



City Administrator's Report

May 2004

Dear Reader,

This monthly report from the City Administrator's Office 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:

May 4, 11, 18, 25 ▪ Santa Barbara City Council

Flags on State Street:

May 3 - 11 ▪ Pearl Chase Society (Preservation Week is 5/3 - 5/8)
May 11 - 25 ▪ Bike Week
May 25 - June 1 ▪ Memorial Day – American flags

Holidays:

May 9 ▪ Mother's Day
May 31 ▪ Memorial Day observed – City Hall will be closed

Community Events:

May 1 - 24 ▪ Employee Art Exhibit, Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center, 1118 East Cabrillo Blvd., (805) 897-1946
May 8 ▪ Water Awareness Month, city-hosted tours at noon of Alice Keck Park Memorial Garden, Low Water-Using Demonstration Garden, corner of Santa Barbara and Micheltorena Streets
May 15 ▪ Water Awareness Month, city-hosted tour at 9 a.m. of Charles Meyer Desalination Facility, 525 E. Yanonali Street
May 15 ▪ Family Service Agency's 21st Annual Children's Festival at Alameda Park, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., (805) 965-9001
May 19 ▪ Bike to Work Day, 7-9 a.m., (805) 961-8901

- May 27
- 2004 Downtown Art & Wine Tour, 5 - 9 p.m., (805) 962-2098, ext. 22, or www.santabarbaradowntown.com for tickets and information
- May 29 - 31
- I Madonnari Italian Street Painting Festival, Santa Barbara Mission lawn, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. FREE admission. Sponsored by the Children's Creative Project.

City Administrator

Tenet to relocate

In response to various corporate issues, Tenet Healthcare is departing the South Coast for Dallas, where it will consolidate operations. In earlier meetings with Mayor Blum, Tenet executives praised Santa Barbara's business climate. The company had also asked for and received the addition of direct airline flights from Santa Barbara Airport to Dallas/ Fort Worth, to accommodate frequent business travel by their employees.

"Inside Santa Barbara" on City-TV Channel 18

The May program is featuring: Oak Park Neighborhood Transportation Improvement Plan; Future Vision for the Lower Chapala Street Corridor; Youth Enrichment Adventures: The Mystery of Old Mission Creek at Bohnett Park Education Program; Parks and Recreation Department's Community Gardens Program; Santa Barbara Airport's New Non-stop Service to Dallas/Ft. Worth; and the 2004 Parade of Green Buildings. Weekly airtimes from This episode May 8th through June 5th: 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.

Environmental award

The California Association of Environmental Professionals has honored City-TV Production Specialist Chris Bell with its *First Place Award for Outstanding Media Coverage on an Environmental Topic*, for producing a series of video segments for "Inside Santa Barbara" about local green building efforts. Stop by and see the award in the City Hall Trophy Case. Congratulations Chris!!

Search for Parks and Recreation Director

The city is in the process of recruiting a replacement for Richard Johns, who retired as Parks and Recreation Director on April 30th. Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Nancy Rapp will serve as acting director, until the position is filled in July or August. City Administrator Jim Armstrong convened various focus groups with employees and community representatives to hear suggestions regarding the kinds of talents and skills they would like to see in the next director.

Civic leaders to propose pay increase for council members

A group of local civic leaders calling for pay raise for Santa Barbara's mayor and City Council members wants voters to decide the issue in November. The proposal would increase the mayor's annual salary from \$16,800 to \$52,000, and raise council members' annual salaries from the current \$9,600 to \$41,600, to reflect the area's median income.

LOCAL Initiative Campaign

On April 16th, over 1.1 million signatures were filed with county election officers statewide in order to qualify the Local Taxpayers and Public Safety Protection Act (the "LOCAL" initiative) for the November ballot. The LOCAL initiative is a ballot measure sponsored by local governments and their associations that, if passed by the voters, will amend the California Constitution to protect local government revenue from future state raids. Once the signatures have been certified by the Secretary of State (expected in June) the initiative will be qualified for the November ballot.

State Budget Update

As discussed in previous newsletters, the Governor's proposed budget includes a plan to use the Education Revenue Augmentation Fund (ERAF) to shift an additional \$1.3 billion of property taxes from local governments to schools, thus reducing the State's own school funding obligation. Recently, the Governor has had discussions with local government representatives about the proposed property tax shift. These discussions began shortly after local government sponsors of the LOCAL initiative (see above) submitted over 1.1 million signatures in support of the proposed ballot initiative.

Local government representatives have continued discussions with the Schwarzenegger administration about a two-year plan to help alleviate the State's financial crisis. The proposal would link an annual \$1.3 billion local government "contribution" for the next two years (total \$2.6 billion) with a proposed alternative constitutional amendment to protect future local government revenues, which the Governor would actively support.

The constitutional amendment would be built on the foundation of the LOCAL initiative, with the same or improved protections to local revenues and from unfunded mandates. It would be placed on the November 2004 ballot if passed by a 2/3 vote of the legislature. If it failed to receive legislative approval, the LOCAL initiative would still be on the November 2004 ballot.

Apparently, discussions in Sacramento include a reallocation of the proposed \$1.3 billion local government "contribution." The table below shows the original allocation of the local government shift as contained in the Governor's proposed budget released in January and the latest proposal.

As the table indicates, the Governor's original proposal placed the vast majority of the burden on counties. The latest proposal balances the allocation evenly between cities, counties and special districts, with redevelopment agencies taking a slightly smaller hit. As the table indicates, the proposed reallocation would mean a substantially greater hit to both the City of Santa Barbara's General Fund and our Redevelopment Agency. The overall loss to the City (General Fund and RDA) would increase by almost \$1.1 million. The latest proposal would mean a loss of almost \$2.4 million per year for the next two fiscal years.

	Governor's Budget	Latest Proposal	Increase (Decrease)
Cities	\$ 188,611,639	\$ 350,000,000	\$ 161,388,361
Counties	914,743,199	350,000,000	(564,743,199)
Special Districts	98,045,162	350,000,000	251,954,838
Redevelopment	135,000,000	250,000,000	115,000,000
Totals	<u>\$ 1,336,400,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,300,000,000</u>	<u>\$ (36,400,000)</u>
City of Santa Barbara			
General Fund	\$ 577,232	\$ 1,071,149	\$ 493,917
RDA	704,000	1,303,704	599,704
Totals	<u>\$ 1,281,232</u>	<u>\$ 2,374,853</u>	<u>\$ 1,093,621</u>

At this point, nothing is settled and discussions between local government representatives and the Governor's office are continuing. And any agreement between the Governor and local governments would still be subject to approval by the Legislature as part of the state budget process.

In summary, the situation in Sacramento is still very fluid and the financial risk to local governments as a result of the State budget crisis is still unsettled.

Airport Department

Impressive passenger count

During the 2004 first quarter, 180,319 passengers flew in and out of Santa Barbara Airport (SBA), a 10.2% cumulative increase over last year. The load factor for all flights to SBA's nine non-stops averaged 57% for the quarter. In March, 66,285 passengers arrived at and departed from SBA – a 12.7% increase over the same month last year. America West Express flights to Las Vegas had the highest average load factor for the month at 88%, followed by United Express flights to Denver at 79%, and America West Express Phoenix flights at 76%.

Aspiring aviators

One of the most popular Airport Visitor's Center programs is *Future Flyers*, an aviation education course for local sixth graders. This year, 130 students participated in *Future Flyers* by attending sessions, writing papers, and building model airplanes. The annual six-week course culminated with a model airplane flying contest to see which airplane could fly the furthest distance. General aviation pilots volunteered as judges, joining parents and teachers at the Visitor's Center for this special event.

On the road to improvement

The Firestone Road culvert project begins this month, replacing existing metal pipes that convey water from the west end of Firestone Road to Carneros Creek. New concrete converts will be constructed underneath the road with the capacity for a 25-year storm event. A portion of the road will be re-graded, and pavement will be replaced to meet new asphalt limits.

Flying Fortress is coming

The Experimental Aircraft Association's local chapter is hosting the B17 Flying Fortress visit of 'Aluminum Overcast,' May 14th -16th at Santa Barbara Airport – with access at 495 South Fairview Ave. The WWII bomber and "flying museum" will be available to the community for flights in the mornings, and ground tours in the afternoons. Ticket information is available at www.B17.org.

International recognition

Engineering Technician Lyn Story and Assistant Planner Sara Iza developed Geographic Information Systems (GIS) projects about Santa Barbara Airport's Step-by-Step GIS Implementation Program and Birdstrike Monitoring Project. Both have been asked to present their projects at the Earth Systems Research Institute International Users Conference in San Diego later this year. Other Airport projects utilizing GIS technology include the Pavement Maintenance Program, Utility Data Mapping, and Integrated Pest Control Management.

Community Development Department

Planning Commission projects

Under consideration this month by the Planning Commission will be a Concept Review of a proposed mixed-use project at 535 East Montecito Street, across from Casa de la Raza. Jointly proposed by the City Housing Authority and Bermant Development Company, this project would include 90 affordable condominiums and 8,000 square feet of commercial space. The M-1 Zone location makes it necessary to propose a Specific Plan to allow housing in this area.

The Arroyo Burro Creek Estuary and Mesa Creek Restoration Project will be considered for a Coastal Development Permit. The Commission will review a 19-room addition to the Harborview Inn at 29 State Street. Also, the Elings Park Expansion Project – which involves a new soccer field, an upgraded BMX track, a new community building, and other improvements, will be at the Planning Commission for a Scoping Hearing to determine the range of areas to be included in an Environmental Impact Report on the project.

Zoning changes for the "funk zone"

During a March public hearing, the Planning Commission discussed proposed changes to the Local Coastal Plan and zoning policies for the waterfront-area "funk zone." This area is generally bounded by Helena Avenue, Montecito Street, Garden Street, and Cabrillo Blvd., not including parcels fronting along Cabrillo. The changes would create an Ocean-Oriented Commercial zone (OC), and limit the potential for new hotels in the interior area of the Hotel and Related Commerce zone HRC-2).

OC includes ocean-dependent and ocean-oriented uses, commercial recreational uses, and arts-related uses. New residential uses would be allowed only in a mixed-use setting, and would be limited to a maximum of 70% of the total project floor area. Parcels in the area closest to Montecito Street will be given a combined HRC/OC designation, allowing both OC and HRC-2 usage.

The Planning Commission is recommending that restaurants be included as an allowed use in the OC zone, and that small hotels or bed-and-breakfasts be allowed in the OC zone below the railroad tracks – where residential is not permitted. The City Council is scheduled to hear this item on May 25th. The proposed changes will then be forwarded to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) for certification in June. Amendments will not become effective until certified by the CCC.

Finance Department

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT)

The table below shows that March TOT was up approximately 10.9% from March 2003, but still fell just short of returning to the March 2002 level. On the heels of February’s 14.1% growth, March was the second consecutive month of double-digit growth. Fiscal year-to-date growth is now at 4.2%, which is exactly our budgeted growth rate for this year.

	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%	\$696,742	1.7%
Dec	\$594,145	16.2%	\$539,598	-9.2%	\$529,694	-1.8%	\$553,094	4.4%
Jan	\$578,703	9.4%	\$511,090	-11.7%	\$583,413	14.2%	\$584,653	0.2%
Feb	\$628,764	9.4%	\$611,322	-2.8%	\$616,824	0.9%	\$703,493	14.1%
Mar	\$769,047	5.6%	\$783,829	1.9%	\$704,942	-10.1%	\$782,000	10.9%
Yr Total	\$7,505,883	9.8%	\$7,146,497	-4.8%	\$7,311,107	2.3%	\$7,619,938	4.2%

City Budget Update

The public hearings and City Council review of the proposed fiscal year 2005 budget have now begun. Public hearings on the budget, along with department presentations, will continue through June 8th. The proposed budget, along with the scheduled dates and times for the public hearings and department presentations can be found on the City’s website at <http://www.ci.santa-barbara.ca.us/departments/finance/budget/recommended/>.

Interested in a pocket size summary of the proposed budget?

The City of Santa Barbara Budget at a Glance Recommended Operating and Capital Budget for 2005 is available at:

http://intranet/departments/city_administrator/Internet_Posting/Budget_at_a_Glance/2005Budget_at_a_Glance.pdf

Fire Department

Bracing for fire season

Mutual aid agreements with South Coast Fire agencies, the state and federal governments have been finalized in preparation for the fire season. The agreements allow for assistance from other agencies in the event of a large emergency. Additional resources are deployed in response to wildland fires.

A Wildfire Education Outreach campaign on May 1st saw members of fire, law enforcement, the Red Cross, and citizen groups walking door-to-door in high fire areas to speak with residents about preparing for fire season – which officially began on May 3rd. The earlier start is due to the lack of rain this winter, and the hot, dry weather that has already occurred.

Road clean-up

Vegetation clearance along six miles of roadway began in March on Gibraltar, Las Canoas, El Cielito, and Tremonto Roads. Clearing the roads increases safety in high fire hazard areas by creating safer routes for emergency fire response and emergency evacuations.

Library Department

Surf the new website

Check out the Santa Barbara Public Library System's new website, at www.sbplibrary.org. Point-and-click your way to library locations, hours, children's services, search engines, online information services, your personal library account, the library catalog in English or Spanish, and browse around anytime day or night, 24/7.

Funds for new computers

The Santa Barbara Public Library System has received a \$42,563 grant from the Santa Barbara Foundation to replace aging computers. The grant plus matching funds from each of six Friends of the Library groups will replace 43 computers, and add 10 more workstations at the Central and Goleta branches.

Parks and Recreation Department

UV System removed from Arroyo Burro Project

Constructing an ultraviolet light (UV) system to reduce harmful bacteria in Arroyo Burro will not be considered with the proposed Arroyo Burro Estuary restoration project. Additional review, including an EIR, is needed and this would impact the timeline for completing the restoration project. The environmental and public review process calls for the city to further study the potential effects of the UV treatment on the endangered tidewater goby. To address this lack of information, it is proposed that baseline data be collected on the benthic macro invertebrate and tidewater goby populations in the estuary, and intensive DNA source tracking studies undertaken. This data as well as the evaluation of the Old Mission Creek/Westside Drain UV facility to be constructed this fall, will advance our knowledge of the role UV treatment can play

in improving water quality. By not proceeding with the UV system now, the City will forfeit its current eligibility for an \$800,000 state grant that was secured for installing the system and restoring Mesa Creek.

Earth Day outreach

About 200 people visited the Creeks Division booth during April's Earth Day celebrations, and learned about the various city projects underway in the city. Restoration posters and watershed maps detailed current and proposed projects, allowing participants to pinpoint specific areas of interest or get a big-picture overview of creeks activities.

Old Mission Creek celebration

The Creeks Division hosted a community celebration at Bohnett Park last month to herald the completed Old Mission Creek restoration. Close to 100 residents participated in a series of English and Spanish language workshops, where they learned about the native plants, water quality testing, how to reduce pollution, and help keep our creeks clean. Focused on children, the celebration activities included making new signs about the creek, which will be displayed through out the restoration site.

Park vandalized

Recent improvements at Bohnett Park were the target of vandals last month, who destroyed some of the new pathway lights, and defaced the new stairway with graffiti. Building Maintenance and Streets Division have since cleaned up the graffiti. The broken lights have been repaired for safety, and are expected to be replaced sometime this month at a cost of \$3,000.

Police Department

Railroad area clean-up

Last month's clean-up of the fenced area adjacent to the freeway and railroad property from Milpas Street to the Santa Barbara Zoo was a coordinated effort involving the city's Tactical Patrol Force, Streets Division, the Parks and Recreation Department, and Caltrans. Work crews removed excess vegetation to hinder the ability of illegal campers and drug users to conceal themselves in the area. This is part of an ongoing effort to clean up the East Beach and railroad corridor.

Job Fair

During the Santa Barbara City College Job Fair in April, Officer Anita Chamberlain and Human Resources Technician Suzie Gonzales discussed job opportunities at the Police Department, and at the city in general. About 20 students took job applications. In particular, many female students expressed interest in police work.

Busted on drugs

Three ounces of cocaine and \$1,600 were seized by the Santa Barbara Police Department Narcotic Unit, from a man who was on probation. During an earlier surveillance, the man was seen conducting narcotic deals. A traffic stop was conducted and after a brief struggle, the probationer was taken into custody with minor injury. Detectives who searched his vehicle and residence located more than three ounces of cocaine along with scales, packaging materials, and cash.

No escape

A male juvenile wanted by police jumped out of a second-floor window when Detectives Siegel and Holtk knocked on the door of his residence. Dropping 25-30 feet to the sidewalk, the juvenile tried to flee and got about 60 feet before collapsing in pain. He was transported to Cottage Hospital and treated for a broken left ankle and fracture to the right leg. The next day, he was released from care, but ordered into Juvenile Hall by his probation officer.

Public Works Department

Shoreline Drive park expansion

Hang on, we're almost there! After two-and-a-half months of construction, the Shoreline Drive Park expansion project is nearly done. Sidewalks, bike paths, brick pavers, access ramps, and paving are all complete and now the irrigation, landscaping, and sod work are being finished. All work should be completed around mid-May.

Micheltorena Street Bridge at Highway 101

The Caltrans Micheltorena Bridge Replacement project is very near completion. Project improvements include a new bridge, wider sidewalks, and pedestrian lighting. A Caltrans/City of Santa Barbara ribbon cutting ceremony is set for the morning of June 1st. Public announcements will be forthcoming with event details.

Sidewalk improvements

One of the goals of the city's Circulation Element is to improve pedestrian paths of travel throughout Santa Barbara. The City Sidewalk Improvement Project involves constructing 21,000 square feet of sidewalks, 23 wheelchair ramps, 1,100 feet of curb and gutter, plus other miscellaneous concrete improvements at various locations around the community. In addition, about 13,000 square feet of parkway area will be landscaped. Work begins this month, with completion anticipated July 2004.

Trash and recycling

A 20-year contract to haul and recycle the city's trash has been signed by the City of Santa Barbara and locally based MarBorg Industries. In keeping with state-mandated and company goals for recycling and diverting trash from the local landfill, MarBorg is planning to upgrade and improve its construction, demolition, recycling, and transfer station on Quarantina Street.

Waterfront Department

Sounds good to me

To improve the harbor area's cell phone reception, the Waterfront Department and Verizon Wireless are developing a telecommunication site at the harbor vicinity. Numerous locations have been discussed and analyzed with staff, Verizon representatives, and the city's Planning Division. The approved and permitted locations are the Waterfront Center Building for the antennae, and the Harbor Patrol impound yard for the equipment shelter. Project details were presented at a May 4th public forum at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum. Two representatives from Verizon Wireless and six city staff attended to discuss the project and answer questions. Harbor Commissioner Frank Kelly, and two members of the public (Maritime Museum staff), also attended.

Public Memorial for those lost at sea

It's been just over three years since Ted Cabugos disappeared at sea while kayaking off Leadbetter Beach. Since then, Mujiba Cabugos (Ted's sister) and her husband Patrick McAvoy have met with several city departments and advisory boards to discuss a proposed Lost at Sea Memorial, along with its proposed design and its proposed location at the end of the breakwater in Santa Barbara Harbor. The memorial will provide a unique and solitary place of reflection for those wishing to remember persons whose lives were lost at sea.

The project, which includes a memorial plaque on a dolphin bust and two whale's-tail viewing benches, received ABR Final approval on April 26th. Application is underway for a Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission, a process that requires the proposal to be reviewed by the city's Planning Division and approval by the Planning Commission. The department anticipates construction in May/June 2005.

\$1.5 million for Sea Center

Local resident and Beanie Baby tycoon Ty Warner has donated \$1.5 million for the new Sea Center on Stearns Wharf. The announcement came at the conclusion of a four-year fund-raising campaign for the marine science education facility currently under construction. The \$8.1 million Sea Center, the most visible part of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, will now be called the Ty Warner Sea Center. Mr. Warner, who owns the Four Seasons Biltmore Hotel, the Coral Casino Beach Club, the San Ysidro Ranch, and the Sandpiper Golf Course, is planning to attend the Sea Center's official opening early next year. The Sea Center will offer visitors opportunities to explore interactive exhibits featuring sea-life, tide pools, and other local marine-related displays.