous 41.5-cent property tax rate is simply not sustainable. To generate the necessary revenue to secure long-term debt and fund these operations, the newly approved 2026-27 budget introduces a 13-cent fire district tax, effective July 1, 2026. While we understand that any tax adjustment impacts household budgets, this rate effectively resets our property taxes back to where they successfully stood from 2016 to 2022.

While the maximum loan amount currently sits at 10.8 million, please be assured that we view this number as a ceiling, not a baseline. We are aggressively pursuing every avenue to drive this total down by actively engaging with federal and state government, corporate partners, and private donors who share our commitment to a safer Valdese. Through these collaborative efforts, we fully expect the final loan amount to be lower than initial estimates, protecting your tax dollars while still delivering a top-tier facility.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

AUGUST 3 AT 6PM

SEPTEMBER 14 AT 6PM

LOCATED AT VALDESE TOWN HALL

### COMMITTEE & BOARD MEETINGS

VALDESE PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS

JULY 20 | AUG. 17 | SEPT. 21 - 4PM

VALDESE ABC BOARD MEETINGS

JULY 20 | AUG. 17 | SEPT. 21

VALDESE ABC STORE AT 3:30PM

DRUG & HOMELESS TASK FORCE

JULY 28 | AUG. 25 | SEPT. 29 - 6PM

PARKS & REC COMMISSION

JULY 13 - SPLASH PAD BLDG. 7PM

### OLD ROCK SCHOOL EVENTS:

JULY 1-3 - PITCH PERFECT SUMMER CAMP

JULY 31 - ELITE AMERICAN MISS PAGEANT

AUG 12-16 - PITCH PERFECT SUMMER CAMP

AUGUST 29 - AMERICA 250 EVENT

### DOWNTOWN EVENTS

JULY 4 - INDEPENDENCE DAY EVENT

JULY 10 - FFN W/GARRETT HUFFMAN BAND

JULY 10 - AUG 8 - OUTDOOR DRAMA

JULY 17 - FFN W/ CHASING PHOENIX

JULY 24 - FFN W/ SHAKEDOWN

JULY 31 - FFN W/ SMITTY & THE JUMPSTARTERS

AUGUST 7 & 8 - WALDENSIAN FESTIVAL

- WALDENSIAN FOOTRACE
- BOCCE TOURNAMENT
- OPEN ART COMPETITION
- VENDORS | ENTERTAINMENT | CAR SHOW

SEPT. 19 - STATE BOCCE TOURNAMENT

SEPT. 22 - DHS HOMECOMING PARADE

# VALDESE

NORTH CAROLINA

EVENTS: VISITVALDESE.COM  
MEETINGS: TOWNOFVALDESE.COM

The Town Council did not make the decision to adjust taxes lightly. We know that many families, seniors on fixed incomes, and working households are facing tight budgets due to inflation. Every dollar matters, and we feel the weight of asking you to contribute more. We want to encourage every eligible resident to take advantage of existing North Carolina Property Tax Relief Programs. If you are a senior citizen aged 65 or older, permanently disabled, or a disabled veteran, you may qualify for property tax exclusions or circuit breaker deferments through the Burke County Tax Office. Also, through the Eastern Burke Ministerial Alliance, many of our local churches provide food, clothing, hygiene and other essentials to help those in need. Our goal is to protect your safety without placing an unfair burden on your home.

To support our growing local economy alongside public safety, we have restarted our repaving projects (post Helene) with the initial seven streets paved in May- investing in our town's infrastructure- with more paving planned later this Fall. Furthermore, our community is experiencing a residential housing boom that will bring hundreds of new residents to our area, supporting the many businesses on Main Street.

When our local businesses and attractions succeed, our entire community benefits. Beyond exploring downtown, I encourage you to celebrate the new businesses investing in storefronts along Main Street and fully experience the unique spaces that make Valdese home.

Whether you are picnicking with family at the summer concerts, playing pickleball at the rec, or taking a walk in our green spaces, your engagement keeps Valdese vibrant.

We are proud of our shared spirit that makes our town so special. Thank you for your continued support, patience, and investment in the future of Valdese.



Warm regards,

Mayor, Keith Huffman

**WE ARE HIRING**

- Reserve Patrolman
- Part Time Public Works Maintenance Worker

## STATISTICS

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

- Fire Related Calls = 24
- Hazardous Situation = 16
- Medical Calls = 123
- Public Service Calls = 33
- Non-Emergency Calls = 24

### TOURISM (APRIL-JUNE 20)

- Valdese Visitors = 39,800
- Out of Market Visitors:**
- Old Rock School = 3,300
- FFN Kickoff Concert = 657
- McGalliard Falls Park = 33,700
- Lakeside Park = 14,200

*\*includes those with location services enabled*

Valdese Wastewater has compost available free of charge to anyone (not just residents) - an improved quality that is much more dry, with less clods and plastic. The public can pick up Monday-Friday, 8-5pm by calling 828-879-2131. No Deliveries.



## MAIN STREET UPDATES

### A Growing Business Landscape

Valdese's entrepreneurial spirit continues to grow as exciting new culinary and gathering spaces prepare to open downtown.

The **Saloon on Bobo** (*opening soon*) A Western-themed restaurant coming to the former Myra's Little Italy location featuring live music, arcade games, and family-friendly dining.

The **Allard Bakery & Bistro** (*Late Fall 2026*) Bringing French flavors and expanded dining options to the historic 100 Main Street location.

**Sunset Slush of the Blue Ridge** (*opening soon*) Opening a dedicated downtown storefront and serving their popular premium Italian ice.

**Waldensian Festival**  
CELEBRATING PEOPLE OF THE VALLEYS  
VALDESE, NC

**FRIDAY AUG. 7**      **SATURDAY AUG. 8**

**SOUTHSIDE STATION**  
*Playing Everything, Having Everyone.*

**CASSETTE REWIND**  
*\*THE AUTHENTIC 80'S EXPERIENCE\**

**FOOTRACE  
CRAFTS  
MUSIC  
KIDS ZONE  
BOCCE  
ARTS  
TOURS  
FOOD  
CLOGGERS  
DANCING  
TASTING  
TRAINS  
170 VENDORS**

## PARKS & REC UPDATE

Summer is in full swing at Valdese Parks and Recreation. The pool is hosting swim meets, lessons, and open swim, while the bowling alley offers a cool place to relax with affordable food. Valdese's parks continue to welcome visitors all day long.

Fall youth sports registration begins in July, with football opening July 6 and outdoor soccer and cheerleading following later in the month. Football and cheerleading fill quickly, so early registration is encouraged.

We're also preparing for the 50th Great Waldensian Footrace on August 8 during the Waldensian Festival. This will be the final year of the 10K race, so don't miss one last Lovelady Road hill climb. Registration is \$25 through July 30, increases to \$30 through August 6, and race day registration is \$35. Register by July 15 to guarantee a t-shirt. We appreciate the community's support and look forward to seeing everyone at your Valdese Parks and Recreation!