



The Solano Avenue
Association

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President - Harry Pruyn
Solano Cleaning Center

Vice President - Sang L Rowand
Farmers Insurance Group Albany

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Mechanics Bank (Albany)

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Janet Snidow,
The Powder Box Salon

Tom Taylor, Art Thou Graphics

Allen Cain, Executive Director

April 27 2009

Mayor Marge Atkinson
Councilmember Farid Javandel
Councilmember Robert Lieber
Councilmember Peggy Thompson
Councilmember Joanne Wile

Albany City Hall
1000 San Pablo Avenue
Albany, California - 94706

Re: A Request for Funding

Dear Mayor and Members of the Albany City Council:

The Solano Avenue Association requests support funding from the city of Albany in the amount of \$15,000 to assist the Solano Avenue Association in its service to the Albany community at large.

As you know, the Association produces the Solano Avenue Stroll, an event described as a "mile long block party", attended by approximately 300,00 people per year. This event has put the Albany commercial strip on the map. As the largest event of its kind in Northern California, it requires care and attention to ensure that it runs smoothly and that the event participants and attendees have an exceptional experience.

The Solano Avenue Association accomplishes this year after year in part due to careful planning and execution. Most of the work is performed by volunteers. We have only one paid staff member, Allen Cain, our Executive Director. Attached are materials that describe our services to the community.

In addition to the Solano Avenue Stroll, the Solano Avenue Association produces other events to serve the community, scheduled strategically over the course of the year. Our event line-up includes the Pumpkin Party Festival in October; "Santa on Solano" a joint venture with the Albany Chamber of Commerce in December, and our Lunar New Year Celebration and Parade in February.

In addition the Solano Avenue Association provides a number of public services described in the attached document. One of the more significant services we provide is that we answer calls and email inquiries Tuesday through Friday, from the public and merchant community, providing a reliable contact point and source of information about the city of Albany and its commercial and residential opportunities.

This year's Solano Avenue Stroll will be our 35th. The theme this year is "*Come Together*". The event is invariably the second Sunday in September and the 2009 Solano Avenue Stroll will be September 13th.

We are continuing to "green" the event, and to every extent possible we will reduce, reuse and recycle. Even all eating utensils and plates will be biodegradable. Our vision is a *near zero waste event*.

We are also requesting a waiver of encroachment fees for all of the Association's events, and a provision of Paramedics and Police officials to be present at the Solano Stroll, from 10:00AM to 6:00PM, Sunday - September 13th 2009.

You can see how your dollars stretch to help us make Albany a great place to live, work, and play.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Allen Cain
Executive Director, Solano Avenue Association

Attachment (1)

The Solano Avenue Association Annual Program:

The Solano Avenue Stroll:

This is our flagship event, held the second Sunday in September since 1974!. This event subsidizes the below services, and represents a distinctive opportunity for Association Members to showcase their business to a crowd of over 300,000 Avenue Guests!

The Solano Avenue Directory:

The Solano Avenue Association publishes a color directory of our membership. We print 20,000 and hand-distribute 10,000 to the surrounding community.

The Solano Avenue Gift Certificate / Scrip Program:

We sell over fifty thousand dollars worth of gift certificates annually, that can be redeemed at over thirty-six locations on Solano Avenue.

The Solano Avenue Banners:

We install and maintain three sets of seasonal banners on the street poles.

The Solano Avenue Website and Email Group:

We administer a website with hits in the thousands. We have over four hundred people on our email tree, and send out promotions, news, and public safety warnings. Make sure your website is linked.

Lunar New Year Celebration in February:

The 2008 Parade was an absolute success; we have reconfigured the event to include over four hours of stage performances, food, and more! This is a joint venture with the Albany Unified School District.

Halloween on Solano:

This is a wonderful event that includes a magic show, a costume contest, and free snacks - enveloped by the ambiance of Ray's Pumpkin Patch. It is one of many ways that the Association gives back to the community at large.

Santa on Solano:

We hire entertainers, organize a window-decorating contest, and help decorate the Avenue. We bring (a free) Santa's workshop to Solano, in conjunction with the Albany Chamber of Commerce, to help us compete with the Jack London Square and Hilltop Mall's Santa(s).

We fight for the "Underdog":

We perform many behind-the-scenes activities including attending Albany and Berkeley Council and Commission meetings to preserve and enhance the business environment on Solano Avenue and within our community.

Not to mention: We coordinate with the Albany and Berkeley Police Departments to help maintain a safe environment on the Avenue, synchronize a volunteer trash pick-up campaign, and work with the SAA Membership to coordinate other functions on Solano Avenue.

