

Novato Community Garden Project

Building A Healthy Community From the Ground Up!

Sent: August 26, 2008

Email: v4valero@comcast.net

RE: Novato Community Garden—a step closer

Dear Community Garden Supporters,

Late June 2008 the Novato City Council gave permission to City Staff to meet with our Novato Community Garden Committee to have a preliminary dialog about the possibilities of leasing City property for a community garden on Novato Blvd. next to the Dogbone Meadow Park, a half mile west of San Marin Drive.

We have since met with Novato City staff. The City is willing to lease the property for a Novato Community Garden on these conditions: (1) the City is fully reimbursed for all incurred expenses related to time the City staff spends on the project, (2) necessary insurance is acquired and paid for by the garden committee, (3) property taxes are paid for by the garden committee, (4) and the garden is built according to building codes and regulations. In addition, the community group needs to be financially responsible for all future maintenance and costs of the garden. (*SEE NOTE below on the City of Novato's fiscal crisis.)

Cost of Project: We estimate that it will cost a minimum of \$50,000-\$60,000 to open the garden. The bulk of the cost is for fencing, water hookup, parking, permits, and City incurred expenses.

Moving forward: We estimate that we need to raise \$10,000 to move to the next step of signing a Memorandum Of Understanding with the City, paying a deposit, and beginning the preliminary work.

First Fundraiser: Join us Sunday, September 14th at 6 PM for our first garden benefit: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* play, preformed by the North Bay Shakespeare Company. For tickets **we sell**, 50% of the proceeds will go to the Novato Community Garden Project. Join us for a great play and support our community garden!

WHEN: Sunday, September 14, 2008

LOCATION: Hamilton Amphitheater, 610 Hamilton Parkway, Novato, CA

TIME: Doors Open at 5:00, bring a picnic dinner

SHOW begins at 6:00 PM

COST: Adults \$16-\$20, Child \$12-\$16, table of 4 for \$120, or table of 8 for \$240.

TICKETS can be purchased by calling Veronica Valero at 415-897-2302 or filling out and mailing in the *attached flyer*. For more info: www.NovatoLiveWell.org/communitygarden

(Read Reviews: http://www.marinij.com/marinnews/ci_10256313?IADID=Search-www.marinij.com-www.marinij.com

Kid-friendly too: http://www.marinij.com/marinnews/ci_10191256?IADID=Search-www.marinij.com-www.marinij.com)

See Garden Plans: The Novato Community Garden Committee will be tabling at the Novato Farmers Market on Tuesdays, from 4-8 PM in Downtown Novato. Come see the garden plans, share your garden thoughts, and pick up a flyer of the Sept. 14th benefit performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Join us in achieving our dream of building a healthy community from the ground up!

For more info on how you can be involved and support the garden, please see the "Garden Help" flyer. And, please share this information with others.

Sincerely,

The Novato Community Garden Committee

www.NovatoLiveWell.org/communitygarden

415-897-2302

v4valero@comcast.net

About the Novato Community Garden Project

The mission of the Novato Community Garden Project is to build and support a network of community gardens that enable people from diverse backgrounds to grow food and foster community in a sustainable manner. The Community Garden

Project is a sponsored project of MarinLink, a California nonprofit corporation, exempt from federal tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended

Garden Committee: Dr. Gail Altschuler, David Bedar, Don Davidson, Bryan Garbutt, Tori Graw, Donna West, Veronica Valero, Sandy Wollenberg.

Advisory Board: Clark Blasdell, Nancy Boyce, Marc Friedman, Annie Spiegelman, Dietrich Stroeh, Rita Widergren.

***A FISCAL CRISIS: A New City Model for Community Projects.** In the past, the City of Novato joined in partnership with community organizations to build community projects on City property. Although the community partners raised funds for the projects, the City of Novato also incurred expenses. Of the seven projects completed in the past 10 years, the City of Novato incurred expenses ranging from \$66,500 to \$313,00 per project. Because of the economic downturn, the City of Novato is facing a fiscal budget crisis this and in the coming years. For the 2008 budget, the City saw a shortfall of over 1.6 million dollars. This did not include the over 6 million dollars for deferred maintenance projects. To balance the budget, the City had to pull from emergency funds and did other cutbacks. As a result, the City Council agreed that they could not support any community projects that would cost the city money and staff time. *For more info on the City budget:* www.ci.novato.ca.us/Index.aspx?page=336
