



The Saratogan

Fall/Winter 2012

Community Engagement

The City of Saratoga places high priority on finding ways to involve community members in current projects, activities, and events that take place in Saratoga. With only 30,000 residents living throughout 12 square miles, and a modest business community, the City has an opportunity to create a tight knit group that works together using the public process to improve the quality of life in Saratoga. The City offers Commissions and Committees, listed below, as one way to become involved by serving in an advisory capacity to the Council and helping identify areas that need improvement within the community. The City relies on public feedback to ensure that City services, programs, and facilities meet the needs of the community and City Commissions are a great way to participate in your local government. For more information, visit www.saratoga.ca.us/commissions.

- Heritage Preservation Commission provides guidance on preserving and protecting the heritage resources of the community.
- Library Commission provides counsel and recommendations on library policies, budgets, plans and procedures.
- Parks and Recreation Commission makes recommendations about planning, acquisition, development and maintenance of parks, trails, and other recreational areas.
- Planning Commission ensures that physical development complies with goals defined in City's General Plan and considers appeals of development-related decisions made by the City.
- Traffic Safety Commission investigates, reviews and analyzes traffic safety issues and makes recommendations regarding traffic safety.
- Youth Commission, comprised of middle and high school students, serves as a liaison between the youth community and City Council and works to enhance the well being of the local youth, offers positive influences to youth and provides opportunities for youth involvement in the community.
- Pedestrian, Equestrian, Bicycle Trails Advisory Committee reviews planning, acquisition, and development of trails and sidewalks and maintains the trails network.

Throughout this issue, readers will also discover the communication tools and business support that the City offers to stay engaged with community members, and infrastructure projects that come to fruition as a result of civic engagement and input from the community.



Youth Commission Taking Oath with City Clerk

Communication Tools

The City operates with the philosophy that open and consistent communication is the key to strong and lasting relationships. The City values its relationships with community members and therefore continuously explores creative methods to give residents the option to choose one that resonates the strongest with them. While traditional communication methods are used, such as posting flyers at public facilities, sending press releases to local news services that write stories about the City, and maintaining a City website (www.saratoga.ca.us), the City also offers additional communication tools that are easily accessible. The City encourages all residents interested in receiving updated community information to access one or more of the following methods:

- Email Notifications, sent when the City posts information about current news, upcoming public meetings and events, and public safety reports from the Sheriff and Fire Departments. Visit www.saratoga.ca.us/email_subscriptions and subscribe.
- The Saratogan Newsletter, distributed to all Saratoga residents every 4 months via U.S. mail as an insert in the City's Recreational Guide. Residents may also subscribe to receive an email notification when the Saratogan is published.
- Facebook page, launched in June 2012, sends weekly updates. Community members must have an existing account and "Like" the page. Visit www.facebook.com/pages/City-of-Saratoga/312301222187008.
- 1610 AM Radio, Traveler's Information System (TIS), which was upgraded recently, broadcasts information to motorists and residents who are tuned in to Saratoga's 1610 AM Radio Station.
- Nextdoor.com, which will launch in Saratoga by the end of 2012, will connect neighbors and help foster a sense of community between them by providing private and individual neighborhood sites.
- KSAR, a community access TV station, broadcasts the City's Planning Commission and City Council Meetings on channel 15.



Captain Ken Binder Recording a Radio Message



Hakone Gardens (www.venzfinephoto.com)



Saratoga Village (Photo taken by Ron Leckie)

Destination Saratoga

Destination Saratoga is a grassroots effort in Saratoga to create a well-known city brand and market local businesses. To support this effort, the City has provided financial assistance and staff support to the Destination Saratoga Committee and will also be facilitating pop-up or temporary businesses to help fill chronically vacant spaces. Through the partnership between the Destination Saratoga Committee and the City, the site www.gosaratogaca.com was developed and features wonderful dining, spa, and shopping opportunities for visitors to enjoy. The goal of the website is to draw more visitors to Saratoga and re-energize the local business environment. The City continues to work with the Saratoga businesses to create an environment where businesses can thrive.

Community Improvements

The City of Saratoga works hard to strengthen the sense of community in Saratoga and to beautify, maintain and improve its existing infrastructure. This fiscal year, the City plans to spend \$10.26 million on community infrastructure projects. A significant portion of the budget is focused on street and park maintenance and repair. The City has also recently put greater emphasis on improving operational efficiencies by installing energy efficient equipment, such as the solar panels on the Saratoga Library roof, the five electrical vehicle chargers located throughout Saratoga, and LED lights at the Village. Below are two projects that the City completed before November 2012 and two projects the City plans to complete in 2013.

Completed Projects



Village LED Lights

- Total cost: \$450K of which \$417K came from grant funds.
- City paid \$166K toward the purchase of the street poles and lights and \$233K to remove and install new street lights and poles.
- City anticipates seeing a reduction in its billing rate with PG&E and a reduction in staff time used to replace the street lights.



Phase 3 Highway 9 Safety Improvements

- Total cost: \$550K of which \$456K came from Prop 116 Clean Air and Transportation Improvement Act of 1990.
- Balance was paid for by Saratoga, Monte Sereno, Los Gatos, Santa Clara County, and Valley Transportation Authority.
- Project realigned the intersection at Austin Way and Highway 9, installed new medians at Austin Way, bicycle detection system at all signalized intersections, and widened Highway 9 in Los Gatos to accommodate a bicycle lane.

Upcoming Projects



Pedestrian Crosswalk Cox Avenue near Quito Market Winter 2013

- Total cost: \$160K
- Project will begin in mid-December and will be complete at the end of January 2013.
- Work will include enhancing the crosswalk with in-pavement warning lights at Cox Avenue near Quito Market to reduce driver speed and make pedestrians more visible.



Fruitvale Median Beautification Joint Project with West Valley College- Spring 2013

- Total cost: \$140K of which \$90K will be funded by West Valley College.
 - City will pay \$50K to complete the project and \$14K annually to maintain the median.
 - Project will install irrigation system and landscaping and restore the edge of the median and the drainage system.
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Congratulations!

Photos taken by Saratoga News

Ann Waltonsmith



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2012
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Bill and Doris Cooper



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2012
BUSINESS COUPLE OF THE YEAR

Brian Babcock



PROMOTED TO EDITOR
CAMPBELL REPORTER

Street Sweeping Schedule

Beginning in July 2012, the City increased street sweeping services to twice each month for all streets in Saratoga through a contract with Contract Sweeping Services. The streets in the Village will remain on a once per week schedule. Visit www.saratoga.ca.us/streetsweeping for more information.



Attention Saratogan Readers!

Congratulations, you are eligible to receive a \$50 gift certificate! Simply submit your name and contact information to the City of Saratoga by calling (408) 868-1296, emailing saratogan@saratoga.ca.us, or visiting www.saratoga.ca.us/readership. Entries must be received by December 17, 2012 to be included in the drawing. The winner will be announced on December 19, 2012 at the City Council meeting. The person whose name is selected will win a \$50 gift certificate from a Saratoga business of his or her choice! You do not need to be present at the Council meeting to receive the gift certificate.



Ask Our Staff

Have a question? Send your question(s) to mcabute@saratoga.ca.us or (408) 868-1275.

Dear City Staff,

The fence on my property line is dilapidated. The neighbor who shares the fence is not willing to help pay for a new fence. Is there a City ordinance that requires neighbors to split the costs of fences?

Fence Fixing Fred



Dear Fred,

No, there are no provisions in the City ordinance that require Saratoga residents to share in the cost of repairing or replacing fences that divide properties. In fact, the City does not require property owners to have fences.

Chris Riordan, City Planner

Dear City Staff,

I have seen large bins at City Hall and also at the Historical Museum for toy collections. I would like to give toys but want to know where the toys are going?

Toy-Giving Tanya



Dear Tanya,

The City is collecting toys to give to Sacred Heart Community Service. Sacred Heart will distribute the toys to children in need. The bins will be available until December 12th. Thank you for your generosity!

Debbie Bretschneider, Deputy City Clerk



To learn more about *The Saratogan*, make comments, suggest story ideas, or include events in the Events section, contact Mainini Cabute at mcabute@saratoga.ca.us or (408) 868-1275. You can also find *The Saratogan* online and sign up for email alerts at www.saratoga.ca.us/saratogan.