

Concord City News

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITY OF CONCORD

Fall 2011

News Corner

Find Your Zone

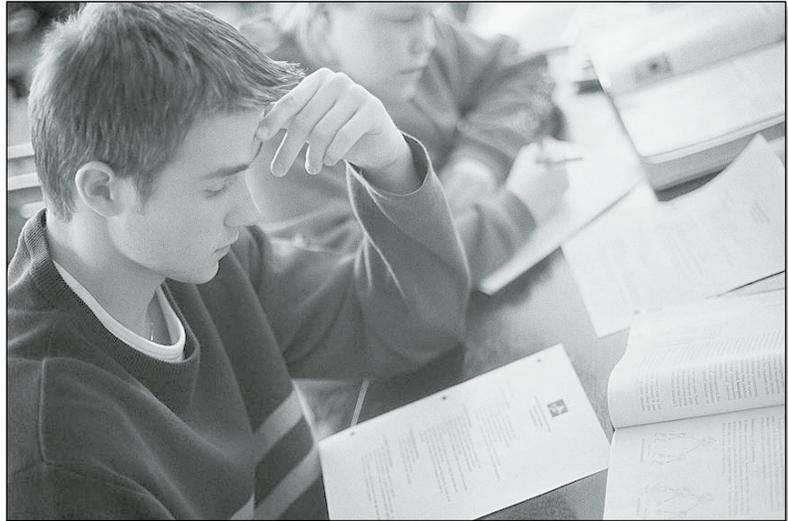
The City is updating its Development Code and Zoning Ordinance. To receive project updates or to see your property's existing zoning designation and proposed new designation online, visit www.concordcode.org.

Aloha Time

The Concord Senior Center's 10th Annual Hawaiian Fusion fundraising event will take place on Friday, Sept. 9, at Centre Concord, 5298 Clayton Rd. The event is always a sell-out and includes a luau buffet dinner and entertainment by Hawaiian male vocalist of the year Nathan Aweau. Tickets are on sale now at www.cityofconcord.org/hawaiianfusion.

Business License

Everyone doing business in Concord needs a business license. To find out how to get a license, visit the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org and select "Business License" from the Quick Links feature, or call the Business License Center, 671-3313.



Concord's new daytime curfew encourages youngsters to stay in school during school hours

Daytime curfew ordinance in effect this school year

Residents with children in Concord's public schools should be aware that the City Council has passed a daytime curfew ordinance. The ordinance will be in effect when the school year begins.

The curfew applies only to public school students during regular school hours. There is an exception in the ordinance for home-schooled students and those who attend private schools. Students and their parents violating the curfew will be given an initial warning, then fined up to \$100 for the first offense, up to \$200 for the second offense, and up to \$500 for any additional curfew ordinance violations.

The Concord Police Department views the new law as a crime-prevention ordinance. The department has noted increased incidents of crime by and against

juveniles as well as physical altercations that are linked to students who should be in school.

While the MDUSD is responsible under state law for enforcing truancy laws and ensuring student attendance, the City has a compelling public safety interest in reducing the rate of local juvenile crime and victimization that often accompanies truancy.

Why a curfew?

The California Department of Education research shows that truancy rates in Concord are higher than the state average and the Mt. Diablo Unified School District average. Rates in Concord's high schools are particularly high, especially

Council passes budget for fiscal year 2011-12 with no new reductions in City services

The City's budget picture is much improved this year over the last several years, thanks to passage of Measure Q, the half-cent sales tax increase approved by voters last November. The City Council passed the 2011-12 budget on June 28 without having to make any additional reductions to service.

Measure Q is expected to contribute \$8 million annually to the City's general fund budget for five years. These funds will rebuild the City's reserves and allow the City five years to reorganize its operations to reflect a smaller work force and reduced operating budget.

While the additional Measure Q revenue will not restore any of the program reductions experienced over the last two years, it preserves service delivery at current levels.

In April, the City Council appointed a seven-member Measure Q Oversight Committee as required by the voters. The committee provides recommendations to the City Council on the use of Measure Q revenue and reviews the City's annual audit report for the years Measure Q money is collected. A presentation is made on the committee findings at a City Council meeting that year. The appointees to the committee are Guy Bjerke, Richard Eber, Norman J. Freitas, Bill Gram-Reefer, Bari Kasper, Dr. Harmesh Kumar and Rosanne Nieto.

The 2011-12 budget maintains the status quo. Employees will continue to take 13 furlough days a year (representing a 5 percent reduction in pay) and there will be no pay increases. In addition, employees will continue to pay increased percentages of their retirement and medical benefits.

Restructuring the organization

With the loss of more than 20 percent of the City's employees over the last several



Street maintenance and children's programs, as well as other City services, have been funded at current levels in the 2011-12 budget

years (from 499 employees in FY 2008-09 to 393 employees in 2011-12), the organization will be restructured in order to continue to provide residents with services in the most efficient and effective way.

"Our goal this year is to reorganize the way the City departments are structured so that residents continue to receive the best possible service we can provide with our limited resources," says City Manager Dan Keen.

One of the changes in department structure is the relocation of the Neighborhood Services Division to the Police Department. Neighborhood Services staff often work with police officers to address neighborhood complaints. Sgt. Ivan Menchaca has been assigned as the new Code Enforcement Supervisor. Because of staffing reductions, the Neighborhood

Services Division will become more complaint driven, and will have less capacity for pro-active programs.

Another change will be a new department titled Community and Economic Development. This new department expands an existing department by bringing all divisions that have responsibility for supporting or permitting private development proposals into one department. These divisions include Economic Development, Planning, Building, Engineering, Transportation, Housing, and Redevelopment.

The Community and Recreation Services Department will have a new name to avoid confusion with the new department. As in many cities, this department will now be called the Parks and Recreation Department.

For more information, visit the City's website, www.cityofconcord.org. ♦

Elimination of Redevelopment Agency will impact community

On June 29, the State Legislature passed a budget that included two trailer bills that affect local redevelopment agencies. AB 1x 26 eliminates redevelopment agencies outright. As an alternative, AB 1x 27 requires an agency to pay a lump sum of money this year and make annual payments every year if the agency chooses to continue to operate.

Redevelopment agency funding is the only local economic development tool that allow cities to create jobs, increase and preserve affordable housing, stimulate economic development, improve public infrastructure and eliminate blighted conditions in a community.

For Concord to retain its Redevelopment Agency, the State is requiring that the Agency pay over \$6 million this year in “voluntary” payments, and millions more in subsequent years. This will essentially drive Concord’s Redevelopment Agency budget into a deficit and, over time, shut down the agency.

Shutting down the City’s Redevelopment Agency will directly threaten the planning and reuse of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station. Staff estimates that the conversion of the base would be delayed by 10 years. Approximately 12,000 construction jobs over the life of the project and creation of an estimated 27,000 permanent jobs would be deferred or eliminated due to loss of Concord’s Redevelopment Agency.

Impact to the community

By redirecting local funds to the State, the City will no longer be able to fund many projects to improve the city’s infrastructure, economic vitality and quality of life. In particular, the agency has funded revitalization of the City’s historic

downtown through community events, which attract over 150,000 visitors to Todos Santos Plaza each year. The agency has supported job creation by implementing many economic development programs to attract, expand and create businesses, making Concord a regional job center. Support from the agency in the form of loans to local businesses has allowed businesses to expand and subsequently hire new workers. Funding capital improvement projects such as downtown streetscape improvements, landscaping improvements and public right-of-way projects has been a core mission of the agency.

Affordable Housing

The Concord Redevelopment Agency is the main funding source for creating and preserving local affordable housing. Because of this action by the State, the agency’s affordable housing program is severely impacted and cannot move forward with current projects, such as funding a loan agreement for the rehabilitation of a 48-unit apartment complex in the Monument corridor. First Time Home Buyers may no longer receive down payment assistance. Concord has homebuyers willing and able to purchase homes who are now unable to utilize the City’s down payment assistance program.

Reviewing Options

The League of California Cities and California Redevelopment Association have filed a lawsuit against the State challenging the constitutionality of AB 1x 26 and AB 1x 27 on the basis that it violates the will of voters who overwhelmingly passed Prop. 22 last November. Prop 22 made it illegal for the State to raid local funds, such as redevelopment. ♦



One Concord Center is an example of a successful Concord Redevelopment Agency project, and houses over 800 employees

Downtown sewer system gets repairs

Over the next few weeks, residents may notice crews working on the City’s sewer system in the downtown area. A condition assessment of the sewer lines determined that some of the lines need attention. Six locations were identified as in need of immediate spot repairs.

Construction is anticipated to start in late August or early September, with work being conducted for two to three days at each spot repair site. No roads will be closed during construction. Four additional sites are also being considered and may be added to the project.

Project sites:

- Grant St. and Colfax St. near Concord Blvd.
- East St. between Pacheco and Salvio streets
- Salvio St. at Galindo St.
- Bonifacio St. between Galindo and Mt. Diablo streets
- Mt. Diablo St. between Bonifacio and Pacheco streets

Temporary traffic signal on Willow Pass Road

Travelers on Willow Pass Road near Hwy 4 will notice a new, temporary traffic signal. The signal has been installed as part of the Navy's project to remove 343 railcars from the former Concord Naval Weapons Station and transport them to Pittsburg for recycling. The former base is within Concord's city limits but is the property of the Navy.

Each railcar will be removed from its axle and wheel assembly, loaded onto a trailer and trucked off of the base. To minimize disruption to the community, transport trucks will leave the base via a special exit point on Willow Pass Road about half way between Lynwood Drive and the entrance to Hwy 4, where the traffic signal has been installed.

The traffic signal will give preference to drivers on Willow Pass Road and will only be activated for truck entry or exit. Trucks will be operating during non-commute hours, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.,



The first of 343 railcars is lowered onto the bed of a tractor-trailer in preparation for its removal from the former Concord Naval Weapons Station

generating six to eight truck trips per day through November.

Removal of the railcars is one of the first visible steps in a multi-year process to return the base to civilian use. The project is the biggest recycling effort in the history of the Navy. Removal of the railcars will be at no cost to taxpayers as the recycling revenues from scrap sales will be returned to the Navy.

Reuse Project Update

The Concord Reuse Project office continues to work on the Concord Reuse Project-Area Plan (CRP-Area Plan) for the former Concord Naval Weapons Station. This plan will be the foundation for amending the adopted community reuse plan into the City 2030 General Plan. The area plan sets the standards and policies that will guide development in a manner consistent with the community's vision for reuse of the base.

This month, the City will begin the required clearances under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A notice of preparation (NOP) of a supplemental EIR on the area plan is expected to be released in mid to late August and a draft document should be ready for public review later in the fall of this year.

Certification of the supplemental EIR, approval of the CRP-Area Plan and amendment of the General Plan by the City Council is slated for the first quarter of 2012. ♦

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**SM



www.cityofconcord.org/recreation

Play

Safe, outdoor space
For us, the biggest benefit is a safe outdoor play space for our kids today... and as they grow.

Forever

Valued today and always
Parks enrich our lives. They add value to our homes and neighborhoods. Individually and as a community, we'll always have that need.

Positive Spaces

Free-time fun
Neighborhood parks are an escape, a place to run around and play.

Gathering Places

Socializing and learning
Parks are like holidays, bringing us together to share good times. They are the common ground that connects us all.

Nature

Beauty and serenity
Being in nature makes one feel alive. We're very fortunate to have beautiful spaces so close to home.

Exercise

Healthy movement
Parks are made for moving at your own pace. And, recreation programs make it easy to stay healthy.

Downtown family fun continues into fall

Concord's popular Tuesday and Thursday music programs in Todos Santos Plaza have been attracting large family audiences all summer. This month, a series of movie nights with a baseball theme has been delighting fans and future star outfielders on Thursday evenings.

"The Thursday Night Music and Market program is not over yet," says Downtown Program Manager Florence Weiss "The season runs through September 15. On September 1, we're hosting an Emergency Preparedness Faire during the Thursday night program. Then on September 15, we have Concord on the Green, an environmental faire produced in partnership with the Todos Santos Business Association."

The musical guest on September 1 is Rodeo House, a rock/country band. On September 15, audiences will enjoy Foreverland, a 14-piece Michael Jackson tribute band, which attracted a record crowd last year.

California Symphony Pops returns

One of the community's favorite events, the California Symphony Pops Concert, returns to Todos Santos Plaza for the 12th year on Saturday, September 17 at 6:30 p.m. The program includes two hours of family-friendly Broadway, film, classical and operatic favorites as well as patriotic standards.



Rock/country band Rodeo House is the musical guest September 1.

Holiday events in October and December

On Sunday, October 30, Concord's gremlins and goblins are invited to show off their imaginative costumes for prizes and treats at the annual Halloween Parade and Costume Contest. The parade steps off at 12 noon, and is followed by the Mayor's Mongrel Mash Pooch Parade.

Kicking off the winter holiday season on Saturday, December 3 is Santa's Grand Arrival at 4 p.m. and Concord's Official Tree-Lighting celebration beginning at 5 p.m. The event features a series of community choirs and performing groups with a traditional tree-lighting ceremony and sing-along lead by the Mayor.

Todos Santos Plaza is located in downtown Concord on Willow Pass Road between Mt. Diablo and Grant streets. Free parking is available in two municipal garages. For more information, call the downtown hotline at (925) 671-3464 or visit www.concordfirst.org. ♦

Curfew from page 1

in the downtown area schools, such as Mt. Diablo High School and Olympic High School.

Before considering the new ordinance, the Concord Police Department (CPD) conducted five truancy sweeps during the first five months of 2011. Each monthly sweep lasted four hours and occurred while public schools were in session. Approximately 204 truant students were detained and taken back to their schools. This equated to an average of 41 truant students being detained during each four-hour sweep.

CPD currently may only detain truant minors observed in public places during regular school hours and transport them back to their host schools. Enforcement by CPD officers is time consuming, costly,

and competes with higher-priority calls for police service.

CPD research linked incidents of daytime vandalism, fights, thefts, and residential burglaries to truant students. Truants often tend to loiter in and about public places. Frequently, public property and persons going about their lawful business become targets of the delinquent behavior of truants when they should be in school. Additionally, minors in these situations are particularly vulnerable to violence and to the pressure to participate in criminal activity.

How does the curfew work?

The ordinance permits CPD officers to detain truants, and on the first offense issue

a warning citation. A notification is mailed to the students' parents. The parents are required to sign and return the notification, including any explanation of an applicable ordinance exception.

Upon any subsequent violations of the daytime curfew ordinance during the same year, fines will be issued.

Daytime and nighttime curfew ordinances have been adopted by a number of other cities throughout the Bay Area, including Pittsburg, Benicia, El Cerrito, Fairfield, San Pablo, Fremont, Richmond, Hayward and Hercules.

For more information, visit www.cityofconcord.org and type "daytime curfew" in the search box on the home page. ♦

Business Accelerator Center coming to downtown

In partnership with John F. Kennedy University, the City will be supporting a new Business Accelerator Center in downtown Concord's Salvio Pacheco Square, 2151 Salvio St., Suite 350.

JFK's Institute of Entrepreneurial Learning, in cooperation with the Contra Costa Small Business Development Center, will be operating the program. The idea is to support and encourage businesses with potential for job creation and growth. Entrepreneurs who are enrolled in the program receive one-on-one mentoring and class training by experts in various aspects of business development.

"One of Concord's challenges in recovering from the national recession is to create new jobs," says John Montag of the City's Economic Development Program. "The new center will aid us in our objectives to improve the job picture in Concord and attract new businesses to the community."

The City currently uses the office space for its Engineering Services Division which



Salvio Pacheco Square, with its iconic courtyard fountain, will soon house the new Business Accelerator Center

will move to the Public Works Corporation Yard in the fall. The City's contribution to the partnership is to provide the office space for the center through the rest of the City's lease on the space through October 2013.

JFK will be responsible for all of the costs of operating the center. To learn more about the Business Accelerator Center, contact Dr. Raul A. Deju, rdeju@deju.net or (925) 699-6220. ♦

Concord Community Pool is going solar

As part of a larger effort to reduce energy consumption, the City is constructing solar panels at Concord Community Park. The panels are being incorporated into two new shade structures, one in the tennis court parking lot and the second in the area near the public restroom. Energy from the solar panels will be used to power the pool circulation pump. The project will result in \$43,000 in annual energy savings. Information about the progress of the solar project and other efforts the City is making to reduce energy consumption and costs is available on the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org.

Ygnacio Valley Road project complete

In July, the City held a small celebration to thank the many agencies and individuals that contributed to the multi-year project to repair Ygnacio Valley Road.

Severe 2005 rainstorms caused a landslide in March 2006 that damaged a 1,000 ft. section of Ygnacio Valley Road in Concord near the Walnut Creek border. Residents from Concord, Clayton and all of eastern Contra Costa County use this important thoroughway to connect to Interstate 680 and State Route 24, and to commute to points in Walnut Creek, logging over 40,000 trips a day.

With assistance from state legislators and funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Caltrans and the

Contra Costa Transportation Authority, the massive project of repairing the road and restructuring the hillside to prevent future landslides was completed this summer.

While drivers may not notice much of a change as they travel down Ygnacio Valley Road, the hillside now includes a 420-foot tie-back wall system with 55 concrete piers. The piers are connected by a 5-foot deep concrete cap. The hillside has been graded for greater stabilization and any bare areas have been hydro-seeded for erosion control.

The project stood up to the heavy rainfall in the first half of 2011, and should serve the community for many years to come. ♦

National Night Out all year long

National Night Out is celebrated during the first week of August in nearly every town in our great country, including Concord. It is a time to bring neighbors out of the backyards and into the community streets, parks, and meeting places. It is an opportunity to meet our neighbors and demonstrate our resolve to address crime and disorder. This organized event is often the only time some communities come together to impact crime.

I have seen a variety of National Night Out celebrations. Sometimes, five or six neighbors will have a barbeque in a cul-de-sac. Other times, there is an organized march through a crime ridden area or rallies and public speakers in front of a school. But I have found something different in Concord. Something more.

In my eight months in Concord, I have attended many community events that carried the flavor of a National Night Out celebration. It is as though we don't need one special day to come together to improve the safety of our town. We find a multitude of events to accomplish that feat. It is woven into our culture.

Todos Santos Plaza on Tuesday and Thursday is a great example. What a hub of activity. Vendors, car shows, music, children playing – all surrounded by a vast selection of restaurants. My family and I enjoy walking around the plaza and taking in the atmosphere. We've seen the County Health Department manning a booth – and administering the shots required to attend school, for free. There are local elected officials seated behind a table, answering questions about the budget. Hundreds of people enjoy sitting and listening to music, while others visit the playground or play on the grass. And residents are talking with each other and sharing stories about the latest topics in our town. Every single week, thousands of people



By
*Police Chief
Guy Swanger*

converge on this community park and achieve what every National Night Out program attempts to do on that first Tuesday in August.

I also attended my first three-day Singing Flag event. Many of you at the event probably saw me walking through the crowd or in the surrounding neighborhood, trying to get a flavor of this 23-year-old festival. And as each night passed, the crowd grew larger. There were so many people, enjoying dinner and each other's company. The music was fantastic and culminated with a fireworks display. I especially enjoyed watching a few thousand people walking down the middle of Concord Boulevard after the show, pushing strollers and carrying exhausted infants.

It is events like the Dana Estates National Night Out in June, a 5K-pancake breakfast and parade on the 4th of July, Father's Day Chili Cook-off (which was won by the Concord Police Department), the car shows behind Park and Shop and even the small regular potlucks that take place throughout many Concord neighborhoods that epitomize National Night Out. Get out of your backyard, get together, and get to know each other – what a powerful crime-fighting tool.

I was once asked by a researcher in a symposium if I could suggest one thing that a community could do to impact crime. I am sure he was expecting something similar to "Call the police when you witness a crime." But I knew that the sustained reduction of crime has a basic requirement – legitimate and visible community activity. Nothing says "crime free" like neighbors visiting parks and shopping centers, walking to coffee shops during the day and restaurants in the evening or hosting organized events throughout Concord, and hosting them throughout the year. That is what National Night Out looks like through the eyes of the Chief of Police in Concord. ♦

Bocce fans, dog owners enjoy Baldwin Park improvements

Thanks to Measure WW park funds and other sources, the City has been able to complete two improvements to Baldwin Park, located on Parkside Circle.

New bocce ball courts are open and include benches, wood trellis arbors for shade, lighting, security fencing, landscaping, drinking fountain, an equipment storage building and picnic tables.

Phase 1 of the construction of an off-leash dog park has been completed. Temporary fencing has been erected in the park until construction of the permanent off-leash area is finished this fall.

Concord City News

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Ronald E. Leone	Vice Mayor
Timothy S. Grayson	Councilmember
Daniel C. Helix	Councilmember
William D. Shinn	Councilmember
Thomas J. Wentling	City Treasurer
Daniel E. Keen	City Manager
Leslye Asera	Community Relations Manager and Editor

Postal Customer

City Meetings

All meetings are held at Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Dr., unless otherwise noted and are open to the public. Dates are subject to change. For information, visit the website at www.cityofconcord.org (see Civic Center Meetings on the home page), check the meeting notices in the Contra Costa Times or call 671-3000.

City Council	First, second, fourth Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.*
Commission on Aging	Third Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle
Community Services Commission	Third Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. City Manager's Conference Room
Design Review Board	Second, fourth Thursday, 5:30 p.m.
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Commission	Second Wednesday, 7 p.m.*
Planning Commission	First, third Wednesday, 7 p.m.*
Zoning Administrator	Second, fourth Wednesday, 9 a.m.

* Broadcast live on Concord Cable TV channel 28 (Comcast), 29 (Astound), AT&T U-verse Channel 99 and online at www.cityofconcord.org. Past City Council meetings are also available online.

Boards & Commissions

For detailed information about the City's Boards and Commissions visit www.cityofconcord.org or call one of the contact numbers below.

Board of Appeals	671-3119
Commission on Aging	671-3419
Community Services Commission	671-3327
Design Review Board	671-3152
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Commission	671-3440
Personnel Board	671-3310
Planning Commission	671-3152



Need an Answer?

Web site: www.cityofconcord.org
Events: www.concordfirst.org
Classes: www.concordreg.org
E-mail: cityinfo@ci.concord.ca.us

Adult Softball.....	671-3279
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator.....	671-3031
Building.....	671-3107
Business Licenses.....	671-3313
Cable TV Astound Broadband.....	459-1000
Comcast.....	1-800-945-2288
Camp Concord.....	671-2267
Centre Concord.....	671-3466
City Council.....	671-3158
City Manager.....	671-3150
Concord Community Pool.....	671-3480
Concord Naval Weapons Station Reuse Project.....	671-3001
Downtown Hotline.....	671-3464
Economic Development.....	671-3355
Engineering.....	671-3361
Flood Zone Inquiries.....	671-3425
Garbage Collection.....	682-9113
Graffiti Hotline.....	671-3080
Housing.....	671-3364
Mayor.....	671-3158
Neighborhood Services Hotline.....	671-3282
Permit Center.....	671-3454
Picnic Site Reservations.....	671-3404
Planning.....	671-3152
Police and Fire Emergencies.....	911
Police/Information.....	671-3220
Pothole Hotline.....	671-3228
Public Works.....	671-3448
Park Maintenance.....	671-3444
Recreation/Registration.....	671-3404
Senior Center.....	671-3320
Sewer Problems.....	671-3099
Shopping Cart Hotline.....	671-5080
Sleep Train Pavilion Hotline.....	363-5701
Information.....	676-8742
Street Light Outages Hotline.....	671-3213
Street Sweeping.....	671-3448
Street Trees.....	671-3445
Traffic Signal Malfunctions.....	671-3132
Willow Pass Center.....	671-3423