



# The Saratogian

Spring 2008

## The Value of Being Better, not Bigger

When the first settlers arrived in this area in the 1800's they faced a remote wilderness. People relied upon their imagination, resourcefulness and ingenuity to move beyond the hardships and carve out a life in this rugged area. When the City government was being formed in 1956, residents retained a desire for self-sufficiency.

Since 1956, there has been a continued focus on delivery of high quality, essential city services that has assured Saratoga's self-reliance. Although much as changed, Saratoga is still a place that attracts resourceful, forward-thinking people who understand the value of being better, not bigger.

The City Council, your elected representatives, and City staff work together as a team to efficiently provide essential services, reduce waste, invest in the future, and capitalize on assets—large and small.

### Focusing on essentials:

The City's commitment to maintaining basic City services at the highest level is reflected in

the City's Operating Budget. Learn more about the budget process on page 2.

Reducing waste: As we all become aware of global warming and our impact on the planet, the City is turning toward more efficient use of resources—as one small example, paper supplies. Read more in the next article.

Investing in the future: The Council recently decided to invest in the North Campus to make improvements that will increase uses at the facility without



*Calabazas Creek Picnic Area*

straining the City's budget. To learn more about how the City is maximizing the use of the North Campus, turn to page 2.

Capitalizing on assets: Easily accessible open space is prized in the community, yet it presents a challenge as demand for development increases. Consequently, the City has taken care to maximize available open space by developing pocket parks and maintaining trail easements on the property of other public agencies located in Saratoga. As an example, the recently opened Calabazas Creek Picnic Area is a Santa Clara Valley Water District easement improved and maintained by the City.

## Saratoga Going Paperless

Adopting environmentally sustainable practices can often be simple and inexpensive. Going paperless is one of the easiest ways to conserve resources. In September 2007, Saratoga City Council started holding paperless Council Meetings and the benefits are already clear!



Holding paperless City Council Meetings has saved:

- 100,000 pages in copies
- 200 reams of paper
- \$640 in paper costs
- 56 staff hours spent copying

## Saratoga Recognized as Tree City USA

Tree City USA is a nationwide program that recognizes cities throughout the United States for making a special commitment to urban forests.

In April 2008, the City was formally recognized as a Tree City USA and celebrated the award with an Arbor Day tree planting in El Quito Park.

The Skillet Lickers kicked off the event with songs about Saratoga and its trees, followed by a poetry reading by Willys Peck and the planting of a 24-inch box tree donated by Saratoga Rotary. Betty Peck ended the ceremony with a tree blessing.



## Saratoga Balancing the Budget

Spring is in full bloom and that means the end of the City's fiscal year is quickly approaching. Each year, California cities are required by state law to adopt a budget and develop a financial plan for the year ahead.

The initial phases of the budget process typically begin in January, with final adoption of the budget in June before the start of the new fiscal year on July 1st. The proposed budget is presented to the Council in a public hearing, where it is reviewed and revised by the Council. The public also has the opportunity to recommend changes. The revised budget is then brought back to the City Council for final approval in June.

Important Dates for FY 2008/09 Budget:

- May 21, 2008: Public Hearing on FY 2008/09 Proposed Budget
- June 4, 2008: Adoption of FY 2008/09 Budget
- June 30, 2008: End of FY 2007/08

The budget is divided into the Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Budget. The greatest source of revenue comes from property tax allocations; over 30% of the Operating Budget's revenues comes from property taxes.

Operating Budget Expenditures:

- City Council support
- Code compliance
- Maintenance of City facilities, parks, trails, open space, & streets
- Planning services & zoning regulations
- Police patrols & emergency response (including 9-1-1 calls and burglary alarms)
- Recreational classes
- Traffic management

The CIP Budget is the financial plan for special projects, acquisitions, or improvements. It is based on a five-year CIP plan. The City has been proactive in securing over \$7.6 million in grants to supplement City funding of the CIP Budget.

Projects Funded in the FY 2007/08 CIP Budget:

- Fellowship Hall Renovations, to be completed Fall 2008
- Highway 9 Safety Improvements Phase 1, started Winter 2008
- Saratoga-Sunnyvale Street Resurfacing, to be completed Spring 2008
- Village Façade Improvement Program, ongoing
- Village Pedestrian Safety Improvements, underway
- West Valley College sports field, to be completed Fall 2008

For more information about the City's budget, visit [www.saratoga.ca.us](http://www.saratoga.ca.us).

## North Campus Taking Shape

Much has changed at the North Campus since the beginning of the year. Here's a look at what has happened this year.

January 2008:

- Public invited to Visioning Meeting to discuss North Campus options
- Options include proposal from Alan & Lisa Beck to replace Sanctuary & Education buildings with child development center & gymnasium



*Fellowship Hall at the North Campus. Renovations to include fully accessible bathrooms, new windows, kitchen, and hardwood floor.*

March 2008:

- City celebrates Fellowship Hall Groundbreaking & renovations started
- Council recognizes contributions of Saratoga-Monte Sereno Community Foundation & House Family Foundation for Fellowship Hall
- Renovations to Fellowship Hall expected to be done by end of the year



*Saratoga Taiko at Fellowship Hall Groundbreaking*

April 2008:

- Becks withdraw proposal
- Council approves plans to demolish the front 2 buildings—Education & Sanctuary building
- Work to be done by end of the year

Renovations to Fellowship Hall and demolition of the unusable buildings at the North Campus will make the site a more versatile facility for future community use and recreational programs. To rent a building at the North Campus, contact Nina Walker in the Recreation & Facilities Department by calling (408) 868-1252.

## Updating Saratoga's Housing Element

Every five years, State law requires California cities to update the Housing Element—a portion of the General Plan developed to address housing needs. The update to the Housing Element must be adopted by the Council prior to June 30, 2009.

### The Housing Element:

- Quantifies existing and projected housing needs;
- Establishes goals, policies, objectives and programs for preserving, improving and developing housing to meet the needs of all economic sectors; and
- Identifies how the City will provide its “fair share” of regional housing.

In the Bay Area, housing needs are determined by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). ABAG studies regional housing needs and each city is allocated a target for new housing units based on income. For 2007 - 2012, ABAG's draft assessment allocates a goal of 292 new housing units to Saratoga.

In response to the housing allocations, the City provides a site inventory and analysis identifying sites suitable for residential development. This allows the City to compare housing allocations with the sites available for development and determine if the identified sites have the capacity to meet housing targets established for each income level. Special attention is paid to adequately providing for affordable housing units.

Each year the City submits statistics to the State documenting our progress in meeting housing allocation targets as required by the State.

Here's a look at 1999-2006:

	Target	Saratoga's Achievement
Total New Housing Units	539	624
Very-low Income Units	75	60
Low Income Units	36	1
Moderate Income Units	108	108

The City Council recently approved a contract with RBF Consulting to prepare the City's Housing Element update. RBF Consulting will be holding several public meetings and there will be several opportunities for public involvement. The first public hearing to gather community input will be on June 17, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the North Campus, located at 19848 Prospect Road, Saratoga.

## Driving with Both Hands: New Cell Phone Laws

Starting July 1, 2008, Senate Bills 1613 and 33 will go into effect. These new laws regulate use of wireless telephones while driving and will require drivers age 18 and up to use “hands-free devices” while driving and will prohibit drivers younger than 18 from using cell phones. Before local law enforcement starts enforcing these new laws, take the time to learn how these new laws will affect you. To find out more, visit [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov).

- Officers will have the authority to issue tickets immediately on July 1, 2008.
- All drivers will be prohibited from using a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle. Motorists 18 and over may use a “hands-free device”.
- Drivers under the age of 18 may NOT use a wireless telephone or hands-free device while operating a motor vehicle.
- The base fine for the FIRST offense is \$20 and \$50 for each offence thereafter. With the addition of penalty assessments, the fines can be more than triple the base fine amount.
- This law only applies to the person driving a motor vehicle, not passengers.
- The new law does not prohibit dialing, but drivers are strongly urged not to dial while driving.
- The law allows a driver to use a handheld wireless telephone to make emergency calls.

## Electronic and Universal Waste

Looking to get rid of any of these items?

- Computer keyboards, mice, monitors, & printers, & external hard drives
- DVD & VCR players
- Electrical switches & relays
- Fluorescent tubes & bulbs
- Household batteries
- Laptop computers
- Mercury thermostats
- Non-empty aerosol cans
- Pilot light sensors
- Televisions
- Used Motor oil & oil filters
- Water based paints



Call West Valley Collection & Recycling at (408) 283-9250 today to schedule a free drop off for these items Tuesday through Thursday, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

## Directory

City Hall	(408) 868-1200
Building Permits	(408) 868-1240
Business Licenses	(408) 868-1260
City Clerk	(408) 868-1269
City Manager	(408) 868-1216
Code Enforcement	(408) 868-1214
Commission Recruitments	(408) 868-1269
Employment Opportunities	(408) 868-1252
Facility Rentals	(408) 868-1259
Garbage & Recycling	(408) 868-1269
Park Maintenance	(408) 868-1245
Park Reservations	(408) 868-1248
Recreation	(408) 868-1249
Senior Center	(408) 868-1257
Sheriff's Office West Valley Division	(408) 868-6600
Storm Drains	(408) 868-1245
Street Maintenance	(408) 868-1245
Tree Removal Permits	(408) 868-1276
Volunteer Opportunities	(408) 868-1216

## Contact the Editor

**T**he *Saratogan* is published quarterly by the City of Saratoga to report on community issues and events.

Community members are welcome to send questions, comments, and story ideas!

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## Friendly Bugs and Green Gardens

If you use pesticides in your lawn and garden, your yard may not be the healthy green oasis that you have in mind. Instead of pesticides, try using "beneficial bugs" that eat insect pests. Ladybugs, Lacewings, and other garden-friendly bugs are great partners in sustainable gardening.

Be sure to check your shelves for unsafe pesticides that contain DIAZINON or CHLORPYRIFOS.

These products have been taken off the market and should be properly disposed of by dropping them off at the County's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) site. You can make an appointment to drop off pesticides or other dangerous products by calling (408) 299-7300.

To learn more about beneficial bugs, visit [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/NE/index.html](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/NE/index.html). Photos courtesy of University of California.

Below: lacewing. Right: ladybug larvae.



## Saratoga's Annual Cleanup Coming Soon!

**West Valley Collection & Recycling (WVCR) collecting unlimited number of items at your curb for free!**

Cleanups will take place between July and September and will be done on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. Two weeks before your cleanup date, WVCR will send a notice and exact details about acceptable cleanup items.

To prepare for your cleanup date, hold a garage sale! Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills and donate unsold garage sale items to a charitable organization for a tax deduction!

For more information about the Annual Cleanup, visit [www.westvalleyrecycles.com](http://www.westvalleyrecycles.com) or call WVCR at (408) 289-9250.



The Saratogan  
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