

Earthquake 1989
City of
Santa Cruz
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Quake funds draw a crowd

By MARTHA MENDOZA
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — More than 70 community members and organizations have applied for their piece of about \$500,000 of relief funds sent to the city after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

The City Council now faces the daunting task of deciding which applicants are the most deserving, because they don't have near the \$2 million-plus requested.

Among the more amusing applications was Freedom resident Stephen Sullivan's — he'd like \$1,800 to continue his work as Santa Cruz's Pied Piper.

"It would give autonomy to an individual who plays penny-whistle for free, without a donation hat, and has been homeless since the earthquake," he said, noting that he could use \$100 for a costume and \$300 for a musical instrument.

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Quake-relief fund

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If given the money, he says he will play at least five days a week. If not, he says, he probably will have to move away.

"If the city of Santa Cruz in their good judgment acknowledges that there is not a rat problem in the streets, then it may be assumed that the Pied Piper has done a good job so far," he said.

While Sullivan's request was heartening, there were many gut-wrenchers among the boxes of applications, which were due at City Hall last week.

"We have been in a state of shock and dismay since the incident (earthquake of '89)," wrote Jean Hass, whose historic home which had been in her family for four generations was destroyed by a city-hired demolition crew after the earthquake.

"We had no time to try and get our things out," she said. "They called the night before, and the next day at the crack of dawn the crew was already working."

Since then, Hass said her 81-year-old father has died, and her husband has had to put off surgery on his ankles and continue working "with a great deal of pain," and she has been frequently ill.

"Doctors tell me I am severely depressed," she said.

Hass is asking for \$225,000 to help pay back loans she took to rebuild her home, and replace some of the items that were destroyed.

Hass' request was the largest of all the applications, and the Campaign for Earth came in with the smallest one, asking for \$360 to purchase a set of handbooks called "Building Sustainable Communities."

The books, which serve as environmental guides for local governments, are published by The Global Cities Project in San Francisco, and the applicants say they could help city staff with rebuilding plans.

Several applications came from the city itself:

- The Police Department is asking for \$20,000 to purchase a "Mobile Equipment Command Post," which could be set up as a mini headquarters on the site of any emergency

- The Redevelopment Agency requested \$3,000 to help downtown property owners design and build landscaping along Pacific Avenue.

- Public Works officials applied

for \$3,500 to buy bags that will be hung over downtown parking meters this holiday season to encourage people to shop along earthquake-damaged Pacific Avenue.

There were also requests from the schools, including Santa Cruz High, which would like \$45,000 to repair and paint the outside of their 77-year-old building, and the city school district, which asked for \$31,300 to create an emergency radio network between campuses.

The Santa Cruz Toddler Care Center asked for \$1,660 to repair a crack in their yard, which is making it tough for their little ones to learn to ride bicycles, and the Golden Age Nutrition Program asked for \$25,000 to buy a Meals on Wheels truck equipped with a refrigerator and oven to deliver meals to seniors.

Administrators say that following the earthquake, they had a 15 percent increase in homebound seniors who applied for the meals.

During the next month, the City Council will be meeting in committee to set priorities for the applications by categories — downtown reconstruction and recovery, housing and social services.

Councilwoman Jane Yokoyama says she expects to be making "more hard decisions."

"We are trying to fund projects which were in the spirit in which the funds were given," she said. "I think it was given as human to human, and I hope we can carry that sentiment through."

Final decisions are expected to be made by the City Council this November.