

City Manager's



Weekly Update Friday, August 21, 2009

McNerney visit: We spent nearly 90 minutes with Congressman McNerney on Tuesday viewing the location of a potential solar energy project at White Slough and the eroding riverbank near Pigs Lake. The Congressman was complimentary of the City's efforts to bring a solar pilot project to the wastewater plant, and by hiking to the far end of the Nature Area, has a greater understanding of the resource threatened. The repair was the City's top priority in the One Voice lobbying trip earlier this year.

Energy grants: If only the energy efficiency block grant program could be managed efficiently. We originally submitted applications for nearly \$600,000 in energy efficiency block grants, covering 10 programs, on June 16 and expected to hear back within 30 days. When we did hear back from the Department of Energy, they wanted us to submit 10 different applications. After talking with DOE some more, they asked that we resubmit a consolidated application with 10 "activity sheets." We hope this will expedite the release of funds, which were appropriated as part of the federal stimulus package.

Local unemployment: The unemployment rate for Lodi reached 12.2 percent in July, a number that far exceeds any historic figures for the month. The information was released Friday by the Employment Development Department. In July 2008, the rate in Lodi was 7.9 percent, compared to 6.2 percent in 2007 and 5.7 percent in 2006. For San Joaquin County, the 16 percent unemployment rate was far higher than any county data available to 1990 – the previous high for a July was 13.2 percent in 1992. Unemployment is certainly higher now than in any time in the past 35 years, perhaps longer, based on the State's report Friday that California unemployment is at its highest point for a July since records began being kept in 1976.

Downtown bars: Police Lt. Steve Price recently organized a meeting with approximately 30 owners and staff of seven bars and drinking establishments located around the downtown area and the northeast part of the City. The reason for the meeting was to reach out and develop a working relationship with the owners of our local bars. The owners and their staff all were very receptive to the idea and want to meet regularly once a quarter to share common issues and come up with new strategies in dealing with problems.

GrapeLine changes: New routes and schedules go into effect for the GrapeLine system on Sept. 8. The information is on the Transit web page. Additionally, the schedules are available online in a format that sight-impaired riders can magnify for easier reading.

Retirements: With the month nearing an end, those employees who received the enhanced retirement are departing en masse. We wished a fond farewell to four retiring Public Works employees with a well-attended lunch on Friday at Hutchins Street Square: Streets and Drainage Superintendent George Bradley, Senior Civil Engineer Sharon Welch, Associate Civil Engineer Mark Lindseth and Inspector Will McVicker. Members of the local development community also attended and provided remarks on the retirees' contributions. Wednesday, fire captains Mike Lair and Jim Miller will receive their department send-off, and on Thursday, the Community Development Department will

fete planner David Morimoto and inspector Al Lucero. We have 13 employees among this early wave of retirees, with another two more expected in the Streets Division.

Trade journal: There's a trade journal for everything. Police Sgt. Chris Jacobson has authored an article on K9 deployment and arrest scenarios for "Police K9" magazine.

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