

Concord City News

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE CITY OF CONCORD

Summer 2011

News Corner

Graduations televised

Mt. Diablo School District high school graduations taking place June 4 to 10 will be televised live from the Sleep Train Pavilion on the City's cable TV channels 28 (Comcast), 29 (Astound) and AT&T U-verse 99, and streamed live from the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org.



Buy Concord
Your dollar matters!

Free coupons

Looking for a bargain? Coupons from local businesses are available on the Buy Concord website. Business owners can also add their coupon offers to the site at no charge. Visit www.buyconcord.net.

Literacy volunteers

The Diablo Valley Literacy Council is looking for volunteers to help non-English speaking adults learn to read, write and speak English. Training is held in spring and fall at 4000 Clayton Rd. on two Saturday mornings and one weekday evening. For more information or to register, call (925) 685-3881.



City Clerk and Kitakami Sister City liaison Mary Rae Lehman with some of the thousands of origami cranes donated by residents

Generous community offers donations, 1,000 cranes for sister city Kitakami, Japan

The Concord Ambassadors, the non-profit organization sponsoring Concord's Sister City Program with Kitakami, Japan, held a "1,000 Cranes for Japan" candlelight vigil and fundraiser on Thursday, March 31, in Todos Santos Plaza in downtown Concord. As recounted in an ancient Japanese legend, organizers hoped to collect 1,000 origami cranes to bring good fortune to the people of Kitakami and Japan after the devastating earthquake. Their ultimate goal was to collect 10,000 cranes in 30 days.

Attendees delighted organizers by contributing 6,000 cranes and over \$2,200 for the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund at the event. In the weeks

that followed, residents continued to contribute both cranes and donations, helping the Ambassadors work to reach their goal. Cranes and donation are still being accepted.

The cranes will eventually become part of an art piece that commemorates Concord's support for its Sister City in times of crisis. Donations can be made to the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, 1840 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115 via Union Bank or online at www.jcccnc.org, the Salvation Army, Red Cross or any other international organization mobilizing to assist Japan. For more information, contact City Clerk and Kitakami Sister City liaison Mary Rae Lehman, 671-3495. ♦



Left to right: Concord High School football seniors Ryan Allen, Ricky Lloyd, United Mt. Diablo Athletic Foundation President Pat Middendorff, Secretary Kent Caldwell, Vice President Mark Lloyd (with check), and Kevin Hennessy accept the check from Future Ford Lincoln's Rick Dumas.

Car dealer promotion is a win-win for City and schools

In February, the City partnered with 14 local car dealers for the President's Week Sales Extravaganza, promoting Concord as the "Car Capital of the East Bay."

As an extra incentive for Concord residents to support the event, the car dealers offered to make donations to two school foundations, the Mount Diablo Music Education Foundation and the United Mt. Diablo Athletic Foundation.

In March, the dealers presented each foundation with a check for \$6,020, for a total donation of \$12,040. The campaign resulted in over 600 cars being sold during the 11-day event, generating additional sales tax revenue for the City. Some dealers experienced increases of five to ten percent over the previous year.

"I think I can speak for all the dealers when I say that our combined efforts resulted in better than expected sales, and we're very happy to be making a donation to the schools," said Rick Dumas of Future Ford Lincoln of Concord.

The following Concord dealerships participated in the event: Acura of Concord, Audi Concord, BMW Concord, Concord Chevrolet, Concord Honda, Concord Mitsubishi, Concord Toyota, Dirito Brothers Concord Nissan, Future Ford Lincoln of Concord, Future Hyundai of Concord, Lehmer's Concord Buick GMC, Lexus of Concord, Mini Concord, and Niello Infiniti. ♦



Residents are invited to attend budget hearings

The City Council will hold two public hearings on the City's 2011-12 budget on June 14 and 28. Residents are encouraged to attend the meetings, which will be held in the City Council Chamber at Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Drive.

The City's budget picture is much improved this year over the last several years, thanks to passage of Measure Q, the half-cent sales tax increase approved by voters last November. While the additional revenue will not restore any of the program reductions experienced over the last two years, it will preserve service delivery at current levels.

In April, the City Council appointed a seven-member Measure Q Oversight Committee, which will provide recommendations to the City Council on the use of Measure Q revenue, review the City's annual audit report and present its findings annually at a public meeting. The appointees are Guy Bjerke, Richard Eber, Norman J. Freitas, Bill Gram-Reefer, Bari Kasper, Dr. Harmesh Kumar and Rosanne Nieto.

For those unable to attend, the Budget Hearings will be broadcast live on Concord cable TV channel 28 (Comcast), channel 29 (Astound) and AT&T U-verse channel 99 and will be streamed on the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org.

Motor oil pick up

The City of Concord has partnered with Concord Disposal Service (CDS) to offer free curbside pick-up of used motor oil and oil filters to all Concord residents. This new and convenient service is funded entirely by a grant from CALRecycle (www.calrecycle.ca.gov).

To participate, Concord residents can call CDS at 682-9113 to request a free collection container. A container will be mailed directly to the home. When the container is full, residents can call for free curbside pick-up at their address.

Collection containers hold six quarts of used motor oil. When the motor in a typical vehicle is serviced, four to six quarts of oil are replaced. The used oil can cause serious environmental damage if handled improperly. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the used oil from one oil change can contaminate 1 million gallons of fresh water - a year's supply for 50 people.

Efficiency projects help the City reduce energy costs

The City is about to embark on a multi-year plan to improve energy efficiency and reduce expenditures on gas and electricity for City facilities. Last year, the City Council approved plans for an energy audit. The audit revealed six significant opportunities that would allow the City to make changes that would reduce energy costs while simultaneously reducing the City's carbon footprint. The projects will be funded through grants, PG&E rebates, building replacement funds and savings in energy costs.



Streetlights like this one on Clayton Road are being retrofitted with new induction lighting to save energy costs

Over the next year, residents may notice crews replacing the lamps in the 8,200 city streetlights. The City purchased the streetlight system from PG&E some years ago to reduce operating expenditures and improve service delivery on repair and replacement of non-functioning lights. The new project calls for the existing high pressure sodium and

metal halide streetlights to be replaced with induction lighting, saving the City \$300,000 annually in energy costs. The look of the streetlights will remain the same; only the lamps will be replaced.

Induction lighting does not rely on a burning filament or electrode to generate light. There are no components to "burn out." As a result, induction lamps last up to 100,000 hours compared to current streetlight lamps that have lifespans of only between 6,000 and 20,000 hours. At this rate, the induction lamps will not need to be replaced for 20 years. The City will see savings in labor and materials costs. Because there are no burned out bulbs to dispose of, the system also produces less waste.

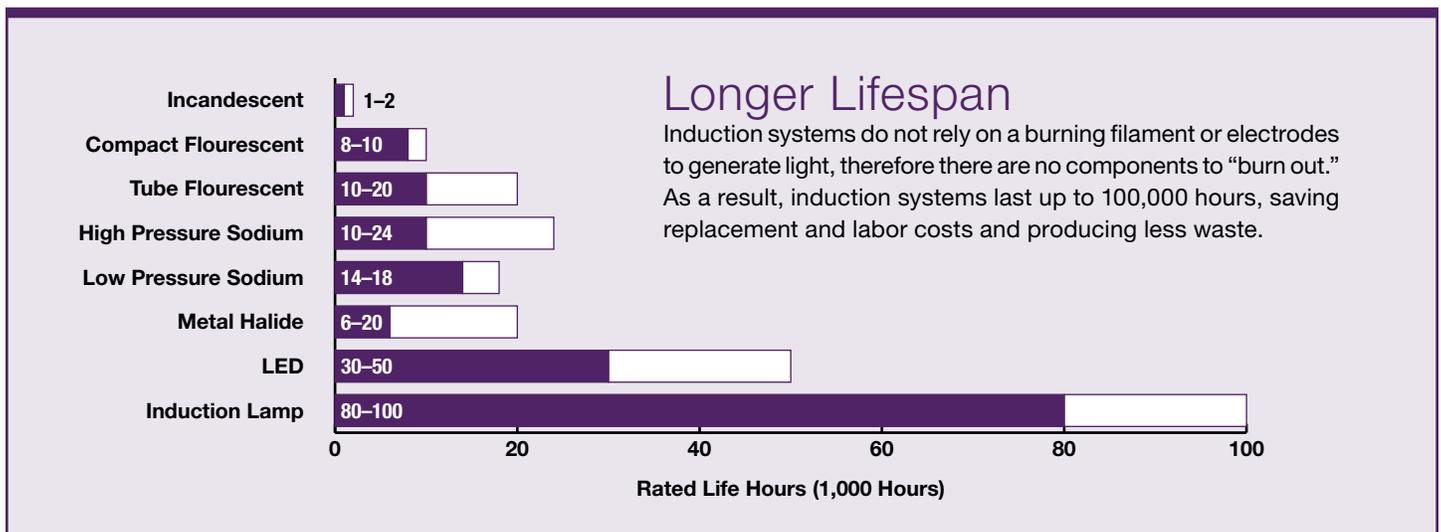
Phase 1 of the induction lighting project, which should be complete by the end of May or first part of June, will replace streetlights on the north side of Clayton Road between Oakland Avenue and West Street, and on some residential streets near the Civic Center and Concord Library on Salvio Street near Parkside Drive. Information about the progress of the project will be available on the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org.

The second project will be the installation of a solar photovoltaic system at Concord

Community Pool. The solar panels will be incorporated into two new shade structures, one in the tennis court parking lot and the second in the area near the public restroom. Energy from the solar panels will be used to power the pool circulation pump. The project will result in \$43,000 in annual energy savings.

Some of the projects won't be visible to the public. For instance, rooftop heating and air conditioning units at Civic Center, the Library, Centre Concord and other buildings will be replaced with more efficient units for a savings of approximately \$24,500 a year. The Concord Community Pool pump and boiler replacement project will result in approximately \$16,500 in annual savings. The Police Station will get a new building energy control system to replace one that has reached the end of its useful life, resulting in \$12,000 in savings. Interior lighting fixtures at the Police Station and Centre Concord will be retrofitted for greater efficiency and 400 exterior building light bulbs will be replaced with induction lights to reduce maintenance costs and improve lighting quality for \$175,000 in annual energy savings.

For more information about the project, contact City Engineer Dana Gemmell at 671-3470. ♦





Workmen are busy with a major exterior renovation at the Bank of America branch at Willow Pass Road and Galindo Street

Renovation projects, new businesses boost local economy

The sound of hammers and drills can be heard once again in several areas of Concord. Buildings are being renovated, long-stalled projects are moving forward and several new businesses have opened in the last quarter of the year.

On Willow Pass Road in downtown Concord, the Bank of America branch is getting a facelift. The three-story, 52,879 square foot building, built in 1980, is undergoing major exterior renovations. The building's aging awnings are being replaced and the building will be repainted to match the look of several other recently renovated downtown structures.

Not far away, in the Park-n-Shop Center, changes are moving forward at opposite sides of the complex. Storefronts near Willow Pass Road and Sutter Street have a new paint job and colorful awnings. A long row of storefronts near Market Street is in the midst of receiving a facelift that includes detailed overhangs, new paint, trailing vines and outdoor seating.

On Willow Pass Road and Port Chicago Highway, the second phase of the Wisteria

housing development is under construction. The new single-family homes should be welcoming families by fall.

Last month, Fresh & Easy opened in the Clayton Valley Shopping Center after the project had stalled for some months. The 14,000 square foot British-owned grocery aims to replicate a neighborhood market and specializes in prepared meals and own-brand products at affordable prices.

Two high-visibility projects coming soon are a much-expanded Forever XXI store at Sunvalley Shopping Center and Concord's first Chipotle restaurant in the shopping center at 785 Oak Grove Road and Treat Boulevard. Already open in this center is 54 Mint Rosticceria and Formaggi, the sister-restaurant to 54 Mint in San Francisco.

Downtown Concord welcomed its newest restaurant this spring with the opening of the Tower Grille, 1950 Grant St.

While the local economy is still working to recover from the recession, these projects represent a few hopeful signs that the business community is beginning to move forward. ♦

Improvements at Baldwin Park

Bocce fans will soon have a new place to play the game when four courts are completed at Baldwin Park, located on Parkside Circle across from the Concord Senior Citizen Center.



Bocce courts at Baldwin Park are nearing completion

The city's only other courts at Newhall Park are heavily used with demand growing every year. The project was recommended by the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Commission.

The project is funded through \$392,600 in Measure WW funds and \$69,300 in Parkland Funds for a total cost of \$461,900, which includes lighting, benches, wood trellis arbors for shade, security fencing, landscaping, drinking fountain, an equipment storage building and picnic tables. The new courts are expected to be completed by the end of the month.

At the same time, plans for a new off-leash dog area have been approved for Baldwin Park. Temporary fencing is in place at the east end of the park on the eventual site of the permanent off-leash area. When construction begins in August on the permanent fencing, the temporary area will be moved to another area of the park. The project is expected to be completed in September.

Monument Boulevard project improves pedestrian access, adds bike lanes

A multi-year project to improve pedestrian access in the city's Monument Boulevard area is substantially complete. The Monument Corridor Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements will allow easier access to BART, commercial centers and residential areas along Monument Boulevard from Carey Drive to Meadow Lane/Oak Grove Road, and on Meadow Lane from Monument Boulevard to Sunshine Drive.

The project includes constructing ADA improvements, such as curb ramps and pedestrian count-down signal heads, widening existing sidewalks, constructing colored concrete crosswalks at various intersections and installing roadway and pedestrian-level lights on portions of Monument Boulevard. In addition, bike lanes have been installed on Meadow Lane, and a traffic signal now stands at the intersection of Robin Lane and Meadow Lane.

The project was funded with a \$1.2 million Surface Transportation Program grant, a \$300,000 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant, and Redevelopment Agency funds.

The improvements were made in response to top infrastructure-related concerns raised before and during the Monument Corridor's Community Based Transportation Plan outreach process, which was conducted in 2005. Most outreach activities were conducted by the Monument Community Partnership (MCP), a non-profit collaboration of residents and social service organizations whose mission is to improve the health and safety of Monument residents.

Community participation rates were high during the outreach process, which included stakeholder meetings,



The intersection of Meadow Lane and Robin Lane now has a new traffic light, as well as curb cuts to assist disabled residents, a bike lane and wider sidewalks

two community meetings, surveys, and stakeholder interviews. The local transit agency (County Connection) and other stakeholders, such as social service organizations and the Transportation and Land Use Coalition, participated in the process. MCP was actively involved in identifying transportation barriers in the course of many neighborhood meetings.

Through the process, the community expressed a need for wider and safer sidewalks, bike routes, and safety improvements at Monument Boulevard and Meadow Lane/Oak Grove Road. The Monument Corridor has a high number of pedestrians, bicycle riders, and baby strollers using the sidewalk for travel. The number of households in the Monument Corridor without access to a vehicle is 18 percent, which is three times the county-wide average.

Although major bus lines serve Monument Boulevard and Meadow Lane, affordability, frequency of service, and lack of convenient transfers are among the major obstacles that prevent many Monument Corridor residents from using the service. For those without vehicles, the main alternatives to using the bus are walking and bicycling, which can now be done more safely thanks to the completion of this project. ♦

WEBSITE UPDATES

How to report a problem

Residents can now report problems, file police reports or get a permit by following the convenient links on the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org. Just select the appropriate icon in the "Most Requested" box.

Affordable Lake Tahoe vacations at Camp Concord

It's not too late to reserve a few days or a week with the family this summer at Camp Concord at South Lake Tahoe. Family Camp offers residents a high-quality, affordable vacation experience, allowing parents and children to relax and experience nature together.



Kaliban-Vargas family at Camp Concord

All meals are provided and families stay in rustic private cabins. A variety of activities, such as canoeing on Fallen Leaf Lake and a beach luau, are available or families are free to explore the Tahoe basin on their own. The hospitality team offers age-specific programs for children, teens and adults.

Several parents who brought their families to Camp Concord had this to say:

"The staff was fabulous. The day trips and evening programs were great ... my kids said 'Best Vacation Ever,'" — Adina Zinn.

"My family enjoyed Camp Concord beyond our expectations; it was relaxed and comfortable, stress-free." — David Ellman

"It was a great way to spend family time without the usual distractions." — Lynn Byrd

For more information, visit www.campconcord.org or call (925) 671-CAMP (2267).

Summer music season in full swing, salute to Bay Area baseball in August

Concord's popular summer music program is in full swing, with performances by different artists Tuesdays at noon and Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at Todos Santos Plaza.

The Tuesday program continues through June 28 and includes the opportunity to shop at the year-round Farmers' Market, which is in the plaza from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. During the month of July, the music moves to the evening hours. The Tuesday Night Blues series will be in the plaza from 6:30 to 8 p.m. beginning July 5. Special guests on July 12 are the Eyewitness Blues Band, featuring performances by Channel 5 news anchors and reporters. Select Farmers' Market vendors will remain open during the concerts.

Music and Market Series

The 23rd Annual Music and Market series is now in session Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8 p.m., and continues through September 15. The Farmers' Market is in the plaza from 4 to 8 p.m. There's something for everyone, from La Ventana's salsa rock on June 23, to Into the Groove's tribute to Madonna on July 21 and Gator Beat's Cajun roots music on August 18. Popular Elvis impersonator James Clark brings his show band to the Cool Concord Cars event on June 30, when he will share the spotlight with dozens of the area's unique vintage cars.



Elvis impersonator James Clark performs June 30

Baseball and movies

Concord salutes the San Francisco Giants and celebrates Bay Area baseball

every Thursday in August after the music program with a series of baseball-themed movies including Field of Dreams (Aug. 4), Angels in the Outfield (Aug. 11) Bad News Bears (Aug. 18), and Take Me Out to the Ball Game (Aug. 25). Movie time is 8:15 p.m.

Special Events

- DadDay salutes Father's Day on Sunday June 19 with music by Aja Vu, a Steely Dan tribute band, and the second annual Chili Cook-off, pitting firemen, Concord police officers and members of the Contra Costa County District Attorney's office in a hotly contested battle for the top prize.
- The July 4th Parade and Jubilee features a traditional pancake breakfast, an old-fashioned festival and the annual parade with a new 10 a.m. start time.
- National Night Out on Tuesday, August 2 brings families together with police officers to highlight safe neighborhoods. Music for the event is by Stung, a Police/Sting tribute band.
- The California Symphony returns for its 12th annual free summer pops concert on Saturday, September 17.

Todos Santos Plaza is located in downtown Concord on Willow Pass Road between Mt. Diablo and Grant streets. Free parking is available in two municipal garages. The Grant Street Garage entrance is on Salvio Street between Grant and Colfax streets. The Todos Santos Parking Center entrance is on Salvio Street between Galindo and Mt. Diablo streets.

For those who can't make it downtown, some of the music events are televised live on Concord cable TV channel 28 (Comcast), 29 (Astound) and on AT&T U-verse channel 99 and will be streamed on the City's website at www.cityofconcord.org by selecting "Watch Concord Cable TV" from the "Video & TV" box. ♦

Calling Concord Home



By
*Police Chief
Guy Swanger*

On my first official visit after being selected as the Chief of Police for the City of Concord, my wife and I were excited to be in Northern California. We came in the morning of December 16 and landed at the Oakland Airport. As we were making that beautiful drive through the foothills along Highway 24, we could not help but smile at our good fortune. The green hillsides, quaint little towns on the sides of the highway, and a subtle mist in the air made it a surreal moment. I was thrilled to be selected as a member of the Concord Police Department.

I have spent the past four months attempting to meet as many people as possible and learning the rich culture of my agency and my new town. Living in the heart of Concord has been a benefit. The daily walks around Todos Santos Park, the weekly visits in the Monument Corridor

and Sunvalley Mall, and the frequent travels through the Valley part of Concord have been educational and enjoyable. I must confess, I am still searching for a true north-south or east-west street in our lovely city. Thank goodness for the Tom Tom.

Concord has that small town flavor, yet has a big city mentality. Residents that grow up here, generally stay here. Children go to the school their parents went to some 20 years earlier. But the pockets of smaller neighborhoods inside Concord, in addition to the large business buildings, warehouse shopping areas, and a developing downtown nightlife, reminds me of a larger city. It is metropolitan, yet grounded in its history.

In my short time here at the Concord Police Department, I have made a few observations. The first was the dedication of the employees that work for this great city. The strength of any police agency begins with its members. The civilian and sworn employees of the Concord Police Department are a proud group. Most of them have grown up in the area and chose to stay in Concord. And others, like my family and me, chose to move here for the opportunities and family friendly environment.

Another observation was the commitment among the members toward improving the

quality of life in Concord. There are officers volunteering their time coaching at local high schools, even though they do not have children that go to that school. Others volunteer on local boards, churches, and countless other civic groups. I was taken back by the large number of volunteers and reserve officers. I believe that there are more reserve officers serving Concord than the number that serve the city I recently moved from last year. Incredible commitment.

Concord. I love that I can sit out in front of one of three different coffee shops downtown and watch such a variety of activity. Organized walking groups. Parents with their children playing in the park. Pet owners walking their dog, on leash. What is common for locals is new for me.

I am consistently asked what is my vision for the department and what direction I am taking the agency in the next few years. That will come shortly. But for now, please allow me this time to make Concord my home.

And for the subtle mist my wife and I experienced on December 16 along Highway 24? Since that day, I have experienced more rain than in my previous 50 years on this planet! I quickly learned that those beautiful green hillsides were not the result of some elaborate irrigation system! ♦

New PD Dispatch Center

In spite of the City's ongoing budget challenges, the Concord Police Department now has an updated Dispatch Center to ensure continued speedy response to 9-1-1 calls. Funding for the project was provided through the 9-1-1 service fees that the State of California collects on every telephone in the state.

Dispatchers in the new center have an updated panel of computer screens and greater access to the information they need to assist both callers and officers in the field.

The 9-1-1 telephone system was upgraded to support full GPS location and movement for emergency calls made on cell phones. Now when someone dials 9-1-1 on a cell phone in Concord, it rings directly in Concord's Dispatch Center and dispatchers can see the caller's GPS location.

The department's highest priority is public safety, and the new Dispatch Center will enhance the department's ability to rapidly respond to requests for assistance. ♦



Dispatcher Tracey Downing with the new panel of computer screens

Concord City News

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Leslye Asera	Community Relations Manager and Editor

Postal Customer

City Meetings

All meetings are held at Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Dr., unless otherwise noted and are open to the public. Dates are subject to change. For information, visit the website at www.cityofconcord.org (see Civic Center Meetings on the home page), check the meeting notices in the Contra Costa Times or call 671-31000.

City Council	First, second, fourth Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.*
Commission on Aging	Third Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle
Community Services Commission	Third Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. City Manager's Conference Room
Design Review Board	Second, fourth Thursday, 5:30 p.m.
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Commission	Second Wednesday, 7 p.m.*
Planning Commission	First, third Wednesday, 7 p.m.*
Zoning Administrator	Second, fourth Wednesday, 9 a.m.

* Broadcast live on Concord Cable TV channel 28 (Comcast), 29 (Astound), AT&T U-verse Channel 99 and online at www.cityofconcord.org. Past City Council meetings are also available online.

Boards & Commissions

For detailed information about the City's Boards and Commissions visit www.cityofconcord.org or call one of the contact numbers below.

Board of Appeals	671-3119
Commission on Aging	671-3419
Community Services Commission	671-3327
Design Review Board	671-3152
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Commission	671-3440
Personnel Board	671-3310
Planning Commission	671-3152



Need an Answer?

Web site: www.cityofconcord.org
Events: www.concordfirst.org
Classes: www.concordreg.org
E-mail: cityinfo@ci.concord.ca.us

Americans with Disabilities Act	
(ADA) Coordinator	671-3031
Building	671-3107
Business Licenses.....	671-3313
Cable TV	
Astound Broadband	459-1000
Comcast.....	1-800-945-2288
Camp Concord	671-3273
Centre Concord	671-3466
City Council	671-3158
City Manager	671-3150
Community and Recreation Services	
Class registration.....	671-3404
Concord Community Pool.....	671-3480
Concord Naval Weapons Station	
Reuse Project	671-3001
Downtown Hotline	671-3464
Economic Development	671-3355
Engineering.....	671-3361
Flood Zone Inquiries.....	671-3425
Garbage Collection	682-9113
Graffiti Hotline.....	671-3080
Housing.....	671-3364
Mayor	671-3158
Neighborhood Services Hotline.....	671-3282
Park Reservations	671-3404
Permit Center.....	671-3454
Planning	671-3152
Police and Fire Emergencies	911
Police/Information	671-3220
Pothole Hotline	671-3228
Public Works.....	671-3448
Park Maintenance.....	671-3444
Recreation/Registration	671-3404
Senior Center.....	671-3320
Sewer Problems	671-3099
Shopping Cart Hotline.....	671-5080
Sleep Train Pavilion	
Hotline.....	363-5701
Information.....	676-8742
Street Light Outages Hotline	671-3213
Street Sweeping	671-3448
Street Trees.....	671-3444
Traffic Signal Malfunctions.....	671-3132
Willow Pass Center.....	671-3423