City Hall News

From the desk of
Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing
July 16, 2009

1. **Aquatics Center Bike Racks.** The City is purchasing bike racks for the new Aquatic Center with transportation grant funds that we received from the Mendocino Council of Governments. We're hoping to have the new bike racks installed in time for the Grand Opening of the facility in late August. I took a tour of the facility last week and it is a sight to behold. The recreation pool is everything the artist's renderings depicted and more. What a tremendous gift to our community!

2. **Skate Park.** Last week, Senior Planner Chris Carterette presented the Skate Park design plans to the Mendocino Coast Recreation & Park District Board. They responded positively to the presentation and expressed continued support and enthusiasm for the facility. A meeting of the "ad hoc" committee will be convened in the near future to hammer out some of the details and logistics for construction, operation and maintenance of the skate park.

3. **Rehab Funds for Glass Beach, Sanderson Way and Seacliff Apartments.** The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funneled economic stimulus money to the State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and CDBG is evaluating unfunded applications from last year's grant cycle as possible recipients of the ARRA funds. The City has one such project on the CDBG ARRA list: rehabilitation of the Community Development Commission's workforce housing projects on John Cimolino Way, Sanderson Way, and Cypress Street. If awarded, the grant would provide about $790,000 for rehabilitation of the housing units plus funds for activity delivery and grant administration.

4. **Mill Site Parkland Acquisition**. The City received official word from the State Coastal Conservancy that the $4.126 million grant for the Mill Site parkland acquisition is being unfrozen using Proposition 40 funds garnered from the last bond sale. Once this summer's remediation work is complete, we'll be able to proceed with the purchase without delay.

5. **State Finally Pays $1,064,834 to City.** The City received the long-awaited check from the State of California providing reimbursement for work performed last summer to relocate the Pudding Creek Force Main. The City received a grant from the Clean Beaches Initiative program (Prop 84 funding) and, after the work was completed but before reimbursement was received, the State froze all bond-funded grant reimbursements. The State sold bonds in April 2009 to allow some reimbursements and we feel very fortunate to have received a real check in late June rather than an IOU from the State.

6. **Sludge Thickener Succumbs to Rust.** In late June, the center mechanism on the sludge thickener at the City's Wastewater Treatment Facility broke loose causing extensive damage to the structural supports and rendering the unit inoperable. Our treatment operators immediately shut down the sludge thickener, rerouted the treatment process in order for the thickener to be taken off line, and developed a preliminary plan to modify treatment flows to bypass the thickener and keep the treatment process functioning. The Regional Board was notified of the equipment failure and informed that every effort was being made to ensure that effluent limits continued to be met. Staff contacted Double J Enterprises from Paradise, a contractor who had previously inspected the thickener mechanism, and obtained a proposal for emergency repairs. Double J completed the emergency repair work over the weekend and treatment plant operations are back to normal.

7. **Update on City's Participation in Mendocino Major Crimes Task Force**. The Mendocino Major Crimes Task Force is a multi-agency partnership dedicated to combating illegal drug activity throughout Mendocino County. Over the past few years, the Fort Bragg Police Department's staffing shortages made it impossible for the City to assign an officer to the Task Force, although the Department has continued to work closely with the Task Force on a variety of cases. Current staffing levels now allow the City to assign an officer to the Task Force. The Police Department recently conducted an extensive testing process for internal candidates interested in a special assignment as an investigator with the Task Force. This new assignment will provide the City of Fort Bragg with additional resources and enforcement efforts to proactively address illegal drug activities in our community.

8. **Dispatch Transition**. For the past decade, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office has provided emergency dispatch services to the Fort Bragg Police Department. Effective September 1, 2009, the Ukiah Police Department will provide dispatch services to the City of Fort Bragg. Mendocino County has agreed to allow the Ukiah and Fort Bragg Police Departments to access the County microwave system for dispatch services which will provide a much higher level of reliability during winter storm events than a dedicated phone line and it will enhance the interoperability of emergency dispatch operations within the County.

9. **County Considering Privatizing Landfill Operations**. In response to serious budget issues, Mendocino County is considering entering into contracts with waste haulers (i.e., Solid Waste of Willits and Waste Management, Inc.) for the operation of the County's transfer stations, including the Caspar Transfer Station. The concept is for the private haulers to operate the transfer stations while maintaining current gate fees and hours of operation. The contracts would be administered by the Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority. This would significantly reduce the County's overhead and eliminate the need for a general fund subsidy to the Solid Waste Division. The Joint Powers Agreement between the City and the County for the operation of the Caspar Transfer Station requires City concurrence for such a change. Once the County's dialogue with the private haulers has progressed, a full report will be brought to the Council.