

**FACELIFTS AND
NEW JOBS: FAÇADE
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REDEVELOPING OAKLAND

REASSESS / REEVALUATE / REBUILD / REVITALIZE

ESPECIALLY
VALUABLE IN TOUGH
ECONOMIC TIMES,
FAÇADE AND TENANT
IMPROVEMENT GRANTS
LEVERAGE THE PRIVATE
INVESTMENTS OF
BUSINESS OWNERS.
THEY REDUCE BLIGHT
AND ELIMINATE VACANT
BUILDINGS, MAKING
BUSINESSES AND
COMMERCIAL
CORRIDORS SAFER AND
MORE ATTRACTIVE
TO CUSTOMERS
AND, THEREBY,
INCREASING BUSINESS.

FACELIFTS AND NEW JOBS

Façade and tenant grants spruce up storefronts and bring new businesses

Spring is a time for new beginnings and fresh starts. You may have recently noticed businesses in your area sporting fresh coats of paint, beautiful tile work or new lighting, signs and awnings. But you may not know that the improvements owe a lot to the Redevelopment Agency's Commercial Property Façade and Tenant Improvement Programs.

"When (a business) does a façade improvement, they don't put up a sign saying, 'Assisted by your redevelopment dollars,' so people don't know," says Tom Thurston, a Fruitvale resident and chairman of the Central City East Project Area Committee (PAC). "They do know that the business looks nicer."

Through these programs, Redevelopment spends more than \$1 million each year on more than 50 projects.

Especially valuable in tough economic times like these, façade and tenant improvement grants leverage the private investments of business owners. They reduce blight and eliminate vacant buildings, making businesses and commercial corridors safer and more attractive to customers and, thereby, increasing business.

They also help create jobs, as tenant improvement grants for interior improvements of vacant spaces have been attractive lures for people starting new companies or considering moving existing ones to Oakland.

"As a package, relative to other cities we were looking at, including Berkeley and Emeryville, this was definitely more attractive," says John Notz of Hodo Soy Beanery, which moved its tofu-making plant to West Oakland from San Jose last fall. In addition to a \$45,000 tenant improvement grant, the company received a loan through the Oakland Business Development Corporation. (For more information on commercial lending, see page 8.)

Façade grants are available in key commercial corridors in participating redevelopment areas. Tenants and property owners can apply for funding to paint, replace windows and doors, and add signs, awnings, lighting or landscaping. Grant amounts, which are based on linear-foot measurements, generally cover 50 percent of the cost of eligible improvements. In redevelopment areas that also are targeted for Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization, grants can cover as much as two-thirds of the project cost.

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ACTUAL CAFÉ, BEFORE AND AFTER

FACELIFTS AND NEW JOBS *(continued from page 1)*

Tenant improvement grants of up to \$45,000 are available in select areas for interior commercial spaces that have been vacant for six months or more. Funds can be used for demolition and reconstruction, systems work such as plumbing and electrical, interior design, hazardous materials abatement and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. (In the Central District, up to \$99,000 is available for tenant improvements and up to \$50,000 for façade changes, with another \$25,000 available for historic renovations in historic districts.)

For both programs, the Redevelopment Agency will match an applicant's costs up to the cap and reimburse expenses. Free, limited architectural design services also are available. For more information, visit www.business2oakland.com/redevelopment.

Here, we spotlight projects throughout the redevelopment areas that are improving businesses and neighborhoods and creating jobs.

BROADWAY/MACARTHUR/SAN PABLO

Sal Bednarz has some revolutionary ideas about community, starting with the notions that you are more than your Facebook profile and text messages are not hugs.

So after he opened **Actual Café** this winter on San Pablo Avenue in North Oakland, he proposed something almost unheard of in our 24/7, plugged-in digital world. He asked patrons to leave their laptops at home one weekend and actually converse with their neighbors.

The response was so overwhelming that the café is now a laptop-free zone every weekend.

"People come out of their way on weekends to come to the café because we don't have laptops and it's a different environment, and they make a point of telling us so," Bednarz says.

It's only one way that Bednarz is helping build community and create a gathering spot in a changing neighborhood. There are weekly movie nights on Wednesdays, crafts on Thursdays and game nights on Sundays. The first Friday of each month features an art opening.

A resident of the Golden Gate neighborhood for 10 years, Bednarz long dreamed of having such a neighborhood spot. The Redevelopment Agency helped make his vision an *actual* reality with façade and tenant

improvement grants to fix up the long vacant bait and tackle store at 6334 San Pablo Avenue.

Actual Café received nearly 45 percent of its total project budget of \$89,000 from the grants, including nearly \$18,000 for tenant improvements and nearly \$23,000 for façade improvements, including some additional federal Community Development Block Grant money.

Work included plumbing, electrical, framing and finishing in the interior, and façade construction including windows and doors, as well as awnings and signage.

"My budget was not huge. I needed to get creative about where my funding was going to come from to do the project," Bednarz says. "The grants made it financially feasible to do the project overall and made it possible to do things I would not have done otherwise, like adding exterior awnings, which really changed the look of the building."

Actual Café, which is open most days from early morning until night, is one important part of the changes that are improving San Pablo Avenue and the surrounding area.

"This stretch of San Pablo has been more about prostitution, graffiti and vandalism than it has about anything positive. A lot of people were intimidated by San Pablo, and that's changing," Bednarz says. "In the past six months, I have noticed the neighborhood going from fairly desolate to more full of people."

LOCATION: 6334 San Pablo Avenue

ARCHITECT: Frank Architects

STAFF: Christine Lebron, clebron@oaklandnet.com

Over on Telegraph Avenue, **Oasis Market** also opened for business last fall, thanks to a \$45,000 tenant improvement and \$30,000 façade grant. The redevelopment funding helped cover a substantial portion of the total cost of \$170,000 in improvements, including storefront windows, tile, stucco and paint on the exterior, and interior work including paint, flooring, woodwork and a heating and air conditioning system.

LOCATION: 3045 Telegraph Avenue

ARCHITECT: YHLA

STAFF: Christine Lebron, clebron@oaklandnet.com

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OASIS MARKET, BEFORE AND AFTER

MESSAGE FROM DEPUTY DIRECTOR

GREGORY HUNTER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Spring is here, and there are signs of life and new beginnings wherever you look.

Here at the City of Oakland's Redevelopment Agency, we are particularly excited to bring new projects to five locations in East Oakland and Downtown.

The Agency-owned sites were the target of a Notice of Development Opportunities (NODO) that went out to developers last fall. We received 15 proposals for the purchase and development of 10 sites, and we have selected developers for five commercial projects, including mixed-use developments, senior housing and a supermarket.

A site at Foothill Boulevard and 73rd Avenue is proposed to become a satellite campus for the Peralta Community College District, as well as an Oakland public library branch. The mixed-use development also would include senior housing and a restaurant.

A second site, at 66th Avenue and San Leandro Street, is slated to become a much-needed new grocery store and gas station that will employ more than 100 workers. The 70,000-square-foot store would be the largest in the area, an extremely underserved community. It would open in fall 2011.

We are also moving forward with developments at the following sites: Clara Street and Edes Avenue; Foothill Boulevard and Seminary Avenue; and Downtown at San Pablo Avenue and 19th Street.

These projects will eliminate blight and engage vacant parcels, create new jobs and provide services for residents and sales tax revenue to the City.

Significantly, all of the projects are market-rate deals, and none will be subsidized with public dollars. By buying property and assembling sites, we have shown that there is interest in investing private capital in East Oakland, and we stand ready to work closely with these developers and others who may be interested in developing other sites in Oakland's redevelopment areas.

Public-private partnerships already are changing the face of Oakland's redevelopment areas, and the Agency's façade and tenant improvement grants are one of the most noticeable efforts. Such programs have gone a long way toward making the Fruitvale one of the City's most vibrant commercial districts and toward attracting the bumper crop of new restaurants making Downtown a gourmet destination.

In this issue, we spotlight projects throughout the redevelopment areas that are improving both the look and safety of our commercial corridors, attracting new businesses and creating jobs.

We also highlight our Project Area Committees, or PACs. These groups of area residents, business owners and other concerned citizens devote time and energy and help make decisions about how redevelopment funds are spent in their neighborhoods.

Investments in projects as diverse as a dog park at Mosswood Park in the Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo area, urban garden improvements in West Oakland and decorative street banners in the Central City East area show that citizen involvement through the PACs does help shape our communities.

In addition, we take a look at businesses in the redevelopment areas that have benefitted from the City's commercial lending programs. A sound and accessible lending program, dating back to the mid-1980s, has helped grow and attract some premium businesses to Oakland. It has helped entrepreneurs starting their first businesses get on their feet, and it has helped businesses that want to expand and offer more services to the Oakland community.

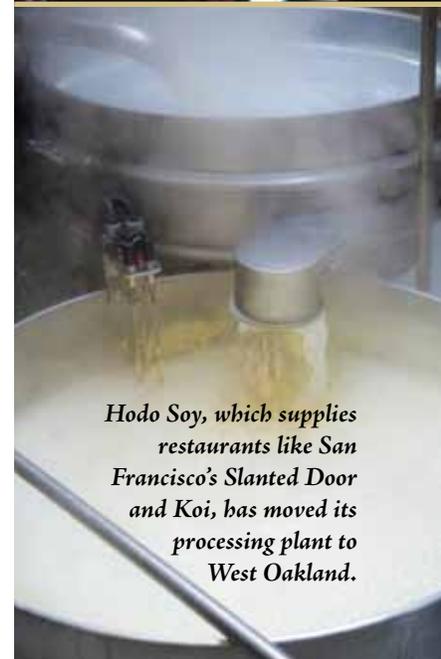
As always, we ask that you patronize these and other local businesses to help keep our community strong.



Gregory D. Hunter



*Piedmont Piano
moves Downtown.*



*Hodo Soy, which supplies
restaurants like San
Francisco's Slanted Door
and Koi, has moved its
processing plant to
West Oakland.*



*Farley's East expands to
Oakland's Uptown District.*



Hibiscus Restaurant

HIBISCUS AND
PIEDMONT PIANO
ARE JUST TWO OF
THE BUSINESSES THAT
HAVE RECEIVED
REDEVELOPMENT
GRANTS WHICH ARE
TRANSFORMING
UPTOWN INTO AN
ENTERTAINMENT
DESTINATION.



Piedmont Piano

FACELIFTS AND NEW JOBS *(continued from page 2)*

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Big changes also are underway in Downtown Oakland's Uptown neighborhood, which is finally reaching its promise as an arts and entertainment district, anchored by the newly restored Fox Theater and historic Paramount Theatre and home to an increasing number of high-end restaurants to tickle any gourmet's fancy.

At the site of the former Sweet Jimmy's nightclub at San Pablo Avenue and 18th Street, an 1890s' building that was stripped of its Victorian façade in the 1960s has been restored to its former glory with \$50,000 in façade improvement grants that helped offset costs of more than \$150,000. Eleven storefront bays were rebuilt in solid wood and the roof was redone in Victorian-style cedar shingles.

"This is one of my favorite and most dramatic before-and-after historic rebuilding projects in 10 years," says Brian Kendall of the Redevelopment staff, who worked with the building's owners and tenants.

Already, two new businesses have opened in the building, both of which also received tenant improvement grants.

The **New Parish**, an 8,000-square-foot nightclub that features live music and DJ dancing, received \$82,000 for more than \$200,000 in work and **Hibiscus**, a Caribbean Creole restaurant helmed by Chef Sarah Kirnon, formerly of Front Porch in San Francisco, received \$50,000 for more than \$200,000 in interior improvements.

Also slated to open in the building are a café and women's and men's clothing stores.

LOCATION: 1745 San Pablo Avenue

ARCHITECT: RPR Architects

STAFF: Brian Kendall, bkendall@oaklandnet.com

Across the street, **Piedmont Piano** is also helping bring new life to the neighborhood in its new location.

Owner Jim Callahan has turned the vacant California Art Supply Building into a new piano showroom and music school, which is also host to regular piano recitals by well-known pianists.

Callahan, who had his business on Piedmont Avenue for more than 30 years, says he wanted to own a building and consolidate his showroom, warehouse and other functions under one roof. He received a \$50,000 façade grant and \$99,000 tenant grant for the renovation

of the 18,000-square-foot building, which cost more than \$600,000. Among the improvements is a neon-blade sign that matches the Art Deco building and reflects some of the area's iconic Art Deco architecture.

"The project couldn't have happened" without the Redevelopment grants, Callahan says. "They paid for a large portion of our renovation."

Callahan is thrilled with his new neighbors, from the New Parish to the Fox Theater and Oakland School for the Arts, and supplies them with pianos and keyboards.

"The neighborhood has turned out to be much more vibrant and wonderful than we ever imagined," he says.

LOCATION: 1728 San Pablo Avenue

ARCHITECT: RPR Architects

STAFF: Brian Kendall, bkendall@oaklandnet.com

Also Downtown, work is complete after three years on a major historic restoration and seismic bracing of an 1880s' building on the corner of Washington and Eighth streets in Old Oakland, one of the neighborhood's last buildings in need of renovation. The owner of **727 Washington Street** and **511 Eighth Street** received \$80,000 in façade grants for \$225,000 in improvements on two neighboring addresses, which included installing solid wood storefronts to replicate the original ones.

LOCATION: 727 Washington Street and 511 Eighth Street

ARCHITECT: Prentice and Prentice Inc.

STAFF: Brian Kendall, bkendall@oaklandnet.com

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727 WASHINGTON STREET, BELOW, BEFORE AND AFTER





▲ ABOVE: Employee at work at Hodo Soy Beanery

FACELIFTS AND NEW JOBS *(continued from page 4)*

WEST OAKLAND

If you think you don't like tofu, you probably haven't tried **Hodo Soy Beanery's** tofu.

The fresh tofu maker, which moved from San Jose last October to open a state-of-the-art processing facility in West Oakland, has already caught the attention of chefs from Slanted Door's Charles Phan to Koi's Daniel Patterson. Its ready-to-eat dishes, such as spicy soy croquettes, also can be found at area farmers' markets and increasingly at local grocery stores.

"We loved the centrality of West Oakland, and we liked the fact that Oakland is becoming a hub of entrepreneurial activity and food," says John Notz, the chief financial officer, who runs the company with "tofu master" and Vietnam native Minh Tsai.

Notz says the former candy factory and bakery at 2923 Adeline Street was perfect for the company's "beanery," allowing the company to expand to nearly five times the space it had in San Jose. Hodo Soy Beanery shares the building with other food manufacturers.

A \$45,000 tenant improvement grant helped seal the deal, as did a loan through the Oakland Business Development Corporation, which helped cover more than \$400,000.

"It was a pleasure working with" Redevelopment and other staff, Notz says.

The West Oakland facility offers one-hour tours and tastings for \$10 for those interested in learning more. For more information, visit www.hodosoy.com.

LOCATION: 2923-A Adeline Street

ARCHITECT: Maxwell A. Beaumont

STAFF: Hui-Chang Li, hli@oaklandnet.com

CENTRAL CITY EAST

The historic, three-story **Senator Building** at Foothill Boulevard and 35th Avenue has received a facelift with the help of a façade improvement grant. New tile work, windows, awnings and lighting now frame the formal arched entry and are helping attract new businesses to the five ground-floor commercial spaces of the apartment building. The work will complement the upcoming streetscape improvements to Foothill Boulevard.

"The façade program is very important," says co-owner Alex Papahadjopoulos. "It's one way you can physically change the neighborhood. Sometimes physical improvements lead to the rest of the improvements."

The project received a redevelopment area façade improvement grant of \$35,000 and a federal Community Development Block Grant of \$30,000 to help cover the nearly \$115,000 cost.

"It's already attracting better businesses, and that attracts better tenants. It really seems to feed on itself," Papahadjopoulos says.

"This area is just sort of waiting to be brought back to what it once was," he adds. "It takes a sustained effort of people who really care to keep working to improve the area and make it a place where people want to live and can feel safe."

LOCATION: 3518-30 Foothill Boulevard

ARCHITECT: Frank Architects

STAFF: David Ralston, dralston@oaklandnet.com

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"THE FAÇADE PROGRAM IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT'S ONE WAY YOU CAN PHYSICALLY CHANGE THE NEIGHBORHOOD. SOMETIMES PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS LEAD TO THE REST OF THE IMPROVEMENTS."

ALEX PAPAHAJDOPOULOS, OWNER

SENATOR BUILDING GROUND LEVEL, BELOW, BEFORE AND AFTER





MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING BEFORE AND AFTER

“I’M THE ONLY PRIVATE PHYSICIAN AROUND HERE. I SERVE ALL POPULATIONS. WE DON’T TURN PEOPLE AWAY.”
 UCHENNA OKORONKWO, MD

FACELIFTS AND NEW JOBS

(continued from page 5)

For 15 years, the boarded-up, abandoned buildings at 10500 MacArthur Boulevard had been a blight on the neighborhood, attracting dumping, homelessness, drug use and violence.

But **Dr. Uchenna Okoronkwo**, who rented a medical office next door, had a vision to transform that blight into a greater good for the community and its residents.

A year ago, after tremendous work and an investment of more than \$900,000, Okoronkwo opened a **new medical office** and has plans to open a community clinic and pharmacy in the underserved area.

“I’m the only private physician around here,” says Okoronkwo, who has worked in the area since 1994. “I serve all populations. We don’t turn people away.”

Okoronkwo credits the Redevelopment Agency funds and staff for helping make his vision a reality. He received a \$45,000 tenant improvement grant and two \$20,000 façade improvement grants, one from Central City East redevelopment funds and the other from the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

The area is now “totally different, like day and night,” he says.

LOCATION: 10500 MacArthur Boulevard
ARCHITECT: Storefront Solutions and Lowney Architecture
STAFF: Gaddy Reyes, greyes@oaklandnet.com

Another building that has seen a dramatic turnaround is the historic Classical Revival bank building at **2607 Seminary Avenue**.

The long-vacant property, which had been declared a public nuisance and was deemed substandard by code enforcement, now is slated to become home to a charter school.



CLASSICAL REVIVAL BANK BUILDING BEFORE AND AFTER

Extensive interior and exterior work included a seismic retrofit, electrical, plumbing, paint, awnings, doors, windows and more. Interior work cost \$169,500 with \$45,000 reimbursed by a tenant improvement grant, and exterior upgrades cost \$129,500 including \$35,000 from a redevelopment façade improvement grant and another \$30,000 in federal funds.

LOCATION: 2607 Seminary Avenue
ARCHITECT: Urban Impression
STAFF: Hagerenesh Solomon, hsolomon@oaklandnet.com

A façade improvement grant of \$15,000 has allowed the owners of **Ivy Beauty & Bridal** to transform their building at 414 E. 12th Street into a beautiful one-stop shop for bridal ware, makeup and photography services.

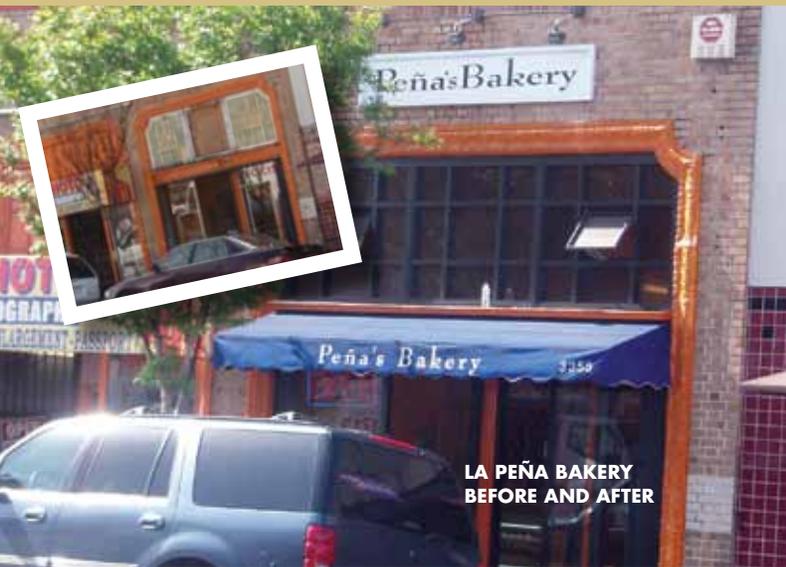
The business is receiving rave reviews from customers who appreciate the ease of filling many of their wedding-related needs, from bridesmaid dresses to alterations to décor, for a reasonable price at one location.

LOCATION: 414 East 12th Street
ARCHITECT: Frank Architects
STAFF: Kimani Rogers, krogers@okalandnet.com

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IVY BEAUTY AND BRIDAL SHOP BEFORE AND AFTER



LA PEÑA BAKERY
BEFORE AND AFTER

FACELIFTS AND NEW JOBS

(continued from page 6)

La Peña Bakery has been able to show that a modest amount of grant money can go a long way.

Using a \$9,630 grant for façade improvement, the bakery at **3355 Foothill Boulevard** installed new transom windows, an awning, signage, entrance tiling and lights. As one of six businesses undertaking improvements in a two-block area, the work is helping revitalize a key section of the Foothill-Fruitvale shopping district and inspiring other businesses to follow suit.

LOCATION: 3355 Foothill Boulevard

ARCHITECT: Urban Impression

STAFF: David Ralston, dralston@oaklandnet.com

COLISEUM

Don Dianda has owned the **Wendy's** restaurant at International Boulevard and Fruitvale Avenue for 17 years.

WENDY'S RESTAURANT, BEFORE AND AFTER



When he recently learned about the façade improvement grants available from the Redevelopment Agency, he realized he could make a big change to a dated restaurant at a prominent intersection. Work was completed in December 2009.

"It looks like a brand new, modern design," says Dianda, who owns eight Wendy's throughout the Bay Area. "The neighbors and customers have commented. Business has improved, absolutely."

"IF THERE ARE FUNDS AVAILABLE OUT THERE, I DON'T
KNOW WHY OTHER BUSINESSES AREN'T DOING IT.
WE COULD MAKE THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD
LOOK BETTER ... WHICH IS BETTER FOR ALL OF US."

DON DIANDA
OWNER OF WENDY'S RESTAURANT

The project received a \$37,500 Coliseum redevelopment area façade grant and another \$37,500 Community Development Block Grant façade grant to help fund nearly \$155,000 in improvements.

Changes also included a new interior (paid for by the owner), redone parking lot and new landscape, lighting and trash containers.

"The help from [the Community and Economic Development Agency] was crucial," Dianda says. "We were able to do something much more interesting than a run-of-the-mill remodel."

Dianda called the process relatively easy and staff members extremely helpful.

"If there are funds available out there, I don't know why other businesses aren't doing it. We could make the whole neighborhood look better," he adds. "It's better for all of us."

LOCATION: 3111 International Boulevard

ARCHITECT: Lowney Architecture

STAFF: Gaddy Reyes, greyes@oaklandnet.com

Coliseum area diners also can eat at another spiffy location, the **World Pizza Restaurant** on 98th Avenue, just east of Edes Avenue.

The restaurant owner, Aster Tesfasilasie, received a \$45,000 tenant improvement grant to help with renovations of about \$160,000.

LOCATION: 655 98th Avenue

STAFF: Daniel Seamans, dseamans@oaklandnet.com

Innovative Construction Solutions also received a \$40,000 tenant improvement grant, helping the business move its Northern California location to Tidewater Avenue in Oakland from Hayward. The general engineering contractor handles construction jobs complicated by environmental and regulatory issues, such as Superfund site remediation.

LOCATION: 4721 Tidewater Avenue

STAFF: Tanya Boyce, tboyce@oaklandnet.com



Meal preparation at Revolution Foods



Products from Premier Organics



Premier Organics warehouse

COMMERCIAL LENDING HELPS BUSINESSES GROW

If you're considering starting or expanding your business in Oakland but are having trouble receiving conventional financing, Oakland's Commercial Lending program may be able to help.

Administered by the Oakland Business Development Corporation (OBDC), the commercial lending program provides personalized technical and financial assistance to small business owners to attract, retain and expand Oakland's economic base.

In addition to making business owners' dreams a reality, such loans help bring needed services, tax revenues and jobs to Oakland.

For information on commercial financing, visit www.obdc.org or call (510) 763-4297. Technical and other assistance also may be available through the Oakland Business Assistance Center at www.oaklandbac.com or (510) 238-7952.

Following are the success stories of several recent commercial loan recipients:

Revolution Foods, which makes and distributes healthy school lunches, moved to the Coliseum redevelopment area, near the Oakland International Airport, in March 2009 from Alameda.

"We always considered Oakland our backyard and our home," says CEO and co-founder Kristin Groos Richmond. "The City was extremely supportive in coming to bat for us and getting us a great loan. All the pieces came together."

Revolution Foods received a \$249,500 Coliseum redevelopment loan to support the build-out of its new facility in a former warehouse. The expansion allowed the company to consolidate its food-service operations and corporate headquarters and to nearly double the number of its local employees to 120.

Groos Richmond calls the loan significant. "It was close to a third of our build-out costs," she says.

Revolution Foods serves 120 schools in the Bay Area, many of them charter schools, as well as schools in Southern California, Colorado and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Last summer, the company also provided the food for the City's summer food service program, which helps feed low-income children and families during the months when school is out and free school lunch is not available.

"It's amazing to be able to offer fresh, healthy food to families at a time when the economy is really tough on people," Groos Richmond says.

The company is growing fast as the topics of childhood obesity and healthy school lunches gain national attention, especially from First Lady Michelle Obama. Groos Richmond was scheduled to travel to the White House to meet with her in early April.

Premier Organics is another Coliseum-area business taking advantage of the City's commercial loans. The makers of Artisan organic nut butters are moving from their current location on 81st Avenue across the street to the former Mother's Cookie production plant.

The move into a 20,000-square-foot space will allow Premier Organics to expand its operations, improve food safety and consolidate its corporate functions and warehouse space.

Premier Organics received a \$175,000 Coliseum area redevelopment loan to build out the new location, as well as \$50,000 in façade and tenant improvement grants from the Redevelopment Agency.

The company employs 19 full-time-equivalent workers and plans to add approximately eight new full-time positions.

Also in the Coliseum redevelopment area, **One Toyota Oakland** has opened in the recently vacated new car dealership near Hegenberger Road, highly visible from Interstate 880.

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COMMERCIAL LENDING HELPS BUSINESSES GROW

(continued from page 8)

Owners Brian McCafferty and Brad Barnett won the right to own and operate Oakland's newest Toyota dealership through a highly competitive process.

The duo was able to secure a \$249,500 Coliseum area redevelopment loan to be used for capital improvements. One Toyota Oakland has 104 full-time employees.

Downtown, in the burgeoning Uptown District, **Bakesale Betty** was scheduled to open its second location at the corner of Broadway and West Grand Avenue in April, saving downtown office workers the trip to the Temescal to line up for her famed fried chicken and coleslaw sandwiches.

Alison Barakat, better known as Betty, and her business partner and husband Michael Camp received a \$241,000 Broadway Corridor loan, as well as \$99,000 in redevelopment façade and tenant improvement grants.

"We outgrew our space in Temescal, and it was time to open up another space with bigger facilities to keep up with the demand for our products," which also include banana bread, brownies and scones, says Barakat. "We are so excited to be joining all the other businesses Downtown, particularly in the Uptown area. It's an ideal location."

"The City has been great, and OBDC has been awesome. They have gone above and beyond," she says. Without the loan, "the shop would not be open. We owe it all to them."

Barakat plans to hire 44 new employees within the first few months of operation, in addition to the 65 workers already employed at the Temescal location.



▲ ABOVE: A large lunch crowd can always be found at the ever-popular Bakesale Betty at both locations.

Around the corner Broadway, **Farley's East** has opened a café at 33 Grand Avenue, branching out from its original location in San Francisco's Potrero Hill.

The café, which opened in Spring 2009, has become a popular gathering spot for the growing number of Uptown residents, community groups and artists. It specializes in coffee, espresso drinks, pastries and paninis, as well as an excellent selection of magazines.

Owners Chris and Amy Hillyard received a \$100,000 Broadway Corridor loan, as well as \$30,000 in façade and tenant improvement grants, to transform the formerly vacant space. It includes a mezzanine and a community meeting space. Farley's has hired seven employees.

▼ BELOW: Mosaic tile entry to Farley's East, a welcome addition to Oakland's Uptown District.



**ATTENTION
SMALL
BUSINESS
OWNERS
HOLD THE DATE**



WHEN: FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2010. 8AM TO 5PM

WHAT: THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SMALL BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM

WHERE: THE OAKLAND MARRIOTT CITY CENTER

WHY: GET TIPS ON HOW TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS,
LEARN IMPORTANT TRENDS AND MUCH MORE!

MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS GREENER: Parks and gardens get Redevelopment boost

Throughout Oakland, the Redevelopment Agency is helping make neighborhoods greener, bringing parks to former industrial areas, sprucing up recreation areas with new plantings and even supporting farms and gardens in urban residential areas.

One of the boldest initiatives is a plan underway to turn the 1.5-mile-long strip at the foot of the eastern span of the Bay Bridge, currently used for tow trucks, billboards and other maintenance uses, into a park, once construction on the new span is completed in 2013.

The City of Oakland is one of nine public agencies, including Cal Trans and the East Bay Regional Park District, involved in the planning process for the 50-acre **Gateway Park**.

At the first public workshop, held in February, ideas ranged from the unusual, a sail-in movie theater and a giant Ferris wheel to the more predictable dog runs and soccer fields. Another idea is a transportation museum with a walking trail lined with oversized artifacts such as the fog bell from the old Carquinez Bridge. Others have proposed Burning Man-scaled industrial art.

"This can't be a regular old neighborhood park," Sarah Kuehl of PWP Landscape Architecture, which will shape design concepts with Perkins + Will, said at the February workshop. The site is sandwiched between a working port and a freeway that handles 280,000 cars on a typical day.

A second public workshop is scheduled for May. Planners hope to outline a vision by September. For more information, visit www.baybridgegatewaypark.org.

Not far away in West Oakland, another unusual transformation already has taken place.

City Slicker Farms has turned several lots into community gardens and farms that grow organic produce for the diverse neighborhood, especially low-income residents who don't have easy access to healthy food. The organization runs a Saturday farm stand on 16th Street, hosts BBQs, helps plant and maintain backyard gardens for low-income residents, and teaches community members about gardening, herbs, composting, cooking and more.

The Redevelopment Agency has supported these efforts with Neighborhood Projects Initiative (NPI) grants of \$12,300 to upgrade two City Slicker Farms facilities.

At the Ralph Bunche Continuation School, funds were used to fix shelving, irrigation and planting tables inside a greenhouse; build raised planting beds; and replace eight planter boxes and one seeding table. At the Center Street Farm, funds helped build a classroom seating area, repair and upgrade an oven/BBQ, rebuild a henhouse and beehive table, and repair and improve a tool shed, growing areas, farm stand and fencing.

In Chinatown, \$335,000 in redevelopment funds have been used to improve the **Hall of Pioneers Chinese Garden** between Alice, Harrison, Sixth and Seventh streets. Work included new irrigation and sod, trees and plants, and concrete pathways and parking accessible to the disabled.

The work has helped to eliminate a barren open space and make the area more enjoyable and safe for the many senior citizens who frequent the City facility.



*Beekeeper and assistant
at City Slicker Farms*



*Just one of City Slicker Farms'
many gardens growing
produce for the public.*



*City Slicker Farms
also raises chickens.*



*Upgrades to Hall of Pioneers
Chinese Garden*

PACS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Do you know who's making redevelopment decisions in your neighborhood? Do you have ideas that can improve your community and want to get involved?

If you live in one of three Oakland redevelopment areas – Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo, West Oakland or Central City East – you may want to check out the Project Area Committee, or PAC.

Under California redevelopment law, redevelopment areas that consist of a majority of residential properties are required to form a PAC to meet and discuss ongoing and future projects in the area, providing valuable insight and making recommendations to the Redevelopment Agency and City Council. The PACs also help make decisions on funding small-scale, community-initiated projects through the Neighborhood Projects Initiative program.

PAC members include area residents, representatives from community organizations, and owners of businesses and other properties.

To learn more about your PAC, read on or drop by one of its regular meetings.

BROADWAY/ MACARTHUR/SAN PABLO PAC

The Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo Project Area Committee (PAC) is continuing its efforts to work together with its neighboring West Oakland PAC in hopes of creating seamless improvements, such as the landscaping of West MacArthur Boulevard.

Recent plans to create a joint community garden were thwarted by hazardous materials found at the site, but that hasn't stopped the desire to work together, says chair Edric Kwan.

Kwan says plans to try to purchase some of the motels on West MacArthur also have been put on hold.

But the MacArthur BART Transit Village now being planned promises to bring much change to the area. This year, developer MacArthur Transit Village Community Partners is expected to move forward with design review and approval for the project's first phase, a

parking garage to provide replacement parking for BART.

Kwan says learning about the redevelopment process can help people understand that major changes take time.

"There's an expectation from the public to have projects delivered immediately, and that's not how it works. There are a lot of checks and balances," he says. PAC meetings can be a good introduction.

"We consist of a very diverse group that reflects many perspectives of the community," Kwan says. "We listen to each other and provide that safe venue for us to talk and collaborate and come up with solutions that, for the most part, can satisfy everyone."

PAC meetings are held the first Thursday of every other month from 7 to 9 p.m. at Beebe Memorial Cathedral, 3900 Telegraph Avenue.

WEST OAKLAND PAC

The co-chairs of the West Oakland PAC are excited about several initiatives that are moving forward.

The PAC recently reviewed grant applications for the Neighborhood Projects Initiative, which allows residents, businesses and organizations to apply for

small, one-time grants to make neighborhood improvements.

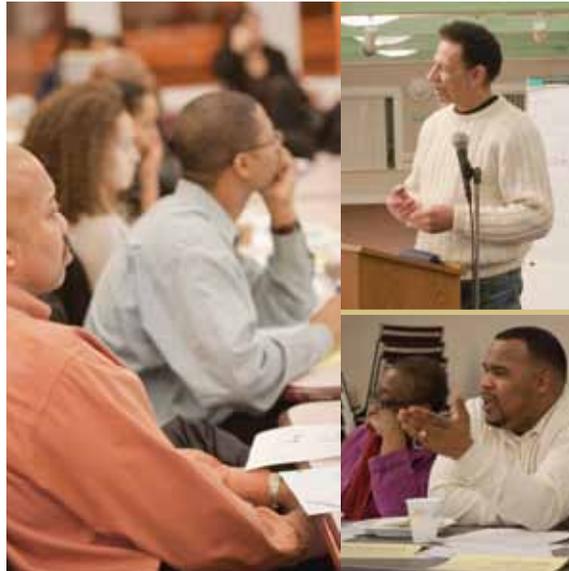
"Normally, redevelopment projects can take a long time. It's a bureaucratic process," says Stefanie Parrot, who co-chairs the PAC with Lynn Horiuchi. "This is a way to get redevelopment funds into the hands of interested parties for more community-based stuff. It's exciting."

The PAC also is in talks with the Oakland Public Library and Oakland Unified School District about opening a much-needed branch library in the West MacArthur/Hoover sub-area.

In addition, community members were thrilled with the addition of Redevelopment staff, including a planner, for their area.

"We're a big project area with a lot of enthusiastic participation," says Parrot. "The addition of staff will help us take off and implement projects that have already been approved."

(continued on page 12)



LEFT: PAC members from Central City East and West Oakland PACs discuss redevelopment issues with the public.

BELOW: The Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo PAC in action.



PACS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

(continued from page 11)

The PAC is looking for “opportunity sites” for future development in each of its sub-areas.

Parrot encourages the public to come out and learn more.

“We love the public to participate in our meetings and give us feedback,” she says.

The West Oakland PAC meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the West Oakland Senior Center, 1724 Adeline Street.

CENTRAL CITY EAST PAC

Nearly everyone has felt the pinch of the slow economy, and the Central City East redevelopment area is no exception.

“In the current environment, we’re hoping to hold onto (the businesses) we have,” says Tom Thurston, who chairs the Central City East PAC. “We had envisioned a continued ramping up of programs, but everything was based on the assumption that property values would go up, and they’ve plummeted. Our funding has taken a fairly significant hit, and there are efforts by the state to reach into the pockets of Redevelopment.”

But even in a challenging economic environment, plans continue for major streetscape improvements along MacArthur Boulevard, Fruitvale Avenue and Foothill Boulevard. Undergrounding of utilities on MacArthur is in its final stages, and work from sidewalk expansions to new street trees is expected to be completed by fall 2011.

Smaller projects, including improvements of business facades and assistance to homeowners to fix up residences, also are underway, Thurston says.

The redevelopment area is in its first year of the Neighborhood Projects Initiative, and a tree planting effort is one of the first recipients.



**GET READY FOR THE
SUMMER'S HOTTEST EVENT!**

Mark your calendars for the **10th Annual Art & Soul Oakland Festival**, coming to Downtown Oakland on **August 21 and 22**. Once again, Downtown will be sizzling with music, dance, art, food and fun.

For more information, check out www.artandsouloakland.com.

Thurston encourages area residents and business owners to come to PAC meetings, learn about the process and make their voices heard.

“We’re overseeing a good deal of their money. Our annual budget of tax increment funds is in the neighborhood of \$10 million a year,” he says. “They may have opinions about what is in the best interest of the community, and we’d like to hear from them.”

Two neighborhood residents who have recently joined the PAC are Mandela High School students Taytiana Brown and Mi Hua, the student member and alternative.

“I decided to become involved because I wanted to make a change and difference in the community so when I get a few years older, I can look around and say, ‘I was one of the many people who helped bring that to this community,’” says Brown, 16, who lives in the Brookdale neighborhood.

The Central City East PAC meets the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Patton University, 2433 Coolidge Avenue, in the Student Activity Center.



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