

California Downtown News



President's message

by Craig Smith, Napa Downtown Association

The California Downtown Association conference, which ended as October began, was a home-run hit, according to feedback from those in attendance. The annual conference is the one membership benefit for which the association is best known, and whether you've been before or not, I urge you attend next year. It was at a California Downtown Association conference that I first heard of PBIDs, and met both folks who had established PBIDs in their downtowns, as well as the people who ultimately helped Napa establish its PBID. That PBID has added \$2 million to our coffers to-date, with another \$2 million coming over the next five years. That alone justified my attendance at conferences for years to come.

However, all is not lost if you didn't attend. Catherine Smith, the California Downtown Association Executive Director, is exploring webinars, and we hope to have the Top Five sessions from this year's conference available for you by the end of the year. It won't be the same as being there, but it will be the same great content, delivered to you at your convenience. How great is that?

On a different subject, you are probably scrambling to dot holiday I's and cross Christmas T's, so that your downtown business is as good as it can be. The first quarter in Napa was awful. The past six months have generally been much better, and made up for January through March. As we all know, regardless of how business has been so far this year, it's ultimately all about the fourth quarter.

Business is being done differently these days. For example, we are seeing an increasing number of businesses team up with their neighbors. Instead of holding a 'sale,' folks are holding open houses, with three or four businesses participating. Bring a tasting room and a good restaurant to your store, and you have two thirds of the ingredients for a casual fashion show, art exhibit or a solid in-store sale. It gives the consumer something to do as well as a shopping experience, and has been well received.

More than just a holiday phenomena, it's an example of how doing business in downtowns is changing. Kraig Kojian from Downtown Long Beach Associates co-facilitated a session at the conference with Brad Segal of Progressive Urban Management Associates. They used Long Beach as an example of a downtown that, like many downtowns, has experienced a lot of change over the years. Business is being done differently and the Redevelopment Agency will sunset in a few years, yet the management district has changed little over the 40 or so years it has been in place. Long Beach recognized that it was time to do some strategic planning to adjust for the changes, and to chart the course for the future of the organization. So far, the results have been very positive.

But that's another article. Happy holidays, see you Downtown!



Downtown Association

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Executive Director's Message

Our Annual Conference in Sacramento was a great success, with nearly 200 attendees representing downtowns and business districts across the state. I hope you found the sessions to be engaging and relevant, and if you haven't already, be sure to complete an online conference evaluation to help us continually improve our conference program. Also, if you missed out on the Conference, be sure to visit www.californiadowntown.com to download some of the presentations.

Congratulations to Downtown Long Beach Associates, City of Palm Springs, City of Lancaster and City of Coachella in partnership with RBF Consulting for winning the prestigious Crystal Eagle Achievement Award! Award recipients were recognized for establishing innovative, revitalization-focused programs in their downtown areas. If you haven't already visited the California Downtown Association [Facebook page](#), be sure to log in and take a look at photos of Crystal Eagle Achievement Award recipients as well as photos taken over the course of the Conference.

You may have noticed the California Downtown Association recently adopted a new tagline – "Helping Business Districts Succeed." The tagline is part of a larger internal and external communications plan set out for the coming year; a main focus of the plan is to highlight California Downtown Association's mission to be the state leader of revitalization for California downtowns and commercial business districts.

We need your help to accomplish many of the California Downtown Association communications goals! One of the greatest potential tools to our members is the power of information exchange via California Downtown Association's newsletter, website, listserv and Facebook page. Please update us regularly with your agency's happenings, success stories and upcoming events.

At the California Downtown Association Board of Directors meeting held at the Conference, the Board unanimously voted to support [Proposition 22](#). Proposition 22, the Local Taxpayer, Public Safety, and Transportation Protection Act, would amend the constitution to make it even more difficult for the state to borrow various types of local revenues. The initiative is on the November 2, 2010 ballot. You may recall that Proposition 1A, which passed overwhelmingly in 2004, was the first step by local government (cities, counties and special districts) to protect their revenues from the state raids. Proposition 22 is building on the concept that local revenues should stay with local services.

Led by the League of California Cities and an alliance of local government groups, the California Downtown Association leadership felt it was essential to join the Proposition 22 alliance in support of municipalities and redevelopment agencies that are part of the association's membership and dependent on local revenues. Chris McKenzie, Executive Director of the League of California Cities, was quoted as saying that the current system is "unsustainable, and we want to make sure that local services are not sacrificed because of the inability of state leaders to manage the state budget."

Here at California Downtown Association headquarters, your association management company, Smith Moore & Associates, was recently certified as a Sacramento Sustainable Business! We're doing our part to be environmentally friendly via solid waste reduction and pollution prevention. Go green!

The Upswing of the Economic Downturn

by Rebecca Jenks, Third Avenue Village Association



Third Avenue Village in the heart of Chula Vista is embarking upon a new era of dining, retail and business success.

The Third Avenue Streetscape Master Plan (TASMP) is underway and will soon mean a complete revamp of Third Avenue, making it more pedestrian friendly, easy to navigate and attractive to all the businesses, locals and visitors who come to experience the true heart of Chula Vista. Third Avenue Village Association is working closely with the City of Chula Vista to ensure that this plan moves swiftly and keeps the interest of our vision for the Village in mind.

In conjunction with the TASMP, TAVA has developed the Village Sign Program. New pedestrian and vehicular signs as well as directories have been designed by Graphic Solutions and will soon appear on and around Third Avenue, helping the public navigate the Village. These signs will feature the new Third Avenue Village color scheme and will aid in the cohesive look of the Village streetscape.

In keeping with its goal to create a pedestrian friendly environment for all, TAVA has instituted a Dog Friendly Program throughout the Village. 10 dog bag dispensers will soon be installed along Third Avenue for the convenience of pet owners when walking their dogs through the Village. Hand painted with paw prints and a different dog breed on each box, these dispensers add character as well as convenience.

Hanging flower baskets will soon appear at key intersections along Third Avenue, heightening the sense of neighborhood fancy the Village evokes. Installed and maintained by the TAVA Grounds Crew, these baskets will contain colorful, drought resistant flowers.

TAVA is taking this economic slowdown as an opportunity to recreate and enhance our Village by initiating these efforts as well as the many more that we have planned. This visual and viable appearance will illustrate to our community and future development that "The Village" is the place to be.

Crystal Eagle Achievement Award Winners

by Howard Levine, Grass Valley Downtown Association

The opportunity to share success is always rewarding. It is extremely important to recognize and understand all of the work necessary to complete a project, thus the Crystal Eagle Achievement Award was created. The 2010 Crystal Eagle Achievement Award recipients are examples of the “ones in the trenches” demonstrating talent, executing ideas and bringing those ideas to fruition with stellar results.



Downtown Long Beach Associates: Ali Raza Kahani, Craig Kojian and Steve Sheldon

The Crystal Eagle Award for Marketing was awarded to Downtown Long Beach Associates for its iPhone and Android application. The application is easily downloadable to smart phones and gives Long Beach visitors the opportunity to access information about local events, where to park, shop and eat, and a variety of other services. Downtown Long Beach Associates partnered with Geoffiti to provide affordable and friendly information to the growing mobile network market.

The City of Palm Springs was awarded the Crystal Eagle Achievement Award for Physical Improvement in recognition of its efforts to refurbish alleyways and rebuild recycling areas. This program included refurbishing or rebuilding the recycling areas, adding compactors and site sculpture. The project has had such a positive response that it morphed into a major façade improvement program upgrading storefronts through the core area.



City of Lancaster: Ron Smith, Vice Mayor and Heather Kennedy

The Special Events & Promotions Crystal Eagle Achievement Award went to the City of Lancaster for its event titled, “Grand Prix of Lancaster.” The event took nearly a year

to plan and came to fruition as a fast, fun and high-revved Go Kart Grand Prix. The race including VIPs kids, and of course, professional go kart racers. The first year brought in more than 20,000 attendees. The thrills, challenges and outcomes got the City of Lancaster to the finish line with a huge and powerful demand for a rematch this year.



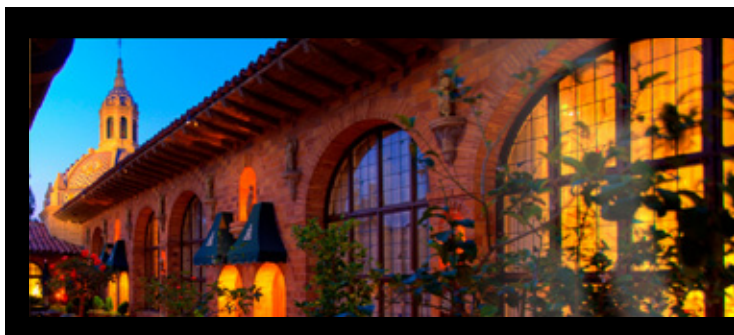
City of Coachella/RBF: Margaret Bulat

The City of Coachella partnered with RBF Consulting in developing a strategic plan for the Pueblo Viejo Revitalization Plan, which was honored with the Crystal Eagle Achievement Award for Planning. The community wide effort included a team of stakeholders, local businesses, community members, Southern California Association of Governments and SunLine Transit Agency. Goals to maintain historical charm, expand the civic center presence with a variety of uses, encourage a vibrant street scene, and develop strong and successful merchants were set as part of this plan to help guide the community for the foreseeable future.

These are just a few highlights that we were fortunate enough to see through the California Downtown Association's Crystal Eagle Achievement Award entries. Other applications were considered as well and gave the committee some tough choices to make. In the future, the California Downtown Association will endeavor to expand the categories for awards and make the process available to communities to showcase their project successes. We hope that you are working to finish up a project to submit for next year's Crystal Eagle Award!



City of Palm Springs: Tammy Perezchica, City Manager, David Ready and Diana Shay



SAVE THE DATE!

California Downtown Association's
Annual Conference

Oct. 12-14, 2011

Reduce Event Costs and Build Relationships

Janice Penner, Executive Director, Riverside Downtown Partnership

Everyone agrees that hosting events is a great way to animate downtown and the demand for events continues to grow. However, in today's tight economy we're all looking at how to do more with less.

The Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) decided that one way to do more with less was to produce fewer events itself and instead sponsor or partner with other organizations for downtown events. For many organizations even a small sponsorship of \$500 can make a difference in the success of their event. And by doing fewer events, RDP isn't competing with nonprofits for scarce sponsorship dollars. By using the money for sponsorships, the money that RDP would otherwise spend on one event can be used for several and bring more people downtown.

Adding on to another organization's event can also work well. One example was the California Riverside Ballet's attempt to beat the Southern California record for the most participants in a re-enactment of Michael Jackson's Thriller. The Ballet planned the event for a Saturday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in front of Riverside's historic County Court House, ideal for staging a dance but several blocks from shops and restaurants on Main Street. RDP planned pre-event activities on the Main Street core from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., including Michael Jackson tribute music, ghoulish face-painting by a local high school theater group, and Tribble races from the Star Trek Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum. RDP also actively promoted both the Ballet's event and the pre-event activities, generating media attention ranging from a spot on Channel 4 News to newspaper articles and blogs. RDP's cash outlay was approximately \$800 for 500 plus people on the Main Street core and more than 1,200 participating in the Thriller event later, and a very pleased partner.

Leveraging existing relationships can also help reduce event costs. Like many Park and Recreation Departments, Riverside's has equipment such as a mobile stage, inflatable jumpers, outdoor movie screens and more for their own programming. RDP sponsors several Park and Recreation events and in return, negotiates the use of its equipment for RDP events – RDP pays staff costs and credits Park and Recreation as a sponsor. Use of their equipment saves hundreds of dollars in rental fees that can be put toward the event itself.



Cities are strapped for cash these days and while the City of Riverside is a strong supporter of events and activities, its sponsorship funds get tapped out very quickly. Rather than asking for actual cash, RDP instead asks for sponsorship in soft costs, waiving permit fees and more importantly, covering the liability insurance for the event under the City's self-insurance program. Since the majority of the events are relatively small (less than 1,000 attendees with the exception of two large outdoor concerts of 5,000 attendees or so) and family oriented, the risk is minimal for the City.

All of the above examples are relatively simple ways to reduce event costs and strengthen existing relationships at the same time.

Calendar of Events

November

- 1-4: California Chapter American Planning Association Annual Conference
- 10: California Preservation Foundation Workshop I, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- 13: Elegant Evening Downtown, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. (Downtown Paso Robles Main Street Association)
- 13: Holiday Open House, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Grass Valley Downtown) held every Friday through December 17
- 26: 43rd Cornish Christmas Celebration, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. (Grass Valley Downtown)
- 27: Downtown Hollister's 20th Annual Lights on Celebration Parade, 5 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. (Hollister Downtown Association)

December

- 3: Downtown Tree Lighting/Winterfest, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. (Vista Village Business Association)

Contribute to the next newsletter!

Submit your articles and topic ideas to ashley@californiadowntown.com by **Monday, January 10** to be featured in the winter edition of the newsletter.



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Downtown Businesses Celebrate 100 Year Anniversary

by Mark Paxton, Hollister Downtown Association

Change is the only constant in American business. But in Hollister, a remarkable number of businesses have embraced change – for 100 years or more.

Only about half of small businesses survive the first five years, according to the small business counseling firm SCORE. In this town of 37,000 people, six locally owned businesses are marking milestone anniversaries in 2010.

The businesses represent a diverse cross-section of American commerce, from insurance services to sporting goods, to building supplies, to automobile sales and service to civil engineering and even a funeral home.

Perhaps no company puts a face on the volatile changes that require businesses to adapt or die better than Tiffany Ford Motor Co.

Founded on April 22, 1910, the company was California's first Ford dealership. Located at the north end of Hollister, on the town's main drag, Tiffany Motors was born when its founder, E.W. Tiffany, went to San Francisco to take delivery of a Model T. While there, he was convinced to open a Ford agency in Hollister as well.

When Tiffany Ford first opened, trade-ins meant horses and buggies.

"My great-grandfather used to have to stay at customers' homes and teach people to drive," said Bob Tiffany, who is the fourth generation to guide the business.

The oldest business in Hollister's historic downtown predates the incorporation of Hollister, and even San Benito, the county for which Hollister is the administrative center. The "Open for Business" shingle went up in 1871.

Black-Cooper-Sander Funeral Home sits in a building with architecture that evokes California's adobes. A quiet, welcoming place located just a block off the main drag of San Benito Street, Black-Cooper-Sander is where John Sander plies his trade.

Change in the funeral services business may not be as obvious as the transition from horse-and-buggy, but it's there nonetheless.

Sander sees changing attitudes about death. Cremation is becoming more popular, which led Sander in 1987 to build a crematory. Advance planning is more common and people are more involved in making decisions about funeral arrangements.

Like Tiffany, Don Winn is the fourth generation of the Winn family to come to work each day to a building displaying the family name.

Winn, the smiling face of Winn and Co. Insurance, employs a staff of 20 providing comprehensive insurance services to the region.

Winn was quick to identify the biggest challenge his business has faced, an observation echoed by the other Century



Club business owners, as coping with economic downturns.

"Our success is tied to the success of our customers," Winn said. "Sometimes it is difficult to deal with these trends. We intend to continue to grow in our marketplace by designing excellent programs for our clients and by providing exceptional and friendly customer service."

Muenzer's Cyclery and Sporting Goods was founded by Joseph Muenzer in 1910. Today, his grandchildren, Jerry and Jan, can be found behind the counters. When the store opened, it was riding the newfound popularity of the bicycle, and motorcycles were part of the mix as well. The Great Depression was encouragement enough to diversify, and Muenzer's began doing sales and repairs of lawnmowers, sewing machines, "practically anything to make a dollar," Jan Muenzer Holthouse said.

But the biggest challenge was "surviving with a German surname during two World Wars, the Great Depression and earthquakes," Muenzer said. Today, it's competition from large chain stores and online shopping.

McKinnon Lumber Co. is said by its owners to be the oldest

Continues on next page

100 Years continued

business in Hollister, and tucked on more than a half-block downtown behind a Western-style façade, it genuinely looks its historic self. The business was originally established as A.P. Boyd Lumber Co. in 1869, and was sold to Archie D. McKinnon on Sept. 10, 1910, when its name changed to the one it wears today.

Since 1910, the size of the lot has been reduced, and the product line has expanded from just lumber to cement, hardware, paint and other building materials, according to owner John Barrett.

Barrett's staff of eight has had more than the current economic downturn to cope with. A local building moratorium slowed construction to a near standstill for much of the decade.

Making a business work for more than a century involves, first, "listening to your customers," Barrett said. Barrett and his staff dispense more than lumber, screws and nails. On any Saturday morning, do-it-yourselfers are at the counter getting advice and a few tips on project plans.

San Benito Engineering was established by Walter J. Hanna Sr. in 1910. Its services include mapping, surveying and, of course, engineering. San Benito Engineering is behind much of the infrastructure of San Benito County and environs.

Changes for civil engineers have been more than technological. Increased regulation and bureaucracy are a daily reality, according to Ann Hall.

Perhaps there's a reason so many businesses in Hollister have thrived through generations.



Hollister itself is no stranger to change. Historically a farming town, Hollister is poised at the southernmost fringe of Silicon Valley. When technology boomed, so did Hollister, and the town rapidly turned into an exurb. Big box stores arrived, presenting a new set of challenges for the historic downtown business district. Hollister is a Main Street community. Even many of those who arrived during the boom value the role of local business in the community.

Tiffany summed up the not-so-secret keys to success: "Perseverance, hard work, dedicated employees, a small community that is supportive, a strong product to sell, outstanding service and four generations that want to be in the car business!"

This Could Be Your Ad

Are you looking for a way to market your service or product?

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Quarter Page: \$300 one issue OR \$450 four issues
Half Page: \$450 one issue OR \$800 four issues
Full Page: \$850 one issue OR \$1,200 four issues

Download the ad insertion form for more information.

A graphic for the Downtown Sacramento Partnership. At the top is a logo consisting of three vertical bars in orange, green, and red. Below the logo, the word "downtown" is written in a large, blue, sans-serif font, with "SACRAMENTO PARTNERSHIP" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font underneath. To the right of the logo and text, the tagline "Building partnerships. Driving business. Creating experiences." is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. Below the text is a horizontal strip of four small, square images showing various scenes of downtown Sacramento: a crowd of people, a person in a yellow jacket, a person in a white shirt, and a person in a white shirt. At the bottom of the strip, the website address "www.downtownsac.org" is written in a white, sans-serif font.

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