

City Hall News

From the desk of
Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing
May 31, 2007

- 1. Business Advocates.** Community Development Department staff met with a group of interested local business people last week to help establish a "Business Advocate" program for our community. The Business Advocates are volunteers who will provide assistance to people who are interested in starting, acquiring, or moving a business to Fort Bragg. The Advocates will provide interested entrepreneurs with an overview of the advantages of locating their business in Fort Bragg, detailed economic and demographic data, introductions to key individuals and groups, and a personalized tour of the town. Community Development Department staff is developing a packet of information for the program and will make referrals to Business Advocates as people come to City Hall requesting a business license or planning assistance. This activity evolved out of Tom Becker's concept of a Business Assistance and Information Team (BAIT) and on-going discussions regarding local economic development opportunities. The Community Development Department's support to the Business Advocates will help implement the City's recently adopted Economic Development Strategy.
- 2. Dog Park Update.** MCDOG has finally found a home for the Dog Park! Last Thursday, the Rec District Board agreed to allow the dog park to be located on the northwest corner of the Aquatic Center facility at Willow and Lincoln Street. This location has a lot of positive attributes for a dog park, plus it will help the Aquatic Center project meet certain objectives tied to their grant funding (i.e., it's a win:win for both MCDOG and the Rec District). Planning permits are required for the dog park and the public will have an opportunity to provide input regarding the location and design of the facility at a future Planning Commission hearing. Staff will be working with MCDOG to assist with the permitting and development process.
- 3. Redevelopment Plan Amendment.** Community Development Director Marie Jones and I met with a handful of redevelopment practitioners last week to discuss the various challenges involved in amending the Fort Bragg Redevelopment Plan to ensure that tax increment financing will be available to assist with redevelopment on the Mill Site. We believe that the best approach will be to remove the Mill Site property from the existing Fort Bragg Redevelopment Project Area and to create a new Project Area for the Mill Site. Once we've worked out the details of how to do this, we will provide a report to the Council/Agency that explains the issues, the logic behind the strategy, and the steps in the process.
- 4. Rosana Cimolino to be Acting Finance Director.** Government Accountant Rosana Cimolino has graciously agreed to serve as Acting Finance Director upon the departure of Finance Director Mark Johnson. We will begin the recruitment for the Finance Director position later this summer and will bring in a temporary employee to help backfill Rosana's position. I am very confident in the ability of Rosana and our Finance Department staff to weather the transition.

- 5. Franklin Street Sidewalk Vandalism.** Unfortunately, the new sidewalks on Franklin Street have proved to be a tempting target for local vandals. During the first couple of weeks of sidewalk work, we had several incidents of folks carving their initials and other markings into the wet concrete. In most instances, the contractors have been able to make repairs. We've asked the shopkeepers to keep an eye on the street and the police have stepped up patrols after hours. Hopefully, these incidents will subside.
- 6. Alley Rehabilitation Project.** Baxman Gravel Company submitted the low bid at \$114,000 to repair and repave the two alley blocks located between Main and Franklin Streets and bounded by Redwood and Oak Streets. The work will be coordinated with Argonaut Constructors, the contractor for the Franklin Street project, to ensure that adequate access is maintained to all Franklin Street properties while the projects are underway.
- 7. Greenhouse Gas Survey Intern.** Daniel Salazar, the intern hired to complete the City's emissions survey and prepare a greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan, has joined the City's staff for approximately three months. He has recently prepared an emissions survey for Cal State-Chico, so he knows the ropes and should be able to hit the ground running. The intern's work is funded by a grant from the Mendocino County Air Quality Management District.