



City installs enhanced crosswalk signals

New signals eliminate the guesswork, improve pedestrian safety

Pedestrians in Elk Grove no longer have to guess how much time they need to cross an intersection after the City installed new “Countdown Crosswalk” signals this summer. A total of 31 signals were installed at intersections throughout Elk Grove.

The signals resemble a traditional “Walk-Don’t Walk” sign, but with a twist. When the flashing red hand symbol appears, numbers light up and count down the seconds of how much time the pedestrian has left to cross the street.

“These new signals will help pedestrians of all ages make an informed decision about when to cross the street,” said City Engineer Bob Lee. “We are optimistic that this technology will reduce accidents and make our city more pedestrian-friendly.”

While other cities throughout the Sacramento region have installed a few countdown crosswalk signals, Elk Grove is scheduled to retrofit all traffic signals in the City over the next three years. Elk Grove officials are confident that the signals will offer better protection for pedestrians throughout the City, especially in areas where children visit frequently, such as schools.

“We know that children are especially vulnerable when crossing a busy intersection, and protecting their safety is one of our top priorities,” said Councilman Jim Cooper. “This system will provide one extra layer of safety for the youngest pedestrians on our city streets.”



New countdown crosswalk signals let pedestrians know how much time remains for them to cross the street.

Elk Grove Launches New and Improved Website

Elk Grove has revamped the City's website, which now features an updated design, more information, and an easier-to-use format.

The new site, www.elkgrovecity.org, was unveiled in late July after City staff surveyed local residents about what features they wanted to add to the existing website.

The website now includes information on business licenses, building permits, economic development, road work, a calendar of events and City Council information.

Website visitors can also access "Community Links," which features information about local hotels, restaurants and entertainment.

"As our community continues to grow, we are committed to consistently providing the best, most accurate and up-to-date information about Elk Grove," said Mayor Pro Tempore Rick Soares. "For residents and businesses alike, Elk Grove's new website will provide all the information they need in a format easy to navigate and comprehend."

City Achieves Senior Housing Affordability with Vintage Laguna Senior Apartment Complex

Elk Grove seniors searching for affordable housing now have more options, thanks to the Elk Grove City Council. The Council approved a 156-unit affordable senior housing project at the Northwest corner of Laguna and Big Horn Boulevards, slated to open this fall.

The Vintage Laguna Senior Apartments contain single and double occupancy apartments. A single bedroom/single bath apartment will cost between \$513 and \$625. A two bedroom/two bath apartment will cost \$751.

The complex is within walking distance to retail, medical and dental offices, diagnostic services and the Kaiser Permanente primary care facility.

Elk Grove's City Council approved a financial package that includes loans, grants and waivers to finance the project. The financial assistance was made possible by using a special fund paid by developers to make affordable housing projects like this one possible.

"Elk Grove's proactive planning allows us to meet the diverse needs of our city," said Councilman Dan Briggs. "Our goal is to create workable, realistic solutions to benefit all residents."

City Economic Development Officials Urge California Businesses to "Experience Elk Grove"

Elk Grove partnered with the Elk Grove Chamber of Commerce to sponsor "Experience Elk Grove," an event that showcased the City's pro-business community.

With its affordable housing, abundant open spaces, a top notch school system and attractive land prices, Elk Grove was presented to prospective businesses by event coordinators, who explained why the City is a place "where business and quality of life meet."

Event participants interacted with Elk Grove business leaders who established successful ventures in the area, as well as took tours of the City to view potential business sites.

"Elk Grove is a premier place to live, work and play," said City Manager John Danielson. "It is our goal to consistently identify and implement sound economic strategies that will help our community continue to grow in a healthy and productive manner."



Message from the Mayor



As the summer heat slowly fades away, we begin looking forward to family trips to the pumpkin patch, jumping in leaf piles and gathering around the table for holiday dinners. Times like these remind me about the many benefits

of raising a family in Elk Grove. Perhaps more than any other season, fall in Elk Grove is the perfect opportunity to remind ourselves how fortunate we are to live in a city that is known for its excellent quality of life.

This fall's newsletter will update you about the good things that are happening in Elk Grove, and some of the ways we are addressing problems that affect our residents' lives.

We know you don't have time to attend every City Council meeting and read every article in the newspaper. That is why we are producing this quarterly newsletter – to give you a concise, informative update on the City's activities all year round. Please take a moment to read through this newsletter and learn the latest about your city. And, feel free to give us your feedback: on the newsletter, on the stories, or other issues that are important to you. Contact Elk Grove City Hall at 683-7111 or visit us at www.elkgrovecity.org.

We are here to serve you, and your comments and suggestions will help make Elk Grove even more attractive with each passing season.

Sophia Scherman
Elk Grove Mayor

Kids, seniors benefit from increased funding

City uses streamlined application process for new grants

More special-needs children will have the opportunity to ride horses and more senior citizens will be able to ride a new bus, thanks to federal grant money awarded to the City this year. Elk Grove was one of a handful of cities in the nation to apply for – and receive – the Community Development Block Grants using a unique application process.

Project R.I.D.E., an Elk Grove organization which teaches special-needs children how to ride horses, will be able to purchase several new horses with the grant funding. Their \$12,000 portion of the grant will help the organization improve the lives of special-needs children who learn life-long skills such as physical coordination, following directions and fostering relationships.

In addition, senior citizens will be able to utilize the services of a new bus at the Elk Grove Senior Center as a result of the grant funding. The bus will transport seniors to and from the Center and other activities, providing much-needed mobility for an important part of our city's population.

The City of Elk Grove used a streamlined application process with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to apply for the grants. Instead of following a typical months-long process, the City provided HUD with instant data to expedite the delivery of the funds. According to Elk Grove officials, it is a new technique used by only a handful of cities around the nation.

The new federal funding complements city funding for projects important to children and seniors. Already this year, the City has provided thousands of dollars in funding for affordable senior housing and children's programs.

To learn more about Community Development Block Grants, please call Beth Thompson at 361-8384.



The new Police Service Center is located next to City Hall at 8380 Laguna Palms Way.

Elk Grove opens new Police Service Center

Center fosters more citizen interaction with officers, better customer service

As our City grows, so does the potential for crime. That is why the Elk Grove Police Department – under the direction of Police Chief Ed Flint and Assistant Police Chief Ed Kelly – is utilizing new ways to ensure our neighborhoods remain safe.

The new Police Service Center on Laguna Palms Way, which opened its doors in June, will undoubtedly help serve and protect residents better. The 13,000 square foot center provides a workplace for nearly 100 officers, detectives, administrators and volunteers – all in an effort to serve and protect the City of Elk Grove better.

The center features a reception area, allowing residents to report non-urgent or ongoing problems and to have reports taken for crimes such as burglary, theft, and vandalism. Other important activities and programs that take place at the Police Service Center include Neighborhood/Business Watch, Curfew Sweeps, Kids' Safety Fair, National Night Out, Apartment Watch, Crime Prevention and Personal Safety Presentations and Park Watch.

Previously, the Elk Grove Police Department shared close quarters with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department. The new Police Service Center, more than three times as large as the space at the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, allows officers, detectives and volunteers to work more efficiently, and is also more accessible to the public.

The public meeting room is another incentive for community members to visit the Police Service Center. This room is available for community or educational association activities. The room also serves as a larger work area for volunteers to help police fight crime – the perfect example of community policing in action!

"The foundation of a strong community is grounded in its residents' safety, and public safety is our City government's top priority," said Mayor Sophia Scherman.

That is why our police force is working hard to ensure our residents enjoy safe streets, safe schools and safe neighborhoods – and the first way to achieve this is by having a Police Service Center close and accessible to the community that it serves!

The Elk Grove Police Service Center is open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Contact them at 478-8000.

Smoother roads this fall after much-needed summer repairs

Projects increase traffic flow, promote traffic safety

After Elk Grove incorporated in July 2000, City Council members promised to make road improvements a top priority after they inherited a network of roads in desperate need of repair. This summer, Elk Grove kicked off its first phase of major roadway enhancements by completing repairs to Laguna Boulevard and making ramp improvements on southbound West Stockton Boulevard from Highway 99 to Sheldon Road.

“This was a big step in making improvements to our road system in Elk Grove,” said City Engineer Bob Lee. “Our goal for the city is to be proactive with our road maintenance so we can provide our growing community the highest possible level of service.”

The Laguna Boulevard improvements included the addition of turn lanes and repaving the roadway. To help ensure the longevity and quality of these improvements, Elk Grove has utilized new road enhancement technology. The rubberized asphalt used in the Laguna Boulevard overlay reduces noise as cars pass by houses and businesses alongside the roadway and will last longer than traditional roadway technology.

“The innovative use of rubberized asphalt is neighborhood-friendly and provides a smoother ride for motorists,” said Lee. “This technology also is much more durable than other types of asphalt, thereby saving wear and tear on the roadway and extending the life of the pavement surface.”

Sheldon Road and Highway 99 roadway improvements included widening the ramp, adding a right turn lane and stripping and repaving the roadway. The City also made traffic signal improvements at the intersection of Sheldon Road and West Stockton Boulevard.

“These roadway improvements reduced traffic congestion and increase traffic flow throughout the city,” Councilman Mike Leary said. “It is just part of our unwavering commitment to make sure all those who travel in and out of Elk Grove can do so safely and efficiently.”

Elk Grove will continue work on its roadway improvements next year. In the summer of 2004, Elk Grove will begin renovation of Elk Grove Boulevard east of Highway 99, in an effort to make needed road improvements and continue easing traffic congestion in the City.



Road crews repave and widen the southbound West Stockton Boulevard exit from Highway 99 to Sheldon Road.



Laguna West Annexation Approved

City formally unites with Laguna West area on December 15

This September, the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Committee (LAFCO) approved the City's request to annex the Laguna West, Stonelake and Lakeside subdivisions. Laguna West will formally become a part of the City on December 15, increasing its population to nearly 100,000 and making Elk Grove the second largest city in Sacramento County.

City officials are excited that Laguna West residents will now be able to experience the many benefits of annexation. First, Laguna West residents will receive better police protection once the Elk Grove Police Department begins patrolling the area. The Elk Grove Police Department has .96 officers per 1,000 residents, compared to the .58 deputies per 1,000 residents Sacramento County Sheriff's Department offers. This translates into 13 new officers who will be making the streets of Laguna West safer.

Laguna West residents will also receive fair and equal representation on issues that affect the Elk Grove community as a whole. According to City officials, Laguna West can formally be a part of the community they have identified with from the beginning and help Elk Grove speak with one strong and united voice.

City officials are making final preparations for the annexation process, including finalizing details on how they will provide transportation, storm drainage and waste management for residents.

"We are very excited that residents of Laguna West will join our City since they have long identified themselves with Elk Grove," said City Manager John Danielson. "These residents will now fully experience the superior quality of life that Elk Grove offers."