



# The Saratogan

Spring 2010

## Saratoga Successes

Have you been to Saratoga Village lately? Over the past few years, the City has been making a number of improvements to the Village. The City's efforts are aimed at improving the business environment by making it easier to own and operate a business in the Village while maintaining its beauty and historic character. Read about some of the improvements the City has undertaken, then visit the Village to see firsthand how these improvements are making it a better place to live, work, and shop.

### *Supporting the Business Community & Village Events*

- Commissioned a retail study to identify retail opportunities
- Annual financial support and numerous one-time grants for the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce to promote local businesses
- Support for Saratoga Village Development Council events

### *Capital Projects*

- Blaney Plaza improvements, including relocation of the Memorial Arch and new landscaping
- Addition of decorative benches and garbage/recycling enclosures along Big Basin Way

### *Operational & Ordinances*

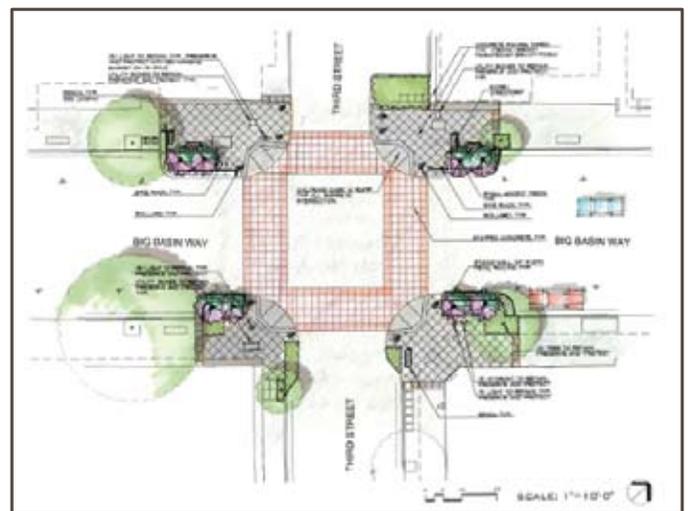
- Weekly street sweeping and collection of garbage/recycling
- Decorative street and tree lighting
- Extension of parking ordinance moratorium to facilitate downtown development; 12 businesses have taken advantage of this incentive
- Implementation of administrative conditional use permit process to lower cost and decrease permit approval time for businesses
- Conditional use permit fee waivers for up to 5 businesses, including family style restaurants, bakeries, grocery stores, wine tasting businesses, ice cream or yogurt stores, arts and craft instruction studios, and other businesses with Council approval

### *Future Improvements*

- Pedestrian safety and streetscape improvements
- Installation of attractive news rack enclosures
- Beautification improvements, including hanging flower baskets and decorative paving



*Blaney Plaza, photo by Ron Leckie*



*Pedestrian safety improvements to Big Basin*

Visit [www.saratoga.ca.us/village](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/village) for a full list of Village improvements and read about other Saratoga success stories in this issue of The Saratogan.

## Healthy and Active Living in Saratoga

Statistics about the health of Americans are startling: the Centers for Disease Control reports that more than two thirds of U.S. adults and about one fifth of U.S. children are overweight or obese due to lack of exercise and poor diet. Being overweight or obese increases the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, and stroke.

As providers of park and recreational services, cities can play a key role in addressing this national health epidemic. The City of Saratoga has been working for years to help residents achieve healthy and active lifestyles through parks and recreation. The City maintains 67 acres of developed parkland and 13 miles of walking trails. Park amenities range from par courses to tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball diamonds, soccer fields, and walking paths.

The Saratoga Recreation Department also offers a wide variety of health and wellness programs, which this summer will include zumba, jazzercise, pilates, ballroom dancing, tennis, golf,



ice skating, a variety of yoga classes, lacrosse camp for youth, junior rock climbing for children, karate for children, and hands-on healthy cooking around the world. Go to [www.saratoga.ca.us/recreation](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/recreation) to view the latest activity guide and register for classes. Look for the “Healthy Saratoga” icon next to the City’s health and fitness classes.



## Sustaining Saratoga

The City of Saratoga has long been committed to adopting more environmentally sustainable practices. In 2010, the City will be ratcheting up its commitment to protecting the environment. In January, the City applied for a Federal grant to replace the existing High Pressure Sodium street lights in the Village with Light Emitting Diode (LED) lamps. These new lights will use 50% less energy and have a significantly longer lifespan than the current lights. The project is expected to reduce maintenance expenses by \$5,000 per year.

The City will also be installing a 25 kilowatt solar array in its Corporation Yard. The solar panels are expected to supply power for the City’s Corporation Yard and the Joan Pisani Community Center. This will save the City approximately \$7,200 annually in energy expenses.

Additionally, the City is participating in two regional efforts to help residents reduce their impact on the environment. Saratoga is a member of the CaliforniaFIRST pilot program that will be launched in late summer 2010. This clean energy program will enable residential and commercial property owners to make clean energy improvements to their property and repay the project costs through their property taxes over an extended period of time. Visit [www.californiafirst.org](http://www.californiafirst.org) for additional details and to sign up for program updates.

The City is also working with Santa Clara County and the Association of Bay Area Governments to implement Retrofit Bay Area, a program that will help residents reduce their energy use through energy audits and building retrofits. Information about this program will be available later this year.

To learn more about going green, visit [www.saratoga.ca.us/sustainability](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/sustainability).



## MOVE-IT Saratoga

Make it a summer of fitness and fun! Walk/run a marathon (26 miles) or bike a century (100 miles) in Saratoga this summer!

Walk, run, or bike your miles in Saratoga between May 31st and September 1st. Then turn in your miles to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Everyone who completes their miles will be honored at the September 15, 2010 City Council Meeting. Register and report miles at [www.saratoga.ca.us/moveit](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/moveit).

To help you along the way to your goal the Trails Committee invites you to join them:

- Saturday, June 5 at 9:00 a.m. for a hike on the Parker Ranch Trail
- Monday, June 21 at 7:00 p.m. to celebrate the summer solstice with a Heritage Triangle walk

This program is sponsored by the Saratoga Parks and Recreation Commission. For City trail maps, visit [www.saratoga.ca.us/trails](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/trails).



## Ask Jana

Got Code Enforcement questions? Ask Jana! Send your questions to Jana Rinaldi at 13777 Fruitvale Avenue, Saratoga CA 95070 or by email to [jrinaldi@saratoga.ca.us](mailto:jrinaldi@saratoga.ca.us).



Dear Jana,

I'm ready to do my part for the environment and would like to install solar panels to take my home off the grid. Do I need any permits or other approvals to install solar panels on my roof?

Solar Sally

*Dear Sally,*

*Yes, a building permit is required to install solar panels on your rooftop. In most circumstances, the contractor who will perform the work will submit the required plans to the City and obtain the permit. If the solar panels will be mounted on the ground rather than a rooftop, you'll need to contact our Planning Division to determine an acceptable location on your property for the panels. The Planning counter is open Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to noon.*

*Jana*

Dear Jana,

This year during a couple of winter storms, I've lost power to my house. I'm thinking of installing a fuel cell generator as a backup power supply. I understand that these generators are efficient and quiet. Can you tell me what the requirements are for fuel cell generators?

Fred

*Dear Fred,*

*A permit is required for this project. You'll need to get approval from the Planning Division and then the Building Division will perform a plan review. Although the generator does not make noise, it will have to be placed in a location that meets setback requirements. Information about the Planning and Building Divisions is available at [www.saratoga.ca.us](http://www.saratoga.ca.us) or by phone at (408) 868-1222.*

*Jana*



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## Saratoga Community Garage Sale

Need to make a little extra space in the garage? Then mark your calendar for the Saratoga Community Garage Sale on July 31, 2010. The City provides advertising for the event in the Silicon Valley Community Newspapers and San Jose Mercury News classifieds to help residents reduce waste by selling usable treasures. Registered garage sale locations will also be included in a listing on the City's website. Residents will be able to register starting in late June by visiting the City's website at [www.saratoga.ca.us/garagesale](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/garagesale) or by picking up a registration form at City offices.

The Saratoga Community Garage Sale will take place just after the start of the City's annual cleanup, which will run from July 21, 2010 to September 26, 2010. Visit [www.westvalleyrecycles.com](http://www.westvalleyrecycles.com) for information about the cleanup.



Neighborhood Association Joint Meeting

## Attention Neighborhood Groups

The City Council will hold the third annual Homeowner and Neighborhood Associations joint meeting on June 16, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. in the Joan Pisani Community Center. Meet other neighborhood groups, get updates on the City, and share your interests! For more information or to register, contact Debbie Bretschneider at [debbieb@saratoga.ca.us](mailto:debbieb@saratoga.ca.us) or (408) 868-1216.

## Low Interest Home Repair Loans

Low interest home loans are available for low and fixed income Saratoga residents. To be eligible for the program, applicants must meet income guidelines. Loans may be used for home and property improvements including roofing, heating, painting, structural repairs, electrical repairs, and plumbing.

For more details about loan terms, qualifications, and amounts available, contact Tracy Cunningham at the Santa Clara County Housing Rehabilitation Program at (408) 441-4323. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).



## Saratoga Arbor Day

Take part in the Saratoga Arbor Day celebration on April 22, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. in Azule Park located at 12277 Goleta Avenue. Enjoy refreshments, live music, help plant a tree, participate in a scavenger hunt to learn about sustainability, and take home a free bag of compost, sapling, and other giveaways! For more information visit [www.saratoga.ca.us/arborday](http://www.saratoga.ca.us/arborday) or contact Crystal Morrow at [cmorrow@saratoga.ca.us](mailto:cmorrow@saratoga.ca.us) or (408) 868-1275.

Got ideas? Send story ideas & comments about *The Saratogan* to Crystal Morrow at [cmorrow@saratoga.ca.us](mailto:cmorrow@saratoga.ca.us) or (408) 868-1275.