



City Administrator's Report

November 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.

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Key Meetings:

November 2, 9, 16, 23 Santa Barbara City Council

Holidays

November 25 & 26 Thanksgiving Holiday (City Hall closed)

Community Events

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| November 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7th Annual Empty Bowls lunch to benefit the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, Rockwood Women's Club, (805) 967-5741, ext. 104 |
| November 13 & 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breast Resource Center's 6th Annual Holiday Boutique, 526 W. Pueblo Street, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., (805) 569-9693 |
| November 20 & 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Santa Barbara Botanic Garden's Annual Nature Holiday Marketplace, 1212 Mission Canyon Road, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., (805) 682-4726 |
| December 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 52nd Annual Downtown Holiday Parade, State Street, Sola to Cota Streets, (805) 962-2098, ext. 23 |
| December 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 19th Annual Santa Barbara Parade of Lights, Santa Barbara Harbor, Santa Claus arrives at 3 p.m., parade starts at 5:30 p.m. and fireworks follow, (805) 897-1962 |

Flags on State Street

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| November 1-2 | Fighting Back – Santa Barbara Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse |
| November 2-12 | Election Day/Veterans Day (American flag) |
| November 12-22 | Planned Parenthood |
| November 22-30 | Unity Shoppe and Downtown Organization holiday flags and décor |

City Administrator

Election Results

Proposition 1A: Passage of this initiative signaled strong support for local control of government revenues. Voters sent a message to the Legislature that California city coffers should not be tapped to resolve state-created budget problems.

Measure A: Voters came out in favor of raising the annual salaries of Santa Barbara's mayor (to \$45,300) and city councilmembers (to \$36,300), effective July 1, 2005. The measure also allows for cost-of-living pay raises. The increase enables anyone who wants to run for Santa Barbara City Council to do so without financial constraints as a deterrent.

Measure B: On the other hand, Measure B was defeated by 68.5% of voters opposed to allowing architects who don't live in the City of Santa Barbara to serve on the Architectural Board of Review.

Neighborhood Improvement Program

Milpas Action Task Force (MATF) report to Planning Commission on Nov. 18th: At the direction of City Council, the MATF – formed to respond to homelessness issues and impacts along the Milpas Street Corridor – will make a presentation to the Planning Commission. This presentation will be part of a hearing on amendments to Casa Esperanza's Conditional Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit. The report addresses concerns raised by shelter neighbors.

Redevelopment Agency neighborhood improvements: The RDA, charged with a portion of the MATF Action Plan, is exploring the reconfiguration of the existing temporary parking lot for Casa Esperanza staff to allow for a temporary pedestrian and bicycle pathway through RDA properties along the railroad right-of-way between Cacique Street on the east, and Calle Cesar Chavez on the west. RDA staff is reviewing the existing situation on the RDA properties. They will attend a site visit being coordinated by Public Works, and are reviewing permitting requirements for the proposed fencing and pathway.

“Hot Spots”

- The Police Department (PD) assisted with a coordinated clean-up effort with Streets Division, the Parks and Recreation Department, and Caltrans in the area of Los Patos Way and the railroad tracks. Twenty-six city employees removed extensive amounts of debris, trees, and vegetation.
- PD partnered with the Public Works Department, Union Pacific, and Marborg to clean up the area around Orange and Wentworth Avenues.
- Working with the Zoning Division and Public Works, PD participated in a clean-up of 1520 Santa Rosa Ave.

Community Garden renovation: This Community Development Block Grant project is on schedule, with the redwood border now completed at Rancheria Gardens. Half of all redwood borders have been installed at Yanonali Gardens and should be completed within a week. The Pilgrim Terrace borders are scheduled for installation this month. Storage sheds for the three locations are on order and are expected to be installed in three to four weeks. Information kiosks are being designed and preparations are being made to lay down weed fabric in all common areas and pathways.

“Inside Santa Barbara” on City-TV Channel 18 – November edition airs Nov. 6th through Dec. 8th: Features include the Highway 101 Improvements between Milpas Street and Hot Springs, Sheffield Reservoir Update, Marborg Recycling Facility, Airport Disaster Response Drill, CDBG Program 30th Anniversary, City Employee Florida Hurricane Relief Effort. Weekly airtimes are 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

Passenger count continues to rise: In September, 70,030 passengers arrived at and departed from Santa Barbara Airport (SBA) – a 13.4% increase over the same period last year. By comparison, national passenger traffic was up 5.1% in September. SBA’s United Express flights to Denver experienced the highest average passenger loads at 87%. American Eagle Dallas/Fort Worth flights were the second highest at 73%. Currently, there are 45 daily departures to 10 non-stops from SBA. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 10.7% over 2003.

Horizon Air reinstates popular non-stop service to Portland, Oregon: Complementing their non-stop Seattle service, the Portland regional jet flight will continue on to Seattle, replacing one of the two Seattle non-stops. Local passengers can make easy connections on Horizon and sister carrier Alaska Airlines to cities in Alaska, Washington, Oregon Idaho, Montana, British Columbia and Alberta from the Seattle and Portland hubs.

Airport parcel development Request for Proposals will be released this month: To develop a commercial/industrial building complex at 6100 Hollister Avenue (14.47 acres), proposals will be sought from developers with commercial/industrial facilities experience and the financial capability to fund the project. The project requires high standards of urban design and architecture consistent with the approved Development Plan and Supplemental Environmental Impact Report.

Community Development Department

St. Anthony's Seminary School site in escrow: The San Roque School Charitable Trust is in escrow to purchase the St. Anthony's Seminary School site at 2300 Garden Street. For the last couple of years, the Franciscan Friars have been looking to sell the school site. Current tenants Santa Barbara Middle School and Waldorf School tried a number of times to purchase the site, but were not able to come to an agreement.

The intent of the San Roque School is for the site to remain an educational facility, consistent with its historical use. The Middle School has a number of years left on its existing lease, which will be honored. The Waldorf School is on a month-to-month lease and will be allowed to stay through the end of the school year. Details on how the San Roque School intends to use the facility are pending. For more information, contact Bettie Weiss or Paul Casey in the Community Development Department.

Ritz Carlton Club construction update: Remediation of contaminated soils and groundwater must occur before major construction can begin, per the County Protection Services Department. Demolition of buildings to allow for the remediation work will begin shortly. After remediation is completed, construction activity on the project will commence with issuance of building permits for Area C (the north-east corner of State and Mason), which have been thoroughly reviewed and are ready to be issued. The Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) has also completed review of Area B (south-east corner of State and Mason), with plan-checking of those building permits to begin shortly. HLC's review of Area A (the Californian Hotel) is expected to begin in about a month.

Planning Commission update:

Comment period on Veronica Meadows Annexation EIR ends Nov. 5th: Last month, the Planning Commission held a hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Veronica Meadows (Lee Annexation, 900 - 1100 Las Positas). Overall, the comments on the quality and conclusions in the Draft EIR were very positive. Questions from the public and the commission were raised about the conclusion that construction of the proposed bridge across Arroyo Burro Creek would result in significant, unavoidable impacts on wildlife migration. The consultant is beginning work on responses to comments received, and the EIR will return to the Planning Commission for certification and project consideration in 2005.

Cottage Hospital Reconstruction Draft EIR was released Nov. 1st: The comment period will end on December 15th. A Planning Commission hearing to receive comments on the EIR will be held on the afternoon and evening of December 2nd.

Finance Department

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT): The table below shows September TOT was up about 4.9%. Our growth year-to-date is 4.5%, which is slightly ahead of budget.

City of Santa Barbara TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAXES

	FY 2002	Change from Prior Year	FY 2003	Change from Prior Year	FY 2004	Change from Prior Year	FY 2005	Change from Prior Year
July	\$ 1,171,041	-2.8%	\$ 1,183,951	1.1%	\$ 1,198,952	1.3%	\$ 1,301,652	8.6%
Aug	1,276,212	2.3%	1,328,278	4.1%	1,349,990	1.6%	1,357,717	0.6%
Sept	808,657	-15.1%	849,174	5.0%	887,095	4.5%	930,700	4.9%
FY Total	\$ 3,255,911	-3.3%	\$ 3,361,403	3.2%	\$ 3,436,037	2.2%	\$ 3,590,069	4.5%
Budget	\$ 9,779,115		\$ 9,974,700		\$ 10,273,900		\$ 10,684,900	

Note: This report includes only the 10% unrestricted TOT revenues. Beginning in January 2001, an additional 2% is credited to Creek Restoration and Water Quality Improvement (Measure B).

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) audits: The Finance Department has begun a renewed TOT audit program. In May, Finance staff met with the Greater Santa Barbara Lodging Association to explain why we are undertaking the audits and what we hope to accomplish. In August, the city contracted with Jefferson Wells, Inc. (JWI), an audit firm that specializes in TOT audits for local governments. We sent a letter to all hotels advising them of the audit program and we selected a cross-sampling of five hotels for the initial audits, ranging from a full-service hotel to a bed-and-breakfast. JWI conducted field audits in September and they have now provided us with their findings. We were very pleased to learn that there were virtually no revenue variances identified. The audits will continue over the next year to ensure that hotels are properly applying the city's TOT ordinance.

Fire Department

Recent rains end fire season: The Santa Barbara County Fire Department and the U. S. Forest Service declared an end to fire season on Nov. 1st. With that, the Santa Barbara City Fire Department changed to the wet season response of two engine companies (versus three) for all grass and brush fires, effective Nov. 1st.

Library Department

Best for studying: The Santa Barbara Public Library was named "Best Study Spot" by readers of The Santa Barbara Independent in the Oct. 21st issue. Noting the musical performances, galleries, public lectures, tons of great books, and a quiet comfortable place to learn, the Central Library was called "civilization's most stalwart supporter in this beautiful burg."

Parks and Recreation Department

Fast action saves an infant's life: Last month, one-year-old Erica Nagarai fell from a chair at the Lower Westside Center and hit her head on the tile floor. She lost consciousness for about 30 seconds and was not breathing. Fast action by Marina Martinez, Assistant Community Services Supervisor, alerted others to call 9-1-1 and she provided immediate CPR. Fortunately, little Erica came to and was breathing on her own when paramedics arrived to transport her to the hospital. After receiving a CAT scan she is now doing well and at home with her parents. We thank Marina, as do Erica and her parents, for her fast response and job well done!

Volunteer workday at Franceschi Park is Nov. 13th: The Pearl Chase Society, Riviera Association, and Parks and Recreation Department will co-sponsor a volunteer workday to prepare the ground for a planting demonstration bed at the park. If you'd like to help out, please call Terri Yamada for more information at (805) 564-5484.

Community forums rescheduled for Arroyo Burro and Mission Creeks: These meetings are to discuss development of the watershed action plans. The new date for the Arroyo Burro forum is Nov. 10th at 6 p.m., La Colina Junior High School Auditorium, 4025 Foothill Rd. For the Mission Creek forum, the new date is Nov. 11th at 6 p.m., Santa Barbara Public Library, Faulkner Gallery, 40 E. Anapamu Street.

Residents of the city and unincorporated areas in each watershed will receive notification of the meetings via postcard. Flyers have also been developed in English and Spanish for each watershed area. Additionally, the meetings will be posted on the city's website, announced on City TV, and advertised in the local newspapers. For more information, contact Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Jill Zachary at (805) 897-2508.

City employees volunteer for Red Cross hurricane relief efforts in Florida and Alabama: Representing the City of Santa Barbara were Community Services Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Antonio Velásquez; Waterfront Maintenance Crew Leader Don Dwyer; Airport Department Executive Secretary Mabel Shatavsky; and Public Works Maintenance Worker II Fernando Banales.

Police Department

Armed robber arrested after stealing \$50 from a downtown gas station: On an evening last month, the suspect entered the gas station, nonchalantly asked for prices of cigarettes, then suddenly produced a blue-steel automatic pistol, aiming it point blank at the store clerk across the narrow counter. The robber scooped all the coins and bills from the cash register, stuffed the money in his pockets, and fled on foot. Following a hunch, Officer Greg Kennedy tracked the 56-year-old suspect to a liquor store three blocks away in the Milpas Street business corridor.

City TV's "SBPD LIVE" leads police to wanted criminal: A recent airing of the city-produced television program featured two criminals who were wanted by police for multiple scams and a theft at Fess Parker's Double Tree Resort. After watching the show, a viewer called and gave the crooks' location in Santa Maria. Santa Barbara Police Department detectives notified Santa Maria PD, who arrested the man and woman at the Buckboard Motel.

Alert citizen helps police capture young vandal: Police were notified when a resident observed a youth spray-painting graffiti on a wall at Santa Barbara Junior High School last month. Working with Santa Barbara Police Department dispatchers, officers were directed to where the suspect hastily fled. The 12-year-old gang member was arrested two blocks away, with fresh paint on his hands and a backpack full of spray-paint cans. He was booked at Juvenile Hall for vandalism and for participation in a criminal street gang.

Public Works Department

Granada Garage taking shape: Construction contractor McCarthy has completed the demolition, erected fencing, made provisions for trash removal, and installed soldier piles at the site. Excavation began on Oct. 25th to remove 33,000 cubic yards (2,300 truckloads) of dirt to make room for the two underground levels. Construction of the new parking garage will only affect one Christmas season.

Expanded residential street sweeping began Oct. 4th: Contractor Venco Western, Inc, reports removing approximately 55 tons of debris from the streets during the first week in the expanded areas, and 47 tons of debris during the second week. In October, the Police Department issued warning notices to cars parked in violation of the parking restriction for street sweeping. In October, the residential street sweeping program collected 158 tons of debris, trash, and leaves throughout the city. On Nov. 1st, officers began issuing parking tickets to cars parked in violation of the parking restrictions.

Milpas Street Beautification Project anticipates construction in late summer 2005: On Nov. 9th, staff will present to the Mayor and City Councilmembers a scope of work for the final design. During June and July, staff conducted several public outreach meetings to gather input on how the \$500,000 construction budget should be spent. Staff used that input to create a list of elements to be constructed along Milpas Street between Quinientos and Canon Perdido Streets. The elements will be presented at the meeting and include pedestrian lighting (non-cornstalk themed), tree plantings and grates, sidewalk repair, trash/recycling cans, bus stop upgrades, painting utilities, decorative railing replacement at the Haley/Milpas intersection, and curb bulb-outs at the Milpas/Canon Perdido intersection.

City Council's input will be gathered at the meeting and the scope of the project will be finalized. Public Works staff will then propose beginning the final design process.

City water mains set for major upgrade: The Public Works Department's Water Division has established a goal to replace 1% of the city's water mains annually. The department has combined two years' work into one project which will lead to better economies of scale. Engineering staff has completed the design of approximately 40,000 linear feet, representing 2% of the city's water mains. This year's project significantly upgrades firefighting capability in the foothills and the Cottage Hospital area by creating pressure zones and eliminating an aging pump station. Anticipated cost of the project is in the \$4.5 million range, and will be publicly bid in November/December.

Sheffield Reservoir: The construction of the two, 6.5 million gallon underground reservoirs is progressing on schedule and is approximately 50% complete. The cable wrapping of Tank 2 will be completed later this month and pipeline work continues. The construction of Tank 1 is done and that reservoir is scheduled to be filled this month. Once the second tank is put on line, both tanks will be backfilled early next year.

Annual slurry seal program underway: This year's program will treat approximately 5.9 million square feet of pavement in Maintenance Area F which includes the Mesa, the southeast-side neighborhood, upper Riviera, and the Sycamore Canyon area. This work started the first week of September and weather permitting should be completed by the middle of December. The Pavement Preparation Program preceded the Slurry Seal Program and is completed.

Pedestrian Master Plan: The Transportation Planning Department is working with representatives of various city departments in drafting this document. The plan will include a Safe Routes to School component, Pedestrian Design Guidelines for the public right of way, a Paseo Plan for Downtown, and prioritization of various sidewalk and intersection improvements that will enhance walking in Santa Barbara. The PMP will provide staff with a tool that can be used to apply for grants and special funding for pedestrian improvements. It will also guide public improvements that are often required in the land development process.

The document is currently in draft form and is being reviewed by the Transportation and Circulation Committee, and the Planning Commission. The final document is anticipated to be presented to the City Council in February 2005.

The draft plan can be viewed on the city's website at: http://ci.santa-barbara.ca.us/departments/public_works/transportation/alternative/index.html

Oak Park Neighborhood Traffic Management Program: Area residents attended the seventh neighborhood meeting last month to discuss the neighborhood traffic calming improvements that the residents have identified for inclusion in the Neighborhood Mobility Plan. The Mobility Plan identifies 30 locations throughout the neighborhood for improvement, and includes curb extensions at strategic locations to improve pedestrian crossing, a small number of mini traffic circles, and addition of bike lanes. The next neighborhood meeting will be on Nov. 16th at 6 p.m. in the Burtness Auditorium at Cottage Hospital. Residents will prioritize the improvements and be asked to finalize their Neighborhood Mobility Plan. For more information, visit www.oakparktrafficmanagement.org

West Nile virus threat averted as mosquito season ends: There have been no confirmed cases of a human contracting the virus in the city of Santa Barbara. This is due in part to the efforts of city staff in treating standing water areas for mosquito larvae on public lands. In addition, the Santa Barbara Coastal Vector Control District treated similar areas in the county. Statewide, at least 586 cases have been confirmed, with the number declining since late July and early August, according to state statistics.

Waterfront Department

2005 Annual Waterfront Parking Permit available beginning Dec. 1st: General Annual Waterfront Parking Permits can be purchased at any Waterfront Parking Kiosk, the Waterfront Business Office, or the Harbor Patrol Office for \$65 each. General Permits are designated with a red border. Slip-holder Annual Waterfront Parking Permits can be purchased for \$50 each only through the Harbor Patrol Office. Slip-holder Permits are designated with a blue border made available for harbor tenants and current slip-holders. This year's permit features a dolphin motif, and is valid until December 31, 2005.

Waterfront Parking Permits are good at all Waterfront Parking lots except for Stearns Wharf. For more Waterfront Parking Information call (805) 564-5523 or (805) 897-1965.

2004 Parade of Lights set for Dec. 5th: From approximately 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., the Santa Barbara Waterfront will be illuminated with a sea of lights at the 19th Annual Santa Barbara Harbor Parade of Lights. The parade's theme this year is "Diamond Skies and Silver Seas."

During this celebration of the holidays, spectators may view the parade from the beaches, Stearns Wharf, and Santa Barbara Harbor. Decorated boats of all shapes and sizes will motor across the waterfront from the harbor entrance down East Beach and back along Stearns Wharf for judging. The procession of lights will be followed by a fireworks display creating diamond skies over illuminated silver seas.

The parade will be preceded by activities for families and friends including a visit by Santa Claus, and a winter wonderland full of snow on the city pier in the harbor. The evening's festivities will conclude with an awards ceremony announcing the parade winners from five categories: Human Power, Sailboat, Fishing boats, Commercial Fishing, and Commercial Other.