

**REDEVELOPMENT HELPS BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

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# REDEVELOPING OAKLAND

REASSESS / REEVALUATE / REBUILD / REVITALIZE

“WE’VE ALREADY BEEN A STRONG, SILENT PARTNER (WITH PUBLIC HEALTH) WITH PROJECTS WE’VE EMBARKED ON, WHETHER IT’S BRINGING GROCERY CHAINS TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES OR REDEVELOPING PARKS ...”

— GREGORY HUNTER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
COMMUNITY  
ECONOMIC  
REDEVELOPMENT

▲ ABOVE:  
William D. Wood  
Park, District 5

## REDEVELOPMENT HELPS BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

**W**here you live can have a great impact on your health and even how long you’ll live, influenced by factors from pollution to violence to access to healthy food. Did you know that residents in Oakland’s flatlands live, on average, a decade less than their counterparts in the Oakland Hills?

That stunning statistic is contributing to a new approach for Alameda County’s Public Health Department and increasing opportunities for health and Redevelopment officials to work together.

“When you look at that data, you see that place really matters. What’s around people shapes their opportunities to be healthy,” says Dr. Sandra Witt, the public health department’s deputy director for planning, policy and health equity. “Traditionally, we’ve looked at individual behavior, but that’s only part of the equation. We have to look at the environment people live in and the policies that shape that environment.”

And in many flatland areas, redevelopment is helping shape that environment with the goals of cleaning up blight, attracting businesses and jobs, providing safe housing and building a more vibrant community.

“We’ve already been a strong, silent partner (with Public Health) with projects we’ve embarked on, whether it’s bringing grocery chains to underserved communities or redeveloping parks and identifying safer and healthier

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## REDEVELOPMENT HELPS BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

(continued from page 1)

places for children to run or play structures to climb on,” says Gregory Hunter, Oakland’s deputy director of economic development and redevelopment.

Cleaning up blight and graffiti, helping develop vacant lots and contributing to job training and green jobs initiatives are other ways Redevelopment helps improve neighborhood safety and residents’ well-being.

The goal is to attract private investment to underserved communities, but it also has the benefit of “adding to the health of the overall community,” Hunter adds.

Oakland and Alameda County are not alone in exploring this new partnership territory. Recently, Bay Area redevelopment and public health officials met to discuss ways that health impacts can be considered in redevelopment plans.

But Oakland and Alameda County are among those leading the way, due both to successful prior efforts and to an unprecedented, multimillion plan to improve health outcomes in East Oakland.

“WHAT’S AROUND PEOPLE SHAPES

THEIR OPPORTUNITIES TO BE HEALTHY ...

WE HAVE TO LOOK AT THE ENVIRONMENT

PEOPLE LIVE IN AND THE POLICIES THAT

SHAPE THAT ENVIRONMENT.”

— DR. SANDRA WITT, MD,  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR PLANNING,  
POLICY AND HEALTH EQUITY,  
ALAMEDA COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT



▲ ABOVE: Excited residents flocked to the grand opening of Mandela Foods.

▼ BELOW: Shoppers enjoy a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.



## HEALTHY FOOD

Flatland residents, particularly in West and East Oakland, have long complained about the distance they have to travel to grocery stores and the lack of fresh food at their corner markets.

Redevelopment and public health officials teamed up on an initiative to help corner markets offer healthier choices, including fresh fruits and vegetables, and become certified to accept checks from the federal Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program.

Public health officials helped survey residents about what kinds of food items they wanted to see and helped store owners with WIC applications and health department mandates for fresh food, while redevelopment officials were able to offer business owners assistance with financing, façade improvements and more.

More recently, both agencies played a role in the opening of Mandela Foods, a locally owned, full-service grocery store and nutrition education center that opened in West Oakland in June 2009. The Redevelopment Agency contributed a \$258,000 tenant improvement grant to help the business open, and public health staff helped train workers on nutrition and procedures for selling fresh food.

This is not the first time the Redevelopment Agency supported the establishment of a full-service grocery store in an underserved neighborhood. Redevelopment has assisted with the development of supermarkets in West and East Oakland over the past several years. In 2004, Redevelopment facilitated a \$65,000 Economic Development Administration loan to Gazzali’s Supermarket, a 30,000-square-foot supermarket in the Eastmont Mall at the corner of Bancroft Avenue and 73rd Avenue. At that time, Gazzali’s Supermarket was the only facility to purchase grocery items in the far East Oakland part of the Central City East redevelopment area.

(continued on page 3)



▲ ABOVE: The entrance to DeFermery Pool, featuring a tile mural by Mike Mandel and Larry Sultan entitled "Pool" (1993), was remodeled with redevelopment funds.

## CLEAN AIR

County public health officials have been working for years with residents and community groups in West Oakland who feel their neighborhood – and health – is adversely affected by all the trucks traveling to and from the Port of Oakland and parking and idling on residential streets.

Redevelopment officials are pleased that plans to redevelop the former Oakland Army Base will help provide a solution with the creation of a "maritime support

center" on 15 acres of City-owned land adjacent to the port, where truckers will be able to park and receive services, from repairs to food, for their vehicles and themselves.

"The rationale is that if they have a centralized location to go for services, they will have less of a reason to wander through West Oakland," Hunter says.



## RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

It's no surprise that exercise is key to good health, but open space and safe play areas can sometimes be hard to find in underserved neighborhoods.

Redevelopment is helping bring about healthy change through its support of recreation initiatives large and small. From contributing funds for dog parks and tot lots to resurfacing playing fields and ball courts, redevelopment grants are touching many areas of the City. For more information, see the fall issue of the newsletter at [www.business2oakland.com/redevelopment](http://www.business2oakland.com/redevelopment).

Among recent Redevelopment investments are:

- ◆ \$300,000 in capital improvements and maintenance to the Oakland Ice Center in the Central District;
- ◆ \$1.6 million for playing fields and amenities at Raimondi Park in West Oakland;
- ◆ \$55,000 for the Mosswood Park Dog Run in the Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo area;
- ◆ \$800,000 to remake Fremont Pool in Central City East; and
- ◆ \$2 million for the planned East Oakland Sports Complex, scheduled to open in 2011 in the Coliseum area.

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▼ BELOW: Young boys take a break at Raimondi Park.



## REDEVELOPMENT HELPS BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

(continued from page 3)

### RE-ENVISIONING NEIGHBORHOODS

Redevelopment and public health also have been working together through the City-County Neighborhood Initiative in West Oakland's Hoover Historic District and East Oakland's Sobrante Park.



#### ▲ Rendering of Sobrante Park

Founded in 2004, the initiative works to build the capacity of neighborhood residents to address violence and other health inequities in their neighborhoods.

In West Oakland, officials are working with residents to reduce blight, create youth services and employment, and renovate Durant Park.

In Sobrante Park, the goals are to reduce drug dealing and violence, create more opportunities for youth and improve Tyrone Carney Park and the neighboring streetscape. Residents have worked with renowned landscape architect Walter Hood to redesign the park, which the City closed in 2002 due to drug dealing and violence. The City and residents are working to secure additional funding to make the vision a reality.



▲ Several Sobrante Park residents conduct a neighborhood walk-through to help redesign the Sobrante Park streetscape.

### UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY IN EAST OAKLAND

Perhaps the most exciting opportunity for Public Health and Redevelopment is getting underway in East Oakland, where officials and residents last summer began a 10-year strategic plan to build a healthy community in East Oakland.

The area is one of 14 statewide chosen by the California Endowment – a private, statewide health foundation – to receive millions of dollars over the next decade to meet those health goals. Starting this year, East Oakland is expected to receive between \$500,000 and \$3 million for the next three years, with funding increasing in the following years.

Work groups involving public health, Redevelopment and other City officials, community organizations and residents have been meeting to create plans for improving health, leadership development, education and the physical environment, including economic development and transportation.

“It’s an enormous amount of work,” says Witt. But “the potential payoff for this is huge. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

The statewide effort is being headed by Dr. Anthony Iton, who previously spearheaded similar efforts in Alameda County to link poverty and health.

For more information, visit [www.eobhc.net](http://www.eobhc.net).

Hunter sees such collaboration not as a wholesale rethinking of redevelopment, but rather as a continuation of the smart-growth principles the Redevelopment Agency already has been trying to foster.

“It’s a more comprehensive way of thinking,” he says.



## NEW PROJECTS ON TAP IN THE NEW YEAR

Despite a challenging economic climate, new projects are getting underway and work is continuing on major efforts from transit villages to streetscape improvements in redevelopment areas throughout the City.

Below are some highlights you can look for in your neighborhood in 2010. For more information on these and other projects in your area, visit [www.business2oakland.com/redevelopment](http://www.business2oakland.com/redevelopment).

### BROADWAY/MACARTHUR/SAN PABLO MACARTHUR TRANSIT VILLAGE

Work continues on the MacArthur Transit Village project, a major development slated to bring more than 600 residential units, retail, community space and parking to the area around the MacArthur BART station.

In 2010, developer MacArthur Transit Community Partners is expected to move forward with design review and approval for the first phase of the development – replacement parking for BART with a new parking structure.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS INITIATIVE (NPI)

Construction of the Mosswood Park tot lot, which will include a play structure, play house, swings, benches and picnic tables, is expected to begin in the spring.

The project, to be constructed next to the Moss House at 36th and Webster streets, received a total of \$100,000 in Agency funding through the NPI program in 2007 and 2008. Kaiser Permanente is contributing \$80,000 and another \$20,000 for a rubberized play surface is coming from the City's Americans with Disabilities Act Programs office.

Two new NPI projects also have been funded: \$71,300 for resurfacing the playground and basketball court at the Golden Gate Recreation Center and \$75,000 for the installation of new pedestrian streetlights on Telegraph Avenue between 40th and 42nd streets.

### STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Installation of pedestrian-oriented, ornamental streetlights on San Pablo Avenue from 53rd to 67th streets is expected to be completed in May. The project, approved in 2007, cost \$1.85 million.



ABOVE AND BELOW: Architectural renderings show the vision for the future of the MacArthur Transit Village.



### RETAIL ATTRACTION

Redevelopment staff is continuing work on the Broadway/Valdez District Specific Plan, an effort to guide City officials in attracting destination retail and mixed-use development to Broadway between 23rd Street and Interstate 580.

Work on the plan began in January 2009 and is expected to take two years. The plan aims to balance land-use goals with environmental, economic, preservation and quality-of-life-related issues, and citizen input is being sought at every stage of the three-phase process.

Agency staff is currently developing and vetting the proposed alternatives.

The area is split between the Broadway/MacArthur/San Pablo and Central District redevelopment areas, both of which have contributed \$400,000. The City also received a grant of \$400,000 from the Association of Bay Area Governments to complete the process.

A series of public workshops is being held at the First Presbyterian Church, 2619 Broadway, from 6 to 8 p.m. The next workshop will discuss alternatives, access and public realm. For the date and more information, visit [www.business2oakland.com/brcp/](http://www.business2oakland.com/brcp/).

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◀ LEFT: The request for construction bids is expected to go out this spring for these streetscape improvements to 23rd Avenue.



## MAKE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFER: START A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP

**F**ighting crime in a city as big as Oakland takes team work!

City officials say there's one easy and effective tool you should know about: getting to know your neighbors. Not only can you keep an eye out for suspicious activity and watch each others' homes, you can band together to seek City assistance on problems from abandoned cars to illegal dumping to burned-out streetlights.

"The best crime-prevention tool ever invented is a good neighbor," says Claudia Albano, manager of the Neighborhood Services Division. "When neighbors know each other, neighborhoods are safer."

The mission statement of the Neighborhood Services Division sums it up nicely: "Every block is organized and every neighbor is skilled, networked and empowered to work together in a partnership with the City to solve problems and build a healthy, resilient community."

It starts at the block level with the Neighborhood Watch program. While there are more than 600 Neighborhood Watch groups, Albano says most of Oakland – with thousands of blocks – remains uncovered. If you don't know your neighbors, National Night Out – the national block party held the first Tuesday in August – is a great starting point for many neighbors to get to know each other, have fun and build groups from there.

Police representatives meet with residents starting Neighborhood Watch groups and talk to them about home security, personal safety and crime issues in their neighborhood. They help create a neighborhood roster and map and explain how and when to contact the police and other City agencies for help. Neighborhood Watch groups also are eligible for training on special topics from child and senior safety to disaster preparedness.

At the next level are the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs), which cover the City's 57 community policing beats. These councils meet regularly to tackle issues in larger geographic neighborhoods, assisted by Neighborhood Service Coordinators (NSC), who are civilian employees of the Oakland Police Department. The NSCs have offices at City Hall, but also in several neighborhoods, including Fruitvale and at the Eastmont Substation.

Many active NCPC members also are active in Project Area Committees in their redevelopment areas, Albano says.

"Try to solve the problem at the lowest level," says Albano. "If you can't do that, call your Neighborhood Service Coordinator or go to the NCPC meeting."

Jessie Mae Brown has been heading up Neighborhood Watch in her East Oakland neighborhood for 30 years.

"THE BEST CRIME-PREVENTION TOOL EVER INVENTED IS A GOOD NEIGHBOR,"

CLAUDIA ALBANO, MANAGER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DIVISION.

"WHEN NEIGHBORS KNOW EACH OTHER, NEIGHBORHOODS ARE SAFER.

She and other volunteers hold a block party on National Night Out every year, and Brown welcomes every new neighbor who moves into her two-block area. She asks them to join her group, help keep the neighborhood clean and keep an eye out for strangers and suspicious activity.

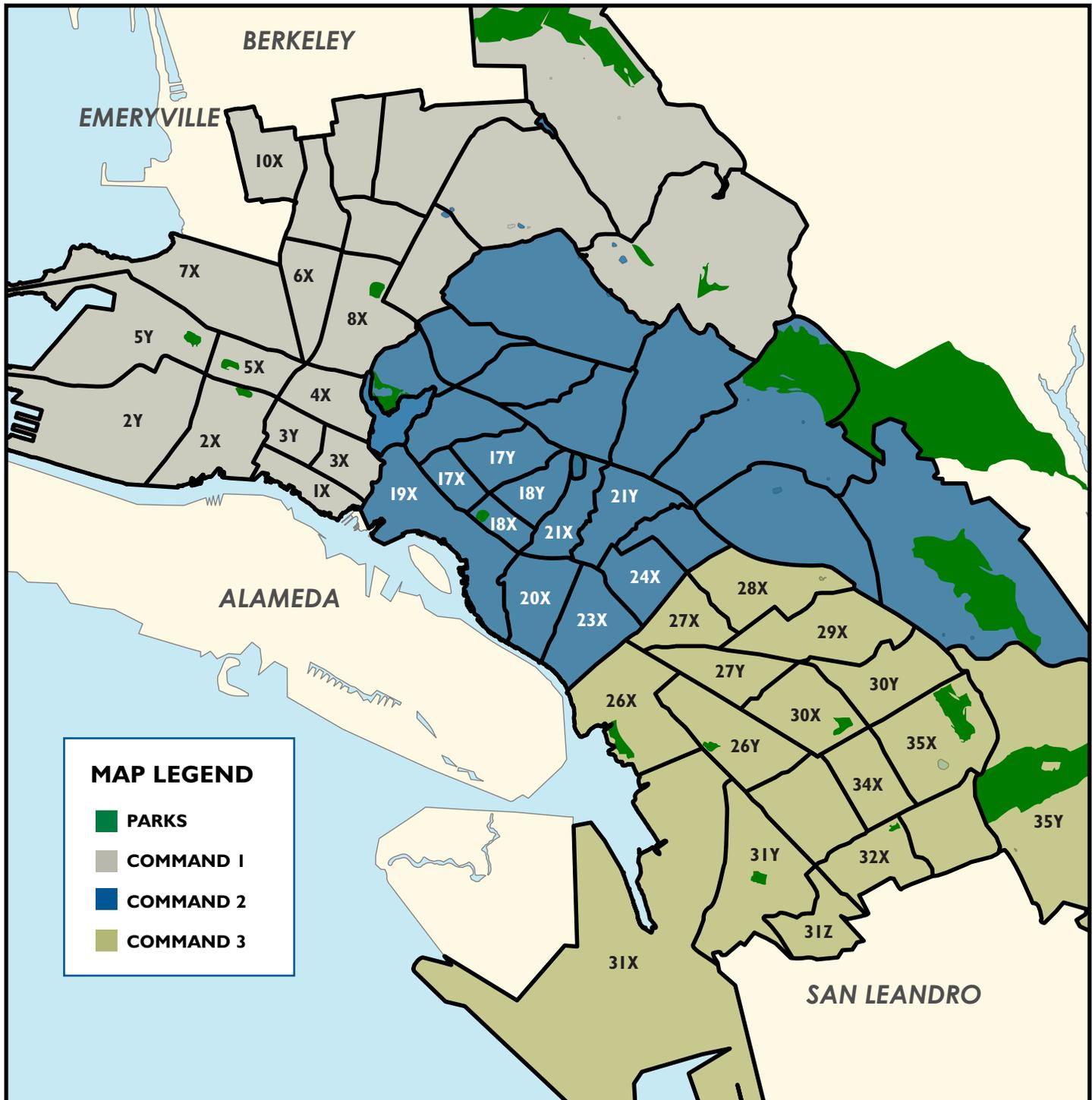
"Some of the youngsters didn't like me, but I keep speaking to them anyway, and now they love me," says the 82-year-old Brown. "Gangsters, too. I treat them like human beings."

She says knowing your neighbors makes "a great difference. If they don't know you, they don't have any kind of respect for you."

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## NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME PREVENTION COUNCILS IN REDEVELOPMENT AREAS



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Brown attends monthly NCPC meetings and appreciates the help when she needs it. “They help you with information on how to handle some of the situations that come up in your neighborhood,” she says. “If it gets too tough, they will back us up.”

Brown says even new technology is no match for getting to know your neighbors. “I know they got this new stuff with blogs and Tweeting

and all that stuff,” says Brown, “but there’s nothing like personal contact.”

If you’re not sure which City department could best help tackle a problem in your neighborhood, the Oaklanders Assistance Center, at 510-444-CITY, can also be a good place to start.

For more information or to start a Neighborhood Watch, call Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Brenda Ivey at 510-238-3091.



## NEW PROJECTS ... *(continued from page 5)*

### WEST OAKLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS INITIATIVE

With a \$40,000 Redevelopment Agency grant, the Oakland Dog Owners Group (ODOG) will be creating a

dog park in Grove-Shafter Park at 37th Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Amenities, funded in part by City Council President Jane Brunner's office, will include small and large dog play areas, boulders, benches, tables and a community bulletin board. The park is slated to open this spring.

NPI funds of \$12,300 also have been used to upgrade two of City Slicker Farms West Oakland facilities. At the Ralph Bunche Continuation School, the farm's nursery got a makeover with repaired shelving, support beams and windows in the greenhouse, graffiti removal, new planter boxes and the replacement of a seeding table. At the Center Street Farm, funds helped build or upgrade a classroom seating area, BBQ, tool shed, henhouse, beehive table, fence and gate, as well as new planter boxes and raised beds.

The West MacArthur Boulevard median also will get a boost with the installation of landscaping and irrigation from Martin Luther King Jr. Way west to the City boundary. The project, which extends a median project completed in 2008, was sponsored by the Market Street Corridor Neighborhood Association and funded by a \$50,000 NPI grant.

### STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Redevelopment staff also is in the initial phases of a planning process to develop streetscape improvements along the length of both Peralta Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way in the West Oakland redevelopment area.

### OAKLAND ARMY BASE

Plans to redevelop the former Oakland Army Base took a major step forward last year with the selection of a master developer for the 303-acre site at the foot of the Bay Bridge, 161 acres of which are owned by the City.

Negotiations are underway between the Agency and a joint venture between California Capital Group, headed by Oakland developer Phil Tagami, and AMB Property Corporation, a San Francisco real estate investment trust.

The developers have proposed using both the City- and Port of Oakland-owned parcels to support operations of the nation's fifth busiest port by increasing capacity for packaging, warehousing and distributing cargo.

In addition to creating a projected 8,000 new jobs, the proposed project – which could cost more than \$1 billion – promises to decrease truck traffic and parking in residential areas of West Oakland by creating a maritime support center on the former base for truckers and their vehicles.

▼ **BELOW:** *A master developer has been chosen for the former Oakland Army Base.*



### CENTRAL DISTRICT BART 17TH STREET GATEWAY PROJECT

The Redevelopment Agency is working with BART and the City's Public Art division to transform an underutilized plaza that is in disrepair between 17th and 18th streets. The goal is to create a safer and more vibrant connector between Broadway and Telegraph Avenue and a new entry point into the burgeoning Uptown entertainment district.

The design and construction budget is between \$750,000 and \$1 million and will come from a combination of Redevelopment and state funding. The public art component, which is expected to include a light- or media-based artwork, will cost another \$600,000 in public art funds.

### OPPORTUNITY SITES

Also in the Uptown area, the block adjacent to the renovated Fox Theatre – and bounded by San Pablo Avenue and 18th and 19th streets – is one of 10 sites that the Agency is seeking to sell to interested developers for new projects.

Thirteen proposals were generated by a request for proposals for the 10 sites, and Agency staff expects to make recommendations on choosing developers to the City Council in February. Developers were asked to submit proposals for possible uses including retail, housing and office, as well as mixed-use developments.

Six of the opportunity sites for which the Redevelopment Agency has solicited developers are in the Central City East redevelopment area. They are: 2777, 3566 and 3600 Foothill Blvd.; the northwestern corner of Foothill Boulevard and Seminary Avenue; Foothill Boulevard and 73rd Avenue; and 10451 MacArthur Blvd.

The rest of the sites are in the Coliseum area: 905 66th Ave., 6775 Oakport St., and 606 Clara St. and 9418 Edes Ave.

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THE GOAL IS  
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UPTOWN  
ENTERTAINMENT  
DISTRICT.

## COMMUNITY MURALISTS ESTRIA AND REFA UNVEIL CULTURAL LANDMARK

**T**he Thai Kee Company, Union Pacific Railroad, Oakland Public Works Agency and East Bay Asian Youth Center (EBAYC) have all worked with local artists Estria and Refa to bring these mural projects to fruition. Spray can artists and city officials in the Bay Area are now working together in an effort to reduce vandalism and showcase the potential of urban art as a tool to empower youth and uplift communities. Refa's mural, "Done by the Forces of Nature", is meant to inspire peace and bring balance to an already chaotic society. Estria's "Four Guardians" mural, shown below, may be Oakland's largest, City-commissioned work, at 22' H x 125' L. Both murals can be seen from Interstate 880.



### NEW PROJECTS ... (continued from page 8)

#### CENTRAL CITY EAST STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

MacArthur Boulevard is slated to undergo a transformation both above and below ground. Pacific Gas & Electric, Comcast and AT&T will be undergrounding utilities, which is expected to be completed this year with contributions of redevelopment funds. Streetscape work – including curb bulb-outs, sidewalk expansions, new street trees and tree wells, lighting, and street resurfacing and restriping – also is scheduled and expected to be completed by 2011.

A request for construction bids will go out this spring for improvements to 23rd Avenue between East 12th Street and Foothill Boulevard.

Planning also is underway to improve the design of the Fruitvale/Foothill streetscape. A design firm has been selected, and community workshops have been held for public input

Conceptual plans and early design work on streetscape improvements to East 18th Street, in the area around the Parkway Theater, also have been completed, in conjunction with Measure DD staff. The project, part of a plan to link this area to Lake Merritt and the adjacent Athol Park, is expected to be completed this fall.

In addition, design work and plans also are underway for streetscape improvements in the following areas: Foothill/Seminary, 14th Avenue, and an area including parts of Foothill Boulevard and Bancroft and Fairfax avenues.

#### COLISEUM OAKLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CONNECTOR

In December, 2009, the BART board of directors approved the \$492 million project "people mover" between Oakland International Airport and the Coliseum BART station.

These elevated, automated, driverless trains are expected to shuttle passengers from BART to the airport in less than 10 minutes, once the project is completed in 2013. A \$70 million federal stimulus infusion gave a much-needed boost to the project. The Agency has contributed \$725,000.

Construction is scheduled to begin this summer and last three-and-a-half years.

#### FRUITVALE TRANSIT VILLAGE

Planning for Phase 2 of the Fruitvale Transit Village also is underway. The development, to be located on a 3.5-acre parking lot at the Fruitvale BART station, will expand the current Fruitvale Village with another 350 to 415 units of mixed-income housing. The development is expected to use state-of-the-art green-building and energy-saving systems.

Construction is scheduled for this summer.

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS: THE BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER



If you're thinking of opening or expanding a business in Oakland, the City has a new, one-stop center to answer your questions and assist you.

The Oakland Business Assistance Center officially opened in July 2009. Since that time, its two-person staff has answered inquiries from and helped some 900 people. More than 300 have turned into "leads," or cases in which businesses are contemplating opening or expanding.



*Business owners have access to resources and guidance at the newly opened Business Assistance Center.*

"We get requests on every thing from how to start a business to finding a location to 'how do I get a zoning clearance' to everything in between," says the center's manager Mike McPherson. "We're not here to solve every problem, but we are here to make people's lives easier as they try to attain services from the City."

The center also has helped existing business owners navigate City bureaucracy as in the case of a Coliseum-area business owner whose building was flooded by backed-up drainage ditches. McPherson acted as a middle man with other City departments and got the problem resolved within a matter of days.

"Our mantra is to get back to people in a timely, efficient manner," says McPherson, whose goal is to answer every e-mail and phone call within one day. "Part of our mission here is to change the perception of what people think of the service here in Oakland."

In addition to tackling problems itself, the Business Assistance Center also refers business owners for financing, training, workshops and other opportunities.

Deontay Wilson, who opened a video production company in West Oakland in September, called McPherson's assistance "invaluable."

"He had a wealth of knowledge and suggestions to help strengthen my proposal and help me attract a couple of investors," says Wilson, head of Warrior Poet Productions. "I had a pretty grand vision. One of the best suggestions he gave me was to start a little smaller and streamline my proposal."

The center was among the key recommendations of Mayor Ronald V. Dellums' Small Business Task Force and had strong support from the City Council, including President Jane Brunner.

The center's ground-level office, at 270 Frank Ogawa Plaza, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and can be reached at 510-238-7952.

But McPherson says the most efficient first contact is to request help through a short questionnaire on the center's Web site at [www.oaklandbusinesscenter.com](http://www.oaklandbusinesscenter.com), which helps staff provide faster, more complete service. Materials also are available in Spanish and Cantonese, and interpreters can be provided in other languages.

"We can send you applications, information on permitting and zoning maps without you leaving your living room," says McPherson.

The Web site is also a great starting place for information for prospective or existing business owners, with user-friendly tips and links on everything from conducting market research to filing for a business license to getting certified as a green business.

"We realize that Oakland is made up of a collage of small businesses. We don't have a large corporate community, but we have a huge small business community," McPherson says. "The Business Assistance Center was put in place to support that portion of the community."



► **RIGHT:** Mayor Ronald V. Dellums gathers with business owners at the grand opening of the Business Assistance Center.

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

GREGORY HUNTER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

While the City and Redevelopment Agency are still in a budgetary belt-tightening mode, Redevelopment is looking forward to several new projects proposed in redevelopment areas that have the potential to generate much needed revenue for the City.

This issue of *Redeveloping Oakland* highlights projects and initiatives that are designed to be a catalyst for development, eliminate blight, stimulate private investment and improve the overall economic condition of neighborhoods and the City.

In addition to facilitating new projects, Redevelopment is currently collaborating with the Alameda County Public Health Department, the Oakland Police Department and a host of non-profit organizations (some of which were featured in the fall 2009 issue of the newsletter) on a variety of initiatives including commercial district security, violence prevention in West and East Oakland, strategic neighborhood planning and job training.

“ ... REDEVELOPMENT IS CURRENTLY COLLABORATING WITH THE  
ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT, THE OAKLAND POLICE  
DEPARTMENT AND A HOST OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ...  
ON A VARIETY OF INITIATIVES INCLUDING COMMERCIAL DISTRICT SECURITY,  
VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN WEST AND EAST OAKLAND,  
STRATEGIC NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND JOB TRAINING.  
IN THIS NEW YEAR, WE CAN ALL RESOLVE TO CONTRIBUTE IN  
SOME WAY TO MAKE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND CITY A MORE VIBRANT  
AND SAFE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.”

Statewide, more redevelopment agencies are recognizing the natural alliance between redevelopment agencies and public health departments. This issue describes exciting Redevelopment and Alameda County Public Health initiatives that have the potential to revitalize neighborhoods and attract additional resources needed to address a broad range of issues affecting redevelopment-area residents.

In the current budgetary environment, neighborhoods will need to be more involved in addressing issues from litter to public safety. The City's Neighborhood Services Division has dedicated staff to work with residents and businesses to tackle a range of problems that affect the overall health of the neighborhood. Learn about Neighborhood Watch and Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils in your redevelopment-area neighborhood and get involved.

In this new year, we can all resolve to contribute in some way to make our neighborhood and City a more vibrant and safe place to live, work and play.



Gregory D. Hunter



## COLISEUM BUSINESS OWNERS AND RESIDENTS: YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**D**o you have an idea that you think would help make your Coliseum-area neighborhood safer or more beautiful? Are you trying to establish a neighborhood identity with banners or signs, or upgrade a community facility?

In February, the Redevelopment Agency is seeking proposals for matching grants through the Neighborhood Projects Initiative program.

Grants of up to \$25,000 per project will be awarded, and a total of \$180,000 is available. Individuals, businesses and community organizations are eligible to apply and will receive matching reimbursement funds once projects are complete. Projects must be small-scale, one-time physical improvements within the Coliseum redevelopment area, which stretches from 22nd Avenue to the San Leandro border, below International Boulevard.

Projects should aim to deter crime, upgrade community facilities, help establish community identity with improvements such as gateway signage or banners, or beautify a neighborhood or commercial corridor, which could include efforts from fencing off an area that attracts dumping to installing benches or trash cans.

PROJECTS MUST BE SMALL-SCALE, ONE-TIME PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS  
WITHIN THE COLISEUM REDEVELOPMENT AREA, WHICH STRETCHES FROM  
22ND AVENUE TO THE SAN LEANDRO BORDER, BELOW  
INTERNATIONAL BOULEVARD.

Since its inception in 2005, the annual Neighborhood Projects Initiative program has funded 27 projects worth \$840,000 in the Coliseum area. Past projects include increased street lighting, decorative planters, improvements to facilities including sports fields, parks and recreation centers, and beautification efforts on International Boulevard.

For information, contact Rupa Parikh at [rparikh@oaklandnet.com](mailto:rparikh@oaklandnet.com) or 510-238-6248.

## NEW PROJECTS ... *(continued from page 9)*

### HILL-ELMHURST PLAZA

Three real estate development teams are in the planning stages for Hill-Elmhurst Plaza, a proposed mixed-use development on 1.25 acres on International Boulevard between 94th and 96th avenues.

The mixed-use plans include senior, workforce and family housing, as well as at least 6,000 square feet of retail space. The design may also include a central plaza where residents could gather.

The development is expected to greatly improve the quality of life in the neighborhood by providing safe, affordable housing and spurring investment and job creation by creating retail services.

### EAST OAKLAND COMMUNITY LIBRARY

This new \$14 million library on 81st Avenue is scheduled to open in March.

The 21,000-square-foot building will be the City's largest branch library and will share space with two neighboring public schools, ACORN Woodland Elementary and EnCompass Academy.

The library also includes a community meeting room and computer lab. Programming is expected to include services for children, teens and adults, including literacy classes and workforce assistance.

The Redevelopment Agency contributed \$4.5 million in funds, allowing the library to secure \$6.5 million in state funding.



Community and Economic Development Agency (CEDA)  
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, #5313  
Oakland, CA 94612  
TEL: (510) 238-3015  
WEB: [www.oaklandnet.com](http://www.oaklandnet.com)  
[www.Business2Oakland.com](http://www.Business2Oakland.com)