

HERCULES

RE: DEVELOPMENT



CITY OF HERCULES REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY NEWSLETTER VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1 Q3 2009

MEETING CALENDAR

■ Redevelopment Agency/ City Council

Second and fourth Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

■ Planning Commission

First and third Monday at 7:00 p.m.

■ Community and Library Services Commission

Second Monday at 7:00 p.m.

All meetings are held in the Hercules City Council Chambers, 111 Civic Drive, unless otherwise noted.

FEATURED EVENTS

■ Consumer & Business Expo

Sunday, September 20, 2009

1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

City Hall Courtyard

Call 510-245-6529 for more info

■ Golf Tournament Fundraiser

Friday, October 2, 2009

Franklin Canyon Golf Course

Proceeds to benefit various programs at Hercules schools

To register call 510-799-8230

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Hercules Transit Center Now Open



The new Hercules Transit Center located at 1000 Willow Avenue near the I-80 off-ramp, with 422 parking spaces, an expanded bus bay, a large loading zone and lighted pedestrian path that extends from Sycamore Avenue

After months of anticipation, the expanded Hercules Transit Center finally opened on August 3, 2009. City officials partnered with WestCAT and BART to host a grand opening and ribbon cutting event. Commuters were greeted with a free tote bag, a City of Hercules lanyard and lots of information about the new facility and transit options. The facility is 66% larger, with a total of 422 parking spaces, and has many great features making it easier and safer for commuters. The Transit Center has an expanded bus bay, a large loading zone, electronic lockers for bicycle riders and a lighted pedestrian path.

To coincide with the transit center opening, WestCAT staff

rolled out a new schedule and new electronic fare media. "We're really glad to see the transit center open and to collaborate with BART and WestCAT to offer such a wonderful facility for commuters and Hercules residents," says Steve Lawton, Economic Development Director and City of Hercules Project Manager.

As with any transition of this magnitude, there were some glitches on opening day, but staff members from all three agencies were on hand assisting transit center users and working out those last minutes details. For more information about the new Hercules Transit Center, check out page 6 or visit www.herculestransitcenter.com.

*Summer Herculean Article
Cause Confusion for
Residents*

In the 2009 Summer Herculean, the City included an article titled "Recent Hercules Fire Due to Lint Build Up." The title and subsequent contents of the article may have caused some confusion since there was a second fire in Hercules just two weeks before the article was released.

The cause of that fire, which occurred on June 21, 2009, is still under investigation. The fire that prompted the article actually happened on April 17, 2009, in a newer home with an upstairs laundry room. As the article states, "many newer homes tend to have dryers located away from an outside wall in bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and hall closets," as was the case with this home.

The City of Hercules wants to remind the community that the intent of the article was to inform residents about the potential dangers of home dryers and how residents can help prevent this type of fire from happening in their home by routinely cleaning their dryer vent system. The article was NOT intended to place blame on any member of the families living in these homes. These families, and fellow Herculeans, have suffered a terrible loss and should be treated with compassion and respect. We ask the community to be supportive and thoughtful if they know or come in contact with the families.

Business & Consumer EXPO Coming to Hercules

The City of Hercules and Hercules Chamber of Commerce are teaming up to offer a unique event to shine the spotlight on local businesses and to encourage residents to keep our sales tax dollars in town. "We have a lot of home based businesses and small businesses that many people do not know about. This event is going to bring them into focus," says Rochelle Samuels from the City of Hercules Planning Department.

This event, called the Business and Consumer Expo 2009, will be held on Sunday, September 20 at the Hercules City Hall Courtyard and will highlight the many unique businesses we have in Hercules. In addition to the exhibitor booths, there will be free food, live entertainment, face painting, balloon animals, raffle prizes and more. "If you are a consumer, this event is for you," adds Samuels.

"Since many of the businesses in Hercules do not have a storefront, this provides them with a great opportunity to meet a new group of customers and for customers to meet a new group of businesses that may offer a product or service they are looking for," says Shirley Gotelli, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce. "We're very excited to host the Expo with the City and know it will benefit both Hercules businesses and Hercules residents."

Similar expos have been held throughout West County and the Bay Area, but this event will focus primarily on Hercules businesses. "Most residents want to buy local, they just don't know what their options are," explains Samuels, "now they'll know."

At the time of print, the following businesses were registered to be at the 2009 Expo: AAA Travel



Expo attendees can ask questions and learn more about local businesses

Agency, Albany Cabinets & Design, Allstate Insurance, Arbonne International, Ardys International, Bartels-Realtors, Bliss Esthetics, Broadway Rhythm Dance Company, D'Lorenza Floral & Event Decor, Divine Glory, Donna's Designs, Dynamic City Skate Shop, Dynamic Referral Group, El Sol Restaurant, Elegant Memories, Farmers Insurance & Financial Service, Friends of the Hercules Library, GGTravelingNotaryService, Hercules Fitness, Hercules Florist, Home Instead Senior Care, Hyperlogik, John Gotelli-Gardener, Kathie Lichtig Studio, Kinder's, La Strada Restaurant, Little Munchkins Academy, Massage by Michelle, A Muse Muzick, Optometry By The Bay, Partylite Gifts, POST NET, The Powder Keg, Princess House, Pro Clean, Radstons Office Plus, Sign-A-Rama, Tenth Inning Baseball, Three Sisters Rental, Universe Painting, Watermark Properties, Yun Technology, and 44 Sports Lounge. So mark your calendar and join us for this fun-filled family event.

City Seeking Volunteers for Ohlone Park Renovation

It used to be that parks were the heart of a neighborhood, refreshing spaces for picnics, ballgames or small gatherings. However, in many communities, municipal budget crunches have cut out resources for programs and maintenance, resulting in some neglect. Hercules does have a park that has faced some neglect in recent years, but that is about to change. On September 26, 2009 from 8:00am to 12:00pm, the City of Hercules, nonprofit organizations, and volunteers will join forces to begin the Ohlone Park Renovation Project.

Ohlone Park is in need of major renovations, and the massive task of refurbishing the park is about to begin. Ohlone Park, located at 190 Turquoise Dr., was developed in the 1980's and over the course of 25 years, thousands of people have enjoyed the park's ample space and beauty. In recent years, the park has fallen into some disrepair. On Saturday, September 26th, the City of Hercules and community volunteers will commence the first of many phases of renovating Ohlone Park.

Phase 1 will concentrate on clearing out the Ohlone Creek, trimming and cutting some of the damaged and falling trees along the creek and pathways, cleaning up the picnic areas including the picnic tables, BBQ pits, fences, bridge, trimming



Picnic areas have become old and worn

brush and clearing mulch. City staff and volunteers will paint, scrape, restore and in some cases, demolish dilapidated BBQ pits and picnic tables, replace and install new wood for fences and bridges, repair and patch sections of pathway and picnic areas and haul or move mulch or base rock.

The City has funded the Ohlone Park Renovation Project over the next three years. Future phases will include the renovation and purchase of new equipment such as: picnic tables, BBQ pits, additional bridges, permanent pathways and



Weeds and fallen tree branches have filled the pathways at Ohlone

improvement of trails.

Some renovations began in April with the new Hercules Sustainable Community Garden located above the soccer field. In just three months, renovations included a fence, irrigation, and single and family plots have been constructed by garden volunteers and business organizations. These plots now have fruits, vegetables, and flowers flourishing in them, and in just a short amount of time. There are also demonstration gardens located throughout the Garden. The Garden volunteers have even been able to use recycled material including the con-



Volunteers can make a big difference as they have with the Community Garden

crete from the Hercules Swimming Pool deck remodel. The recycled concrete is now being put to good use as "stone" blocks which form the demo gardens.

Another renovation completed this past summer involves the large oak tree. The same tree which is rumored to be the tree in our city seal. Over the years, this large and beautiful oak has run into some hard times and inclement weather. To help save and prolong the tree's life, the City had a professional tree company remove the large branches from the oak tree, trim some of the branches, and had several cables installed to support the tree.

During the renovation effort, the city and community groups hope to acquire products such as wood, fence material, sprayers, gloves, fertilizer, paint, hardware, fuel, concrete, food and water through donation. Sponsors of the project will be recognized in future Herculean and Recreation Activity Guide issues.

You can also be a part of the renovation by volunteering. Join us on September 26, ask questions, and be involved in making Ohlone Park better than ever. For more information, please contact Pedro Jimenez at 799-8228, or at pjimenez@ci.hercules.ca.us.

Hercules Chamber Provides Valuable Experience for Hercules High School Students

Guest Article by Louisa Man, Hercules High School Senior



Chamber member John Mills interviewing high school student

There could never be a better time to learn how interviews are conducted and what it feels like to be in the interview environment than in high school, when one is learning, blossoming, and preparing to enter the professional world. This chance to experience the interview setting was what retired Hercules High School journalism teacher John Brown, Hercules Chamber of Commerce member Bob Polacchi, and other various members of the Chamber presented to the pupils of HHS.

“Many people have difficulties with in-person encounters, and these mock interviews acquaint us with the process and show us how we can improve,” said HHS senior Julia Maniquiz. In this program, many students are able to experience what to expect in an interview. The students and the guest interviewers went through an intense one-on-one question and answer session for two rounds. Questions covered topics including the individual’s aspirations, significant moments in their academic history, and characteristics that make each person unique from other applicants.

During the 5- to 10-minute feedback period, the interviewers discussed the strong and weak points of each interviewee. Students were able to better comprehend what to expect from the interviewer and what the interviewer expects from the student. In addition, the participants are able to familiarize themselves with first-time encounters by meeting different Chamber members and engaging in discussion with them, an often difficult task for many at the high school level.

“I think the entire process is extremely beneficial, whether you’re interested in a scholarship, a job, or

an academic position” said Maniquiz. “The Chamber of Commerce is so benevolent to assist high school students in this manner.”

With the assistance and guidance of the Chamber members, many were able to complete job interviews successfully and scholarship interviews without difficulty. One event students found the simulated interviews to be helpful for was the West Contra Costa Unified School District’s Ivy League Connection, a college program that offers high school students a chance to study at one of the Ivy League universities for a few weeks in the summer. This highly prestigious and accredited program allows students to broaden their college scope and explore various post secondary institutions outside California including Brown, Columbia, Cornell, and Yale universities.

“The one-on-one sessions with professionals provided me a great wealth of strategies to use for my Ivy League Connection interview,” said senior Stacy Chan. “Most importantly, the valuable input given to me has merely highlighted what my areas of strengths are, as well as areas of improvement.”

The mock interview program was incredibly valuable as it gave students both professional and life skills that will definitely be useful in the future. A connection like this between students of a local high school and members of its city’s Chamber of Commerce helps to prepare young students for future success in whatever endeavor they decide to pursue. More schools and cities all around should consider following the wise model the students and officials of Hercules have set.



Chamber member Arthur Williams of Wells Fargo Bank helping a high school student prepare for a job interview

Hercules Hit In State Budget Crisis

On Friday, July 24, the State Legislature voted to take \$2.05 billion from redevelopment agencies in California. Redevelopment took the largest single “hit” in the entire budget package. In this year alone, \$1.7 billion will be taken, representing a 31 per cent loss of redevelopment funds.

By now, you know that this mid-year revision of the state budget was required to close a massive, \$24 billion shortfall caused by both the short-term recession and long-term structural flaws in California public finance. Many agencies and functions also took “hits”, including parks, schools, justice, social welfare and general government. Many observers see even more cuts on the way later this year.

Most Californians have become accustomed to an annual budget crisis. In eighteen of the past twenty-two years, the Legislature has tied itself in knots trying to produce a balanced budget. This year, however, has been the darkest in the history of California redevelopment since its inception in 1945. For many of the 397 active redevelopment agencies in the state, this “Black Friday” budget will wipe out all of their available funds.

Hercules is doing fairly well compared to other Bay Area cities, but that does not mean we are not affected. The Hercules Redevelopment Agency will lose about \$1,000,000, or about 8 per cent of the amount we receive annually from property tax increment.

The importance of redevelopment funding to the City of Hercules cannot be overstated. Almost every dollar of capital spending – spending on durable goods, buildings, and infrastructure – is funded by the Hercules Redevelopment Agency. Redevelopment is effectively the only method Hercules taxpayers have to direct their own tax dollars back into significant, long-lasting public assets.

With the exception of wastewater and HMU electric infrastructure, which are funded by ratepayers, the Redevelopment Agency is virtually the only source of capital funding in Hercules. The Agency uses property tax increment, supplemented by grants, for the public purpose of making the long-term investments beyond the reach of private investors in land and buildings. New

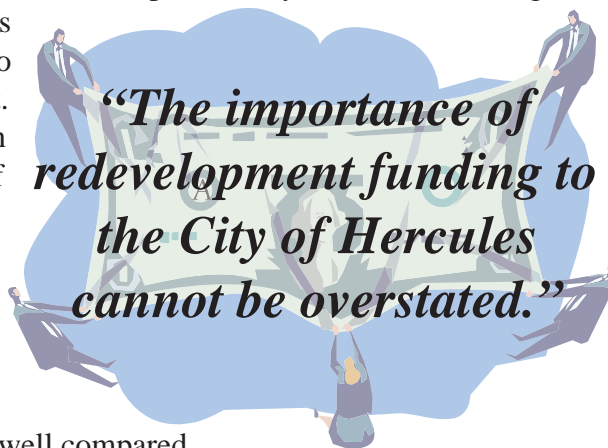
streets and roads, parks, plazas, transit centers, mixed use development, industrial sites, and affordable housing: these are the kinds of public infrastructure investments that will pay off over many years. By investing today to pass value on to future generations, Hercules signals to private investors that this is a community of long-term, secure value.

The benefits to today’s residents are obvious. Recent statewide studies indicate that every dollar of redevelopment spending generates nearly fourteen dollars in sales of goods and services, increasing state income by more than seven dollars. Sadly, the recent statewide cuts in redevelopment funding are estimated to result in the loss of 197,950 full- and part-time construction and related jobs.

Looking around the Bay Area, it is obvious that most construction activity has ground to a halt – except for Hercules. Redevelopment funding is the reason. The Sycamore Downtown (North) buildings are under construction, the new Frog Pad Park, the Tsushima Bridge and John Muir Avenue extension, are all visible examples of public capital improvements made possible only by the Redevelopment Agency. And behind the scenes, the \$100 million Intermodal Transit Center, the \$12 million investment in the New Town Center, the future \$16 million freeway ramp improvements, and the completion of the Sycamore Downtown all depend on extensive planning, engineering, and environmental work funded by a reliable, predictable flow of redevelopment dollars. These are the local benefits of keeping tax increment revenues in Hercules.

The California Redevelopment Association is filing a lawsuit against the State of California to reverse the \$2.05 billion taking of redevelopment funds. While the outcome is uncertain, the State actually lost a similar lawsuit earlier this year.

Redevelopment benefits Herculeans. You and your children have a very tangible stake in the outcome of this year’s state budget crisis. We all have an invested interest in the effort to reverse the taking of redevelopment funds, and prevent such takings in the future.



Hercules Transit Center FAQ

For those residents that use the Hercules Transit Center or would just like to learn more about the new facility, we've included some of the frequently asked questions that are also available on our website.

Why is the Transit Center being moved?

Constructed in 1995, the Hercules Transit Center is no longer adequate for the park-and-ride demand. Consequently, many commuters have resorted to parking along Sycamore Avenue and John Muir Parkway. With new construction projects such as Sycamore Downtown underway, having a larger transit center has become an even more pressing need. Due to site and funding constraints, the Hercules Transit Center could not be expanded on-site so a new location had to be found.

How do I obtain a parking pass?

Patrons can now go online and register their credit card information on the secure server at www.herculestransit-center.com. You can either print out a daily permit or request mailing of a monthly permit hang-tag. The daily permit will include two tear-off bus transfer instruments. The permanent transit windshield decal will be mailed with a WestCAT monthly pass. If you do not have access to a credit card or the internet, you may call 1-800-997-0197. Remember, your daily or monthly pass reserves your parking space. There are no parking meters or dispensing machines on site.

Can I still participate in a casual carpool?

The new Transit Center facility was specially designed to improve the safety and capacity of passenger

loading. At the new Transit Center, motorists picking up or dropping off riders should use the east entrance, and stop alongside the platform marked with signs reading "No Parking - Loading Zone". Persons waiting for rides can now form queues on this platform without interfering with bus or automobile movements. The loading zone platform also has a wheelchair-accessible ramp. There is no charge for entering the lot to pick up riders. However, motorists parking their cars in the lot will need to obtain a permit for either daily or monthly parking.

Can I use Wage Works or Commuter Checks to pay for my parking permit?

Yes, you can. Just let your employer know the amount you want the voucher for and make payable to Hercules Transit Center. As long as the payment is received by the 15th of the month, your credit card will not be charged. Never heard of Wage Works or Commuter checks? Check out <http://www.bart.gov/guide/taxbenefits.aspx>.

How do I use the electronic bike lockers?

There are twelve electronic bike lockers, called eLockers, available at the Hercules Transit Center. The lockers provide on-demand bike parking on a first come, first serve basis. To use the lockers, you first need to purchase a BikeLink™ Card at www.bikelink.org or by calling 1-888-540-0546. Once you have the card, insert the card into the machine and the screen guides you through the process. The cost, 5-cents an hour, is automatically deducted from your card. When you return, just insert your card into the slot, get your bike, and any unused

time will be automatically refunded back to your card. The BikeLink cards can be used at any BART eLocker location. For more information, visit www.bikelink.org.

Why do we have to pay for parking?

Even though the facility may seem like a big empty lot, the Transit Center does require maintenance and police services. The parking fees help cover those expenses. In 2005, BART passed a resolution approving parking fees at the Hercules Transit Center. With the opening of the expanded center, these approved fees will now be enforced. The parking fee structure is also designed to encourage Transit Center users to ride BART, since a WestCAT bus ticket to BART is included in the pass. In effect, this provides a 'discounted' parking rate to the Transit Center users who choose to take BART.

Who is maintaining the new Transit Center?

The new Hercules Transit Center is owned and operated by BART. In July 2009, the City Council reviewed and approved an agreement with BART where the City would oversee the day-to-day operations of the facility on behalf of BART. These services include routine maintenance such as water and power, trash pick-up, landscape maintenance and graffiti removal. Hercules police will continue to respond to calls for service, although incidents requiring significant follow-through resources will be turned over to BART Police. Hercules will also provide, through a vendor, the day-to-day services required for BART's paid parking program. For more FAQs visit www.herculestransitcenter.com.

City and Developer Begin Hercules Point Planning

The City together with Hercules Bayfront LLC is beginning the process of park planning at Hercules Point. The 12.5 acre site was part of the historic Hercules Powder Works Co. that housed a fuel storage area, the Power House that supplied steam and electrical power for plant productions and other ancillary storage facilities.



Hercules Point when it was used by the Hercules Powder Company

Since the site was closed in the late 1970's, the Point has been envisioned as a recreational area. Most recently, the Waterfront Master Plan Initiative (WMPI) refers to it as an important regional open space, drawing visitors from the entire Bay Area. The WMPI also envisions "direct access and interaction with the Bay ... with trees, lawns, paths, trails and shrubs all naturally disposed."

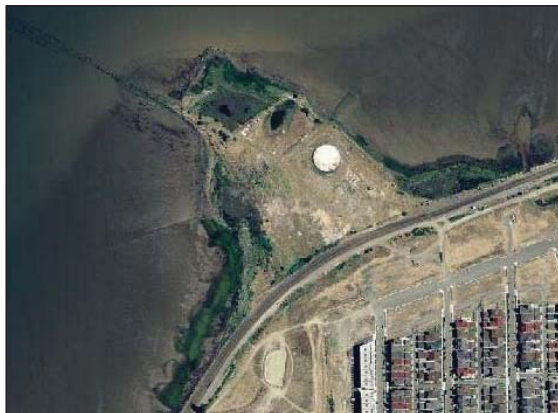
With this in mind, the team is in the beginning stages of collecting and analyzing background data about the site and coordinating very basic elements of the Park that affect the mixed-use (land-side) development such as the placement of the pedestrian bridge landings on

either side of the railroad tracks.

The future park site is constrained by the railroad tracks limiting access to the site, the surrounding tidally influenced wetlands, and is under the permitting jurisdiction of several State agencies, all of which will require close coordination to ensure a viable public amenity. Additionally, a team of consultants will be hired to assist the City with environmental review, landscape planning, and site design.

The City will be hosting several meetings in the next few months to solicit public input on the details of what the Point will look like and what amenities it will offer. Some of the ideas that have been suggested so far include an amphitheatre, a recreational boat yard including access to the proposed San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail, a fishing pier, an interpretive center, and public restroom facilities, just to name a few.

If you have suggestions, or would like to be part of this process, please contact Liz Warmerdam at lwarmerdam@ci.hercules.ca.us.



Aerial view of Hercules Point today

Staff and resources

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*City Hall is located at 111 Civic Drive.
Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
website: www.ci.hercules.ca.us*

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Hercules Re:Development provides an update on projects funded by the Redevelopment Agency and/or projects located within the Redevelopment Project Areas.

At times, updates on projects that are not located within the Redevelopment Project Areas will be featured, as these projects are anticipated to serve all areas of the community.

Wicking Completed Ahead of Schedule

The Waterfront wicking work, which began in July, is expected to be complete in early September, four weeks ahead of schedule. This work is to prepare a section of the Waterfront between Refugio Creek and the North Shore Business Park for future roadways. The final step for the wicking work will be to relocate some of the soil from the south side of Refugio Creek to the north side. This step has two benefits.

First, this will promote the water in the soil (or more specifically the young bay mud) to migrate out of the soil over the next year, allowing the young bay mud to compress. This is necessary for any construction to begin including roadways, utilities, or buildings. Second, moving the soil will also create a level area on the south side of Refugio Creek. The reshaping of this area is paramount for construction of planned retaining walls, utility relocations, and rail work, which are all expected to begin in late 2010.

At the same time the soil is being moved to the north side, additional soil will be placed adjacent to



Special equipment is required for wicking, as seen here in Hercules

the intersection of Railroad Avenue and Bayfront Boulevard where one of the four public plazas will be located within the Waterfront. The soil will be placed approximately five

feet higher than the eventual height of the plaza and will compress the young bay mud, similar to the work on the north side of Refugio Creek. The reshaping of the Bayfront Boulevard area is one of the first steps in bringing the planned Intermodal Transit Center to Hercules.

Once the young bay mud has compressed, the surface height will be lowered back down. This will reopen the view to the bay, provide an access point to the future Bay Trail, and create a location for a potential pedestrian bridge to Hercules Point.

More details about how wicking works can be found on the Waterfront project page of our website at www.ci.hercules.ca.us or on the July 2, news story titled, “Wicking Work Begins on Waterfront”.

If you have any questions about the future plans for the Waterfront or the ongoing work, please contact Assistant City Manager Lisa Hammon at lhammon@ci.hercules.ca.us.

CITY OF HERCULES REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY NEWSLETTER



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