



## CITY NOTES

October 23, 2014

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**CITY DIALOGUE 2014>>** The Fall 2014 City Dialogue meeting will be held this Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. at Laurel Deli in the Depot Building on West Laurel Street. The City Dialogue meetings are informal round table meetings that are held quarterly and provide a forum for community members to receive updates from City staff, ask questions, and offer suggestions. Everyone is welcome to attend!

**THE GREAT SHAKE-OUT>>** Last Thursday was the Great California Shake-Out, a statewide event to help individuals, families, businesses, and communities prepare for a major earthquake. In coastal communities it is also necessary to prepare for a tsunami that may be generated by a near or distant earthquake. In the past 150 years, nearly 40 earthquakes of magnitude 6 or larger have shaken northern California. In the past 70 years, 34 tsunamis have been recorded on the north coast, five of which caused damage. The City's governmental website- [www.city.fortbragg.com](http://www.city.fortbragg.com) has an Emergency Preparedness page (under "Our Community") with lots of information and links to help residents and businesses prepare for the inevitable.

**TSUNAMI SIREN TESTING>>** Starting November 5<sup>th</sup>, the Tsunami Siren Warning System along our coast will be tested on the first Wednesday of every month at 11:00 a.m. Tsunami sirens were installed on the Mendocino coast a couple of years ago. One is located just east of Pudding Creek beach and two are in Noyo Harbor. The monthly testing is necessary to ensure that the sirens are functional and reliable. During the testing, each siren will emit a full "wail" for five seconds and then coast down to a stop over the next 20 seconds. During a real tsunami event, the siren will ramp up and down every five seconds.

**TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX REVENUES ON THE RISE>>** Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) is a surcharge on hotel room bills that is remitted to the City and is a major source of revenue for the City's general fund. The final numbers are in from FY 2013/14. The City received nearly \$1.68 million in TOT in FY 2013/14 which represents a 7.5% increase over the prior year. This is the highest annual TOT that the City has ever received and is testament to the fact that our tourist-based economy is rebounding following a five-year slump. The promotional and marketing efforts of the Fort Bragg Promotion Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, Visit Mendocino County, lodging establishments, and local visitor attractions have helped to strengthen Fort Bragg's reputation as a popular visitor destination.

**STATE TAKES ANOTHER SWIPE AT REDEVELOPMENT>>** Every six months, the Successor Agency to the Fort Bragg Redevelopment Agency files a financial plan with the State Department of Finance detailing expenditures necessary in the following six months to "wind down" the work of the former Redevelopment Agency. Six months ago, the State disallowed expenditures relating to the City's oversight of the Mill Site remediation process under the Polanco Act. In response to the most recent filing, the State has disallowed expenditures relating to the Noyo Center for Marine Science. To the extent that the City has contractual obligations that can no longer be repaid with redevelopment funds, alternative sources of funds for these projects will need to be identified.

**STATE REIMBURSES CITY FOR DECADE-OLD “MANDATED COSTS”>>** Last week, the City was notified that the State Controller’s Office will make payments to reimburse each California city for costs incurred in complying with State “mandates” prior to 2004. Given the passage of time since the City requested reimbursement, we had long since given up on payment. What a pleasant surprise to hear that the City of Fort Bragg will receive a check in the amount of \$12,684.

**PHASE 2 OF THE FORT BRAGG COASTAL TRAIL PROJECT UNDERWAY>>** The Coastal Trail is under construction and will open in summer 2015. It includes a bike and pedestrian path that will extend from Pudding Creek Trestle to Noyo Point Road—but for now there is a missing segment in the middle of the Mill Site property in the vicinity of the Mill Pond and the beach (“Fort Bragg Landing”). This connector will be developed as Phase 2 of the Coastal Trail project. The Community Development Department is processing the environmental review and permits for the Phase 2 project. Because there is uncertainty about the preferred alignment of the trail, pending more information about environmental remediation and stabilization of the Mill Pond dam, the permit documents are evaluating two alternative trail alignments—one circumnavigating the Mill Pond area and the second hugging the coastline.

**FARMERS’ MARKET TO MOVE INDOORS FOR THE WINTER>>** The City Council has paved the way for the very successful Fort Bragg Farmers’ Market to move indoors at the Old Rec Center gymnasium during the winter months. The first indoor market will be held on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> with sales beginning at 3:00 p.m.

**WHAT’S ON THE AGENDA FOR CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION?>>** On the October 27<sup>th</sup> agenda, the City Council will consider opting in to the PACE Program to help residents and businesses finance solar energy improvements, take action on refinancing the former Redevelopment Agency’s bonds, and provide direction to staff regarding the expenditure of Program Income on CDBG-eligible activities. The November 10<sup>th</sup> draft agenda includes an introduction of new employees hired during the past six months, public hearings on amendments to the City’s Fire Code and the General Plan Housing Element, consideration of a fee “waiver” for Habitat for Humanity, and a new contract for City Attorney services. The Planning Commission will consider the updated Housing Element at its October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, along with a permit for modifications to the Seabird Lodge signage.

*City Notes is published on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. If you have questions or suggestions regarding the column, feel free to contact City Manager Linda Ruffing at (707) 961-2823, ext. 118 or [L.Ruffing@fortbragg.com](mailto:L.Ruffing@fortbragg.com).*