

City Hall News

From the desk of
Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing
April 19, 2007

- 1. Resignation of Finance Director Mark Johnson.** Finance Director Mark Johnson has submitted his resignation. Mark has been a key member of the City's management team for three years and has led the Finance Department through a period of great transition, both with staffing and the conversion to a new financial software system.
- 2. Retail Trends Analysis.** The Community Development Department has completed an analysis of retail trends in Fort Bragg. The analysis found that retail sales increased by a modest 5.7% between 2000 and 2005 after adjusting for inflation. Sectors with fast growth include apparel, auto sales, service station sales, and home furnishings. The analysis explores the impact of tourism on our retail sectors by analyzing the difference in sales between the tourism and non-tourism seasons. The study shows that sales of apparel, art, books, music, gas and dining out are significantly higher in the tourism season (25% to 80% higher). The analysis also looks at retail leakage (how much money local residents spend out of town for goods). Retail leakage has a big impact on the strength of our retail sector and our local economy and Mendocino Coast residents spend significant dollars each year out of the area on apparel (\$7 million), general merchandise (\$13 million), auto dealers/suppliers (\$22 million), books (\$1.6 million) and home furnishings (\$3.5 million). The report can also be found on the Economic Development page of the City/Community Development Department website.
- 3. Police Department Activities.** The Police Department has been busy with several notable events in recent weeks. Our officers have been actively working on proactive gang and drug enforcement. Two separate investigations produced several felony arrests, large amounts of marijuana/methamphetamine (packaged for drug sales), seized assets, and parole violations. Also, our officers participated in a multi-agency gang enforcement operation in Ukiah with more planned in Willits and Fort Bragg.
- 4. New Construction and Waste Demolition Ordinance.** The City's new Construction and Waste Demolition ordinance became effective on April 11th. All new construction and demolition projects of more than 1,000 square feet, remodels of more than 500 square feet, and road, sidewalk, or driveway renovation/demolition projects of more than 200 square feet will be required to pay a refundable deposit of between 35¢ and 50¢ per square foot (depending on project type) to encourage recycling of construction and demolition waste. Deposits will be refunded so long as recycling targets are achieved. Unreturned deposits will be used to improve all recycling efforts within the City. More information is available on the Community Development Department page of the City's website.
- 5. CDBG Grant Awards.** This week, the City received notification from the State Community Development Block Grant program that three applications for Planning & Technical Assistance Grants have been funded. These include: 1) \$35,000 to help fund new economic development activities and efforts; 2)

\$35,000 to develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Community Development Department; and 3) \$35,000 for a Wastewater Collection Facilities Management Plan.

6. **LCP Amendments.** Community Development Director Marie Jones and I met with Bob Merrill and Tiffany Tauber from the California Coastal Commission earlier this month to discuss the status of the Commission's review of the City's comprehensive Local Coastal Program (LCP) amendment application. They informed us that Tiffany will be assigned to review the document on a full-time basis in June, July and August and that they hope to have the application on the Coastal Commission's agenda for its September meeting in Eureka.
7. **Save the Dates.** Two exciting community workshops are scheduled in early May. On Wednesday, May 2nd at 6:00 pm at Fort Bragg Town Hall, the Mendocino Coast Recreation and Parks District will conduct a community workshop to solicit public input regarding the proposed Skate Park project. On Thursday, May 10th at 6:00 pm at Fort Bragg Town Hall, a workshop will be conducted regarding the joint City/County Solid Waste Transfer Station Siting Study. More information will be provided on these projects at a later date.