

PLANNER

WEDNESDAY

Chamber Board Meeting Noon. Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce Chamber Board meeting, 50 N. Second St., Rio Vista. Info: 374-2700 or <http://www.riovista.org>.

Ambassador's Committee Meeting 5:15-7 p.m. Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce Ambassador's Committee meeting, 1111 Webster St., Fairfield. Info: 425-4625 or <http://www.ffsc-chamber.com>.

COMING UP

Business Mixer 5:30 July 7. Vacaville Chamber of Commerce business mixer. Hosted by Seeno Hornes, 506 Pine Tree Court, Vacaville. Info: 448-6424 or <http://www.vacavillechamber.com>.

Ambassador's Meeting 8 a.m. July 10. Vacaville Chamber of Commerce Ambassador's meeting, Hampton Inn & Suites, 800 Mason St., Vacaville. Info: 448-6424 or <http://www.vacavillechamber.com>.

Introduction to Federal Contracting 3-5 p.m. July 10. The Solano College Small Business Development Center is offering an "Introduction to Federal Contracting" workshop. Info and registration: 428-7792.

Fairfield launching 'Buy Local' program

During difficult economic times, retail sales can become sluggish as consumers cut back their discretionary purchases. Of course, this impacts local governments' ability to fund services as retail sales tax receipts decrease when consumers stop buying.

Recently, most cities in California have seen a decrease in sales tax receipts because of the slowing economy. Locally, it's no secret that many Fairfield retail businesses are struggling with sales declines.

To help address this issue, the city is launching a "Buy Local" program to encourage residents to spend their shopping dollars in Fairfield. The city is hiring a local marketing company, Infuze Marketing, a local photographer and a printer to produce marketing materials to help promote the campaign.

This campaign is being modeled after similar campaigns across the country. The key messages will include how spending "in town" increases local em-



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ployment and will generate sales taxes that benefit the community by funding public services and facilities such as parks, police, fire and road crews.

As a key part of the campaign, staff is working with Fairfield retailers to develop special promotions for Fairfield residents who purchase products in Fairfield. In the future, look for "Buy Local" information in the envelope of your water statements, in city newsletters, on city Web sites and in advertisements in local media.

The city is also looking at ways to seek local bids and consider Fairfield companies when making purchasing decisions. Buying local

helps support many of the businesses that choose to locate in Fairfield.

We've been hinting about this news for a while now, and we can now confirm that the owners of Mankas Corner's Vintage Caffe restaurant have now signed a lease in the newly renovated Costanzo property at 721 Texas Street. The Italian-style deli will be called Canepa Deli and will offer a varied menu.

The city provided assistance through the Business Revolving Loan Fund program. Look for Canepa Deli to open in September or October.

Speaking of downtown, in response to comments from businesses and property owners, staff is also revising the downtown facade improvement loan program. One idea is a demonstration block, in which the Fairfield Redevelopment Agency would fund the improvement of all the facades in a specific block.

The hope is that such a project might generate interest among other property

owners in property improvement.

Over the past two months, you may have noticed city staffers walking around the area with clipboards and cameras. The city is undertaking a comprehensive survey of conditions in the neighborhood.

Some of the items surveyed include building condition, vacant parcels and buildings, street and sidewalk conditions, street trees, parking, historic preservation and design issues associated with multi-family and second unit development.

Staff anticipates developing recommendations to guide future redevelopment and improvements in the downtown core neighborhood, particularly in light of recent investment by Solano County at the County Government Center campus.

These planning efforts may be facilitated by regional agencies' interest in encouraging development. Downtown has also been designated a "Priority Development Area" by the As-

sociation of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Bay Area's regional planning agency, and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the regional transportation planning agency.

Through the Priority Development Area Program, ABAG hopes to encourage new, higher density and more walkable urban communities in core areas near transit, reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.

In downtown Fairfield, the Priority Development Area focuses on local employment centers and the Capital Corridor train station in Suisun City. The regional agencies hope to use grants and planning funds to facilitate urban development.

Economic Notes is an update from Fairfield City Hall written by Brian Miller and Karl Dumas of the Fairfield Planning and Development Department. They can be contacted at 428-7461 or e-mail at kdumas@ci.fairfield.ca.us or bkmill@ci.fairfield.ca.us.