

Concord City News

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITY OF CONCORD

Winter 2011

News Corner

Year-round Farmers' Market

The summer Thursday night Music and Market series is over for the year, but the year-round Tuesday Farmers' Market continues from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every week in Todos Santos Plaza. In addition to seasonal fruits and vegetables, vendors bring flowers and specialty items to the market.

Office closures

City offices will be closed in December from Friday, Dec. 23 through Sunday, Jan. 2 for unpaid furlough days, and the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Connect online

The City offers several ways to stay connected through a variety of monthly eNews options delivered to your email. Choose City eNews for general information or options for Seniors, Parks & Rec, and Business. Sign up on the City's website, www.cityofconcord.org. Select "Subscribe to eNews" from the choices in the right hand column of the homepage.



Residents participate in the Penny For Your Thoughts community priorities game

Concord receives state-wide award for creative community involvement

In October, the City Council was officially presented with a League of California Cities Helen Putnam award in the category of enhancing public trust, ethics and community involvement. The award recognizes outreach efforts last year to educate residents about the City's budget deficit through the "Penny for Your Thoughts" priorities game at the 2010 Living Within Our Means community workshops.

The game asked participants to balance the City's budget using 30 pennies distributed over five service categories. The participants were then asked to address a 'deficit' by removing six pennies. The exercise helped residents understand the difficult choices Councilmembers face when revenues decline.

The League designates one state-wide winner in each of twelve categories. In presenting the award, League representative Eric Figueroa told the City Council that the program was selected for the award because it was innovative, creative and interactive, and "forced the community to think about its priorities."

Mayor Laura Hoffmeister thanked the League for the award. She said that the "Penny for Your Thoughts" game seemed to resonate with the community, and many people expressed to her that they had a better understanding of the tough job faced by Councilmembers in balancing the budget.

For more information, contact Community Relations Manager Leslye Asera, (925) 671-3272. ♦

Connecting residents with City Services

As most residents are aware, the City has had a challenging time balancing its budget during the recession. After a nearly 25% reduction in staff, the City is undergoing a reorganization to consolidate and streamline services, creating some confusion when residents call City staff for information or assistance. In this issue, readers will find facts and figures about some of the City's most visible departments, and contact information to assist in getting the right information when a problem or question arises.

Residents also often call City Hall looking for information about a service not provided by the City. For example, while the City has its own police force, fire services are provided by Contra Costa Consolidated Fire. In some communities, the city manages the school system; in Concord, the schools are managed by the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Contra Costa County provides animal control, birth records and marriage licenses. Separate agencies provide water and sewer services. It can be difficult to connect with the right agency. A listing of the most requested contact numbers for these service providers can be found on page 5.

The following brief profiles of the Police Department, Public Works and Parks & Recreation are to assist residents in better understanding how to connect with City services, where their tax dollars go and what services are provided by the City. More information is available on the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org.

Police Department

The Concord Police Department is a busy place. The Dispatch Center answers more than 45,000 calls a year (that's almost 125 calls a day), and is open 24 hours. Officers in the field roll on over 93,000 calls a year and make over 3,500 arrests.



Police personnel stand ready to serve the community

In addition to the business of policing, officers interact directly with residents in non-emergency situations through a number of programs that promote crime prevention. School Resource Officers work with young people to encourage good citizenship. Many of the thousands of residents who frequent the Farmers' Market or the music programs in Todos Santos Plaza have seen the officers assigned to the downtown area. District Commanders and their patrol units are assigned to look after neighborhoods. Recently, the Neighborhood Services division that provides code enforcement services was moved over to the Police Department to better serve residents.

Over the last few years, there has been a noticeable reduction in crime in Concord. For example, the number of the most serious crimes (criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, arson) has fallen from 5,900 in 2008 to 4,172 in 2010.

In a recent survey, 90% of residents reported feeling "very safe" or "somewhat safe" in their neighborhoods during the day. While budget reductions have impacted all City departments, the City Council places a premium on public safety. The Police Department continues to work every day to protect and serve residents.

Resource officers enforce new daytime curfew

In September, officers began enforcing the new Daytime Curfew Ordinance, which mandates that those between the ages of 6 and 18 must be in school during school hours. This ordinance was enacted for the primary purpose of reducing the amount of juvenile-related crime and victimization.

See [City Services](#) page 3

Report minor crimes online

Residents have been making good use of the Police Department's convenient online system to report less-serious crimes such as garbage dumping, harassing phone calls, hit-and-run non-injury accidents, identity theft (under \$1000), lost property, theft, theft of recyclables, vandalism and vehicle tampering.

The online system does not replace crime reports taken by officers if that is the preference of the victim, but is offered as a convenient option for busy residents who may need to document a loss for insurance purposes.

To submit a crime report online, visit www.cityofconcord.org, and select "Crime Report" from the Quick Links drop down menu.

City Services from page 2

Students found in violation of the daytime curfew will be issued a warning citation, with a letter going to their parents. A short question and answer form will be included for additional clarification. Any subsequent violations of the daytime curfew will result in an infraction citation. The student and his or her parent/guardian will then be required to answer the citation at Superior Court, 2970 Willow Pass Road in Concord.

The Concord Police Department School Resource Officers have been instrumental in the implementation and enforcement of the new ordinance. SROs also work in and around the schools, implementing a number of unique programs to keep students safe and in school. Some of the programs they have instituted include:

- An SRO conducts bicycle patrols at Concord High School, in nearby parks, in the surrounding streets near the school, and in Dana Plaza Shopping Center.
- The Concord High SRO has developed a training plan for campus supervisors so they can patrol the campus on bicycles.
- Resource officers are now wearing alternative uniforms which are less traditional than regulation uniforms and make the officers more approachable.

Contact Concord Police 1350 Galindo Street	
Area Code (925)	
Emergency (Dispatch Center)	911
Non-emergency	671-3220
Records Bureau (police reports etc.)	671-3240
Code enforcement hotline	671-3282
District Commanders	671-5067 or 671-5041
Police Chief Guy Swanger	671-3194

Public Works

The Public Works Department takes care of the City’s infrastructure. Crews maintain roads and traffic signals, sewer and storm water runoff systems, parks and all City facilities. The department maintains 713 paved lane miles, and filled 410 potholes last year. The street sweepers traveled 8,548 miles. Crews kept 154 traffic signals in working order, and looked after Concord’s 1,642 acres of park land.

As part of road maintenance, the department recently completed this year’s patch paving and cape seal program. A total of 76,168 square feet of pavement has been patch paved and 713,255 square feet of pavement has been cape sealed.

The City chose to use a rubberized cape seal process, which consists of three steps – first applying an oil mixture, then small gravel chips, and finally a slurry seal on top.

A few of the advantages of using rubberized cape seal include:

- It’s a viable alternative to overlays and reconstruction
- Waterproofs the pavement surface



Road crews cape seal a street

- Environmentally friendly because it’s made from recycled tires
- Has an increased resistance to oxidation and aging over other chip seal binders
- Can be applied in cooler temperatures and at night because it is a hot-applied system
- Uses high quality, pre-coated aggregate and can be swept within minutes

Public Works encourages residents to call the hotline numbers listed on page 4 when they see graffiti, pot holes, abandoned shopping carts and street light or signal outages.

See [City Services page 4](#)

Remember to “Slow for the Cones”

The following tips are to help everyone stay safe while traveling through maintenance and construction work zones. Motorists can make trips a little safer by remembering the following work zone safety tips:

- ✓ Do not speed in work zones; obey the posted speed limits.
- ✓ Stay Alert! Expect the unexpected.
- ✓ Watch for workers. Drive with caution.
- ✓ Don’t change lanes unnecessarily.
- ✓ Avoid using mobile phones while driving in work zones.
- ✓ Expect delays, especially during peak travel times.
- ✓ Allow ample space between you and the car in front of you.
- ✓ Anticipate lane shifts, and merge when directed to do so.
- ✓ Be patient!



City Services from page 3

Meet the new Director of Public Works

Lori Vereker is the City's new Director of Public Works. Her first day on the job was September 6. Vereker came to Concord from Escondido, where she served as the Director of Utilities for that city of 140,000 residents located in Southern



Lori Vereker

California. In that position, she managed 150 employees and a budget of \$70 million.

From 2002 to 2008, she was the Deputy Director of the Operations and Maintenance Division of the Metropolitan Wastewater Department for the City of San Diego, managing 325 employees and a budget of \$80 million. From 1983 to 2001, she held the position of marine biologist in that department. Vereker holds a B.S. degree in Zoology from San Diego State University.

"I'm happy to be here in Concord, and I have learned in my short time here that we have many knowledgeable and dedicated employees who are proud of their contributions to the community," she said. "My plan is to address organizational issues that will facilitate more efficient and effective operation of the department."

Contact Public Works 1455 Gasoline Alley

	Area Code (925)
Graffiti Hotline	671-3080
Pothole Hotline	671-3228
Sewer Problems	671-3099
Shopping Cart Hotline	671-5080
Street Light Outages Hotline	671-3213
Street Sweeping	671-3448
Street Trees	671-3445
Traffic Signal Malfunctions	671-3132
Public Works – Main office	671-3448

Parks & Recreation

Thousands of children, seniors and families avail themselves of the many classes, activities and programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department every year. Until recently, the department was called Community and Recreation Services. The new name is a result of the City-wide streamlining effort.

The City's Camp Concord at Lake Tahoe served 644 family campers this summer. Last year, over 3,500 people attended classes offered by the department. More than 7,000 adults played on one of 450 softball teams. The Senior Center provided 24,700 individual services (nutrition, care management, transportation), almost 15,000 seniors attended classes and more than 30,000 participated in Senior Club activities for a total participation of over 70,000. At the other end of the age spectrum, approximately 1,500 students participated in the CARES after-school program. Concord Community Pool reported over 2,500 registrations for swimming lessons, and hosted approximately 44,000 lap swim and recreational swim customers.

Sand bags available at City Corp Yard

In preparation for the rainy season, the City of Concord is once again offering free sandbags for Concord residents. The Public Works crew has set up a covered area at the City's Corporation Yard where residents can pick up as many as 25 bags per household between the hours of 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. As in the past, residents can fill sandbags themselves (bags, sand and shovel are all provided). Staff also has a supply of already filled sandbags put aside for the elderly and handicapped. The Corporation Yard is located at 1455 Gasoline Alley. For more information, call (925) 671-3448.

Concord Community Pool upgrade requires a brief winter closure

The City will be upgrading the mechanical systems at Concord Community Pool to increase energy efficiency. This will require closure of the pool from Dec. 15, 2011 through Jan. 7, 2012. While the pool is not open for recreational swimming or classes in the winter, the closure impacts lap swimmers and members of the Terrapin Swim Team. The project includes the installation of new high-efficiency heaters and retrofitting the pool's circulation pump.

"In the long run, these two projects will mean higher energy efficiency and less potential for pool closures," says Recreation Program Manager Christopher Roke. "Both are huge benefits to the City as well as our user groups." For more information about the pool closure, call (925) 671-3480.



*The pool will be ready
for next year's swimmers*



Gymnastics is a popular class

In a recent survey, approximately half of residents said they or someone in their household had participated in a recreation program or activity in the last year. The department’s slogan, “Parks Makes Life Better,” speaks to the fact that residents consider Parks & Recreation important to the quality of life in Concord. ♦

Contact Parks & Recreation 2974 Salvio Street	
Area Code (925)	
Online class registration: www.ConcordReg.org	
Class and program registration	671-3404
Picnic site reservation	671-3404
Adult softball	671-3279
Rain Information Hotline – Athletic fields and dog parks closures	671-3479
Athletic Field Permits	671-3288
Camp Concord at Lake Tahoe	671-2267
Centre Concord 5298 Clayton Road	671-3466
Concord Community Pool 3501 Cowell Road	671-3480
Concord Senior Citizens Center 2727 Parkside Circle	671-3320
Diablo Creek Golf Course 4050 Port Chicago Highway	686-6262
Willow Pass Community Center 2748 East Olivera Road	671-3423
Park Maintenance	671-3444
Special Events Permits	671-3403

Frequently requested contact numbers

The City relies on other government entities and contracted companies to provide some services to residents and businesses. Listed are contacts for some of the most-requested services.

Service	Provider
Fire, emergency	911
Fire prevention and information	Contra Costa Consolidated Fire Administrative Office 2010 Geary Road Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 www.cccfpd.org (925) 930-5500, 930-5531
Stray animals (dogs, cats, livestock, wildlife), animal cruelty	Contra Costa County Animal Control 4800 Imhoff Place, Martinez www.co.contra-costa.ca.us (925) 335-8300
Nuisance animals (mice, rats, skunks), dead birds, mosquito control	Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control 155 Mason Circle, Concord www.contracostamosquito.com (925) 685-9301
Garbage and yard waste collection, recycling, sharps and motor oil disposal	Concord Disposal • 4080 Mallard Drive, Concord www.concorddisposal.com (925) 682-9113
Household hazardous waste disposal	Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility Run by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District 4797 Imhoff Place, Martinez http://centralsan.org (800) 646-1431
Sewer service	Central Contra Costa Sanitary District 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez http://centralsan.org (925) 228-9500
Water service	Contra Costa Water District 1331 Concord Ave., Concord www.ccwater.com (925) 688-8044
Public schools	Mt. Diablo School District 1936 Carlotta Drive, Concord www.mdusd.org (925) 682-8000
Traffic tickets	Traffic Court 2970 Willow Pass Road Concord, CA 94519 (925) 646-5404
Birth, death, marriage certificates, fictitious business filings, property records, etc.	Contra Costa County Clerk/Recorder 555 Escobar Street, P.O. Box 350 Martinez, CA 94553 www.ccclerkrec.us/connect/site/ (925) 335-7900

Sidewalks are responsibility of adjacent property owners

Like most cities, Concord follows state law regarding the maintenance and construction of public sidewalks. Under state law, maintenance of the sidewalk is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, even though the sidewalk is in the City's right-of-way.

Residents should be aware that they are responsible for repairing or reconstructing sidewalks adjacent to their property if the sidewalk becomes cracked or if there is a tripping hazard. Failure to keep sidewalks in good repair means residents are liable if someone trips on that part of the sidewalk.

While the City doesn't have the resources to construct and maintain all residential sidewalks, it does fund the following programs:

1. Citywide Sidewalk Program – Funded with local funds, this program is used to address accessibility problems in sidewalks throughout the city.
2. Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk Repair Program – This program is funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies, and can only be used to repair sidewalks, curbs and gutters in federally designated CDBG areas.
3. Removal of Barriers to the Mobility Impaired – Also funded with CDBG monies, this program provides for the construction of curb ramps and removal of other barriers in CDBG areas.
4. Tripping Hazard Removal Program – When the City learns of a sidewalk tripping hazard, funds from this program are used to apply asphalt "ramps" to uneven, cracked sidewalks or to grind the sidewalk to eliminate the tripping hazard. To report a tripping hazard, call 671-3050.

Residents with damaged sidewalks can contact the City to see if the damage is going to be repaired as part of one of these programs. If this is not the case, residents can also inquire about including their sidewalk repair job in the Citywide Sidewalk Program, which greatly reduces the cost of the repair. This option has several benefits:

- The cost can be less than hiring a private contractor to fix the sidewalk due to the economies of scale; the City's construction contract is based on a large number of projects
- Residents joining this program will not be required to obtain and pay for an encroachment permit and the related inspection fees. The improvements will be inspected by City inspectors at City's cost
- The City contractor is bonded/insured (not true of all private contractors)
- The City contractor provides a one-year warranty, during which period the contractor will repair any defects (not all private contractors provide this warranty)

Residents who would like to have someone look at the sidewalk adjacent to their property and/or discuss having a sidewalk repair included in the Citywide Sidewalk Project, may contact Daniel Sequeira, PE, Associate Civil Engineer and ADA Coordinator, at (925) 671-3031.

Accommodations for disabled residents

Disabled residents who receive a citation for a violation of a City code, rule or regulation and are unable to comply because of their disability may be entitled to an accommodation. For more information, contact the City's ADA Coordinator Daniel Sequeira, PE, Associate Civil Engineer, (925) 671-3031. ♦



Hilton Concord has been repainted and rooms are getting an upgrade

Hilton undergoes a major renovation

The Hilton Concord hotel, at 1970 Diamond Blvd., is undergoing a multi-million dollar renovation project that the company expects will have a positive impact on the local economy.

"We are excited about how this renovation will not only enhance each of our guests' travel experience, but also because of the positive economic and environmental impact it will have on the city of Concord," says Jack Hlavac, general manager. "We have made a conscious effort to employ local companies and to buy sustainable products that are made in the United States."

The building's exterior has been repainted as part of the update. Guest rooms, corridors, the lobby and event space will all get an upgrade. "The Concord Hilton's investment is a testament to the ownership's commitment to providing the best hotel experiences possible for their guests while maintaining their position as the "go to" destination for events and business meetings in Contra Costa County," stated John Montagh, the City's Economic Development Manager.

A majority of the construction is expected to be completed by the end of this year. Additional enhancements are planned for 2012. ♦

City offers help with home ownership

Thanks to the City's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, the Wisteria Development by New America Homes is currently offering one Below Market Rate (BMR) unit, with two more to be built over the next 18 to 24 months. The site is located at the corner of Willow Pass Road and Port Chicago, across from Safeway.

The sales price for the 3 bedroom, 3 bath BMR unit has been set at \$315,000, based on moderate income levels set by the State. The maximum income limits for eligibility are tied to 120% of median income levels, based on household size. For a family of four to qualify, the maximum income is set at \$110,750.

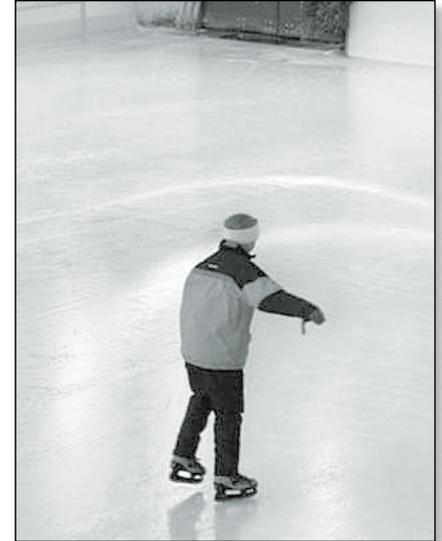
The City is also offering the incentive of down payment assistance of up to \$30,000 (at 3% interest) through State BEGIN funds. Applications are currently being taken at www.Homebricks.com/Wisteria.

The Wisteria neighborhood will include 37 homes at final build out,

with the remaining 19 scheduled for construction over the next 18-24 months. Home construction is being paced such that homes are built as each release is sold. Homebuyer interest has been strong. For the most recent release, four homes were built and three have sold. Potential buyers are attracted by the urban location near two BART stations and the proximity to the downtown and events such as the popular summer music series and the Farmers' Market.

The residential design of the single family homes is distinctive for Concord with living areas on all three levels, including a bedroom and bath at ground level, living areas on level two and two bedrooms and two bathrooms on level three. The homes include stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, a fireplace in the living area, dual zone heating and air conditioning and a two-car garage.

For more information, contact Senior Planner Joan Ryan, (925) 671-3370. ♦



Adults and children can try out the new skate rink through January 3

Try the new iceless ice rink

Families are invited to stop by Concord's latest holiday attraction – an iceless ice rink in downtown Concord. The rink will be open through January 3 in Todos Santos Plaza (Willow Pass Road and Mt. Diablo Street).

This is the first year for the rink, although it made a preview appearance this summer during the National Night Out celebration in September. Hockey-style and figure skates will be provided at no cost. Entry fee is \$8 per person. There is no age limit, but the smallest skate size available will be a child's size 4.

The rink is sponsored by the City, Todos Santos Business Association, Tesoro, Concord Disposal and Sonoma Bank. ♦



Smoking banned in downtown area

The City Council approved an ordinance in October that bans smoking downtown within a 17-block area around Todos Santos Plaza. The ban applies to sidewalks and public areas, as well as to areas on private property that are accessible to the general public.

The ban was requested by downtown business and property owners to make the downtown healthier and more welcoming to residents and visitors. In developing the proposed smoking ban, staff held a

series of meetings for the general public and communicated with the Todos Santos Business Association, downtown business and property owners, downtown residents and the County Public and Environmental Health Advisory Board.

The ordinance provides the legal mechanism to prohibit smoking in the core downtown in order to enhance the area as the community's central gathering place, improve commerce in the area and foster a healthy quality of life for residents and visitors. ♦

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**

Concord City News

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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