



City Administrator's Report

September 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:

- September 13, 20, 27 ▪ City Council meets at 2 p.m. (depending on duration, an evening session at 6 p.m. may follow)

Holidays:

- September 5 ▪ Labor Day Holiday (City Hall will be closed)

Community Events:

- September 17 ▪ Day of Caring, Ben Page Youth Center, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., (805) 564-5431
- Coastal Clean-up Day, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., (805) 882-3602, www.lessismore.org/Programs/coastal_cleanup.html
- September 18 ▪ Free Sandcastle Building Workshop, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. @ East Beach (by Cabrillo Arts Pavilion), (805) 966-3979 www.sandcastlefestival.com/workshop.htm.
- Organic Festival, Alameda Park, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., (805) 965-4491, www.organicfestival.com

- September 22

 - Santa Barbara County Horticultural Society Plant Sale, MacKenzie Park, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., (805) 684-5725, www.pacifichorticulture.org/calendar.html
- September 24

 - Old Town Harvest Festival, 5-9 p.m., (805) 962-2098, ext. 22, www.santabarbaradowntown.com/staticpages/107/do_events.cfm
- September 24-25

 - 7th Annual Book & Author Festival, De la Guerra Plaza, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., (805) 962-9500, www.sbbookfestival.org/
- September 24-25

 - 17th Annual Santa Barbara Artwalk, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, (805) 682-4711 ext. 181, www.sbnature.org/artwalk/
- September 25

 - Sandcastle Festival hosted by Citizens Planning Association and Citizens Planning Foundation, East Beach, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., (805) 966-3979, www.sandcastlefestival.com
 - Gay Pride Festival, East De la Guerra Street, www.SBpride.org

Flags on State Street:

- September 1-6 ▪ United Way
- September 6-12 ▪ American (for September 11th Tribute)
- September 12-26 ▪ UCSB
- September 26-30 ▪ Ensemble Theatre

City Administrator

“Inside Santa Barbara” on City-TV Channel 18: The September edition airs September 7th through October 8th. Feature segments include the visit of the USS Ronald Reagan, Westside Community Clean-Up, Ortega Park Mural Restoration, Community Gardens Update, and a water wise website at www.sbwater.org. “Inside Santa Barbara” weekly air times 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.

Westside clean-up tackles 65 city blocks: On August 20th, the city's Looking Good Santa Barbara Committee brought together 12 local churches, Westside neighbors, Allied Waste Industries, the Streets Division (including the use of SWAP workers), and Police Department to create the largest clean-up effort to date. Approximately 65 city blocks on the Westside were targeted and a total of 452 volunteers participated in the event. The result was 3.7 tons of trash, and 5.7 tons of green waste, plus one ton of recyclables for a total of 10.4 tons of waste cleared out of Westside neighborhoods! In addition, 80 shopping carts were retrieved, 5,000 residences received the hotline flyer, and two large homeless encampments were cleared out.

Loma Alta/TV Hill cleanup now completed: A biological assessment was conducted and erosion control measures are now in place. On August 25th, fence materials were delivered to the site and according to the contractor, installation will take approximately 40 working days.

Private security hired by the Dreier Group continues to patrol the area on a weekly basis. Dave Beard of the Dreier Group reported that they have not seen a recurrence of the trespassing and camping on the property. The city is pleased to acknowledge property owner Chad Dreier for taking positive action as a good neighbor. He is responsible for all of the clean-up, security, and fencing of the property. Immediately after purchasing the property and for the last three months, Mr. Dreier and his staff have worked cooperatively to abate the hazards on the property and resolve longstanding neighborhood concerns. Not including brush, approximately 92 tons of garbage was removed from the hillside. These efforts will help to reduce the risk of wildland fires, discourage trespassing and related illegal activity while improving the overall image and visual appeal of the area. To date, the clean-up and fencing costs alone have totaled approximately \$300,000.

Ordinance Committee considers living wage: A Living Wage proposal is being considered by the Ordinance Committee and would apply to service contractors who perform \$15,000 or more in business with the city each year. Under the draft ordinance that is currently being considered by the Ordinance Committee, employees who are offered no benefits, must be paid a minimum of no less than \$14 per hour. The Ordinance Committee will make final recommendations at its September 13th meeting, which will be reviewed by the Finance Committee for analysis on the impacts on the budget.

Airport Department

Goleta Slough mosquitoes test positive for West Nile Virus (WNV): The Airport quickly responded to combat human exposure to the virus, and is working with the Santa Barbara Coastal Vector Control District through ongoing, enhanced mosquito abatement and treatment in and around the slough. Additionally, Airport staff, tenants and contractors were notified of the presence of the virus and provided with information on how to avoid mosquito bites and possible exposure to WNV. Prevention information is available on the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/>.

Airport GIS uses continue to increase: The Airport Department began using a Geographic Information System (GIS) in the year 2000 for several applications including airport operations analyses, noise complaint tracking, and bird-strike tracking. Two recent applications were developed by Airport staff that have further improved operations: 1) the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Tracking System; and, 2) the Property Management Tracking System. In late 2004, staff created an IPM project in *ArcView*, a software program, which is being tested as a tool to track IPM efforts at the airport by integrating Pest Treatment Record data with existing Airport GIS data. The IPM GIS project provides a visual means for displaying locations and tracking less toxic efforts and pesticide usage. The Property Management GIS project allows a user to view a map of the airport with all property management data, thus streamlining the property management process and improving management capabilities.

Contract awarded for Airfield Drainage Project: The City Council approved a \$1,262,317 construction contract on August 16th for Lash Construction to make the existing airfield drainage system more efficient and reduce impacts to airport operations during heavy rains. After several flood events in the 1990s, the Federal Aviation Administration funded a drainage study to determine if it was feasible to provide better flood protection for airport facilities. Study results indicated that the drainage system could be improved by increasing pipe sizes and slopes, changing from rough pipe (corrugated metal pipe) to smooth pipe, making modifications to inlet and outlet structures, and installing two new segments of storm drain pipe. This project is scheduled for completion in December.

New taxiway 'M' to be constructed: The project also includes a new service road and a public access area (overlook) for viewing the Goleta Slough. The contract was awarded to Granite Construction for \$4,405,815 to complete the work by year's end. The new taxiway, parallel to runway 15R-33L, will provide enhanced circulation of aircraft to and from runways 15R-33L and 15L-33R. The Slough Overlook, required by the Coastal Commission, will be an area where the public can park, walk on a short path, read interpretive signage, and observe portions of the Goleta Slough. The east service road will connect two existing service roads and bypass an aircraft parking ramp. This will move vehicular traffic off of the aircraft ramp, which is a much safer condition.

Airport Terminal Improvement Project update: Development of the Airline Terminal Improvement Project Program Criteria Document (PCD) continues. On August 24th, the Airline Terminal Design Sub-Committee comprised of members of the Architectural Board of Review, Airport Commission, Historic Landmarks Commission, and Planning Commission met to review a conceptual site plan for the Terminal complex that will be included in the PCD. The sub-committee will meet again on September 21st. The PCD will be reviewed by the various boards and commissions this fall prior to consideration by the City Council. A design team for the project will be selected in early 2006.

Community Development Department

Pending: New design review requirement for two-story homes: After considering a concept for a potential interim update to the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO), the City Council last month voted to refer the matter to the Ordinance Committee for further consideration. While the Single Family Design Guidelines (SFDG)/NPO Update work program is taking longer than anticipated, the process has identified a general preference in the community for all two-story homes to undergo design review. The interim ordinance is intended only to apply to single-family home projects more than 17 feet tall that would represent a 50% increase in size since 1992. A tentative Ordinance Committee hearing date has been set for September 27th, after which final City Council action will be required.

Applicants with single-family home projects designed to be exempt from design review per the current NPO (including NPO Checklist Item #13 exemptions) must submit a complete application for a building permit by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, September 30th. Otherwise, such projects may be subject to design review, pending final City Council action on this interim ordinance. An interim ordinance would remain in effect until the estimated summer/fall 2006 completion date of the entire NPO Update. A proposed date of October 1st would allow

architects and applicants who have already prepared architectural drawings a reasonable amount of time to apply for a building permit application.

To receive e-mail notifications regarding the SFDG/NPO Update process, please contact Heather Baker at hbaker@santabarbaraca.us. For more information, see: <http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Community/Planning/NPO.htm>.

Planning Commission update: Planning Commission regular meetings are scheduled for September 8th, 15th, and 22nd, along with special meetings this month. Highlights:

- September 8th – The Planning Commission and City Council will hold their semi-annual joint work session from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. on the Planning Division Work Program. The primary focus will be on the next phase of the General Plan Update 2030. The meeting will be held in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room.

At 6 p.m., in the Council Chambers, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to take comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Cottage Workforce Housing Project. Written comments will be accepted until September 23rd, and should be addressed to Irma Unzueta, Project Planner, City of Santa Barbara Planning Division, P.O. Box 1990, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.

- September 12th – The Planning Commission and City Council will hold a joint meeting from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, regarding undergrounding utilities.
- September 22nd – The Planning Commission and the Transportation and Circulation Committee will hold a joint meeting to discuss the latest information on the 101 in Motion project. That meeting will be held at 6 p.m. in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, following the regular Planning Commission meeting.

Fire Department

Proceeds from “The Fire Ball” fundraiser provide new equipment: In the interest of helping to provide a higher level of service to the community, the Santa Barbara Firefighters Alliance has donated a Bullard T3 Max Thermal Imaging Camera, three HotSticks, and a Delsar Life Detector Four Sensor System to the Fire Department. The Alliance is a local non-profit that, through equipment donation, is attempting to maximize efficiency, safety, and support the welfare of firefighters

The Thermal Imaging device makes it possible to see through smoke and darkness to locate victims and the source of fires. HotSticks are used to determine if an area is free of potentially dangerous electrical hazards in suspected locations. The Life Detector detects signs of life from extremely small vibrations and will aid fire/search and rescue crews in locating victims.

New defibrillators purchased: Fire Department personnel recently completed training on new, automatic external defibrillators. The new machines are replacing older equipment and have been placed in service at all fire stations. Defibrillators deliver electronic shocks to the heart to try to establish a normal heart rhythm.

USS Ronald Reagan vs. SBFD: Softball games were organized between navy personnel and firefighters during the recent visit by the USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier. Following the games, a BBQ was held with plenty of good food and music. A fun time was had by all, and the men and women sailors were very appreciative. The Commanding Officer of the ship promised they would be back and they will look forward to spending time with us again.

Finance Department

July Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) up 13.5%: July continued the recent strong growth in TOT with a 13.5% increase over the prior July.

	FY 2003	Change from Prior Year	FY 2004	Change from Prior Year	FY 2005	Change from Prior Year	FY 2006	Change from Prior Year
July	\$ 1,183,951	1.1%	\$ 1,198,952	1.3%	\$ 1,301,652	8.6%	\$ 1,477,000	13.5%
Aug	1,328,278	4.1%	1,349,990	1.6%	1,357,717	0.6%		
Sept	849,174	5.0%	887,095	4.5%	931,244	5.0%		
Oct	830,054	4.9%	863,919	4.1%	914,718	5.9%		
Nov	684,776	4.7%	696,742	1.7%	721,982	3.6%		
Dec	529,694	-1.8%	553,094	4.4%	575,075	4.0%		
Jan	583,413	14.2%	584,653	0.2%	606,484	3.7%		
Feb	616,824	0.9%	703,493	14.1%	699,349	-0.6%		
Mar	704,942	-10.1%	782,652	11.0%	872,554	11.5%		
April	793,352	-3.5%	875,760	10.4%	941,281	7.5%		
May	817,047	-4.6%	895,378	9.6%	1,001,450	11.8%		
June	942,897	-6.9%	973,955	3.3%	1,157,985	18.9%		
FY Total	\$ 9,864,403	0.3%	\$ 10,365,683	5.1%	\$ 11,081,490	6.9%		
Budget	\$ 9,974,700		\$ 10,273,900		\$ 10,684,900		\$ 11,504,200	

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).

Library Department

Adult Literacy Program and Verizon promote literacy awareness: The Santa Barbara Public Library received a \$6,000 grant from the Verizon “ProLit” project in order to raise public awareness of literacy issues and to invite volunteers to join the tutoring team. The Library Department’s Adult Literacy Program will be placing ads on the interior and exterior of MTD buses during September, and delivering door-hanger information pieces in some areas of the community. Also, a panel of literacy tutors and adult learners will talk about how “A Library Changed My Life” at the Central Library Faulkner Gallery on Thursday, September 8th at 7 p.m. Everyone is invited.

Downloadable audiobooks debut September 1st: Beginning this month, patrons of the Santa Barbara Public Library System will have access to 800-plus audiobook titles – with more added each month – that can be downloaded from the library website, <http://www.sbplibrary.org>. Look for the banner at the top of the library homepage announcing the new service, and click on that link for instructions on creating an account, plus information about the new service. Books and a large selection of language-learning guides can be downloaded for a three-week period,

renewed once if desired, and then “returned” (become unplayable). There’s nothing to bring back to the library, so there are no overdue fees! Once downloaded, these digital books can be played on any desktop or portable device that supports Windows Media Player, including portable music players, media centers, pocket PCs, and even some smart-phone devices.

Santa Barbara Reads! kicks off at September 24th festival: The Santa Barbara Public Library System announces, “**When the Emperor Was Divine**” by Julie Otsuka, as the 2005 Santa Barbara Reads! program selection. The program will kick off at the Santa Barbara Book and Author Festival on Saturday, September 24th, and run through November 4th. Ms. Otsuka’s novel tells a spare and evocative tale of a Japanese-American family forced to leave their home in the Bay area for a WWII internment camp. The author will speak about her work and her family at the festival on September 24th. Other Santa Barbara Reads! events include a panel discussion at the Central Library Faulkner Gallery on October 19th at 7 p.m., and a screening of the documentary film, “**Rabbit in the Moon**” on November 4th at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. For complete information, visit <http://www.sbplibrary.org/sbread>.

Parks and Recreation Department

Staff to be honored at Santa Barbara Beautiful Award on September 25th: The 2005 Jacaranda Award for Outstanding Community Service will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Department staff at the Santa Barbara Beautiful Awards Ceremony at the Lobero Theater. Special guest host Huell Howser, producer and host of the popular *California Gold* series on PBS, and Mayor Marty Blum will present the award. – honoring “the hard work and dedication of parks staff to keep public open spaces attractive and accessible, taking into account the challenges of staff reductions, budget cutbacks and increased park maintenance efforts due to reduction and elimination of pesticides.” Tickets are \$40 per person for the courtyard reception (4-5 p.m.) and ceremony (5 p.m.), or \$20 for the ceremony only. Please call (805) 965-8867 or e-mail info@sbbeautiful.org.

Free classes week at the CRC kicks off with Carrillo Courtyard renovation celebration: A celebration to mark the completion of the Carrillo Recreation Center courtyard is scheduled for Monday, September 19th at 2 p.m. Parks and Recreation Department staff, Mayor Blum, Park and Recreation commissioners and others will attend. Monday is also the first day of the Center’s Open House Week offering free beginning classes to the public from Monday, September 19th to Friday, September 23rd. Open House Week is an opportunity for anyone – kids, teens, and adults – to sample many dance, fitness, and cultural arts classes at the Carrillo Recreation Center before signing up for the new fall sessions. For a complete list of the free classes offered, see the “Fall & Winter Activity Guide,” or visit www.sbparcsandcreation.com/openhouse.

Mural restoration at Ortega Park to be celebrated: A grand opening to honor the completion of the mural restoration at Ortega Park will take place on Wednesday, September 21st from 11 a.m. to noon. The restoration provided an opportunity for artists, youth, and community organizations to come together in the name of art and community. The project was funded in part by the Community Arts Grant Program using funds provided by the County of Santa Barbara in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission as well as Community Development Block Grants. In addition to talking about the mural project, recent Ortega Park improvement projects to improve safety and visibility will be explained.

Parks and Recreation Department to co-sponsor 2005 Organic Festival: This year's Organic Festival will take place at both Alice Keck Park Memorial Garden and Alameda Park on Sunday, September 18th. This is the fifth year that the Pesticide Awareness and Alternatives Coalition (PAAC) have produced this free community event, and the second year that the Parks and Recreation Department has been a co-sponsor. Proposed activities include park tours showcasing pesticide-alternative methods, lectures, music, entertainment, delicious organic food, plants, samples, raffle items, organic-product vendors, and community organizations, a magical area for children, and a pesticide-free Kid's World. Volunteers interested in helping to organize the event organization may contact Estelle Foster, PAAC at (805) 965-4491, or estelle2@cox.net.

City employees will lend a helping hand at the 14th Annual United Way Day of Caring on Saturday, September 17th from 8 a.m.-1 p.m.: Each year the city's employees join hundreds of other volunteers from local companies and organizations to give a few hours of community service to help make Santa Barbara a better place. After a breakfast and rally at the Ben Page Youth Center, volunteers head to their assigned work sites. This year, city employees will work at one of three locations: cleaning, painting and gardening at Ortega Park Welcome House, St. Vincent's, or one of the Housing Authority complexes.

Police Department

Police report a calmer Fiesta this year: There was a marked reduction in the number of significant crime problems and police enforcement.

- **Preliminary Enforcement Figures:** Felony arrests fell by 37%, misdemeanor arrests with jail booking fell by 40%, and driving under the influence arrests fell by 30%. In contrast, citations for traffic violations and low-level misdemeanor incidents rose by 26% and 60%, respectively. These increases reflected SBPD's policy of maintaining a high-profile presence, and addressing small problems before they escalated.
- **Significant Assault Cases:** Unlike any Fiesta in memory, serious assault cases did not dominate police resources. The worst incident was a 14-year-old gang member arrested for stabbing another 14-year-old boy. In another incident, an intoxicated 22-year-old man was arrested for inflicting a minor stab wound to a security guard. In the last case, a 20-year-old man leaving a dispute was arrested for trying to run down two pedestrians who stumbled on the scene.
- **Anecdotal Statements:** Officers working reported smaller and better behaved crowds on State Street. Alcohol related incidents remained the number-one enforcement problem. Officers credit the smaller crowds, additional lighting, and pro-active contact as significantly reducing the perceived tension. For the vast majority of attendees, Fiesta 2005 was a festive and enjoyable occasion.

Forgery cases and arrests are on the rise: Forgery, identity theft, and use of stolen credit cards are a growing crime problem. Police arrested six people for forgery and related crimes in August. In many cases, methamphetamine addiction fueled the illegal activity. The arrests were linked to 30 local victims of theft, auto burglary, and fraudulent use of checks. SBPD urges the public to safeguard their checks, credit cards, and identity as they would their cash.

Returning burglar gets arrested: While a police officer was investigating a burglary at a Milpas Street restaurant, the suspect returned and was confronted by the officer. A struggle ensued until the officer could handcuff the man, who had stolen 38 bottles of beer and five pounds of cheese. After hiding the stolen property, the suspect returned for more. He was booked for burglary and resisting arrest.

Public Works Department

City land at 404 Garden Street to be sold at public auction: The vacant lot near Highway 101 is best recognized by the mural of a jaguar at the rear of the parcel. The lot is zoned manufacturing and is approximately 2,546 square feet in size. A new home cannot be constructed on this lot. Access to and from the lot will be permitted on northbound Garden Street only. Copies of the Bid Packet for this property are available at the Public Works Department information counter, 630 Garden Street, or on the city's website, www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov. Sealed bids for the lot will be accepted until 3 p.m., September 8th. Contact Senior Real Property Agent Don Ireland at (805) 564-5384, with any questions.

New look for Ortega Street pedestrian bridge at Highway 101: The much traveled pedestrian bridge at Ortega Street, over-crossing Highway 101, will soon have a new look. Aided by a federal grant obtained with assistance from Congresswoman Lois Capps, the city has awarded 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 approximately mid September.

Westside clean-up tackles 65 city blocks: On August 20th, the city's Looking Good Santa Barbara Committee brought together 12 local churches, Westside neighbors, Allied Waste Industries, the Streets Division and Police Department to create the largest clean-up effort to date. Approximately 65 city blocks on the Westside were targeted and a total of 452 volunteers participated in the event. The project focused on picking up litter, retrieving abandoned shopping carts, painting-out graffiti, distributing door hangers containing city hotline numbers, and clearing weeds and overgrowth. The result was 3.7 tons of trash, and 5.7 tons of green waste, plus one ton of recyclables for a total of 10.4 tons of waste cleared out of Westside neighborhoods! In addition, 80 shopping carts were retrieved, 5,000 residences received the hotline flyer, and two large homeless encampments were cleared out.

City employee picnic produces zero waste: The city led by example in reducing waste by making our 2005 Employee Picnic a zero waste event, jumping into the world of composting. With biodegradable plates, napkins, utensils, and even cups, just about everything at the event, aside from the recyclables was compostable. The plates and utensils were all specially designed materials that easily break down to yield nutrients for the soil. Also, uneaten food scraps were tossed not into a trash container, but into a specially made biodegradable bag labeled "composting." With help from MarBorg industries, the materials were shredded, mixed with green waste, and are now composting, saving precious space at the Tajiguas Landfill. This service is not available currently to residents and businesses, but a pilot program with Santa Barbara City College and Cottage Hospital is currently being developed.

El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant work continues: The construction contract to upgrade and repair the El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant primary and secondary clarifiers and the aeration basins was recently awarded by City Council. Construction of this year-long project is anticipated to begin in September. The much-needed upgrades will increase the plant's effectiveness and reduce maintenance.

Downtown parking rate increase options: The first of three public meeting to get input from the public on options under consideration for increasing the rates in the downtown parking lots was held on August 29th. The next public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 7th at 6 p.m. in the Faulkner Gallery at the Santa Barbara Central Library. The final public meeting will be on Thursday, September 15th, at the Center Stage Theater at Paseo Nuevo. Staff will also present the options to the Downtown Organization for their input. The Downtown Parking Committee will select an option to recommend to City Council at their October meeting and will take into consideration the comments from the public in reaching their recommendation. The Downtown Parking Committees recommendation for new parking rates will be presented to Council in November and will go into effect on January 1, 2006.

Enhanced Transit Subcommittee (ETS): The ETS, the ad hoc committee established at the July 20, 2005 transit workshop to explore options for enhancements to transit, has held three meetings. Membership in this committee includes representatives from the Downtown Parking Committee, Planning Commission, Transportation and Circulation Committee with liaisons from the Council and MTD board attending. The ETS has committed to meet every other Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. in the public meeting room at the MTD offices. Their next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14th. The ETS confirmed their work plan and has received an overview of MTD's operations and potential transit routes for improving service. The ETS will be asked to select transit routes for improving service at their September 14th meeting followed will discussions and recommendation on funding the service at the September 28th and October 12th meetings. At the completion of the ETS work, their recommendation will be presented to the Downtown Parking Committee, Planning Commission, and Transportation and Circulation Committee for review and recommendation to Council. Presentation of the enhanced transit recommendation to City Council is anticipated for December.

Waterfront Department

Santa Barbara Harbor slip signs replaced: A total of 625 fiberglass signs identifying the 1,133 slips were installed, replacing the previous wooden signs. Fabrication of the wooden signs was very labor intensive and the signs faded rapidly in the harsh marine environment. The wood signs were also not visible at night. The replacement fiberglass signs have large reflective white lettering on a blue background that makes them very easy to see day and night. Compared to the approximately three-year life expectancy of the wood signs, the new materials are anticipated to last between 10 and 15 years – a five-fold increase. Staff believes the replacement fiberglass signs will lower maintenance costs dramatically, and improve boat safety and slip navigation. Slipholders and especially visiting vessels will surely appreciate this recent improvement.

Santa Barbara Beautiful's 2005 Public Open Space Award Winner: Santa Barbara Beautiful will be acknowledging Stearns Wharf as Santa Barbara Beautiful 2005 Public Open

Space Award winner with a presentation to Director John Bridley at the Lobero Theatre on September 25th. Stearns Wharf is managed and maintained by the City of Santa Barbara Waterfront Department. The 2005 award event feature special guest host Huell Howser. There will be three special awards: President's Award; Heritage Oak (Lifetime Achievement); and Jacaranda (Community Service.) Also, awards in 13 categories will range from single-family residences; commercial buildings; commercial signs; historic restoration; open public space; and public art.

USS Ronald Reagan navy ship visit: The historic first visit of the USS Ronald Reagan to Santa Barbara marks her Homecoming. The ship was adopted by City Council decision in 2002 and through the efforts of an Advanced Planning Team, the world's largest naval vessel dropped anchor on Friday, August 19th -- bringing with her approximately 3,300 sailors and 300 officers. During the three-day stay, the aircraft carrier seemed impressively staged outside the Harbor and dwarfed the support vessels around her. The amount of equipment and personnel aboard the navy ship is remarkable. At full capacity, the CVN-76 multi-purpose aircraft carrier holds more than 6,000 personnel. The USS Ronald Reagan is the nation's most advanced aircraft carrier supporting 80 aircraft, including the F/A 18 Hornet and F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet strike fighters, the E-2C Hawkeye airborne early warning aircraft, the C-2 Greyhound logistics aircraft, the S-3B Viking anti-submarine aircraft, the EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft, and the multi-role SH-60F and MH-60 R/S helicopters to name a few. Running on two nuclear reactors, the USS Ronald Reagan is self-sustaining for 20 years before needing any power replacement or upgrades. This is truly a "city" on the ocean. After her three-day stay, the USS Ronald Reagan returned to San Diego to prepare for a later deployment.

There were no public tours during the three day visit due to the navy's security force protection policy. There were 1,500 guest tours sponsored by the navy and Navy League, allowing for a 90-minute tour of the vessel. Guests went through a two-week security screening process. Security was paramount with the carrier and her crew. A 25-bouy security perimeter with two armed inflatable craft kept the 1,000-yard security zone around the vessel clear. Sea Landing was the main designated area for loading/offloading of crew. The Sea Landing facility was reinforced with required fencing, barriers, signage, and an extra loading ramp. Added security also extended to Stearns Wharf and the pier at Santa Barbara Harbor. Major events aboard the USS Ronald Reagan included Saturday's *Taste of Santa Barbara* and Sunday's *Taste of Freedom*. Mayor Marty Blum and Congresswoman Lois Capps joined others on Sunday aboard the vessel to make presentations and welcome the ship to Santa Barbara.