



UNITED NEIGHBORHOODS OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY'S

Neighbor to Neighbor

VOLUME 7: NUMBER 3 – MARCH 2004

CALENDAR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday Mar 3
7:00 pm

UNSCC Alma Office
525 W. Alma Ave.
San Jose

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday Mar 17
6:45 pm

UNSCC Alma Office

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday Apr 7
7:00 pm

UNSCC Alma Office

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday May 5
7:00 pm

UNSCC Alma Office

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday May 19
6:45 pm

UNSCC Alma Office

The Board Meeting
agenda is posted on our
website

UNSCC 2004 GOALS

On Wednesday, January 21, the UNSCC member organizations met at the first Advisory Council Meeting of 2004 and developed the following goals:

- Develop stronger relations with elected officials
- Improve UNSCC communication and dissemination of information
- Reestablish UNSCC's financial stability
- Produce the annual fall conference
- Develop and promote strong relationships with community businesses

The UNSCC Board has been busy working on these goals. Here are some highlights:

UNSCC co-sponsored a "Candidates Night" on Feb 9, 2004. Assembly District 23 candidates debated at the Berryessa Community Center. Thanks go to Bill Hughes, the Berryessa Citizen's Advisory Council, and the Asian Law Alliance.

The UNSCC website is being reviewed and modified, and plans are being implemented for focus interest newsgroups, an online newsletter, and links for member organizations' websites and newsletters. Board members have been contacting political and business leaders for speakers throughout the year. For the March Advisory Council meeting, the speakers will be Jim Cunneen of the San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce and Beverley Bryant of the Home Builders Association of Northern California.

At our February Board Member Meeting, we discussed new approaches for increased funding, such as additional non-voting membership categories: neighborhood businesses, community organizations, and corporate businesses, and a possible partnership with a pool of interested businesses for funding.

Ken Henning chaired the first UNSCC Fall Conference committee meeting on February 12. The date of October 16 has been reserved, and board members are contacting political personalities for speakers. We will determine the final location in March.

The UNSCC Board is also working on developing new services for member organizations. Ideas being considered include Speaker Bureau, local neighborhood association newsletter archives, newsletter support services, webmaster discussion groups, and additional workshops (Traffic was completed in January, Grant Writing and Planning and Development Education are planned for future workshops).

UNSCC is meeting the challenging year ahead with energy and optimism. Come to our March Advisory Council on March 17 and help us shape our future!

525 W. Alma Avenue
San Jose, CA 95125
Phone: 408-286-8661
Fax: 408-286-8680
unsc@pacbell.net
www.unsc.org

UNITED NEIGHBORHOODS OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County is a coalition of neighborhood associations. Our mission is to promote the creation, preservation, and enhancement of healthy neighborhoods through education, resources, and outreach.

UNSCC DOES NOT ENDORSE POLITICAL CANDIDATES

Neighbor to Neighbor

THANK YOU, SUPPORTERS!

Thank you to the following people and businesses for supporting UNSCC with donations, volunteer hours, and advertising. If you would like to advertise in this newsletter, please contact UNSCC at unscc@pacbell.net or 408/286-8661.

FREE SHADE TREES

Your neighborhood group or public school can receive free shade trees from Our City Forest's Green Neighborhoods program!

For more information, call *Our City Forest* at (408) 99TREES (998-7337) to request a 1-page tree grant application. Or, visit our web site at <http://www.ourcityforest.org/>

HEALTH AND SAFETY FAIR

The Haven Neighborhood Association is holding a Health and Safety Fair for all Haven Association streets on May 22, 2004 from 9 am to 3 pm at Dana Rock Park and the surrounding area. There will be different booths set up for neighbors to obtain information on health and safety. Food and drink will be available, and there will be activities such as crafts, and games for children and adults. For more information, contact Antoinette Schoning or Barbara Woods at 408/281-0561 or 408/229-8446.

COMMUNITY GRANTS APPLICATION DEADLINE MARCH 6TH

The Resources for Families and Communities (RFC) 04-05 Community Grant cycle application deadline is Saturday, March 6, 2004. Applications are available to download at www.rfcommunity.org. Along with the application, organizations must also complete a Community Matrix, also available on our website.

The focus of the 2004-2005 grants will be projects that promote opportunities for families to interact in a manner that will enhance the family, the neighborhood, and the community.

For more information, contact Michelle at mjeung@rfcommunity.org or 408/521-5110 ext. 1003.

Resources for Families and Communities
Community Development Program
480 N. First Street #200
San José, CA 95112
408.521.5110



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Neighbor to Neighbor

PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC PROPOSES RATE CUT

By Tom Bottorff, PG&E Vice President of Customer Service

PG&E recently announced an agreement with major customer groups to lower rates by more than \$850 million and flow the bulk of the decrease to California businesses. If approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), the proposed rate cut would provide PG&E customers with rate reductions ranging from 4.4 percent to over 16%.

Under the agreement, small business customers would see their rates reduced by about 12% to 14.8 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh). Medium sized businesses would see their rates lowered to 14 cents per kWh, a drop of nearly 10%. PG&E's largest customers would see their rates drop by more than 16%, to 8.6 cents per kWh. Residential customers would see rate reductions averaging about 4.4%.

As proposed by the settling parties, California businesses would receive the larger rate reductions because business customers were forced to shoulder most of the cost increases during the energy crisis. With costs coming down, the parties reasoned that the bulk of the reductions should flow to those who paid the higher costs.

The over \$850 million in electric rate reductions assumes that the following changes in the utility's total electric revenue requirement are approved by the CPUC:

- Reduction in revenues resulting from implementation of the approved bankruptcy settlement agreement that ended the rate freeze and the energy crisis surcharges.
- Settlement of PG&E's 2003 General Rate Case as proposed by PG&E and other parties (final approval is currently pending before the CPUC).
- Reduction in the size of PG&E's Regulatory Asset by approximately \$170 million, as provided in the bankruptcy settlement agreement. The reduction reflects pending refunds and claim offsets from power generators and energy suppliers, including the settlement with El Paso Corporation.
- Amortization of approximately \$100 million arising from a reduction in the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) 2004 revenue requirement, due to DWR overcharges in 2001-2002.

Only customers who buy their power from PG&E will be seeing the proposed reduction in rates. Customers who buy their power from another source will see increases to cover various service and reliability improvements.

If the CPUC approves the rate agreement at its February 26th meeting, businesses would begin seeing the lower rates in their March bills. The rate reduction will be made retroactive to January 1, 2004, as provided by the bankruptcy settlement agreement.

For more information about PG&E's rate reduction plan, call the Business Customer Center at 1-800-468-4743.

Proposed new PG&E electric rates

Customer Class	Current Average Rates (¢/kWh)	Proposed Average Rate (¢/kWh)	Percent Reduction
Residential	13.13	12.55	4.4%
Small Business	16.82	14.83	11.9%
Medium Business	15.53	14.04	9.6%
Agriculture	13.26	11.27	15.0%
Streetlights	17.40	14.72	15.4%
E-19	13.97	12.48	10.7%
E-20	11.90	10.36	12.9%
Transmission	10.25	8.55	16.5%
Primary	12.12	10.63	12.3%
Secondary	13.62	12.20	10.4%
Average Bundled Rate	13.90	12.67	8.8%

Neighbor to Neighbor

BAY AREA REGIONAL RIDESHARE PROGRAM

The Bay Area Regional Rideshare Program helps create and implement transportation programs at workplaces. For more information on transportation programs or to set up a program where you work, contact Kurt Overmeyer at 510/273-2061, kovermeyer@rides.org.

Below is a calendar of transportation-related events for 2004:

March

Clean Air Champions Nominations (Mar. 1-Apr. 30)
Bay Area Air Quality Mgmt. District (BAAQMD)
Luna Salaver, 415/749-5196, www.baaqmd.gov

April

Earth Day (April 22)

ACT Regional Conf. San Francisco (Apr. 22-23)
Bridging the Gaps: Solutions for Improved Mobility
Northern California and Inland ACT chapters
www.actweb.org

May

Spare the Air Employer Signup
BAAQMD
Judi Goldblatt, 510/273-2091, www.sparetheair.org

Clean Air Month
American Lung Association
650/994-5864, www.lungusa.org

California Bike Commute (May 17-21)

National Employee Health & Fitness Day (May 19)
National Association for Health & Fitness
716/583-0521, www.physicalfitness.org

June

Spare the Air Season Begins
BAAQMD
Judi Goldblatt, 510/273-2091, www.sparetheair.org

National Trials Day (June 5)
American Hiking Society
Jane Thompson, 301/565-6704,
www.americanhiking.org

July

Clean Air Champions Announced
BAAQMD
Luna Salaver, 415/749-5196, www.baaqmd.gov

Watch for Spare the Air Alerts
BAAQMD, 415/749-4900, www.sparetheair.org

August

Watch for Spare the Air Alerts
BAAQMD, 415/749-4900, www.sparetheair.org

September

Deadline for the "Bay Area's Best Workplaces for Commuters" List (September 17)
U.S. EPA
Robin Snyder, 202/343-9288, www.bwc.gov

Pollution Prevention Week (September 20-26)
Department of Toxic Substances Control, Pollution Prevention & Technology
Robert Ludwig, rludwig@dtsc.ca.gov,
www.dtsc.ca.gov/pollutionprevention

Watch for Spare the Air Alerts
BAAQMD, 415/749-4900, www.sparetheair.org

October

California Rideshare Week (October 4-8)

National Walk Our Children to School Day (Oct. 6)
919/962-2358, www.walktoschool.com

"Bay Area's Best Workplaces for Commuters" List Released (October 21)
U.S. EPA
Robin Snyder, 202/343-9288, www.bwc.gov

November

"Spare the Air Tonight" Wintertime Campaign (thru January 2005)
BAAQMD, 415/749-4900, www.sparetheair.org

December

Lower Your Payroll Taxes and help employees cut commute costs by offering commuter benefits
Regional Rideshare Program, Call 511
www.511.org

Neighbor to Neighbor

ENERGIZING COMMUNITIES AND REDUCING SPRAWL

from the Transportation And Land Use Coalition (TALC)

Registration is now open for TALC's 7th Annual Summit, set for Saturday, March 13th from 9:30 am – 2:00 pm at the Laney College Forum in Oakland. Senator Barbara Boxer will be the keynote speaker, and the \$10 registration fee includes a continental breakfast and a box lunch.

The Bay Area has traditionally subsidized sprawl development, but that may be changing. Now MTC, the regional transportation agency, may condition funds for transit expansion on supportive growth plans, and may give funds to cities to plan for smarter growth. TALC's major effort for 2004 is to build support for smart regional policies, and the Summit is a way to learn about these issues and help plan successful campaigns.

In addition to Senator Barbara Boxer's speech, Summit activities include Coalition speakers, multimedia presentations, as well as strategy and training sessions. Session subjects include land use, transportation, TALC's five-year goals, a Safe-Routes-to-School program, negotiating with developers, and lobbying elected officials. Participants will be able to meet at the end of the day with others from their county or sub-region to discuss local campaigns.

TALC is a partnership of over 90 groups working for communities that provide all residents with transportation choices and affordable housing. The coalition analyzes county and regional policies, works with community groups to develop alternatives, and coordinates grassroots campaigns.

For more information:

Website: www.transcoalition.org

Email: info@transcoalition.org

Phone: 510-740-3150

Fax: 510-740-3131

Address: 405 14th St., #605, Oakland, CA 94612

TAX BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES

If you have a child with a severe learning disability, such as AD/HD or other physical, mental or emotional impairment, you may qualify for tax benefits. Because tax laws are complex, and many tax preparers often do not have occasion to use these unique tax benefits, families are at risk of losing refunds worth many thousands of dollars. It's likely that 15-30 percent of families with a disabled child have one or more unclaimed tax benefits.

The IRS provides free booklets that cover many relevant topics. The titles listed below may be ordered by calling the IRS toll-free number: (800) 829-3676. Generally, taxpayers may order up to three copies of any publication or form.

- IRS Publication 17: Your Federal Income Tax
- IRS Publication 502: Medical and Dental Expenses
- IRS Publication 503: Child and Dependent Care Expenses
- IRS Publication 501: Exemptions, Standard Deduction and Filing Information
- IRS Publication 596: Earned Income Tax Credit

Other links to the IRS and the American Bar Association Section on Taxation can be found through the following website:
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=773>.

SPOTLIGHT ON PLASTICS

Not all plastics are recyclable. Only three types of plastics can go into the recycling cart in San Jose:

- Containers labeled 1 through 7 inside the triangle that appears on the bottom
- Plastic bags that are stuffed together inside a larger bag
- Styrofoam, such as packing "peanuts" or food containers that have been rinsed

Check your recycling guide for a list of recyclable plastic items or visit www.sjrecycles.org for more information about plastics recycling in San Jose.

General Members

Alma Neighborhood Association
Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council
Blossom Valley Neighborhood Association
Buena Vista Neighborhood Association
Burbank Community Association
Campus Community Association
Canoas Garden Neighborhood Association
Casa Loma-Loma Chiquita Neighborhood Assn.
Cory Neighborhood Association
Crescent Park Neighborhood Association
Cuesta Park Neighborhood Association
Eden Neighborhood Association
Edenvale Roundtable Community Association
Friends of Santa Teresa Park
Goodyear/Mastic Neighborhood Association
Guadalupe/Washington Neighborhood Assn.
Horace Mann Neighborhood Association
Independence High Neighborhood Association
Julian/St. James Neighborhood Association
Lakewood Village Neighborhood Association
McLaughlin Corridor Neighborhood Association
Monta Loma Neighborhood Association
North Willow Glen Neighborhood Association
Northside Neighborhood Association
Olinder Neighborhood Association
Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association
Plata Arroyo East Gate Neighborhood Association

Rancho Narvaez Neighborhood Association
Redwood Estates Community Club
Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
Rosemary Gardens Neighborhood Association
San Jose Downtown Residents Association
Santa Teresa Citizen Action Group
San Tomas Neighborhood Association
Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association
Silver Leaf Neighborhood Association
South University Neighborhood
Spartan Keyes Neighborhood Association
Sunnyhills Neighborhood Association
Sunnyvale Neighbors of Arbor Including LaLinda
Sunrise Valley Neighborhood Association
Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association
University Neighborhoods Coalition
Warner Heights Neighborhood Association
West of Fourth Street Neighborhood Group
Willow Glen Neighborhood Association

Associate Members

Almaden Winery Neighborhood Association
College Park Neighborhood Association
Dobem Community Action Team
Eden Hill Neighborhood Association
Fairview Drive Neighborhood Association
Glenview Drive Neighborhood Association
Haven Neighborhood Association

Hyde Park Neighborhood Association
IOOF/San Ysidro Neighborhood Association
Japantown Neighborhood Association
Joaquin Miller Neighborhood Association
LeyVa Community Action Team
Lyndale Neighborhood Association
Mayfair Improvement Initiative
Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Association
Newhall Neighborhood Association
North Murray Neighborhood Association
Palm Haven Restoration Neighborhood Assn.
Park Pleasant Neighborhood Association
Primrose Neighborhood Association
Rogers Lane Neighborhood Association
Rose Garden Neighborhood Preservation Assn.
San Miguel Neighborhood Association
Santa Teresa Foothills Neighborhood Association
Seven Trees Neighborhood Group
Shasta/Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association
Southgate Neighborhood Association
South Skyline Association
Summerhill Neighborhood Association
Sunland Park Civic Improvement Association
Tamien Neighborhood Association
West Evergreen Neighborhood Association
Westside Property Homeowners' Association

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