



City Manager Message



Greetings,

As we approach the end of 2024, I want to wish all our City staff and community members a happy and safe holiday season. This time of year offers a chance to celebrate our accomplishments, reflect on our progress, and look forward to opportunities ahead.

I am excited to end this year on many positive notes. One major highlight is the completion of the [University Now Initiative White Paper](#). A joint City of Chula Vista and Southwestern College-led task force developed a research white paper outlining academic disciplines that could be established at the City's University Innovation District to attract binational higher education partners. The research paper for the University Now Initiative culminates a yearlong process funded by Chula Vista and state legislative dollars building upon efforts to expand higher education and workforce opportunities in South County.

This month, the City of Chula Vista is seeking input on priorities to include in a new five-year Strategic Plan that will be developed in 2025. We are hosting community workshops to guide the creation of the new Strategic Plan. These workshops, available both in person and virtually, are designed to ensure the plan reflects the unique values, needs, and aspirations of our community. Spanish translation will be provided at all meetings. Community input is an essential part of this process and we look forward to seeing strong community participation.

More exciting news! I am thrilled to share preliminary election results showing overwhelming support for the extension of Measure P, with an impressive 73% Chula Vista voter approval. Starting in 2027, the extended half-cent sales tax is projected to provide \$37 million annually. In the last fiscal year alone, Measure P contributed \$27 million in funding for City infrastructure projects. The extension also ensures the Measure P Citizens' Oversight Committee will continue its important work. Learn more about the committee's work [here](#). Thank you for your trust and commitment to Chula Vista's future.

We also look forward to welcoming new councilmembers for Districts 3 and 4. Their swearing-in ceremony is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10, at the City Council meeting. The election results are scheduled to be certified by the San Diego County Registrar of Voters by December 5.

Finally, I am thrilled to announce the reopening of Harborside Park on December 16 with updated amenities, including a mini-pitch soccer field generously donated to the City by the U.S. Soccer Foundation, along with enhanced safety measures. We appreciate efforts by Chula Vista native and professional soccer player Paul Arriola to make this happen. The revitalized space will once again serve as a hub for community connection and recreation.

As 2024 comes to a close, I want to thank each of you for your contributions to making Chula Vista a remarkable place to live, work, and play. I am excited for what's to come in 2025 – such as the highly-anticipated opening of the Gaylord Pacific Resort and Convention Center!

Enjoy this month's edition, and please [contact me](#) if you have any questions or comments.

~Maria V. Kachadoorian, City Manager



Final Touches Coming Together for Chula Vista Starlight Parade & Festival

Can you hear it? That's the sound of hoofbeats on the pavement, classic cars on the street, fire engines tooting their horns, bands on the march and musical artists on stage. Can you see it? That's the sight of floats on the parade route, a movie outdoors on screen, the holiday tree coming alight and children's laughter and wonder in the Kids' Zone. Can you smell and taste it? That's a dazzling array of food and beverage options in the Holiday Market. Can you own it? You sure can, with tantalizing treats and glittering gifts on offer for the whole family.

After months of planning and hard work by hundreds of businesses, civic groups, car clubs and more, the community will come together for the 60th Annual Chula Vista Starlight Parade & Festival presented by Seven Mile Casino.

Downtown Third Avenue Chula Vista will light up Saturday, December 14. The festivities start at 3 p.m. with the holiday festival leading into the tree lighting ceremony at 5:45 p.m. and the Starlight Parade beginning at 6 p.m. The event is expected to conclude by 9 p.m.



The Starlight Parade & Festival is put on by the City of Chula Vista, with the help of [SoundSkilz](#). The event is the City's flagship civic celebration of the year, a jewel in the crown of the City's resurgent events calendar that includes the Chula Vista Art Fest, South Bay Earth Day and FourthFest.

With more than 50,000 guests attending in 2023, the City expects tens of thousands of participants again. The City has taken several steps to increase safety and manage expected crowds. One step is the parade route has expanded to give spectators more

spots to stand and watch. The new route runs along Third Avenue starting one block south at I Street and running north to E Street in Downtown Chula Vista.

The parade—at full capacity again this year—will feature about 130 entries, ranging from festive floats and marching bands to dance teams and classic/custom cars.

Before the parade begins, guests can enjoy festivities such as the Holiday Market and FREE family photos with Santa beginning at 3 p.m. At the Holiday Market, guests can shop for festive bites, sips, décor, and stocking stuffers from among almost 50 vendors—a capacity group.

The 25-foot tree lighting ceremony takes place at 5:45 p.m. in Memorial Park.

All the while, a DJ and three music acts will entertain the crowd at Memorial Park, including the retro-inspired band [The Dreamboats](#); America's Got Talent contestant Mercedes Gonzalez, and [Mariachi Internacional San Diego](#). Then, at 6 p.m., attendees can watch the modern classic holiday film, Will Ferrell's ELF, in Memorial Bowl as the parade gets underway.

Mayor and lifelong Chula Vista resident John McCann said he is looking forward to another successful event this year.

"We have been honored by the level of support we've gotten from parade participants, vendors, performers and sponsors this year," said Mayor McCann. "We had an amazing turnout last year, with over 50,000 attendees, showing the pent-up excitement for this holiday tradition. We have come a long way since I participated in the parade a kid as part of the Safety Patrol. It is a tradition I'm honored to pass down to my children, grandson and the entire Chula Vista community."

The Chula Vista Starlight Parade & Festival presented by [Seven Mile Casino](#) would not be possible without its sponsors and supporters, who help bring to life this beloved and long-standing tradition each year. This year's sponsors include (in alphabetical order):

- Baldwin & Sons
- Chula Vista Police Officers Association
- City of Chula Vista
- Community Health Group
- Cox Communications
- Gaylord Pacific Resort & Convention Center
- HomeFed Côta Vera
- Lolita's Mexican Food
- Meridian Development
- Pacifica Companies
- Port of San Diego
- San Diego Community Power
- San Ysidro Health
- SDG&E
- Vulcan Materials Company



City Seeks Community Input for New Strategic Plan

The City is seeking input on priorities to include in a new Strategic Plan that will reflect the unique values, needs, and aspirations of the community. Development of the five-year plan is kicking off with a robust community engagement effort, an online survey, and a series of workshops continuing in early December. The City expects to complete the new Strategic Plan in 2025.

Community input is an essential part of this process as the City establishes a vision that represents those who live, work, own a business, attend school, or visit Chula Vista. In these interactive workshops, participants will have a chance to share their thoughts and experiences living or working in Chula Vista, as well as what they think is good and what could be improved in the City.

Upcoming meetings are scheduled for December 4,

5, and 7, including three in-person community meetings, one in-person meeting for local

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMUNITY MEETING

YOU'RE INVITED



THE CITY WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Join us to learn more, share your thoughts, ask questions and work together with the City.

PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON OR ONLINE!

www.chulavistaca.gov/strategicplan

Wednesday *Spanish translation available
December 4

Time
5:30 p.m.

Virtual | ZOOM
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87291307309>
Meeting ID: 872 9130 7309

Saturday
December 7

Time
9 a.m.

Monteville Recreation Center
840 Duncan Ranch Rd.
*Spanish translation available

Thursday ** LOCAL BUSINESSES
December 5

Time
2 p.m.

CVPD, Community Room
315 Fourth Ave.
*Spanish translation available

Saturday
December 7

Time
1 p.m.

Veterans Community Center
785 East Palomar St.
*Spanish translation available

Thursday
December 5

Time
6:15 p.m.

Norman Park Senior Center
270 F St.
*Spanish translation available



business owners/managers, and one virtual meeting. The City welcomes any who want to get involved. Spanish language translation will be available at each meeting.

The [survey](#) can be taken on a smartphone, tablet or desktop and takes about five to 10 minutes to complete. Stakeholders can answer questions and provide responses to help shape the development of the Strategic Plan. Responses will be collected through January 3, 2025.

More information is available on the City's [Strategic Plan webpage](#).



Recognizing City Employees: Recreation Specialist Rafael Felix

The City of Chula Vista Parks and Recreation Department is proud to name Rafael Felix as the inaugural recipient of its new Leader of the Season award, for his outstanding dedication, hard work, and contributions to the department and community. The award, launched in November, identifies and celebrates part-time recreation staff going above and beyond for the community.



Felix began with Parks and Recreation as a volunteer referee at the age of 16. As he became more involved in serving his community, Rafael set his sights on joining the City's Recreation staff and secured work as a Recreation Aide. Felix's passion for recreation and the well-being of the community have fueled his success as a Recreation Leader and most recently as a Recreation Specialist.

In the last seven years, Felix has performed a wide variety of duties, including managing day camps and classes, coordinating league game schedules, and ensuring the smooth operation of programs at Parkway Community Center.

Felix has grown both professionally and personally by building strong relationships with other City staff members and community members who he serves. One of his favorite parts of the job is being able to work on youth sports. He explained that the youth sports community is filled with volunteers who share his love for sports and recreation, which makes the experience for participants a whole lot better.

"I really enjoy anything sports related with kids," he said. "I feel like it's a good way for them to learn basic life skills like teamwork and communication. I really enjoy my time here."

Felix expressed his gratitude for Recreation Supervisor III Christy Vasquez, who has been mentoring him by providing opportunities to further develop his leadership and technical skills. Felix has become more involved in supporting adult athletics programming during a critical time, and his colleagues thank him for his dedication.

"Rafael's impact goes beyond the day-to-day tasks as he inspires his colleagues and sets a standard of excellence for all part-time employees," Vasquez said. "His leadership and dedication make him a truly deserving recipient of this award."



Highlighting Small Businesses: Otay Ranch Town Center Restaurants and Eateries

As we move into the holiday season, we get the privilege of spending time together celebrating with friends and family. While doing your holiday shopping and surely working up an appetite this winter, consider shopping small and visiting local restaurants and eateries at Otay Ranch Town Center.

Local restaurant options are plenty, from delicious rotisserie chicken tacos at El Pollo Grill to fruity hard kombucha and Brazilian bites at Novo Brazil Brewing Co. The options are endless when it comes to satisfying everyone's appetite.

Otay Ranch Town Center is home to a number of small restaurants and eateries to accommodate your solo stop when needing to fuel up while checking items off your holiday list. Or you can plan ahead to bring your whole family by making reservations at some of your favorite local restaurants that can accommodate large parties.

Don't forget to stop in at some of your local favorites while shopping at Otay Ranch Town Center this season. Fantastic local options include:

- 365 Korean BBQ
- El Pollo Grill
- Garbatella Osteria



- Karina's Mexican Seafood
- Linny's Sweets
- Mochinatics
- Novo Brazil Brewing Co.
- Savoie
- Sushiya
- Taqueria Revolution
- Vitale Poke Shop & More

You can also plan ahead to visit Otay Ranch Town Center this month for the popular Farmer's Market taking place at the mall's Main Street every Tuesday from 4 to 8 p.m. There, you can find fresh produce, prepared foods and pantry staples brought to you by local vendors and farmers.

Otay Ranch Town Center is located at 2015 Birch Road in Chula Vista. For more information about local shops and eateries, visit the [Otay Ranch Town Center website](#).

If you would like your small business featured in a future newsletter, please complete this [submission form](#).

For business assistance, please refer to our website at chulavistaca.gov/businesses and be sure to refer to the [Award-Winning Business Resources Guide](#) for additional information on available resources to assist your business.



Spotlighting Community Partners: San Diego Rescue Mission

Since 1955, the San Diego Rescue Mission has been a beacon of hope for thousands facing homelessness, hunger and hardship across San Diego County. The nonprofit's impact continues to grow. This year, the Rescue Mission has helped 1,774 people receive immediate shelter, supported 331 people in securing permanent housing, and celebrated a record-breaking 160 graduates from the life-changing, yearlong Mission Academy Residential Program.

The Rescue Mission has found that homelessness rarely has a single cause. The reasons vary widely. Many struggle due to the loss of a job or loved one, rising rent prices, health issues, or the challenges of single parenthood. The nonprofit addresses these complex needs through several key initiatives:



- **Emergency Lighthouse Shelters:** Located in National City and Oceanside, these 30-day emergency shelters offer guests a safe place to sleep, as well as hot meals, clothing, and weekly case management, designed to guide individuals toward stable housing and long-term recovery.
- **Mission Academy:** This transformative, yearlong residential rehabilitation program helps men, women, and single parents overcome the challenges that led to homelessness in the first place. Through a trauma-informed, holistic approach focusing on mind, body, and soul, residents rebuild their lives, find housing and bring stability and hope to their families.

- **Mobile Shower Ministry and Street Outreach:** The Rescue Mission's outreach team builds relationships with unsheltered individuals by providing hot showers, essential hygiene services, referrals to services and access to programs.

A powerful example of the Rescue Mission's community impact is partnership with the Chula Vista Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT Team). Every Wednesday, the Rescue Mission's Mobile Shower Ministry visits Chula Vista, offering unsheltered neighbors showers, clean clothing, hygiene kits, food, and a pathway to receive additional services.

With the opening of the South County Lighthouse, the HOT Team has direct referral access to the Rescue Mission's shelter, as well as Mission Academy, making it easier for individuals to transition from the streets into a structured support system.

"Our partnership with the City of Chula Vista showcases the powerful change we can create when we join forces to address homelessness," said Donnie Dee, President and CEO of San Diego Rescue Mission. "Working together, we're bringing hope, stability, and lasting change for our neighbors in need."

To learn how to contribute to the San Diego Rescue Mission, please visit the nonprofit's [webpage](#).



City to Join Clean Plates Program

Chula Vista will be the next city in San Diego County to participate in the Clean Plates program, which helps eligible unsheltered individuals reduce or eliminate outstanding parking fines.

By easing the financial burden of parking citations, the program helps get rid of barriers for unsheltered individuals on the path to self-sufficiency and stable housing. Outstanding fines can hinder individuals from obtaining a driver's license, registering vehicles, or retrieving vehicles from impound.

The Clean Plates program is a partnership between the San Diego City Treasurer's Office, the San Diego City Attorney's Office, the San Diego County Public Defender's Office, and the San Diego Homeless Court Steering Committee.

The program was among those promoted [during a recent Homeless Resource Fair](#) held in Chula Vista last month. The San Diego County District Attorney's Office CARE Center partnered with the City of Chula Vista and MTS to hold the fair, where individuals could connect with dozens of essential services.

For additional information on how the City is addressing homelessness, visit chulavistaca.gov/homeless.





Downtown Parking District Meter Rates to Increase Jan. 2

The Chula Vista City Council last month approved a 25-cent increase in the hourly parking meter rates in the Downtown Parking District. The rates for two-hour and four-hour parking will increase from 50 cents to 75 cents per hour and the rates for 10-hour parking meters will increase from 25 cents to 50 cents per hour. The new rates will go into effect Monday, January 2, 2025.



The last time Downtown Parking District meter rates rose was in 2007. With the increase, Downtown Chula Vista will maintain some of the lowest public parking rates in San Diego County. In all, the Downtown Parking District offers 1,500 public parking spaces, with nearly half free. The parking district is bounded by E Street to the north, Del Mar Avenue to the east, Garrett Avenue to the west, and H Street to the south.

The City took the measure following an analysis of future revenue and expenditures in its parking meter fund. All revenue from the collected parking meter fees goes toward the operation and maintenance of recently installed meters. The funds are also used to update street and curb painting and signage and make ADA parking and other parking facility improvements.

The City worked with a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the Downtown Parking District in 2022. A parking management plan was then developed and approved by the City Council in September 2022. The plan provided several recommendations, including providing smart meters that offer card and contactless payment options. The smart meters were installed along Third Avenue in October 2023.



Community News

Good to Know



**CVAS
ANGEL TREE**

BE AN ANGEL TO A FURRY FRIEND THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

- SELECT AN ORNAMENT WITH A FURRY FRIEND AND CHECK OUT THEIR WISHLIST
- PURCHASE SOME OR ALL OF THE ITEMS ON THEIR LIST
- DROP OFF YOUR DONATIONS TO ANY CHULA VISTA PUBLIC LIBRARY

ALL OF OUR FURRY FRIENDS FEATURED ON THE TREE ARE AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION AT THE CHULA VISTA ANIMAL CARE FACILITY!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

SOUTH CHULA VISTA LIBRARY
389 ORANGE AVE.

CHULA VISTA ANIMAL SERVICES LIBRARY

The Chula Vista Public Library is thrilled to announce the launch of the **Holiday Angel Tree in support of Chula Vista Animal Services!** From now until January 2, 2025, the tree will be on display at the South Branch Library, located at 389 Orange Avenue. Participants are invited to become an "angel" this holiday season by sponsoring a furry friend in need. Simply choose an ornament featuring an animal from the shelter and purchase some or all the items on their wish list.

You can drop off donations of monetary gifts or supplies for Chula Vista Animal Services at any Chula Vista Public Library branch throughout the month of

December. Every contribution will directly benefit our local shelter. With the shelter currently at full capacity, your generosity will make a meaningful difference in caring for these animals. All the furry friends featured on the tree are available for adoption at Chula Vista Animal Services, located at 130 Beyer Way. Thank you for helping make this holiday season brighter for our community's animals!

Millions of dollars in rebates are now available for single family households to obtain heat pump HVAC equipment. Income-qualified California residents can receive rebates of up to \$8,000 through TECH Clean California. The benefits are offered through the Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEEHRA), a federal Inflation Reduction Act-funded program managed by the California Energy Commission. The Inflation Reduction Act created programs to help pay for clean energy retrofits in homes across the U.S.

To receive one of the rebates, customers work with a TECH Clean California-certified contractor trained in HEEHRA rebates. TECH California contractors can also help identify other available rebates to help reduce costs. Look for the HEEHRA badge when finding a contractor at [The Switch is On](https://techcleanca.com/incentives/heehrarebates). For more information, please visit: <https://techcleanca.com/incentives/heehrarebates>



Sign up for San Diego Community Power's monthly newsletter to stay up to date on the most recent clean energy developments. Items in the organization's November newsletter included [residential](#) and [commercial customer](#) surveys, [energy saving tips for the holiday season](#), opportunities for [commercial customers to optimize energy usage](#), an update on [local renewable energy projects](#) and more.

San Diego Community Power is your community-driven clean energy provider working to lead the San Diego region toward a healthier, more sustainable future. For more information or to sign up to the newsletter, please visit: <https://sdcommunitypower.org/news-and-events>.

Every December, the Chula Vista Police Foundation, in partnership with the Chula Vista Police Department and local sponsors, helps make the holidays special by providing meals and toys to South Bay families in need. Over 500 identified families will receive a meal voucher to attend the **annual Holiday Meal & Toy Giveaway**. The voucher will provide a frozen turkey and fixings to enjoy an amazing holiday meal. Santa also arrives on his sleigh to give toys to the kids.



You can make the holidays brighter for these families by supporting this event! Drop off new, unwrapped toys (for children of all ages) at any of our drop-off locations by December 14th:

- Walmart Supercenter – 875 E H St., Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Walmart Supercenter – 1360 Eastlake Parkway, Chula Vista, CA 91915
- Walmart – 1150 Broadway, Chula Vista, CA 91911
- Walmart – 75 N Broadway, Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Starbucks – 2250 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista, CA 91915

- Starbucks – 1610 Millenia Ave., Chula Vista, CA 91915
- Starbucks – 519 Telegraph Canyon Road, Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Sun Outdoors RV Park – 825 E St., Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Balboa Thrift & Loan – 865 Amena Court, Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Chula Vista City Hall (Building A) – 276 4th Ave., Chula Vista, CA 91910
- CVPD Front Lobby – 315 4th Ave., Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Aqua Tots Swimming School – 2015 Birch Road Suite 1505, Chula Vista, CA 91915
- Dick’s Sporting Goods – 390 E H St., Chula Vista, CA 91910
- Yoga Lab Millenia – 1685 Metro Ave., Chula Vista, CA 91915
- California Coast Credit Union – 368 E H St. Suite 213, Chula Vista, CA 91910

You can also donate online at www.chulavistapolicefoundation.org or mail a check to Chula Vista Police Foundation, 315 4th Ave., Chula Vista, CA 91910. Write “Holiday Meal/Toy Giveaway” in the Memo/Comments section.

Things to Do



Chula Vista Parks and Recreation is offering several exciting **upcoming events and activities** this month! Enjoy a winter craft party at Monteville Community Center, cookie and keepsake craft workshop at Salt Creek Community Center, Tippi Toes classes at Otay Community Center, and much more! To see a full schedule of upcoming events, please visit the Chula Vista Parks and Recreation activities [webpage](#) or call (619) 409-5979.

MAAC, San Diego Urban Sustainability Coalition, and SDG&E will host a **Community Climate Workshop** on Friday, Dec. 13, 2024, from 3:30 – 7:30 p.m. The event will take place at MAAC Project Community Center, located at 1387 Third Ave., Chula Vista. Share your climate change priorities and learn about SDG&E and other programs in the community. Enter giveaways and win raffle prizes at this kid-friendly event! Free food and activities will be provided. Register through the [Community Climate Workshop webpage](#).

Neighborhood Beautification

OPERATION PRIDE continues monthly cleanups. Supervisor Anzar, Ranger Perez, and Park Ranger Program Manager Alzubaidi, in conjunction with Alpha Project, and McAlister (Work for Hope) collected 16,680 pounds of trash and 80 shopping carts as part of November's OPERATION PRIDE. McAlister (Work for Hope) continued work painting Veterans Park. Alpha Project: Take Back the Streets on non-outreach days collected 5,720 pounds of trash. Rangers are continuing to enforce and maintain the parks, while making them clean and safe for the public.



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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



Meetings/Events

The Chula Vista City Council is scheduled to meet for a special session on **Tuesday, December 10** at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. (new councilmember swearing-in) and a regular session on **Tuesday, December 17** at 5 p.m. Members of the public are invited to provide e-Comments on any agenda item. Check the [website](#) 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.



Get ready for the **60th Annual Starlight Parade & Festival!** On December 14, 2024, stop by for the City's holiday festival, take photos with Santa, take your children to the Kids Zone, watch the movie Elf in Memorial Bowl, enjoy a variety of performances, and view the parade anywhere along this year's extended route along Third Avenue between I and E streets. Festivities will begin at 3 p.m., and the parade begins at 6 p.m. For more info, visit the [Starlight Parade & Festival website](#).



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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



Join us for the **Reopening of the City's Harborside Park!** On December 16, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. at 670 Oxford St., learn about the newly renovated park and enjoy food, ice cream, giveaways, activities, and more!

