

# Urban Renewal:

## What's It All About?

(Earl Newkirk, executive director of the city redevelopment agency, discusses urban renewal in these columns on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. Suggestions and comments may be offered in person, by mail or telephone. The redevelopment agency is in the city hall annex, 322 Church street, telephone GA 6-0460.

By Earl Newkirk

Some of my friends have startled me by asking: "When is the redevelopment agency going to begin work on the levees, dikes and walls along the San Lorenzo river and Branciforte creek?"

The answer is simple — we aren't. That's the job of the U. S. Corps of Engineers, and a \$307,000 appropriation to get them started was approved by the senate yesterday.

But you can bet your life we are keeping in close touch with the army engineers and with the state highway people just to be certain how their plans for the future will affect the plans we are making for our San Lorenzo park project.

We have sounded out the army as to the possibility of pulling the levee on the east bank back from the edge of the river to make room for a riverfront park between Water street and Soquel avenue. They say it's OK with them . . . if the city wants it.

Actually, it would simply provide yet another extra iota of flood protection in the event of a really terrific cloudburst coinciding with a high tide. To us, it means the possibility of having a park along the edge of the river and a sort of terraced effect up to the high ground, where it is tentatively proposed to have a hotel-convention center.

Result: no ugly levee standing between the convention center and the river—just terraces and a gentle slope. Normal winter rains would never put the river above the present bank—severe rains such as caused our last flood might inundate a portion of the park once every 15 or 20 years—but in no event would the waters reach the higher portions of the project located behind the last terrace or levee.

Then, too, we have inquired as to whether or not the army engineers would consider a flood wall all along the west bank instead of just up to the lower portion of the project as proposed in their earlier plans. Again they say, if that's what the city wants—OK.

Our reasoning, of course, is to provide more area for commercial and off-street parking use on the west bank of the river. A wall would take up much less land area, naturally.

All of these are further reasons for beginning the planning of our project while the engineers are still designing the flood control system. In view of the

length of time it will take to do all the planning, to hold public hearings and meet federal requirements, it appears to us foolish to consider waiting to do our planning until the engineers have completed theirs.

Besides, we definitely propose that our redevelopment plan be accomplished in two stages—one to begin immediately upon approval of the plan by the city council and the second to begin immediately after the levees are actually in and protecting the area.

Thus, the high ground now proposed for a hotel-convention center, together with the park area, might well comprise all we could do in Stage I; the remainder to be accomplished in Stage II, when flood control is an established fact. In any event, it seems to us we have a great advantage by planning and developing simultaneously with the engineers.

As many of you know, the U. S. Corps of Engineers hopes to complete engineering plans and begin actual construction sometime in August or September of 1957. Even if this timetable is met, we will surely have a minimum of one more winter with no flood protection and a second one with only partial protection.

It seems foolish to wait so long just to begin redevelopment planning.

## Movies Turn To A As Box Office Slump

By James Bacon

Hollywood (AP).—The movie industry, in the midst of a national box office slump, finally is applying the lesson that the department stores and used car dealers learned long ago.

In a sentence, it's this: The tougher the business the harder you sell.

Hollywood, of course, is the most illogical town on earth so it's easy to understand why the movies just now are getting around to such an obvious truism.

For years in times of slump, the first studio employees to get the axe have always been the boys in the publicity department.

It was like Fuller brush laying off its door-to-door salesmen at the first dip in sales. The publicity men used to have about as much security as a South American politician.

But, paced by the potent examples of such super-salesmen as the Paramount and Hecht-Lancaster publicity departments, the Hollywood press agent has taken on a new stature in the industry.

Paramount currently is releasing two of its best pictures of the year. One is "That Certain Feeling" with Bob Hope and the other is "The Proud and Pro-