



City Manager Message



Greetings,

As we find ourselves already in May, it's remarkable how swiftly this year seems to be flying by.

Summer is almost here, which means the end of the fiscal year is near and a new proposed [Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget](#) is here. Over the past several months, City staff have been working hard to prepare a balance budget. This proposed budget sets the course for the next fiscal year. The budget responds to community needs, and funds critical City services such as additional resources to respond to the growing needs of our unsheltered population. The proposed budget also includes the City's sales tax Measure A and Measure P allocations. We will present the proposed budget to the City Council for their consideration on Tuesday, May 7, 2024. We welcome you to submit comments regarding the City Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2024-25 City budget through this [Budget Comment Form](#).

Last month, we welcomed our newly elected City Attorney, Marco Verdugo, and newly appointed Councilmember for District 4, Rachel Morineau. Their commitment to public service and willingness to serve will greatly contribute to our community.

In other exciting news, we are just about a year away from the opening of the Gaylord Pacific Resort and Convention Center. Earlier this month, all 22 decks were completed, and we celebrated this huge construction milestone with a topping out ceremony. Take a look at the progress being made by viewing drone footage and other information through the website <https://www.mmjvcp.com/>.

A big thank you to our Fire Department for leading an important effort this past month by hosting the San Diego County Multi-Agency Wildland Preparedness Exercise! Over the course of three days, over 750 firefighters and 200 law enforcement officers from across San Diego and Imperial counties participated in a drill to train and maintain the skills necessary to keep fires as small as possible when they do occur.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this month's message in memory of Assistant Chief Phil Collum, who passed away in April. Assistant Chief Collum was a trailblazer in many ways. He served our community for almost 30 years with the utmost professionalism and dedication. He was true hero in every sense and the embodiment of what it means to have a "heart behind the badge." There

is no doubt his service has made our City better, and his absence will be felt throughout the organization.

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

~Maria V. Kachadoorian, City Manager



Remembering Chula Vista Assistant Police Chief Phil Collum

Chula Vista Police Department (CVPD) Assistant Chief Phil Collum passed away April 12, leaving an outstanding legacy of service and humanity to the community. He died after a short battle with a rare form of cancer.

Collum began his career as a CVPD officer in 1994 and dedicated 29 years to the department and community, blazing a trail for ethnic minorities and members of the LGBTQ+ community. He developed a reputation of fairness and ethical professionalism that helped him rise through the ranks from officer to agent to sergeant. He then became the department's first African American police lieutenant in 2009, police captain in 2018 and assistant chief of police in 2022.

It was under his leadership that the department created the Community Engagement Division in 2022 to enhance outreach and understanding between the police department and the City's residents. He carried that passion for building bridges to the larger law enforcement community, helping repair relationships that allowed San Diego County law enforcement to participate in San Diego Pride events once again.

He was a lifelong learner, graduating from the prestigious Command College and the FBI National Academy. Throughout his career, he freely shared his time and talent. He was the liaison for the United Way, a liaison for the San Diego Gay & Lesbian Parade, a member of the California Police Chiefs Association and a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. He earned numerous local awards, including being named one of the 2023 Persons of the Year by LGBTQ San Diego County News.



Personally, he was a devoted husband to William Lopez, who he married in 2013. Collum served on the Board of Directors and volunteered for his church, where he also put his creative and



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technical skills in sound and photography to work for the church's music and media productions. He and Lopez also volunteered every month, traveling south of the border to support orphanages in Mexico, as part of the Corazón de Vida Foundation.

Collum will be remembered not only for his accomplishments and charitable works, but also for being an amazing husband, loyal friend, and passionate leader. He was a true hero in every sense, and he will be greatly missed by his family, the community, and the Chula Vista Police Department. To honor his memory and legacy, the family asks that you consider a contribution to the [Phillip Collum Scholarship Fund](#) that has been established in partnership with Corazón de Vida Foundation.



Animal Adoption Special Offered for Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and what better way to add joy to your life than to bring home a new best friend? Chula Vista Animal Services invites you to meet the dogs, cats, rabbits, and other animals in their care in hopes of rescuing one in need.

The City's shelter, located at 130 Beyer Way, has seen a tremendous influx of animals lost or in need of care in recent years, and is now facing an urgent situation.

The companionship of an animal can have numerous mental health benefits, including reducing stress, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness. Now is the time to visit!

Throughout the month of May, members of the public can adopt for just \$25. City employees, meanwhile, can adopt for free.

Adoptable pets are always spayed or neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated. Head to the [Animal Services website](#) to view the long-term residents who are ready for their forever home.



Mental health

\$25
DOG ADOPTIONS

MAY

AWARENESS MONTH

City of Chula Vista employees get
FREE adoptions!
www.cvacf.org

CITY OF CHULA VISTA
ANIMAL SERVICES



Otay Ranch Library Reopens in New Location

A larger library branch at Otay Ranch Town Center has reopened in its new location, and popular programs are back, including story time and an exciting new seed library. The branch is located at 2015 Birch Road, Suite 1103, in the former Famous Footwear space, a couple doors down from the School of Rock.

The new location is about 600 square feet larger than the previous site, with additional study space and seating, and integrated passport services.

Librarians have brought over the same great books and media collections and swapped out some of the older offerings with new items. The hours are also the same, from Monday to Saturday, 11 am – 7 pm and Sundays from noon – 6 pm.

This location is temporary until the library moves into a dedicated new building currently under construction in Millenia. The permanent library is scheduled to open in fall 2025.

Summer is coming and it's a perfect time to pick out a book and a spot on the beach or in the park. Don't forget, free museum passes, and a host of other services are available, too. For more information, visit [Chula Vista Library Services](https://www.chulavistaca.gov/library-services).





Recognizing City Employees: Librarians at Otay Ranch Branch

When the library branch at the Otay Ranch Town Center reopened in April, librarians Natalie Vega, Diana Ysla, Mikaela Espiritu, and Ahmad Jaber began planting the seeds for a new program that will be available at all Chula Vista library branches this month—a seed library. Beginning May 6, anyone with a library card can peruse the portable seed shelves and select a variety of fruit and vegetable seeds to take home and plant. There are dozens of varieties from which to choose. Who knew there were at least 19 varieties of tomatoes?



The idea for a seed library germinated when the librarians won a Sustainable Libraries Grant from the California State Library system. There was one of 15 grants of this kind awarded this year, and they have used the funds to purchase hundreds of starter seeds from [San Diego Seed Company](#). The seeds are all organic and native to this area, helping to expand sustainable agriculture. Vega, Ysla, Espiritu and Jaber have spent weeks parceling out the seeds into individual packets. The labeled packets are then placed into individual cabinet shelves—picture the old-time library card catalog.

The seed library will be replenished when patrons who took seeds this year come back next year with the seeds from their successful gardens. The librarians have already held workshops on how to harvest the seeds at each of the library branches last month. There are many more workshops planned for the remainder of the year.

To build success for new and veteran gardeners, the librarians have curated books and resources that will help your seedlings thrive. Each seed variety also has a QR code that allows gardeners to learn more about how to grow that type of plant.

The librarians say the seed library is another way to connect with our community. They look forward to learning more about gardening alongside the patrons.

“We encourage people to come, even if it’s their first time, like us,” Espiritu said. “The library is not just books. It is a way to show our community new things.”

The librarians have already begun practicing their gardening skills. As part of their longtime partnership with Chula Vista Animal Services, the librarians have helped plant food for the Bunny Garden at the Animal Care Facility.

To learn more, head over to the [Library Services website](#).



Small Business Spotlight: Common Theory Public House

May is Small Business Month and to celebrate the countless contributions of small businesses in Chula Vista, the City is launching a monthly small business feature.

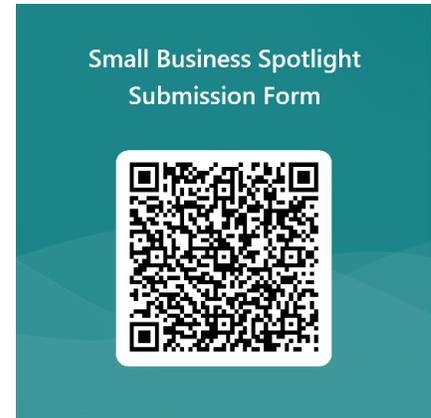
Opened in Chula Vista's Otay Ranch in March 2024, Common Theory Public House is a beacon of community and culinary innovation, founded by business partners Cristian Liang and Joon Lee. Common Theory is a gastropub, but it represents more than just a place to dine. It's a gathering spot where locals come together to savor exceptional food, craft brews and a lively ambiance. From gourmet burgers bursting with flavor to inventive small plates perfect for sharing, every dish is crafted with care and creativity.



From its inception and founding at its first location in Kearny Mesa, the establishment has prioritized hiring local staff, providing employment opportunities, and fostering a sense of pride and ownership among locals. Common Theory is collaborating with neighboring businesses and organizations and participating in charity events and community initiatives that aim to uplift and strengthen the fabric of Chula Vista. An example is the recurring Brew Battles that feature 5-ounce tasters of the finest craft brews from Chula Vista's brew scene where visitors vote on their favorite beers.

With delectable cuisine, diverse beverage offerings and unwavering dedication to community engagement, Common Theory Public House shines as a new, but already beloved, establishment in Chula Vista's thriving culinary scene. As it forges ahead under the visionary leadership of Liang and Lee, the future looks bright for this culinary gem, promising even more memorable experiences and meaningful connections for locals and visitors alike. Visit Common Theory Chula Vista at 1980 Optima Street and on social media @commontheory.

If you would like to have your small business featured in the Small Business Spotlight in future newsletters, please scan the QR code and you will be considered for future spotlights. For business assistance, please refer to our website at chulavistaca.gov/businesses and be sure to refer to the award-winning [Business Resource Guide](#) on the website under [Business Resources](#) for additional information to assist your business.





New Independent Auditing Firm Selected

The City of Chula Vista requires an annual, independent audit of its financial statements, and the City reviews its relationship with an independent public accounting firm on a periodic basis. This year, the City solicited proposals for independent financial audit services and received six proposals. An internal selection committee comprised of leaders from the City's Finance Department evaluated the proposals.

Criteria used to evaluate the proposals included experience, personnel, qualifications, fee proposals, interviews, and the adherence to the City's solicitation. The selection committee recommended that the City Council approve an agreement with Rogers, Anderson, Malody & Scott, LLP, to provide financial audit services. The City Council recently adopted a resolution approving an agreement with the firm.

Founded in 1948, Rogers, Anderson, Malody & Scott, LLP specializes in public and nonprofit organization auditing, accounting, and management advisory services.

Personnel at the San Bernardino-based firm include seven partners, five managers, 10 supervisors/seniors and 17 professional staff. Clients include cities, such as Imperial Beach, Poway, and El Cajon, as well as redevelopment successor agencies, water districts, other special districts, and joint power authorities.



The City's annual audit process typically begins in June when the auditor interviews City staff and requests accounting information. The auditor begins testing the City's internal controls and the accuracy of financial transactions recorded in the accounting system. The auditor will continue work in the fall to audit the City's year-end financials. At the end of the audit, the firm will issue an opinion on whether the City's basic financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position and operating results of the City. The audit results are reported to City Council each year.



Community Partner Spotlight: Chula Vista Elementary School District

The Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) is the largest transitional kindergarten through sixth grade school district in California. With 50 schools and counting, CVESD provides students with a modern and rigorous learning environment featuring high-quality instruction, a technology-based curriculum, innovative programs, and strong integration of visual and performing arts.

CVESD's mission is to nurture students' potential by collaborating with teachers, staff, parents, and the community. CVESD's commitment to this mission is reflected in tailored programs that directly address the unique needs of the community. From initiatives supporting military-connected families and low-income and foster youth to special education, CVESD has made education accessible to all, ensuring that no child is left behind.



The City of Chula Vista has been an integral community partner in providing CVESD students and the greater Chula Vista community with innovative STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) and career-related learning opportunities since the inception of CVESD's station experiences.

Superintendent Eduardo Reyes, Ed.D., said that CVESD has seen the benefits of its partnership with Chula Vista. "The City's continued support and partnership in bringing innovative learning experiences to our community has made a positive difference in the lives of our students and will for years to come," he said.

In 2016, the City and CVESD collaborated with Qualcomm to open the Innovation Station at the Chula Vista Public Library's Civic Center Branch. This partnership, along with a collaboration with San Diego Gas & Electric, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 569, and the

National Electrical Contractors Association, provided the resources needed to open the Energy Station at the Chula Vista Public Library's South Branch. In 2023, with the continued support of these partnerships, the Sound Station opened at the former Boys and Girls Club. The City has also supported additional student experiences like the Health Station at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center and the Coastal Education Program at the Living Coast Discovery Center.

CVESD is grateful for its community partnership with the City, which enhances educational experiences for Chula Vista students. To learn more about CVESD, visit cvesd.org.



Community News

Good to Know

The **Chula Vista Fire Department offers child car seat safety checks** twice each month. Trained personnel will properly install car seats at no cost. The safety checks are held in the Macy's parking lots from 10 am – 2 pm. On May 4, fire department personnel will be at the Otay Ranch Town Center and on May 25 they will be at the Chula Vista Center.

Shoppers can now use their **CalFresh public benefits food assistance (EBT card) at the Downtown Chula Vista Farmers' Market** held each Sunday at the City's Memorial Park. The [Farmers' Market](#) is held from 10 am – 2 pm rain or shine. Known federally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP, CalFresh provides monthly food benefits to individuals and families with low-income and provides economic benefits to communities. CalFresh is the largest food program in California and provides an essential hunger safety net. To find out about income requirements to qualify for the public assistance, visit the [state's CalFresh webpage](#). Many local agencies, including Feeding San Diego, can help residents fill out their applications.



The **City's Public Works Department will be closed** Friday, May 10 and Friday, May 24. All City offices will be closed on Monday, May 27 for the Memorial Day Holiday.

Planning your summer vacation? **All three Chula Vista libraries offer passport processing!** [Learn more on the webpage.](#)

Things to Do

If bicycle road racing is your speed, the **JKC Memorial Hunte Parkway Road Race will be held Saturday, May 18**, beginning at 7 am. There are 18-, 21- and 36-mile routes, along with a 42-mile Pro Women route and a 52-mile Pro Men route. The community is also invited to participate in the 1-mile run or ride, beginning at 2 pm. The race is sponsored by the [Padyak Racing Team](#), a group of South Bay bicycle riders. To register for the May 18 race, head to the [JKC Memorial Hunte Parkway Road Race website](#).

The **City of Chula Vista's adult basketball program** offers many opportunities for players of all skill levels to compete. Whether you are a weekend warrior or almost a pro, we have something for you. Adult basketball registration for the summer opens May 6 at 8 am. For more information or to register go to www.chulavistaca.gov/rec.

Bring your camping gear and join us for the **annual Snores N S'mores Family Camp Out under the stars** starting at 5 pm Friday, June 7 at Monteville Community Center. There will be a hot dog dinner, games and activities, a movie in the park and much more. The camp out will run until 10 am Saturday, June 8. The cost is \$10 per person, and ages 2 and under are free. Everyone must register at www.chulavistaca.gov/rec. The Monteville Community Center is located at 840 Duncan Ranch Road.

Chula Vista Parks & Recreation has a ton of options to keep children busy this summer. Registration is now open for camps that start June 10. Camps will take place at different locations and offer a variety of themes and activities. From adventure camps, sports camps, performing arts and water camps, we have something your child will enjoy. For more information or to register go to www.chulavistaca.gov/rec.

Otay Community Center is excited to bring new sports classes to our community starting May 8, with a second session June 11. Multi-sport and volleyball classes are offered at different times and days throughout the week, for different age groups ranging from 2-12 years old. Costs range from \$89-\$99. Go to www.chulavistaca.gov/rec for more information or to register. The Otay Community Center is located at 3554 Main Street.

Get Involved

Join the **Chula Vista Police Department for a 2024 Community Leadership Workshop!** The free, two-day classes are geared towards community leaders, such as business owners, elected officials, community advocates, and church representatives. Participants will see how the department is a leader in modern, constitutional policing and learn how the department uses crime data analysis and proactive policing to keep the community safe. Attendees can also participate in a use-of-force training simulation and have lunch with the mayor as part of a Q&A

session. Sessions will be held May 11 and 18, June 22 and 29 or July 20 and 27. To learn more and apply, visit: [Community Workshops & Academies | City of Chula Vista \(chulavistaca.gov\)](https://www.chulavistaca.gov/Community-Workshops-Academies).

The City is seeking community input for an **update of its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) self-evaluation and transition plan**. The City makes every effort to provide accommodations to those needing access to attend or participate in all City meetings, activities, programs, or services. What might be missing to gain access? How can the City be more accommodating? The City has opened a new survey to gather information and ideas. The survey can be accessed by scanning this QR Code or by visiting [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) Compliance | City of Chula Vista \(chulavistaca.gov\)](https://www.chulavistaca.gov/Americans-with-Disabilities-Act-ADA-Compliance). Surveys are also available in an alternative format, and suggestions can also be sent in writing or by email. To receive the survey in an alternative format, or for more information, contact Shayne Wagner at 619-409-1960 or by email at swagner@chulavistaca.gov or TTY through California Relay at 7-1-1. The survey is open through June.

Scan the code to take the survey from your mobile device!



Neighborhood Beautification

OPERATION PRIDE continues monthly clean ups, and in conjunction with Alpha Project, collected 24,900 pounds of trash and 104 shopping carts this month. McAlister (Work for Hope) continues to paint Rohr Park, and Alpha Project Take Back the Streets has collected 19,140 pounds of trash. Rangers are continuing to enforce and keep the parks clean and safe for the public. Thank you for your continued efforts.

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Meetings/Events

The City Council will meet on **Tuesday, May 7, 14, 21 and 28**, 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.