



City Manager Message



Greetings,

Spring is here, and I am happy to share some exciting news and updates.

First, I am honored to have been recognized with the MANA de San Diego Legacy Award during Women's History Month. This award is a testament to the collective efforts of our community to empower Latinas. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the national nonprofit MANA de San Diego, for their noble dedication to this cause, as well as their advocacy and vision to fostering leadership and celebrating milestones.

Next, April is Earth Month! Chula Vista has been a long-standing leader in conservation and renewable energy efforts. In 2000, the City adopted the Climate Action Plan that not only serves to protect our environment but also helps achieve numerous community co-benefits, including utility savings, better air quality, reduced traffic congestion, local economic development, zero waste best practices, and improved quality of life. Let's celebrate Earth Month and the City's sustainability efforts at South Bay Earth Day on Saturday, April 13 at Bayfront Park. For further details, please visit www.southbayearthday.com.

In other news, our Housing & Homeless Services Department has been diligently working to enhance transparency surrounding our programs and activities. We have made several improvements to our webpages, including the introduction of new dashboards that provide up-to-date information on our initiatives. I encourage you to explore our [Addressing Homelessness webpage](#) to stay informed about our ongoing efforts, the current state of unsheltered in our community, housing programs, outreach and clean-up efforts, latest news, and more.

Lastly, I would like to end this month's message in memory of the tragic passing of the construction workers in the recent Baltimore bridge collapse. As we go about our daily routines, let us remember our maintenance crews are at work filing potholes, laying asphalt, checking the sewer system and much more. April is also Distracted Driving Awareness Month, so I encourage you to please be on the lookout for our hardworking employees and drive with care.

For daily updates on City happenings don't forget to follow us on social media @ThinkChulaVista. Enjoy this month's edition. Please [contact me](#) if you have any questions or comments.

~Maria V. Kachadoorian, City Manager



South Bay Earth Day

The City kicks off the sixth annual South Bay Earth Day on Saturday, April 13 from 11 am to 3 pm at Chula Vista Bayfront Park. The event offers opportunities for education and engagement. Whether you're looking to upcycle your clothes at the tie-dye workshop or get a broken device or furnishing repaired for free at the Fix-It Clinic, South Bay Earth Day vendors will help participants become more earth-friendly.

More than 50 green vendors will display and sell sustainable and eco-conscious items alongside live entertainment from Dreaming of You—the ultimate Selena tribute. The event will also include a surprise marquee headliner to be announced next week!

A Kid Zone will allow participants to decorate one of their kitchen waste caddies—which will also be distributed to those households that haven't yet

received them. Families can learn about what that food waste turns into—compost that is so helpful to gardens and greenscape. Take home a small sample of the compost!

An Artist Alley will include live artists presenting their earth-friendly art and the Living Coast Discovery Center will have live animals for all to learn about conservation.

Those riding their bicycles will receive royal treatment with a free bike valet. And don't worry about food and drink. There will be a variety of food and drink vendors available.

Thank you to the [Port of San Diego Experiences](#) for their generous grant to make this event a success. For more information, head to the [South Bay Earth Day webpage](#).



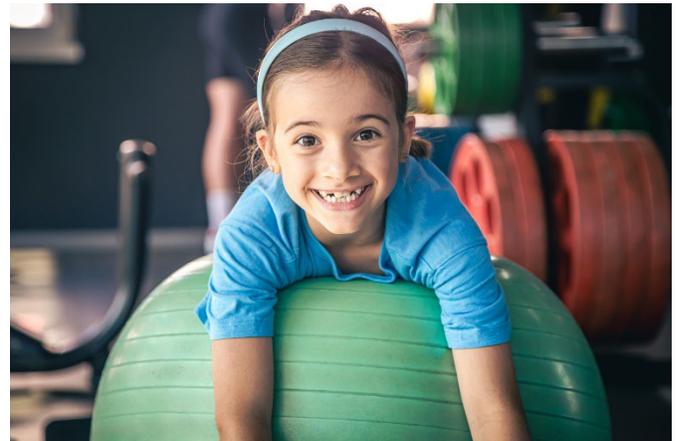


Free After School Care Through ASPIRE Program

Families looking for a safe space for after school care for youth ages 5 – 16 have a FREE option through the City's ASPIRE program. ASPIRE stands for After School Program in Recreational Enrichment. This drop-in program requires no reservations or enrollment at the following City [Community Centers](#): Heritage, Salt Creek, Veterans, Parkway, Loma Verde, Otay, and Monteville. Hours of operation are usually weekdays from 3 – 5 pm, depending on dismissal time from school.

Students can participate in a variety of activities, ranging from basketball and other gym activities to table sports, arts and crafts and homework assistance. Participants play an active role in designing their activities.

One of the goals of the program is to encourage entire families to find activities at their local community centers. Each of the centers offers community-based activities, including low-fee fitness centers, outdoor classrooms and open swim and pool rentals at Loma Verde and Parkway.



Parents interested in finding more information about the ASPIRE programs, can head to the [community center webpages](#) and search for ASPIRE. Monthly activities will be listed in the center's schedules.



Community Budget Presentations

The City of Chula Vista will present a preliminary draft of the City Manager's Fiscal Year 2024-25 Proposed Budget at community budget presentations on April 17 and 24. The public is invited to learn about and provide input on the draft budget, which serves as a financial plan, operations guide and policy document for City services.

The presentations are planned for:

- Wednesday, April 17, at 6 pm at the Civic Center Library Auditorium located at 365 F Street
- Wednesday, April 24, at 5:30 pm at the Otay Ranch Library Hub Community Room located at 2015 Birch Road, Suite 409.

City staff will then present the City Manager's Proposed Budget to the Chula Vista City Council on Tuesday, May 7. Following that meeting, the budget will be available online at www.chulavistaca.gov/budget.

The City operates on a fiscal year calendar from July 1 through June 30. Each year, the City Manager is required to present the City Council with a balanced General Fund budget, meaning total expenditures are equal to or less than total revenues.

The Citywide budget includes more than 200 funds, with the General Fund being the largest discretionary fund. The budget is generally composed of an operating budget and a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget. The operating budget covers the provision of services such as police, fire, parks and recreation, and libraries. Since these operations represent ongoing expenses, the budgets are prepared for a single fiscal year and overall expenditures are equal to or less than anticipated revenues.

The CIP budget invests in long-term capital improvements, facilities, and equipment, with revenues collected and accumulated over time as fund balance. Capital projects often extend beyond a single fiscal year, and so capital budgets often include expenditures funded by both current year revenues and funds previously budgeted.



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Keeping the community connected to information, programs, and services.



Reduced Sewer Service Charges Available

The City is pleased to offer 30 percent reductions in sewer service charges to eligible residential customers for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. Funding is limited and eligibility is based on financial need. The program is funded by available, unrestricted revenues allocated by the City.

The application period for the Reduced Sewer Service Charge Program is from April 22 to May 17. All residential sewer service customers will receive a letter with information on the program and application criteria in mid-April.

Please visit the City's [Reduced Sewer Service Charge Program webpage](#) for more information on eligibility, required documentation, and more.



Employee Spotlight: Office of Sustainability

As we gear up for South Bay Earth Day on April 13, the City of Chula Vista's [Office of Sustainability](#) has been diligently working to help us learn more about how to do our part in protecting the planet. Formed in 2007, the office educates residents on the everyday things we can do to help the community be more earth conscious.

The Office of Sustainability, which is composed of the divisions of Environmental Services and Conservation, helped the City become one of the first in the state to create a [Climate Action Plan](#). This plan outlines what each of us can do to lower our carbon footprint. A key action is participating in the new food waste recycling effort. Already, the City has distributed 15,000 kitchen waste caddies, allowing residents to recycle meat, seafood, and food scraps. Caddies can be picked up at a few locations listed on the [City's Residential Food & Yard Waste Collection webpage](#).



The office also sponsors the following events to help residents become more sustainable:

- Four annual compost giveaways: residents can visit the [Otay Landfill](#) to receive a truckload of compost (multiple visits per specified day) to receive free compost. The office also works with the City's Parks and Recreation to spread compost over park properties to conserve water.
- Zero Waste Academy: these six-week classes allow residents who are passionate about conservation to learn what they can do to spread the message of conversation. The inaugural academy was held last year. The office is looking hold another one this fall.

- Beautify Chula Vista: every year, the City assembles volunteers to remove graffiti and trash. Up to 350 volunteers receive t-shirts and disperse throughout the City to remove trash and beautify our communities.
- [Chula Vista Community Shuttle](#): Residents aged 55 and older living in the western area of the City are eligible to hail a free shuttle for doctor's appointments, grocery shopping and even friend visits through the [Ride Circuit app](#) on Mondays – Fridays from 7 am – 7 pm. Save gas and money.
- Partnering with [Produce Good](#): If you have a fruit tree that produces more than you can use, please reach out to local nonprofit Produce Good and their volunteers will glean that harvest for those in need.
- Hazardous Waste Recycling: You've seen the signs around town soliciting the recycling of your old computers. Did you know you can recycle those items—AND oil, batteries and needles—twice a week at the [City's John Lippitt Public Works Center](#), located at 1800 Maxwell Rd.? Hazardous waste recycling is available on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9 am – 1 pm.
- [Sustainable Business Program](#): If you're a business interested in helping the planet AND saving money, the City provides resources to assist you in becoming more sustainable. The City can provide recycling containers, liners, and food waste containers, among other items, to help you become a designated sustainable business.

We want to thank the Office of Sustainability for all their hard work. The office is composed of Dennis Gakunga, Manuel Medrano, Victor Sanchez, Martie Solomon, Mike Hice, Joseph Coppola, Dave DiDonato, Alejandro Ruiz-Velasco, Mayra Estrada, and Gabriel Castillo in the Environmental Services branch, Coleen Wisniewski, Cory Downs, Janelle Barraza and Lucas Escobedo in the Conservation Branch, and Monica Rodriguez in Economic Development Administration.

For the latest information, check out the Office of Sustainability's Instagram handle at [@sustainabilityCV](#).



Community Partner Spotlight: Humble Design

Nonprofit [Humble Design](#) changes lives and communities by custom designing and fully furnishing home interiors for individuals, families and veterans emerging from homelessness.

In just one day – using furniture and home goods donated by the community – Humble’s professional interior design and moving teams transform their clients’ empty houses into fully furnished, custom-designed homes based on the clients’ unique needs, preferences and dreams. Think HGTV for people who truly need it. This simple but profound act of service provides stability and beauty, restores dignity, and helps people break their cycle of homelessness.

And it works: 98% of Humble Design clients remain housed.

Humble Design was founded in 2009 in Detroit, Michigan. The nonprofit opened an office in San Diego in 2018. Humble Design’s motto and promise to the community is “togetherness to end homelessness.” The Humble Design team works in partnership with case managers and housing navigators at social services agencies across the region who refer clients for Humble’s services – people who have worked hard to secure housing and all the wraparound support services they need to thrive.



Every home is filled with furniture and home goods donated by people who are compelled by Humble’s mission and want their beautiful belongings to have a meaningful next chapter in someone else’s story of hope.

Humble Design's work is bolstered by a devoted volunteer community which organizes the warehouse, selects personal items for every client and works together with Team Humble each week to transform clients' empty houses into beautiful homes. Many homes are sponsored by generous companies and community groups who roll up their sleeves to furnish an empty space and then help welcome Humble clients home. Volunteering with Humble Design is meaningful for all involved and helps foster empathy, connection, and joy.

Last month, Humble Design transformed the home of Crystal, who successfully transitioned from the Chula Vista Village at Otay shelter into her own place. Last September, Crystal connected with the City's Homeless Outreach Team (H.O.T.) and the Housing and Homeless Services Department to begin the journey to permanent housing. To learn more about Crystal's inspiring journey, view the [City-produced video](#).

In addition to San Diego, Humble Design serves individuals, families and veterans emerging from homelessness in Detroit, Chicago, Seattle, and Cleveland.

If you would like to donate furniture, volunteer, or sponsor a home for a Humble client, visit humbledesign.org/sandiego or follow @humbledesignsandiego on Instagram or Facebook. The organization's San Diego headquarters are located at 1944 Commercial St.

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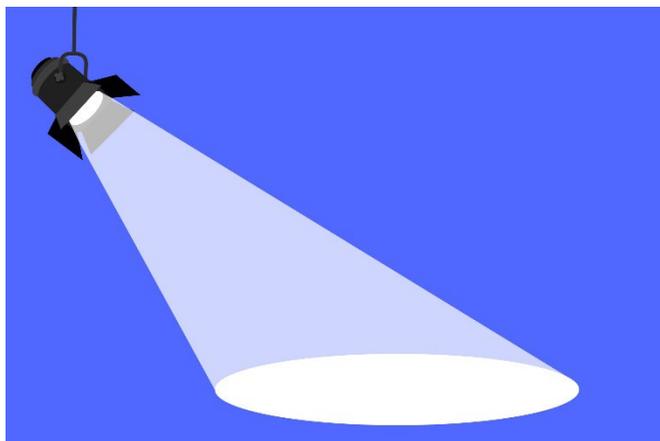


Community News

Good to Know

If you are an older adult or have limited income and are looking for help with taxes, stop by the City's Civic Center Branch Library at 365 F Street on Thursday or Friday from 10 am to 2 pm. The **AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide** program will be providing free tax assistance through April 12 on a walk-in basis only. For other tax assistance options, please call 2-1-1.

The City is proud to be home to a talented, creative, and diverse community of small businesses. To celebrate the contributions of our businesses and support their continued



success, the City is launching an inclusive and equitable way to spotlight local small businesses in this monthly newsletter, *Community Connections*. If you are interested or have a suggestion for a candidate our new **business spotlight**, [please complete and submit this form](#). A small business, selected at random, will be featured each month. Should you be selected, City staff will reach out to you to coordinate your spotlight. With any questions or for business assistance, please contact: business@chulavistaca.gov.

Things to Do

The City will host an annual **National Prescription Drug Take Back Day** on Sat. April 27 from 10 am – 2 pm. Anyone who has expired, unused, or unwanted prescription drugs is encouraged to drop them off for disposal at the City's John Lippitt Public Works Center located at 1800 Maxwell Rd. No sharps or e-waste will be accepted. For more information about the disposal of prescription drugs or the April 27 Take Back Day event, go to <https://www.dea.gov/takebackday>. There are many additional ways to properly dispose of unwanted prescription drugs every day, including the 11,000 authorized collectors that are

available all year long. For more information, visit the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's year-round collection site locator at <https://apps.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/spring/main?execution=e1s1>.

Southwestern College will hold a **State of the District and State Update event** on Friday, April 12 from 9 – 11 am. The event will be held at Southwestern College Performing Arts Center at 900 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista, 91910. Speakers will include Southwestern College Superintendent/President Dr. Mark Sanchez, California Assemblymember David Alvarez, Governor Gavin Newsom's Chief Deputy Cabinet Secretary and Senior Advisor for Cradle to Career Ben Chida, and San Diego Regional EDC Director of Talent Initiatives Taylor Dunne. To register or for more information, visit <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E358293&id=58>.

The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation is inviting the public to participate in a series of public meetings on April 8 and April 29 from 6-7 p.m. to provide information and discuss opportunities for a **45-acre park within Otay Valley Regional Park**. Public input will be used to determine amenities and overall park design. The first meeting will be virtual, and the second will take place in person at Ocean View Church, at 2460 Palm Ave., San Diego. For more information and to register for the April 8 meeting by Zoom, visit [OVRP: Active Recreation Area 3 | Engage San Diego County](#).

Get Involved

Do you have room in your heart and home to foster or adopt a pet? The Chula Vista Animal Care Facility is always looking for loving homes to help pets find their way into a permanent home. Foster animals may be nursing mothers, under medical treatment or may need a home environment, training, or enrichment. To get started, fill out the [online foster care application and agreement](#).



Neighborhood Beautification

OPERATION PRIDE continues weekly clean ups with assistance from the City's Public Works Department, as well as nonprofit Alpha Project. In March, these efforts resulted in the collection of a total of 27,580 pounds of trash and 75 shopping carts. Thank you!

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Meetings/Events

The City Council will hold special meetings on **Thursday, April 4** and **Tuesday, April 9** at 4 pm, and regular meetings on **Tuesday, April 9 and 23** at 5 pm. Members of the public are invited to provide e-Comments on any agenda item. Check the website www.chulavistaca.gov/councilmeetings for details. A Spanish-language video stream is available and interpretation services for Spanish speakers are provided at each City Council meeting. Members of the public can watch the meeting [via livestream](#). Chula Vista City Council meetings are video recorded and aired live on Cox Cable channel 24 (only in Chula Vista). Recorded meetings are also archived on the City's website.