



Quarterly Newsletter from Mayor Joe Palla – November 2009

Dear friends and neighbors,

As 2009 winds down, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the past year. Despite the global recession and the impacts it has had on local government, your City Council and City Staff have been hard at work to keep things moving in a positive direction. It is my privilege to update you on our progress over the last year.

Each year your City Council adopts goals and objectives to help steer us through our decision making process. The goals & objectives for this year have been to:

- Promote Economic Development in order to create an environment where residents can live, work, and play.
- Establish the Financial Stability of City government in order to provide reliable, sustainable services to the community.
- Support City staff in order to provide Excellent Service to the community.

With the guidance of these goals and objectives, your City Council, as well as City staff, have strived to do all we can to achieve them. As I look back, I am proud of all the hard work and effort the City has put into achieving these goals and objectives.

As you may know, the City Council has eight Subcommittees, which include the Airport, Finance, General Administration, Planning/CDA, Police, Public Works, joint City/Fire District, and joint City/School District. These subcommittees meet monthly, are open to the public, and residents are encouraged to attend. A few of the numerous accomplishments seen at the Subcommittee level include:

- Entered into a lease agreement with NorCal Skydive.
- Made considerable progress in outlining a plan that would make the Airport financially self sustained. In addition, we hosted the first annual Open House event at the Airport.
- Oversaw the Outside Agency grant program, funding 11 outside agencies; all programs will provide activities and programs of significant value to the community.
- Developed and launched the new City web site.
- Began work on a new City wide volunteer program. Please contact Briana Herpst, Administrative Specialist, at City Hall, if you would like more information about this exciting program.
- Updating Animal Control Codes and establishing an Enforcement Program, including handling dog licenses locally.
- Continued efforts to obtain grant funding to improve Cloverdale Creek.
- Completed installation of new restrooms at Vintage Meadows Park.
- Completed re-stripping bicycle lanes on arterial streets throughout the city.
- Continued making progress on the 4-corner projects. The History Center is complete; the new Fire Station is anticipated to be complete in December; the new Performing Arts Center is continuing with design plans and construction should begin soon; and the City continues efforts to identify a suitable location for an updated Police Station.
- Adopted an updated General Plan, including a defined Urban Growth Boundary which is scheduled to go before voters in November 2010.
- Completed an updated Fireworks Ordinance.

City Staff has been busy in their various departments. From Administration, to Community Development, Police and Public Works, just some of the many accomplishments in addition to their work with the Subcommittees

include:

- Continue efforts to restructure and streamline city operations due to declining city revenues.
- Work continues on regional energy/environmental initiatives.
- Updated the 5-year forecasts for City major funds.
- Updated the utility payment processing system.
- Increased enforcement of nuisance code violations, including graffiti abatement, abandoned property maintenance, and abatement of blighted areas.
- Developed new marketing materials to help the City attract potential new businesses.
- Purchased 5.32 acres of the former Thyme Square Site and began work to beautify the site. Future public meetings regarding the use of the site will be planned.
- Completed three public workshops on the Station Area Plan, which will describe how the Cloverdale Depot (the northernmost terminus of the Sonoma - Marin Area Rail Transit [SMART]) will connect to Cloverdale's downtown in a pedestrian-friendly way.

During my time as Mayor, I have tried to keep my focus on collaborating for the good of the community. This has led to building a strong partnership with Cloverdale Unified School District. Through this partnership, we have worked together on several joint projects, including the recent upgrade of five Tennis Courts at Cloverdale High School. These courts are now available for community use. In addition, we launched the first annual free summer Movie Nights Downtown and formed the Economic Development Short Term Task Force.

This will be my last newsletter as your Mayor. It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your Mayor for 2009. Things have not always been easy and tough choices had to be made. But rest assured, your City Council and City staff are always working with the community's best interests in mind. There is no doubt that the current economic challenges are both impacting and concerning all of us. Like you, the City has been seriously impacted. With that said, I want you to know your City Council and City Staff remain committed to working through the financial challenges we face and will continue working hard until real long-term solutions are in place. The challenge within our General Fund is more than a spending issue. It is a reduced revenue issue. Simply put, we do not have enough revenue coming in to fund needed services. The last few years have been difficult budget years and we are not out of the woods yet. Despite all the cuts and reductions that already have been put in place, the City still faces a budget deficit of \$300,000 to \$400,000. The City Council will meet Monday, December 7, 2009, 6:30 P.M., at the Senior Center, to discuss the situation and consider a revised budget proposal. I encourage you to attend and encourage you to stay involved.

In closing, I want to personally thank Brianna Herpst, Administrative Specialist, for providing information for this newsletter. I am grateful to all City employees, residents, and businesses, for all you do individually and collectively to make Cloverdale an exciting and remarkable place to live. I remain committed to working for you and the City of Cloverdale. My very best wishes are with you and your family for a safe and joyous holiday season.

City Hall Office Hours

My last office hours at City Hall, as your Mayor, will be Monday, December 7, 2009, between 10:00 A.M. and 12:00 P.M. With that said, I will always be available by appointment. Please contact City Hall at 894-2521 to schedule an appointment.

Stay involved in your community. I hope to see you soon!