



City Administrator's Report

February 2005

Dear Reader,

This monthly report from the City Administrator's Office will briefly summarize and provide updates on major activities, events, projects, and programs that impact the Santa Barbara community. Feel free to share your comments and suggestions with us.

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Key Meetings:

February 1, 8, 15 ▪ City Council

Holidays:

February 21 ▪ Presidents' Day (City Hall closed)

Community Events:

February 1-6 ▪ Santa Barbara International Film Festival continues, (805) 963-0023;
www.sbfilmfestival.org

February 7 ▪ Community Forum with Michael Dukakis, "Getting Commuter Rail On Track," Faulkner Gallery at Santa Barbara Central Library, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., RSVP to (805) 564-5385

March 9 ▪ "State of the City" address, Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort, (805) 965-3023, ext. 103

Flags on State Street:

February 1-7 ▪ Santa Barbara International Film Festival

February 7-21 ▪ Black History Month

February 21-28 ▪ American Red Cross

City Administrator

"Getting Commuter Rail On Track" community forum set for February 7th at the Santa Barbara Central Library, Faulkner Gallery: The City of Santa Barbara invites the public to join keynote speaker and former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, along with South Coast leaders at a forum on commuter rail for Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Topics include the national perspective, how other communities made it happen, the nuts and bolts of financing, and how commuter rail can merge with current transportation efforts. Registration is 8 -8:30 a.m. The program runs from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For reservations, please contact Anne Van Belkom at (805) 564-5385 or AVanBelkom@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Mayor Marty Blum will deliver the "State of the City" address on March 9th: This annual breakfast presentation at the Fess Parker Doubletree Resort will review the previous year's accomplishments and plans for the coming year. Contact Marcia Reed at the Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce at (805) 965-0323, ext. 103. Please make all reservations by February 15th.

Cynthia Rodriguez appointed city clerk manager on January 31st: Santa Barbara welcomes Cynthia (Cyndi) M. Rodriguez, who most recently served as Goleta's city clerk. Earlier, she spent 11 years with the Ventura city manager's office. Ms. Rodriguez is a certified municipal clerk and a graduate of California Lutheran University, with a B.S. degree in business management.

Fire negotiations completed: The city and the Santa Barbara Firefighters Association have reached a new, three-year labor agreement for fiscal years 2005 through 2007. The Firefighters Association voted to ratify the agreement at the end of January, and it is scheduled to go before the City Council for final ratification in February. The city administrator thanks all of the employees and management staff who worked to put this agreement together.

Other bargaining units: Negotiations between the city and the General Employees bargaining unit, the Treatment & Patrol bargaining units, and the Police Officers Association are continuing. Negotiations with the Supervisory Employees Association are just getting underway.

"Inside Santa Barbara" on City-TV Channel 18 – February edition airs February 5th through March 5th: Features include Water Supply Status, January Rain Storm Report, El Estero Capital Improvement Program, D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Graduation, Ray Strong: 100 Years of Art, MTD Valley Express, and the Santa Barbara International Film Festival. 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.

Neighborhood Improvement Program

Milpas Action Task Force: Operating guidelines adopted at a recent meeting allow the board to function in an orderly manner to accomplish the goals and objectives outlined in the Milpas Action Task Force report that was approved by the Planning Commission.

Community Gardens: Renovation of the Community Gardens is on schedule to be completed in June. Garden plot borders have been installed at the three sites, storage sheds have been delivered and will be permanently located as soon as weather permits, irrigation systems are being repaired, and information kiosks have been ordered. Pathway mulching and accessible planting areas will be undertaken beginning next month.

Airport Department

Security hold-rooms set for expansion – ‘band aid’ solution: Overcrowding continues to occur during peak travel times. To alleviate the cramped conditions there are plans this spring to increase the size of the hold-rooms by taking space from airline operating areas. Exacerbating hold-room constraints is the extensive square footage needed for post 9/11 security screening staff and equipment. Despite facility limitations, SBA’s on-time rating for departures in November 2004 was 90%.

Airport sponsored Adopt-A-School event at Isla Vista Elementary: An internationally renowned puppeteer gave two performances of an inspired adaptation of *Peter & the Wolf* for the entire student body of Isla Vista Elementary School on January 24th. The first-rate puppet shows were presented in association with the Children’s Creative Project, a local non-profit organization. As Isla Vista School’s partner in education, the Airport remains flexible in providing unique experiences for the students each year.

2004 passenger count is second highest in SBA’s history: Traffic increased close to 10% over the prior year. A near-record 823,935 passengers arrived at and departed from Santa Barbara Airport (SBA) last year, compared to the 1997 peak of 845,199. The introduction of two non-stop routes contributed to the passenger increase. *American Eagle* began service to Dallas/Fort Worth and *Horizon Air* reinstated service to Portland.

Airline Terminal Improvement Project stakeholder meetings begin this month: Airport staff and the URS Corporation project management team will present information for initial input from stakeholders. These project ‘kick-off’ meetings will focus on the process of developing a Program Criteria Document (PCD); i.e., the key elements for design of a new Airline Terminal complex. The PCD process enables the City Council, board and commission members, and affected users to have their concerns and needs addressed prior to design.

Community Development Department

Planning Commission:

- On March 31st, the Planning Commission will consider certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Veronica Meadows (900-1100 Las Positas Road) project. In a separate item following EIR certification, the commission will discuss the various issues around the proposed project and provide input to the applicant and staff regarding the appropriate direction for the project.
- On February 9th, the Planning Commission will participate in a special meeting, along with the City Council, the Airport Commission, the Architectural Board of Review, and the Historic Landmarks Commission regarding the future expansion of the Airline Terminal.
- On February 17th, the Planning Commission will hold a General Plan Update Trends & Issues discussion. Topics will include police, fire, solid waste, hazardous materials, public facilities, schools, and libraries.
- On February 24th, the Planning Commission will consider Airfield Drainage Improvements. The Airport Department has already made several improvements to the drainage system around and on airport property. This project represents the next phase, and will improve existing drainage facilities on the airfield. Like the other drainage improvements, this project will also enhance and restore the airport area wetlands. In addition, the Planning Commission may hear the proposed 10-unit condominium project at 210 Meigs Road, adjacent to Washington School, which also requires zoning, General Plan, and Local Costal Plan amendments to increase the allowed density.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Warner McGrew retires from 35-year career on April 1, 2005: Deputy Chief Mitch Vaughn will act as fire chief until a recruitment process is completed.

Firefighter recruits began 12-week academy training last month: For the second time, the training is being conducted as a "Multi-Agency Training Tower" along with 13 recruits from Santa Barbara County and two recruits from the City of Carpinteria. Holding a joint academy has proven very cost effective for all departments involved. The recruits will graduate on April 8th.

La Conchita response: Some of the worst obstacles and challenges have a way a bringing out the best in us as co-workers, family members, and human beings. The toughest problems command our immediate attention, like the devastating mudslide at La Conchita – where loved ones and homes were tragically lost, and lives were disrupted. Fourteen Santa Barbara City firefighters were part of an Urban Search and Rescue team, along with other area departments dispatched to La Conchita. We also commend city employee John Booth of the Public Works Department -- who resides in La Conchita -- for pulling two people to safety. John was shown on Channel 4 News immediately after the mudslide, wearing his city orange safety jacket during the search and rescue operation.

Disaster Preparedness classes are underway: Two new Community Emergency response Training (CERT) classes have begun. The first is a 12 week Spanish language class being held in combination with the Police Department's Citizens Academy. The class focuses on two main topics: how the Police and Fire Departments operate, and being prepared for a large disaster. The second class is a six-week English language course which prepares students to be self-sufficient in a disaster.

Fires ravage three homes: The fires occurred during the day when no one was home, so no injuries occurred. One home was a complete loss, and all contents of one apartment were destroyed. NONE of the homes had a working smoke detector.

Had these fires occurred at night while people were home, the fires may have had far more tragic consequences. Smoke detectors are an inexpensive way to save lives. Statistics state that 70% of all home fire deaths occur in houses with no working smoke detector. Please test your smoke detector(s) monthly and change the batteries when necessary.

Finance Department

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) for December was up 3.9%: December TOT continued its recent steady, moderate growth. The table below shows TOT was up about 3.9% from the prior December. Our fiscal year-to-date growth is 4.5%, which is slightly ahead of our 4% year-end projection.

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%	931,244	5.0%
Oct	790,919	-5.8%	830,054	4.9%	863,919	4.1%	914,718	5.9%
Nov	653,829	-5.4%	684,776	4.7%	696,742	1.7%	721,982	3.6%
Dec	539,598	-9.2%	529,694	-1.8%	553,094	4.4%	574,900	3.9%
FY Total	\$ 5,240,256	-5.2%	\$ 5,405,927	3.2%	\$ 5,549,792	2.7%	\$ 5,802,212	4.5%
Budget	\$ 9,779,115		\$ 9,974,700		\$ 10,273,900		\$ 10,684,900	

Note: This report includes only the 10% unrestricted General Fund TOT revenue. It does not include the additional 2% Measure B TOT which is credited directly to the Creek Restoration and Water Quality Improvement (Measure B).

Departments continue developing two-year financial plan for fiscal years 2006 and 2007: All department budgets are due to the Finance Department by February 18th. Department budget reviews with the City Administrator's Office and Finance Department will take place through March 4th, with the City Administrator's recommended budget scheduled to be filed with the City Council on April 12th. A nine-week review process of the recommended budget by the City Council, city boards and commissions, and the public will culminate in budget adoption, scheduled for June 21st.

FY2004 Comprehensive Financial Annual Report now available online: The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is the document that contains the City's audited financial statements. Finance Department personnel compile this yearly document which last year was awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Governmental Finance Officers Association.

The Fiscal Year 2004 CAFR was transmitted to the mayor, city council, and residents of the City of Santa Barbara on September 9, 2004 and received by the City Council at their November 23, 2004 meeting.

The electronic version of this document in this section is available for viewing and printing at <http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/Finance/CAFR/>. You must have Adobe Reader to view this PDF file.

For ease of navigation throughout this 148-page file, go to the Table of Contents, position your cursor over desired page, and left-click your mouse. This will automatically link you to the requested page.

Library Department

Library incorporates "Reach Out and Read" Program: The local "Reach Out and Read" (ROAR) program is part of a national organization addressing literacy issues by recruiting physicians to encourage young children to read. Beginning in the next month, Santa Barbara Public Library will take over responsibility for the local ROAR project, and will recruit and train volunteers to read to children in community clinic waiting rooms, select books to give to children, and work with doctors who will give each young patient a "prescription" for a daily 20-minute reading session with a parent and encourage them to get a library card. The children, parents, and clinic staff in this program have been very enthusiastic. Some children ask to go to the clinic for a story even when they don't need to see a doctor!

Parks and Recreation Department

Rose pruning success attributed to volunteers: Thanks to a huge turnout of volunteers and the return of beautiful weather to Santa Barbara, 80% of the 1,600 plants at the A.C. Postel Rose Garden were pruned on January 15th. Working alongside city parks staff and Santa Barbara Rose Society members, more than 80 volunteers received training in rose pruning. In addition, the Rose Society contributed 100 bare root Iceberg rose bushes to be planted in the next several months. Local nurseries also contributed 150 other bare root plants.

Open House Week at Carrillo Recreation Center (CRC) is well-attended: Despite the devastating rainstorm and cancellation of Monday classes due to its designation as a Red Cross Shelter, the CRC event offering free Parks and Recreation classes for the week of January 10-14 was a success. More than 70 new participants attended the evening Salsa class, and almost all other classes had a significant increase in attendees. Staff will determine how many new participants returned for the remaining six-week series offered at a discount to Open House guests.

Storm Damage as of January 19, 2005

PARKS:

Franceschi Park - Mission Ridge slope slippage
Skofield Park - Road erosion, bank slippage, undermining of banks and roads
Honda Valley - Trail erosion, sink holes, slope slides
Hidden Valley - Stream bank erosion
Parma Park - Trail slides and erosion
Cold Springs - Trail slides and erosion
Stevens Park - Trail slides and slope erosion
Mission Rose Garden - Masonry wall fell due to erosion
Chase Palm Park Expansion - Surface damage from flooding

RECREATION:

MacKenzie Park Youth Building - Offices flooded with one to two inches of standing water on the south and south-west sides of the building
Franklin Center - Water leak in the reception area of the Mental Health offices
Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center - Kitchen flooding, big leak in plaster wall and ceiling in two different places, leaking in storage area and from ceiling by east patio door
West Beach Wading Pool - Sewer backed up into the pool
Sports Fields - All playing fields flooded
Cabrillo Pavilion Bathhouse - Water under the weight room floor and one back office
Municipal Tennis Courts - Parking lot flooded (two- to three-feet deep), two inches of water on the floor of the building

Golf Course:

Lost 21 trees, pesticide shed roof blew off; maintenance shop flooded when water came through broken power conduit, several roof leaks at clubhouse and maintenance building.

Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center gets much-needed makeover: The historic Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center, a well-known and popular rental facility for wedding receptions, business conferences and nonprofit events, will be getting new carpeting this month in the ballroom, conference room, balconies, and offices.

Parks and Recreation to have booth at "Walk for Health" fair: Department staff will be handing out Activity Guides, the new city park maps, and flyers describing a variety of recreation programs at the "Walk for Health – Walk for Life" event at the Santa Barbara City College track on February 5th from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The event is cosponsored by California on the Move, the Diabetes Resource Center, and the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara.

Police Department

Arrest made in fatal hit-and-run case: Santa Barbara Police Department investigators arrested a local man in connection with the hit-and run death of Rafael Humberto Diaz, age 52. The 61-year old driver was arrested after appearing at the police station to obtain a release for his 2000 Honda Accord, suspected of being the hit-and-run vehicle. Investigators believe that the driver's car struck Diaz from behind as he walked along the south shoulder on Old Coast Highway. The Honda sustained moderate damage consistent with the nature of the collision. The suspect fled the scene and parked his damaged Honda in the Bird Refuge parking lot on Los Patos Way. In an attempt to throw off suspicion, the suspect and two accomplices staged a vandalism and vehicle theft incident. The driver then reported his vehicle as 'stolen.' Investigators determined the Honda was the suspect vehicle. After several hours of investigation and the serving of two search warrants, the suspect was arrested for vehicular manslaughter, felony hit-and-run, making a false report of a stolen vehicle, destruction of evidence, and parole violation. His two accomplices were arrested for criminal accessory and destruction of evidence. One of the men was also charged with parole violation. Detectives are seeking one other man believed to have assisted in staging the vehicle theft. Diaz's next of kin, a brother, has been contacted in Texas.

Twelve arrested for drunk driving; two are arrested for assaulting police officers: The three-day Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend was busy for the Santa Barbara Police Department. Officers and dispatchers handled calls ranging from stolen autos, driving under the influence, hit-and-run, and assaults on police officers.

Spanish Academy kick-off: The Police and Fire departments kicked off their 2005 Spanish Academy last month. Police Chief Sanchez and Fire Chief Wilkinson welcomed 18 participants to the program. The Spanish Language Citizen's Academy is designed to increase awareness of the Police Department's mission, and foster a closer working relationship between the Police Department and the Spanish-speaking community. Former students have given high marks to this outreach program, and are thus more likely to cooperate on community safety issues.

Public Works Department

Ortega Street pedestrian bridge getting a makeover: The much traveled pedestrian bridge at Ortega Street, over-crossing Highway 101, will soon have a new look. With the aid of a federal grant obtained with assistance from Rep. Lois Capps, the city is expected to soon award a construction contract to fabricate and install specially designed art elements throughout the bridge. These improvements will further enhance the corridor between Westside and Eastside neighborhoods. The art elements designed by a local artist illustrate native aloe plants, birds, and various archways. Construction is slated to begin in late February or early March.

Lake Cachuma fills: Storms during the first part of January were enough to completely fill Lake Cachuma, the city's primary water supply source. Gibraltar Reservoir is also full. As a result, drought is no longer a near-term concern on the South Coast. However, there will be future droughts and the city will continue to plan and operate its water supply system with that in mind. Water conservation is always a good idea, and city water customers are urged to continue efforts to use water efficiently. Our award-winning conservation program offers free water check-ups plus information about indoor and outdoor water savings. Call (805) 564-5460 or visit the city's website at www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov or Santa Barbara's regional water website at www.sbwater.org.

Cater Water Treatment Project is successfully completed, on-time, and on-budget: The William B. Cater Water Treatment Plant (Cater) built in 1964, treats drinking water for Santa Barbara, plus the Montecito and Carpinteria Valley Water Districts. Cater has a maximum production capacity of 37 million gallons per day, and an average production rate of 16 million gallons per day.

The major improvements and additions made to the plant during a 28-month construction project were completed without interrupting Cater's ability to supply drinking water to the community. They included:

- Replacing aging equipment
- Compliance with upcoming drinking water regulations and standards mandated by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act
- Increased reliability
- Increased systems efficiency
- Security updates to the entire water treatment operation

Arroyo Burro Estuary Restoration Project to begin this summer: The Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Division with assistance from the Public Works Department, will "daylight" Mesa Creek by removing an existing 300-foot long concrete culvert and excavating a new creek channel. The project will also expand the estuary, remove invasive non-native weeds, install more than 5,000 native plants, and construct trails and a footbridge over the new section of Mesa Creek. Restoration activities are scheduled to begin in July and be completed by December 2005.

Waterfront Department

Stearns Wharf Annual pile driving project begins this month: The project will replace 25 piles, one pile cap, four ladders, and 40 deck boards. Two addendums were prepared to include damage to the wharf as a result of the storms during the last week of December 2004 and the first week of January 2005. Daytime pile driving will occur between February 7th and 15th. The remainder of the contract period will allow for nighttime pile driving and will focus on those areas that would otherwise require closing the wharf to the public. The contract period ends on March 31, 2005, and will allow for any contract change orders that may be necessary if there is additional storm damage to the wharf. This year's cost estimate for the project is \$110,000.

March 2005 Annual Santa Barbara Whale Festival canceled: Reasons prompting the cancellation include the departure of Valerie Bohonus as chief event director for the festival, and the disbanding of its principal sponsor – the Beachside Business Merchants Association. The Santa Barbara Museum of History and Ty Warner Sea Center have been asked to assume the production role of the festival in the years to come. The awarded 2005 grant in the amount of \$10,200 from the city's Santa Barbara Community Events and Festivals Committee was earmarked for this year's event advertising. These funds will be rolled-over for the FY 2006 event.

Ty Warner Sea Center: Building construction work is on track and expected to be completed by the end this month. The installation of exhibits has begun and will continue into March. The public grand opening is tentatively planned for April 2nd.

First phase of harbor dredging completed in December 2004: The project began in November with AIS Construction, Inc dredging the federal channel, removing some 98,000 cubic yards of material – 20,000 cubic yards short of the Corps of Engineers estimate of available material. Storms during the last week in December 2004 and first week in January 2005 deposited additional material in the channel, but navigation was never impeded.

The second phase of dredging is scheduled to begin between February 20th and March 1st. Typically, 185,000 cubic yards of material is removed from the federal channel during the spring cycle. This number is expected to be larger because of the recent storms and infiltration of sediment. In consideration of the recent and severe coastal erosion, Waterfront staff and the Corps of Engineers will carefully analyze all of the potential discharge locations to determine the most appropriate areas to create beaches.

2005 On the Move Santa Barbara event set for February 5th: Everyone is invited to participate in On the Move by walking individually or in teams to promote health and wellness. The event takes place at the Santa Barbara City College La Playa Stadium from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with "track walks" at 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. For more information, call Brian Slagle at (805) 897-1962.