



City Administrator's Report

February 2004

Dear Reader,

This monthly report summarizes and provides updates on major activities, events, projects, and programs that impact the Santa Barbara community. Feel free to give us your comments and suggestions.

E-mail copies of this report are available to members of City of Santa Barbara boards, commissions, and committees. E-mail delivery conserves paper, trees, and ink, saves times, and reduces costs. To receive your copy of this report electronically, send your name, city affiliation, and e-mail address to Mindy Jackson at mjackson@ci.santa-barbara.ca.us.

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Key Meetings:

February 3, 10, 24 City Council Meetings

Flags on State Street:

February 1-10 Santa Barbara International Film Festival
February 10-24 Black History Month
February 24-29 American Red Cross

Holidays:

February 16 President's Day (City Hall closed)

Community Events:

- February 6-15 ▪ Tango & Malambo Festival, various city locations, (805) 568-5996
- February 1-8 ▪ Santa Barbara International Film Festival continues, (805) 963-0023; www.sbfilmfestival.com
- February 14 ▪ Holiday Arts and Crafts Show, Cabrillo Blvd., 10 a.m.-dusk, (805) 897-1982
- February 21 ▪ "Roses to La Playa" 5K/10K run, Leadbetter Beach, (805) 962-3627
- February 24-March 14 ▪ Designer Showcase to benefit CALM, tickets \$30 per person, Feb. 21st Premiere Gala is \$250 per person, (805) 965-2376

City Administrator

State budget

In January, California Governor Schwarzenegger released his proposed state budget for the 2005 fiscal year - which includes measures to address the projected \$15 billion state budget deficit. This lengthy document contains more than 300 pages for the Budget Summary alone, while the Budget Highlights section totals 100 pages!

Based on the analysis prepared by the Finance Department, here is how the proposed state budget could impact the City of Santa Barbara:

The governor proposed a \$1.3 billion shift of local government property taxes from counties and cities to schools, thereby reducing the required state funding for K-12 and community college education pursuant to Proposition 98. The impact of the property tax shift on the City of Santa Barbara General Fund is approximately \$577,000 plus an additional \$700,000 cut to the City Redevelopment Agency.

The governor's proposal also includes the elimination of \$217,000 in state reimbursements for booking fees paid by the city to the county for processing arrestees through the county jails.

There is still considerable uncertainty as to what the state legislature and the governor will ultimately agree upon over the next several months, and what the final impacts will be on the City of Santa Barbara. It is likely that the state budget will once again not be approved until well into the summer.

It is important to note that the impact on cities is less compared to the impact on counties. Statewide, counties would lose \$914 million, or 68% of the \$1.3 billion, in property taxes. The County of Santa Barbara, for example, would lose approximately \$10.8 million (~6% of their General Fund revenues). You will likely be hearing continuing news accounts about the devastating impacts to county services as a result of the governor's proposal.

City budget

City departments are currently in the process of preparing their proposed budgets for the fiscal year 05 budget, which begins on July 1, 2004. In accordance with the long-term strategies previously approved by the City Council, the proposed budget will rely on a combination of reserves, cost cutting, and revenue adjustments to remain balanced. Based upon the Governor's proposed budget, the strategy remains sound.

In the last month, Finance Department and City Administrator's Office staff have reviewed the current General Fund budget projections with both the City Council's Finance Committee and the City Council. As discussed above, under the governor's proposed state budget, the City of Santa Barbara's General Fund will lose as much as \$800,000.

City staff are developing a General Fund budget that assumes the final state budget will contain cuts to cities at least as onerous as those contained in the governor's proposed budget. Therefore, the city is developing a recommended General Fund budget that will contain a total of \$2 million in adjustments - a combination of reduced expenditures and enhanced revenues.

Approximately half (\$1 million) is to address the city's own budget shortfall, and the other half is in response to anticipated state budget impacts.

In addition to proposed State funding cuts the City is facing a dramatic \$5 million increase in Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) cost next year. This 61% cost increase from the current year will require the City to continue tackling the problem of major cost increases that are outpacing our growth in revenues.

Shortly after the city files its recommended budget in April, the City Council and public review process will begin and continue until the budget is adopted in late June.

City "Facts"

The latest edition of the "City of Santa Barbara Facts" brochure is available online at www.ci.santa-barbara.ca.us/documents. This handy document includes population and employment statistics, fiscal year 2004 budget numbers, information on the city's educational institutions, transportation, real estate, business, housing and economic trends. A directory of city phone numbers is included, along with visitor information and more.

George Gerth Award

In January, the Downtown Organization (DO) established the "George Gerth Volunteer of the Year Award," to honor that group's ex-officio board member and 18-year City of Santa Barbara employee. Before his untimely death last year, George worked closely with the DO as the city's streets, transportation, and parking manager. The award was created in recognition of George's enthusiasm as a volunteer at practically every DO event. Kate Schwab, general manager of Borders Books & Music and DO's current promotions committee chair, received the first George Gerth Award presented last month during a luncheon at El Paseo Restaurant.

Inside Santa Barbara on City-TV, Channel 18

The February 7th through March 6th program line-up will feature: Santa Barbara International Film Festival; Street Smart: Public Art Workshop; City Employee Bicycle Safety Class; Earthquake Preparedness; Alternative Fuels; and Library Youth Services. Weekly airtimes: Mondays at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5 p.m.; Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Saturdays at 9 p.m.; and Sundays at 10:30 p.m.

Airport Department

Noise contour map

A primary component of the Airport Noise Compatibility Study is updating the Airport's Noise Exposure Map (NEM). Last updated in 1989, the NEM delineates noise-impacted areas around the airport, and provides planning guidelines for determining existing and future land use. The study is 50% complete, with the NEM portion scheduled for presentation to City Council later this month. Public input on the project has been sought and will continue to be solicited through workshops and neighborhood committees.

Airport Terminal Improvement project

On February 10th, Airport Director Karen Ramsdell will make a presentation at a City Council Joint Work Session, regarding the proposed Airline Terminal Improvement project. She will address project goals, team resources, milestones, funding, public information, and next steps. The Airport Commission, Architectural Board of Review, Planning Commission, and Historic Landmarks Commission will be part of the session.

Website facelift

The airport's website, www.flysba.com is being revamped and updated to provide easier navigation. Features include new graphic design, new photographs, and a search function. The upgrade is expected to be completed this month. Currently, the website averages more than 11,000 hits daily.

2003 passenger traffic

More than three-quarters of a million passengers arrived at and departed from the airport in 2003 – a 3.4% increase in traffic over the previous year. The percentage is significant, considering the major issues impacting air transportation last year: the Iraq War, SARS, national security, and a weak economy. In 2003, the most heavily traveled months were June through August and October through December, averaging more than 2,200 passengers daily.

Community Development Department

Bond issue

The Redevelopment Agency in December 2003 sold a \$33 million tax allocation bond to fund capital projects. Projects proposed by the agency include Carrillo Street sidewalk improvements, Carrillo Recreation Center restoration, west downtown improvements, and Granada Garage costs.

Planning Commission calendar

Feb. 5th – The commission took comments on the Draft Negative Declaration for the Arroyo Burro Estuary and Mesa Creek Restoration. The project also includes ultraviolet removal of bacteria in an effort to improve water quality in the estuary, and will be the first of many projects to improve Arroyo Burro Creek water quality. Also considered was a mixed-use project in the Chapala Corridor known as Paseo Chapala. This project would replace about 9,800 square feet of commercial space and 29 residential condominium units, with eight affordable units proposed.

Feb. 12th – The commission will hear an update on the status of Measure E, a couple of small condominium projects, and will hold a discussion on the Samarkand Retirement Community's master plan for development over the next several years.

Feb. 19th – The commission will hold a special morning session to hear proposals and take input on Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital's transportation, circulation, and other issues, and also will consider certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Wildland Fire Master Plan.

This month, the City Council and Planning Commission will hold their semi-annual work session on the Planning Division workload – tentatively scheduled for Feb. 26th at 2 p.m.

Kudos

The California Redevelopment Association (CRA) has selected Santa Barbara for two, statewide “Awards of Excellence.” The projects cited are the Casa de las Fuentes housing project for downtown workers, developed by the Housing Authority; and the Casa Esperanza (Cacique Street) Homeless Shelter. The awards will be presented to the city at the CRA’s annual conference in March.

Finance Department

Update on Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT)

The table shows that the December TOT was up approximately 4.4% from the prior fiscal year. We are now up 2.7% fiscal year-to-date. While this is good news, we need to grow at a stronger pace in the latter half of the year in order to meet our 4.2% budgeted growth rate.

	FY 2001	Change from Prior Year	FY 2002	Change from Prior Year	FY 2003	Change from Prior Year	FY 2004	Change from Prior Year
July	\$1,204,593	11.3%	\$1,171,041	-2.8%	\$1,183,951	1.1%	\$1,198,952	1.3%
Aug	\$1,246,973	7.9%	\$1,276,212	2.3%	\$1,328,278	4.1%	\$1,349,990	1.6%
Sept	\$952,314	14.1%	\$808,657	-15.1%	\$849,174	5.0%	\$887,095	4.5%
Oct	\$839,946	3.7%	\$790,919	-5.8%	\$830,054	4.9%	\$863,919	4.1%
Nov	\$691,398	13.2%	\$653,829	-5.4%	\$684,776	4.7%	\$696,231	1.7%
Dec	\$594,145	16.2%	\$539,598	-9.2%	\$529,694	-1.8%	\$553,202	4.4%
Yr Total	\$5,529,369	10.5%	\$5,240,256	-5.2%	\$5,405,927	3.2%	\$5,549,389	2.7%

(Please note that these amounts are only the 10% General Fund TOT revenues. They do not include the additional 2% that is credited to Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement - Measure B.)

Fire Department

Business self-Inspection Program

To form a partnership in fire and life safety, the Santa Barbara City Fire Department has implemented a self-inspection program for businesses within the city. The Business Self-Inspection Program (BSIP) allows “low hazard” businesses to be inspected by the business owner and/or manager. The purpose of the inspection is to ensure that all businesses meet the minimum standards for fire and life safety under the Uniform Fire and Building Codes. BSIP educates business owners by making them more aware of fire safety behaviors and fire prevention practices to be carried out throughout the year.

AED/CPR launch

With a successful start for the new AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) and CPR classes to help save lives, 12 residents were taught CPR, and 14 residents were taught CPR and AED procedures last month. This month, 275 city employees will be taught CPR, first aid, and receive AED orientation.

Experienced firefighters

Five new “lateral” firefighters are in the process of being hired. Candidates must be employed as fulltime firefighters with a California public agency. This pre-qualification helps ensure an existing level of skill and experience, reduces their training time, and puts them into action sooner with the City of Santa Barbara.

Airport rescue vehicles

Two new ARFF (Airport Rescue Firefighting) vehicles are now in service after extensive operational training for Santa Barbara Airport firefighters. The vehicles are outfitted with equipment designed specifically for airport emergencies.

Library Department

Adult literacy

The Santa Barbara Public Library Adult Literacy Program recently partnered with the federal program AmeriCorps to enhance literacy outreach efforts locally. Modeled after the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps encourages volunteers to assist in U.S. communities. The library provides \$1,000 in matching funds per AmeriCorps member assigned, with each person working 20 hours per week. The Adult Literacy Program has welcomed three AmeriCorps members for a one-year period, during which they will work to increase community awareness of literacy issues, encourage involvement in the program as a tutor or learner, and provide direct programming to adults with poor literacy skills and to at-risk youth. The first event presented by Adult Literacy Coordinator Bev Schwartzberg and AmeriCorps members will be an Easy Voter Workshop at the Central Library's Faulkner Gallery on Feb.10th at 7 p.m., to assist with voter registration and distribute voter information material.

Parks and Recreation Department

Pest management policy

Last month, the City Council approved a citywide Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategy – a required element of an IPM Resolution adopted by City Council in June 2003. Fifteen parks became pesticide free as a result. A committee consisting of city staff representing seven departments and two community members will begin meeting in the next few weeks to continue to review and evaluate strategy's effectiveness.

Franceschi Park advisors

The Park and Recreation Commission last month approved the creation of a permanent Franceschi Park Advisory Committee, to represent the Pearl Chase Society, Horticulturalist Consortium, Riviera Association, Neighbor, and Member At-Large. Responsibilities will include park management and operations, operational policies and compliance with the Franceschi House Usage Plan and Park Use Plan, and phased implementation of the master plan. A Park and Recreation Commission will act as liaison. Applications will be available at the Parks and Recreation Department administrative office beginning Feb. 12th, and are due on March 12th. Interviews and appointments to the committee are set for the March 24th Park and Recreation Commission meeting.

Bohnett Park

Last month's ribbon cutting ceremony celebrated the completion of the Old Mission Creek Restoration Project at Bohnett Park. The approximately 75 attendees included Mayor Marty Blum, Council Members Barnwell, Falcone and Schneider, Representatives from the 1st and 2nd District, Parks and Recreation Commissioners, Creeks Advisory Committee members, plus members of the Bohnett family. The goal of the restoration project, implemented by the Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Division, was to restore native habitat and improve water quality, while providing a safe and healthy place for residents to enjoy their local creek.

The creek restoration demonstrated successful leveraging of Measure B funds, with more than half of the \$788,000 project funded through the California Resources Agency's Coastal Resources Grant Program and Proposition 12 State Parks and Water Bond 2000. The project also received City of Santa Barbara General Fund monies.

State awards

The California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) District 8 last month presented several awards to Santa Barbara. Cliff Lambert, recreation supervisor for youth activities since 1980, received the Community Service Award. Cliff is retiring on March 5th after 24 years with the city. Also, the Police Activities League (PAL) received a Community Service Award for its Campership Alliance and Safe Summer for Kids Program. PAL has a strong partnership with Parks and Recreation youth and teen programs. Last summer, these two programs provided 800 camp scholarships, fundraised \$130,000, and secured \$100,000 of in-kind donations. The city also received Agency Showcase Recognition Awards for Outstanding Website, the *Parks & Recreation Activity Guide*, the *2003 Community Services* brochure (Best Single Brochure), and the Resident Fee Discount Program Marketing campaign.

Police Department

New Year's Day arrests

A police officer's attempt to stop a driver on W. Carrillo Street for an inoperative headlight led to a foot pursuit after the suspect sped away, crashing his car into a concrete retaining wall. Within one block, police caught and arrested the 30-year old Vine Ave. resident, who was on parole and unlicensed.

In a separate incident, an officer responded to a call about a prowler attempting to enter a W. Islay Street residence. A 32-year old man pushing a bicycle away from the scene was questioned and then arrested for prowling, and for stealing the bicycle from the owner's backyard. He refused to comment on credit cards in his pocket that belonged to two different people. The cards were seized to notify their owners. In addition, he had a no-bail warrant for probation violation.

Crystal meth

A routine traffic stop on W. Figueroa Street last month for a vehicle with an inoperative taillight led to the arrest of two Ventura residents. The pair initially lied to the officer about their identities. The 21-year old had \$13,000 in warrants, and the 28-year old possessed hypodermic needles. A search of their vehicle after it was towed to the police station turned up more than one-half ounce of crystal meth, plus scales, packaging materials, and needles. Both suspects had extensive criminal histories, and were booked into County Jail on charges of possession and transporting methamphetamine, possession of needles, driving with a suspended license, and miscellaneous warrants.

Cocaine and marijuana

The Narcotics Unit executed a search warrant on a suspect who was dropping off his 13-year old son at Santa Barbara Junior High School last month. Detectives located 1/2 pound of cocaine and scales on the floorboard next to the boy's feet. The father also had a small amount of cocaine in his pocket. Detectives later learned that the suspect had planned to conduct a drug deal next to the school after dropping off his son. Detectives searched the man's Mellifont Ave. residence and located about a pound of marijuana and \$ 1,609 cash. An accomplice was also arrested at the residence. Believing it related to drug dealing profits, detectives froze the first suspect's bank account with \$5,930, charging him with narcotic violations, child endangerment, and possessing cocaine with intent to sell near a school.

Gunman arrested

A 27-year old identified as the gunman in the January 1st shooting of 33-year old Daniel Gallegos was arrested in Los Angeles later that month. Gallegos had been shot three times with a .40 caliber handgun on the street outside his Sunset Ave. residence here. The Santa Barbara Police Department was notified that a law enforcement arm of the State Department of Justice (DOJ) made the arrest. Two co-suspects were also arrested. A quarrel over a drug debt and theft were determined to have led to the shooting. An illegal assault rifle and a stolen handgun were recovered during a search of the gunman's vehicle and L.A. residence. Originally listed in critical condition at Cottage Hospital directly after the shooting, Gallegos has since been released and is expected to make a full recovery.

Oncoming train

During a routine check of the tracks near Garden Street around 2 a.m., a Santa Barbara police officer attempted to issue a citation to a man who was drinking alcohol in public. Refusing to sign the citation, the man walked into the path of an oncoming train. Running up the embankment, the officer pushed the man to safety, narrowly escaping being struck by the train himself. The man was taken into custody, cited, and released.

Downtown beat

An additional foot patrol officer dedicated to the downtown areas joined Officer Bob Casey last month. Officer Shawn Hill works Thursdays through Sundays, and Officer Casey continues Mondays through Thursdays.

Representatives of the Downtown Organization and the Old Town Merchants Association continue to meet monthly with the Police Department to discuss issues of concern. A Town Hall meeting is being planned for early spring to address ways that businesses can protect themselves from theft and employee fraud.

Public Works Department

Granada Garage

The City Council in December 2003 contracted with Watry Design, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$1.3 million to design the Granada Garage. Last month, city staff unveiled an architects' rendering of the garage at a City Council meeting. In addition to providing 570 downtown parking spaces, the project includes offices for the Transportation Division, Paseo improvements, a bike station, public restrooms, and a mid-block traffic signal. The parking structure uses an express ramp system that connects parking areas or floors, providing faster access and circulation, level parking surfaces for line-of-site security, and flexibility for parking operations. The design is roughly 20% complete and rapidly moving forward.

Shoreline Park expansion

Connecting Leadbetter Beach Park and Shoreline Park, the upcoming Shoreline Park Expansion project will add some much needed improvements between Loma Alta and La Marina. The project will convert the two driving lanes closest to the beach along Shoreline Drive from vehicular traffic to an expanded sidewalk, a wide stretch of grass, and a dedicated two-way bike path similar to the waterfront. Vehicular traffic will then use the existing two lanes closest to the Mesa, similar to Shoreline Drive west of La Marina. Lash Construction, a local contractor, plans a mid-February start. Completion is anticipated near the end of April.

Safe Routes to Schools grant awarded

A \$450,000 Caltrans grant recently awarded to the city will be used to design and construct traffic calming improvements along the corridors approaching Santa Barbara Junior and Senior High Schools. The plan calls for curb extensions and mini-traffic circles at various intersections on Alta Vista Road and Quarantina Street between Sola Street and Cota Street. The goal of the project is to improve traffic conditions along the corridor, allowing more students to safely walk and bicycle to and from school.

Santa Barbara was chosen to receive one of 85 grants in the 2003/2004 funding cycle of Caltrans' Safe Routes to Schools Program. Over the course of the program's four funding cycles, 1500 applications for this hazard elimination funding have resulted in 273 projects statewide.

This is the City of Santa Barbara's second award from the program. Sidewalks constructed with the first award have measurably decreased the number of children walking on mixed flow travel lanes near several local schools. This shift from streets to sidewalks reduces their exposure to motor vehicle hazards and also improves walking conditions in these neighborhoods.

The Safe Routes to School Program allows California communities like ours to seriously evaluate and address children's mobility and to improve safety and access for school age pedestrians and bicyclists. Questions? Contact Alternative Transportation Planner Dru van Hengel at (805) 564-5544, or dvanhengel@ci.santa-barbara.ca.us.

Waterfront Department

Wharf maintenance

The purpose of the 2004 Wharf Annual Maintenance and Repair Project is to maintain public safety and extend the wharf's longevity.

The city has contracted Cushman Contracting Corporation, Inc. to perform the annual maintenance and repair on Stearns Wharf. Work began last month with the replacement of five stringers and 100 feet of pile cap during daytime hours. In the past, the pile driving has always included a portion of nocturnal work to avoid heavy traffic congestion and minimize disruption to Stearns Wharf tenants. Work will continue with night pile driving through the fourth week of February. The project is scheduled for completion by the end of March 2004.

Along with replacing the 26-foot pile cap on the Navy Pier in the Harbor, Cushman Contracting Corporation will replace thirty-four 65-foot piles, 14 stringers, 44 deck-boards, and approximately 150 linear feet of pile caps and corbels.

Chandlery remodel

Local construction firm J.W. Bailey begins work this month on a remodel and two-story addition for the harbor Chandlery building at 132 Harbor Way. The construction work will strengthen the building against earthquakes, provide 1,300 square feet of new commercial, and create the first permanent home for the Waterfront Department's administrative offices.

The initial phase will widen the breakwater sidewalk near the building to preserve emergency vehicle access to Marina No. 1 and to the breakwater. Underground grouting will seal the nearby parts of the breakwater against seawater intrusion, and stabilize the soils for new foundation elements to strengthen the existing structure.

The project is expected to take about 14 months to complete. An important focus of the operations will be an effort to be a good neighbor to the people affected by the construction. As in any area where "many paths and errands meet," this is a challenge. Anyone having concerns, suggestions, or comments is encouraged to call City Project Manager John Flynn at (805) 564-5375, or the waterfront administrative offices at (805) 564-5531.