



City Administrator's Report

March 2005

Dear Reader,

This monthly report from the City Administrator's Office provides a brief summary and update of 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:

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 ▪ City Council

Community Events:

- March 4-6 ▪ Santa Barbara International Orchid Show, Earl Warren Showgrounds, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., (805) 687-0766, www.sborchidshow.com
- March 9 ▪ "State of the City" presentation, Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort, 7:30 a.m. (805) 965-3023, ext. 103
- March 20 ▪ 20th Annual Kite Festival, Santa Barbara City College, west campus lawn, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., (805) 682-2895 ext. 20
- March 25 – April 1 ▪ Hobie Tiger World Championships sailboat regatta, Leadbetter Beach, (805) 856-7774
- March 26 ▪ 2005 Eggstravaganza Easter egg hunt, Chase Palm Park and Franklin Elementary School, 10 a.m. sharp, (805) 564-5495

Flags on State Street:

- March 1-7 ▪ American Red Cross
- March 7-21 ▪ Navy League
- March 21-31 ▪ Whale Festival [Note: This year's festival is cancelled]

City Administrator

State of the City presentation on March 9th: Mayor Marty Blum will make this year's presentation during a breakfast sponsored by the Santa Barbara Region Chamber of Commerce at Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort.

Annual Advisory Board member meeting on March 30th: Issues pertinent to advisory board members will be reviewed from 4:30-6 p.m. at the Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center.

Subscribe to the City Administrator's Report online: Some of you who receive a hard copy of this report by mail may not realize that you can now subscribe to receive it electronically. The following link will take you to the log-in page on the city website, and from there you have options to opt-in or opt-out of lists, set the e-mail format, and reset passwords and change email addresses.

http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Government/E-Subscription/Esub_Userlogin.htm.

If you would like to be taken off the hard copy mailing list, please notify Mindy Jackson in the City Administrator's Office at (805) 564-5305.

Neighborhood Improvement Program

Community Development Block Grant funds of \$425,375 recommended for five neighborhood improvement projects in FY 2006: Funding recommendations for the Neighborhood Improvement Program to be considered by the City Council on March 15th include:

Clean and Safe Neighborhoods	\$ 64,225
Franklin Center/Library	\$ 42,000
Coronel Pocket Park	\$ 125,000
Ortega Park Improvements	\$ 85,000
Montecito Street Lighting	\$ 109,150

These projects and funds will allow us to further our neighborhood improvement efforts.

More grant funds for neighborhood improvements: The city could receive up to \$473,500 from the State Workforce Housing Incentive Grant Program (Proposition 46). These funds are being recommended for the additional neighborhood improvement projects listed below:

1. Montecito Street Pedestrian Lighting Improvement Project
2. Junipero Pedestrian Bridge Lighting Project
3. Punta Gorda Street curbs, gutters, and sidewalks

The City Council will consider this recommendation on March 8th.

Graffiti removal program to be considered by City Council on March 8th: Recommendations will include purchasing equipment and adding one full-time employee to remove graffiti throughout the city. We are working closely with Looking Good Santa Barbara on this project.

Abandoned shopping carts will be retrieved: The city has contracted with the California Shopping Cart Retrieval Corporation to remove abandoned shopping carts on our city streets. Carts retrieved will be returned to their owners or recycled. To report abandoned shopping carts, call (800) 252-4613.

“Inside Santa Barbara” on City-TV Channel 18: The March edition airs March 5th through April 6th. Features include the Street Tree Program, Re-visioning Goleta Valley, Police Activities League, El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant Fuel Cell Dedication, Cater Water Treatment Plant Capital Improvements, and Casa Esperanza Adult Education Classes. “Inside Santa Barbara” airs 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

January passenger count sets all-time record: Air traffic increased 16.5% over the same month in 2004. More than 65,000 passengers arrived at and departed from Santa Barbara Airport (SBA) in January, setting a record for the highest number of passengers for that month. The previous record for January was set in 1998, with just over 59,000 passengers. The addition of *American Eagle* service to Dallas/Fort Worth combined with the Hwy 101 closure accounted for the hike in traffic. Private aircraft usage at SBA also experienced significant increases during the highway closure.

Community Development Department

Redevelopment Agency reconsiders capital funding program: The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) board held a special meeting in January to re-examine currently approved capital projects, grants, and affordable housing funding, as well as identifiable future project opportunities. Through a process of carefully considering projects and priorities compared to total available funding of approximately \$67 million, the board has:

- Determined a capital improvement program of the highest priority projects
- Adjusted for inflation
- Committed approximately \$6.3 million of RDA non-housing funds to affordable housing activities, while identifying an additional \$4 million for opportunity property acquisition that could be used for housing sites
- Deferred consideration of community grants to the budget process for FY 2007, after the RDA has completed fund shifts through Education Revenue Augmentation Fund payments mandated by the state.

Cottage Hospital seismic rebuild project talks underway: Last month, the Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC) reviewed and considered the abandonment of the 2300 block of Castillo Street – proposed by Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital as part of their modernization and seismic compliance plan. The TCC unanimously voted to recommend to the City Council that they approve the abandonment. On March 22nd, the City Council and the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to receive staff and applicant presentations and information regarding the Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital project. At a subsequent Planning Commission hearing scheduled for March 24th, the Planning Commission will consider certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report and Development Plan approval for the project. In a separate City Council hearing on April 26th the City Council will consider approval of the Specific Plan, Development Agreement, Abandonment of Castillo Street (2300 Block), and final allocation of Economic Development (Measure E) square footage for the project.

Finance Department

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) for January was up 3.7%: January’s TOT continued its recent steady, moderate growth. The table below shows TOT was up about 3.7% from the prior January. Our fiscal year-to-date growth is 4.5%, which is slightly ahead of our 4% year-end projection.

	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%	575,075	4.0%
Jan	511,090	-11.7%	583,413	14.2%	584,653	0.2%	606,484	3.7%
Feb	611,322	-2.8%	616,824	0.9%	703,493	14.1%		
Mar	783,829	1.9%	704,942	-10.1%	782,652	11.0%		
April	822,209	1.5%	793,352	-3.5%	875,760	10.4%		
May	856,251	1.7%	817,047	-4.6%	895,378	9.6%		
June	1,012,905	0.0%	942,897	-6.9%	973,955	3.3%		YTD
FY Total	\$ 9,837,862	-3.3%	\$ 9,864,403	0.3%	\$ 10,365,683	5.1%	\$ 6,408,871	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).

Budget development continues on the city’s next two-year financial plan: The financial plan will cover fiscal years 2006 (July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006) and 2007 (July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007). All departments have now submitted their proposed budgets to the Finance Department, and reviews with the city administrator are underway. The financial plan is scheduled to be presented to the City Council on April 12th.

Fire Department

Fire Department is awarded a 2004 FIRE Act grant for \$272,861: These funds are primarily for personal safety equipment for firefighters. Among the items to be purchased are fire shelters, turnout coats and pants, personal alarm devices, and breathing apparatus upgrades. The grant is one of about 8,000 awards totaling \$750 million being given to fire departments nationwide by the Department of Homeland Security.

Library Department

Online visits to library are on the rise: The second quarter of fiscal year 2005 showed 33% growth in the number of visits to the Santa Barbara Public Library System website over the previous year. More than 126,500 hits were made to the website for information on branch locations and hours, to renew items, check the library catalog, look for programs for children, use online reference databases, or any number of other uses. Patrons are enjoying access to the library via the Internet for immediate information and often in place of a car trip to the building. Check it out at www.sbplibrary.org.

Parks and Recreation Department

Bring your kids to the citywide Easter egg hunt: The 46th Annual Eggstravaganza is scheduled for March 26th at Franklin Elementary School, 111 East Mason Street, and Chase Palm Park – starting at 10 a.m. sharp for families with toddlers to 9-year-olds. At Chase Palm Park, kids will enjoy Dynojump inflatables, clowns, face painting, and pictures with the Easter Bunny. Only one hunt is scheduled at the school. Hunts at the park run every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Staff and camp counselors will be on hand to talk about all the summer youth camps, clinics, and programs, and to answer questions about camp registration day and procedures.

Spring & Summer Activity Guide available March 25th: City residents should check their mailboxes between March 25th and April 1st for the new, *Parks & Recreation Activity Guide*, which will be delivered for the first time via postal route throughout the city of Santa Barbara. The guide contains information on summer camps and sports clinics plus a wide variety of activities for all ages offered by the Parks and Recreation Department – including many new classes for youth and adults. The *Activity Guide* can also be accessed online at www.sbparcsandrecreation.com, and at all Parks and Recreation Department administrative offices beginning March 25th.

Franceschi Park Garage razed due to unsafe conditions: A building permit was acquired through the Building and Safety Division, authorizing the demolition.

Volunteers help with hand weeding at Shoreline Park: Last month, 24 adults and children (volunteers from Jang's Karate Center, Soo Bahk Do instructors and students) spent time clearing weeds from Shoreline Park. Earlier, the school had called the Parks and Recreation Department office asking for a community project for which they could volunteer their time.

Sidewalk repair scheduled for Shoreline Park this month: Contractor Bob Trautz will be busting out sidewalks and reinstalling new concrete walks at the park. This sidewalk repair is part of the city's Integrated Pest Management plan to slow down creeping weeds and grasses which intrude into planter beds.

Local students appointed to Jr. NBA/WNBA All-Region Team: Briana Lopez (Santa Barbara Jr. High) and Chris Petetan (Franklin School) were named along with three others at half court prior to the Clippers/Warriors game at Staples Center on January 29th. Briana plays in the Junior After-School Sports Program, and Chris competes in the Elementary School Blacktop Basketball League. Both programs are co-sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Old Mission Creek at Bohnett Park wins award: The Creeks Division has been awarded the 2004 Park Planning Award from the California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS), District VIII, for the restoration of Old Mission Creek at Bohnett Park. In seeking applications for the Park Planning award, the CPRS was looking for planning and design of parks that promote participation in recreation, strengthen community ties, increase safety and security, protect environmental resources, and facilitate community problem solving. The restoration of Old Mission Creek at Bohnett Park is the first project in a long-term effort to restore and revitalize creeks throughout the City of Santa Barbara.

Police Department

Dog finds new owner: Chico, the elderly Yorkshire Terrier beloved by fatal hit-and-run victim Rafael Diaz, has been placed in a new home. Numerous people offered to take the dog. Highly recommended by a local veterinarian, the anonymous new owner prefers helping elderly animals live their last few years in comfort. Chico will be well cared for with plenty of love. The man accused of killing Diaz and fleeing the scene remains in custody, pending trial.

City Hall bomb suspect arrested and charged: A loud explosion was heard throughout De la Guerra Plaza on February 10th. There was no injury or damage, but the blast concussion activated the alarm to a nearby parked vehicle. Investigating officers examined plastic shrapnel shards and determined the explosion to be from a 'dry-ice' bomb, constructed inside a sealed two-liter soda bottle. This home-made bomb qualifies as a destructive device, and is capable of causing serious bodily injury within a radius of about thirty feet. Minutes prior to the blast, off-duty SBPD Officer Chris Payne was at De la Guerra Plaza. He saw a man step away from a group of people in the plaza and place a soda bottle on the ground adjacent to the front steps of City Hall. The man acted suspicious, and quickly left the area. Two minutes later the bottle exploded. Officer Payne realized he had just witnessed the suspect commit the crime. By then the suspect had left the area and could not be located. Three days later, Officer Payne spotted the suspect walking in the 900 block of Chapala Street. He arrested the 19-year-old homeless man who often hangs out at De la Guerra Plaza. The suspect made several statements that

linked him to the bombing. There is no information that the bomb placement was politically motivated, or directed at a specific person. The man was booked at Santa Barbara County Jail for the felony charge of possessing a destructive device. He also had an outstanding warrant stemming from marijuana use. Bail was set at \$50,000.

Citizens queried for SBPD live: Officers Rick Alvarado and Jeff Hill video-taped interviews with citizens on a downtown street corner for use in an upcoming episode of "SBPD Live." The citizens asked questions about the law, police procedures, and community safety. These interview clips will be broadcast on the show, and the officers will also answer questions live. The 10 participating citizens asked great questions that will help educate viewers. As a result of the project's success, additional interviews will be conducted at various locations throughout the city.

Waterfront Department

Harbor Patrol rescue: On February 21st, Harbor Patrol Officers Jan Martinez and Rick Hubbard responded to a distress call from the sailing vessel *Four Sail* – risking their lives to save the life of another at sea, in the most extreme conditions. Officers Martinez and Hubbard's courageous actions and professional handling of this rescue was in the highest tradition of the Santa Barbara Harbor Patrol and marine lifesaving. Adding to fierce weather conditions and violent seas, the 55-year-old male victim was disabled, with only one leg and no prosthesis.

After receiving verbal guidance from the officers, the victim jumped from the doomed vessel into the sea. Hubbard threw him a life-ring before diving into the sea himself. Officer Hubbard then safely swam the victim 700 yards through high seas, a debris field of logs, bamboo, tree burls, and a pounding shore-break, to the beach. The victim was taken to Cottage Hospital and released later that morning. His vessel ran aground on East Beach.

4th Annual Sea Festival set for April 9th and 10th: Santa Barbara Maritime Museum is hosting the festival to celebrate and showcase the visiting tall ship, *The Spirit of Dana Point*. The unique ship will be moored in Santa Barbara Harbor for the Tall Ship Overnight Education Program hosted by the Maritime Museum, in collaboration with the Ocean Institute of Dana Point. Public dockside tours are planned aboard the tall ship during Sea Festival weekend. The festival will include several other exciting and dynamic maritime activities, including a remotely operated vehicle, hardhat diving demonstrations, docent-led tours of the museum, craft activities, marine life touch tank, local exhibitors, storytelling, and more. For information, call the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum Admissions Store at (805) 962-8404 ext. 115.

Rain interrupts Stearns Wharf annual pile driving project: The Stearns Wharf Annual Pile Driving Project began on February 1st and has been delayed three weeks due to recent storm activity. The project will replace 25 piles, one pile cap, four ladders, and 40 deck boards. Wharf storm damage repairs have been included in the scope of this year's project. Night work pile-driving will finish on March 4th, and the project's total completion is anticipated the week of March 14th. This schedule will allow for any contract change orders that may be necessary if additional storm damage to the wharf occurs. The estimate for this year's Stearns Wharf Pile Driving Project is \$110,000.

Public Works Department

News from El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant: The fuel cell installed to provide electricity to the El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant is in its initial operational phase. Up to 500 Kilowatts per day are being generated for plant use, as well as for heating the digesters. The company operating the fuel cell is still working out minor problems, but the system should provide about half of the electricity demand at the El Estero facility. A dedication ceremony was held at the plant last month.

In addition, a project to downsize the blowers with a new blower that requires about half the energy is nearing completion. Blowers are used to supply air to support the microorganisms in the activated sludge process.

Despite almost a week of rain in January, the wastewater collection system performed fairly well until the morning of January 10th. On that day, extremely heavy rains caused flooding and the system experienced spills at various locations around the city. Staff have noticed improvements in the way the system responds to storms and believe that the ongoing program of rehabilitation and replacement of the sewer lines is beginning to have an effect.

Looking Good Santa Barbara announces First Annual Spirit of Service Community Recognition Program: The program was created to honor individuals and entities for their outstanding ongoing efforts to promote effective recycling practices and eliminate visual pollution such as graffiti and litter. The winners honored at the March 3rd luncheon included:

Recycler of the Year: Cottage Hospital Recycling Committee

Outstanding Neighbor- Graffiti & Litter Abatement: Joan Livingston and Jean Olson

Outstanding Neighbor - Recycling: Christine Cunningham

Outstanding Public Employee - Graffiti & Litter Abatement: James Russell

Outstanding Public Employee - Recycling: Kenneth Ficklin

Outstanding School Project - Graffiti & Litter Abatement: Santa Barbara High School

Outstanding Educational Program – Recycling: Gevirtz Research Center Youth
Enrichment Adventure

Outstanding Police Officer - Graffiti Abatement: Officer Bryan Jensen

Outstanding Reporter - Graffiti Abatement & Recycling: John Palminteri

Outstanding Business Recycling Program: Santa Barbara Hotel Group

In keeping with the spirit of the event, each honoree received an engraved award made of recycled glass. Additionally, 27 Santa Barbara residents received a framed certificate of commendation to acknowledge their efforts to keep Santa Barbara looking good. Visit www.lookinggoodsb.com, or contact Executive Coordinator Lorraine Cruz Carpenter at (805) 386-2361 or e-mail cruz.carpenter@verizon.net.