



LAURA MORTON



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RENDERING BY NOLL & TAM ARCHITECTS

Far left: The interior of the early 20th century Carnegie building retains many of the original details, including ornate columns and wainscoting. Above: The Carnegie building is located across from City Hall, and plans are underway to turn it into the "Carnegie Innovation Hall." Left: The College of Alameda's new Center for Liberal Arts, is currently under construction and is expected to be completed in Spring 2020.

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

From school expansions to naval air station redevelopment, Alameda is innovating

It seems everywhere you look in Alameda, some form of redevelopment or renovation is taking place.

Steel support columns have been raised and construction is underway at what will be the College of Alameda's new center of Liberal Arts, a 56,000-square-foot facility that will be the campus' first new building in decades.

City grants are helping restore or refresh store facades in Alameda's retail districts and there's an ambitious plan to turn the old Carnegie library building into an education and events center. A project that will add new science classrooms, additional offices and restore the historic facade of Alameda High School is also underway.

Meanwhile, a former naval air station offers a blank slate for large-scale development facing San Francisco Bay and the Bay Bridge.

The current cycle of development showcases the innovation taking place across the city. But the development isn't limited to brick and mortar. The Alameda Mini Maker Faire, which occurs Sunday, August 11, aims to connect the community with tinkerers, artisans, DIY enthusiasts and innovators.

"We know that small makers and entrepreneurs have the potential to be major drivers of economic growth as they mature," said Amanda Gehrke, economic development analyst. "And we nurture them through events like the Alameda Mini Maker Faire, which celebrates all of the businesses, makers, artists and DIY enthusiasts creating wonderful and inventive things in Alameda."

Updates on Alameda's various redevelopment efforts are listed below:

CARNEGIE INNOVATION HALL

One of Alameda's most significant redevelopments is expected to take place at the Carnegie building, where entrepreneur Michael Sturtz envisions transforming the early 20th century structure into a nonprofit education and events center.

He and the city are close to finalizing a 66-year lease for the building and Sturtz wants to raise between \$5 and \$6 million to rehabilitate the structure.

"I've been eyeing this building for a decade and it's been empty for 20 years," Sturtz said. "The city is trying to make sure this happens and has been a great partner."

Sturtz said the long-term lease will provide the Carnegie Innovation Hall steady footing to establish itself as a community events center and educational hub.

"We want to create something sustainable that serves the com-



JEAN-FRANCOIS REVON

Above: Entrepreneur Michael Sturtz recently signed a 66-year lease with the City of Alameda to rehabilitate the Carnegie building into an events and education center. Below: The Town Tavern on Park Street is one of the businesses that participated in the city's facade restoration grant project.

If you go

Alameda Mini-Maker Faire

The annual event celebrates the city's local artisans and makers. This year's event will take place Aug. 11 at Alameda Point. For more information, visit www.alameda-makerfaire.com.

munity," Sturtz said. "A place with educational programs during day and performing arts at night."

Despite being empty for so long, the building itself is in good shape, Sturtz said.

The city retrofitted the foundation and replaced the roof a decade ago, and many of the original interior details like ornate columns and wainscoting remain intact. The main upgrades will be to the plumbing, electrical and fire suppression systems, as well as achieving compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"It's a beautiful building, all we're trying to do is restore it to its glory," he said. "We want to keep it as an open vessel for outreach and youth and education initiatives."

ALAMEDA POINT

At the site of a former naval air station, the City of Alameda has created an enterprise district to entice developers and businesses to inhabit an area known as Alameda Point.

"Alameda Point is considered one of the best remaining development opportunities for large-scale development in the East Bay," said Debbie Potter, director of community development. "More than 100 businesses, employing more than 1,000 work-



AMANDA GEHRKE

ers, are currently located here, benefiting from the large industrial buildings with adjacent deep water access."

Just recently, the city council approved plans to market Phase 1 of the enterprise district, a 23.9-acre swath of the district. The district is adjacent to a planned ferry terminal that's expected to open in February of 2020, and Potter expects it to attract plenty of attention from developers.

HISTORIC ALAMEDA HIGH SCHOOL

Expected to reopen in August, the restoration and modernization of the historic campus is a massive undertaking. Restoring Alameda High School is the largest high school restoration project

in the history of the state's Division of the State Architect, according to Susan Davis, senior manager of community affairs for the Alameda Unified School District.

The restoration project was funded through the Measure I facilities bond, similar to the modernization efforts and construction of a new two-story classroom building at Encinal High School.

FACADE RESTORATION PROGRAM

Alameda's facade grant program has been preserving the main street charm of Alameda's commercial districts for more than 25 years, Gehrke said. The program has seen a renewed fervor

in recent years, she said.

The city has awarded more than 75 grants and more than \$450,000 in funding since 2016, with grant sizes ranging from \$500 to \$15,000, Gehrke said. Grants help cover costs of window and door replacements, restoration of legacy signs, new awnings, construction of outdoor dining areas and rehabilitation of historic features.

Some businesses that have taken advantage of the program include Cholita Linda, the Sewing Room and Alameda Bicycle.

In order to be eligible for a facade restoration grant, a business has to face the street and the work must be done on the exterior only.

Typically the grants are split 50/50, with business owners receiving a matching reimbursement for the costs. However, Alameda is also issuing 80/20 grants focused on signs and awnings this year. These particular grants see the city covering 80 percent of the beautification costs. Business owners have until May 9 to request such a grant.

The aim of the facade restoration program is simple, Gehrke said, improve the ambience of the city's retail districts.

"The main goal is about the visual and aesthetic improvement of storefronts and streetscapes," Gehrke said. "It's focused on how our commercial districts look while retaining their charm."

COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA'S CENTER FOR LIBERAL ARTS

Construction of a state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly building is already underway. Designed by Berkeley-based Noll & Tam Architects, the three-story structure will feature floor-to-ceiling windows and house the college's arts and design programs.

"It was important to us that the building have a dynamic exterior that faces the community," said Merideth Marschak, principal at Noll & Tam Architects, who designed the building alongside the firm's senior associate, Edward Reifenstein. "We focused on having a showcase element on the northeast side of the building, allowing people to see activity through the glass."

Overaa Construction is already in the process of building the structure that's aiming for LEED Silver Certification, a designation that recognizes the facility's environmental and energy efficiency. The Center for Liberal Arts is expected to be completed by spring of 2020 and represents part of a master plan occurring in phases across the campus.

"The campus' older buildings are concrete, heavy and low," Marschak said. "This is sleek, glassy and high-performance. It's really going to be quite a big difference for the campus."

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