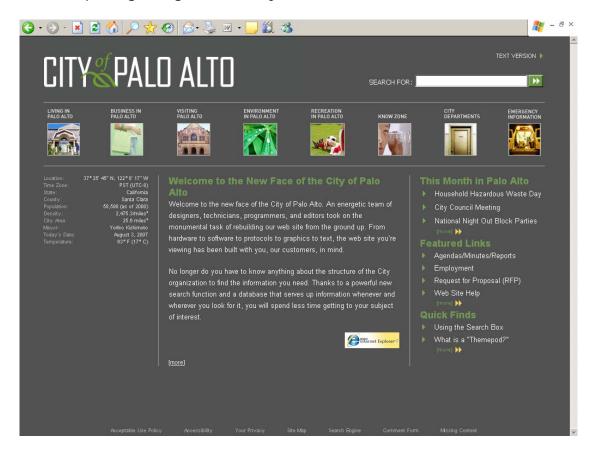
## FRANK'S WEEKLY MEMO

### **City Unveils New Website**

This week, we unveiled the new City website at <a href="www.cityofpaloalto.org">www.cityofpaloalto.org</a> An energetic team of designers, technicians, programmers, and editors took on the monumental task of rebuilding our web site from the ground up.

From hardware to software to protocols to graphics to text, the web site has been built with our customers in mind. No longer is it required to know anything about the structure of the City organization to find the information needed. Thanks to a powerful new search function and a database, less time will be spent getting to the subject of interest.



To address the need for better search results and easier content updating, a Content Management System (CMS) was implemented. This new CMS allows staff to easily update their content, create content once and syndicate across the site, mark content for expiration, and reuse content. Moreover, after more than a decade with the same design, a graphic designer was selected



to give a bold, high class and high touch look and feel to the site. Photography plays a large role, exemplifying a very personal, warm and helpful tone.

As with any kind of rebuild, information has been moved. However, through performing usability studies and condensing many pages of information into more manageable bites, it is expected that the most-requested information is easy to find and even the most obscure fact is discoverable through our search engine. In addition, new functionality (such as interactive forms for the Police Department and Libraries) was created to achieve better efficiencies and communication with our constituents.

The City of Palo Alto's new web site is an exciting accomplishment and we look forward to its natural evolution.



#### YOUR LINK TO THE COMMUNITY Helping Others Every Day

Join the ranks of more than 200 community-minded residents who have become Family Resources Ambassadors: folks who share information about the many resources available to our community, helping families find services they need every day. The Ambassador Development Program offers information about resources, and tools for finding information more effectively. Ambassadors meet and learn from service providers and community leaders. Participants represent a cross section of the community's diverse constituency, creating opportunities for appreciation, understanding, and learning from one another as well. "This is a great program! It has been tremendous! I know so much more about this city and its services!" - Graduate Ambassador

If you are interested in sharing information & connections that can address the daily needs of others, join the Ambassador Development Program 07-08. Participants meet once a month for 6 months, October thru March. Meetings will be the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. at the Cubberley Community Center.

To reserve your place, call Erwin Gonzales at (650) 329-2619 or e-mail to erwin.gonzales@cityofpaloalto.org

### Be a Part of National Night Out on August 7

National Night Out celebrates its 24<sup>th</sup> annual nationwide event on Tuesday, August 7, 2007. It is designed to strengthen neighborhood spirit and unity, raise crime prevention awareness, and develop partnerships between the City and the community at every level. Neighborhood and homeowner associations, PANDA members and Neighborhood Watch groups will be hosting block parties as a way for people to meet one another, have fun and explore how to work together to improve the safety and quality of their neighborhood all year long.

Each year at this time, the City of Palo Alto encourages neighborhoods to organize block parties, a dessert party, ice cream social or barbecues to promote neighborhood unity.

Groups of City of Palo Alto elected officials and employees, including police and fire department staff, will visit the block parties between 6:30 p.m. -8:30 p.m.

### **Library Friends Group Makes Generous Donation**

At the Friends of the Palo Alto Library (Friends) July board meeting, the Library's grant requests for this fiscal year were approved for a total of \$95,500. The money will be used to pay for library programs and events, and purchase books, eBooks and DVDs for the collection. These grants are in addition to the \$67,000 the Friends previously approved towards a partnership with the City to add \$167,000 to the collection budget this year.

"The ongoing support of the Friends has been tremendous," says Library Director Diane Jennings. "Through our partnership and shared goal of improving the Library, we've been able to enhance our service in many ways. The Friends not only provide funding to enrich the collection, but also support innovative pilot programs. I am very appreciative of the hard work Friends volunteers put in to raise money for the Library."

The Friends of the Palo Alto Library is a non-profit organization that raises much of its funds by selling thousands of used books, magazines and more at monthly book sales. Most of the material is donated from individuals, estates and companies. Book sales are scheduled on the second weekend of the month at the Cubberley Community Center at 4000 Middlefield Road. The next sale will be held August 11-12. For more information, visit the Friends' website at www.friendspaloaltolib.org.

# City Wins State Planning Award

The Planning Department received word this week that the California Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) selected the City's GIS Parcel Report for Single Family Homes project as this year's winner for Innovative Use of Technology. The award will be presented at the CCAPA Conference that will be held in San Jose in the fall. The project automatically qualifies for entry at the national level competition to be held during the next year. Gloria Humble, a Senior Planner, conceived the idea and was primarily responsible for developing the report format.

The GIS Parcel Report for Single Family Homes is a one-page report that is generated with a click of the button that includes a map of the property and crucial pieces of information about the property including development standards for the property and its site characteristics. The parcel reports can be printed for the public at the Development Center or emailed to customers. The reports save an enormous amount of staff time by eliminating research time for technicians and planners. The reports have been extremely well received by the public. Architects and development professionals have lauded the City for providing information that is fast and accurate. The report has had a positive effect on the public's perception of the City and the effort it has made to use technology to better serve them. Congratulations to the Planning Department.