



February 22, 2024

Grab your friends and family to join us at the [43rd Annual Clam Chowder Cook-Off](#) — Saturday, February 24, and Sunday, February 25 — at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. The weekend will be full of tasty chowder, fun booths, and friendly competition. Admission is free, and the event happens rain or shine!

Santa Cruz's event is the largest and longest-running Clam Chowder Cook-Off in the country. Join the fun and excitement as talented chefs from the West Coast compete for the title of BEST CLAM CHOWDER.

Amateur chefs compete on Saturday (2/24) and professional chefs on Sunday (2/25). The atmosphere will be festive and fun as contestants prepare their finest ingredients outdoors along the Boardwalk to the delight of thousands of spectators.

Booths open at 9:30 am, and public tasting begins at 1:00 pm. Tasting kits and merchandise can be purchased the day of or online at cityofsantacruz.com/chowdermerch. All proceeds benefit the City of Santa Cruz Parks & Recreation Department.



The City of Santa Cruz Raises New Flag Atop the Town Clock

Last week, in celebration of Presidents Day, the City replaced the weathered and worn flag that adorned our Town Clock with a pristine new American Flag.

In a meaningful gathering, Mayor Fred Keeley, alongside Councilmembers Sonja Brunner and Shebreh Kalantari-Johnson, County Supervisor Justin Cummings, and Vice President Chuck Woodson of The Santa Cruz County Veterans Memorial Building, reflected on what it means to be American and the symbolism of our flag holds. The assembly comprised veterans, community members, City employees, firefighters, and police officers. These community members gathered at the Santa Cruz Town

Clock to witness the retiring of the old American flag and the uplifting installation of a new one, proudly representing the City of Santa Cruz atop the historic Town Clock.

Special thanks to the Santa Cruz Fire Department for their ladder truck, the Santa Cruz Police Honor Guard for retiring the old flag, and the City of Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation for their invaluable contributions to maintaining our cherished Town Clock and City park.

Are We In Or Out Of Drought?

Wondering about our drought status amid all the recent rain? While Loch Lomond (our only reservoir for storing water) is full, factors beyond reservoir levels affect our water supply. In Santa Cruz, on an annual basis, approximately 80% of our water supply comes from local creeks and rivers — the other 20% comes from storage in Loch Lomond and local groundwater.

Changing weather patterns (we call it "weather whiplash") impact the amount of water available in those surface sources. Even with substantial winter rainfall, the delivery of that water over shorter periods of time impacts how much surface water



will still be available later in the year.

As climate change continues to impact the frequency and intensity of storms and drought, our Water Department is actively working on a plan to update infrastructure and secure a reliable water supply that adapts to evolving weather patterns. Initiatives such as water transfers with neighboring agencies, the Aquifer Storage and Recovery pilot program, and in-depth studies on recycled water opportunities and desalination underscore our commitment to a secure water future and maintaining our way of life in Santa Cruz.

Sign up for the [Our Water Our Future Newsletter](#) for monthly updates from the Santa Cruz Water Department.



Kick Off 2024 Broker Breakfast a Success

The Business Services team hosted the first quarterly Broker Breakfast of 2024 this month. Nearly 25 local brokers gathered at Cruzio for a presentation from Bonnie Lipscomb, Economic Development Director, where she gave an overview of the downtown expansion, metro station development, and more. With a considerably low vacancy rate downtown, brokers presented their latest listings and upcoming tenants, then discussed challenges and solutions to fill long-term

vacancies. The Broker Breakfasts have been a helpful tool for developing strong relationships between the brokers and the City in our shared goal to fill vacancies, attract and retain businesses in our commercial districts, and identify new resources or changes to City policies to support our local businesses in accessing commercial spaces.

What do you love about Santa Cruz?

The City of Santa Cruz is asking for your help to strengthen our communications and brand. We are looking at our City's image through the lens of our staff, residents, and businesses to ensure the City's brand and communications represent everything that makes Santa Cruz such a special place. At the end of the project, we will launch a new approach to communications, including a new logo, colors, and other materials that will help us better represent the City.

We encourage you to complete the survey to help us understand the City's essence by gathering the perspectives of those who live, work, and contribute to our diverse community. Please also share the survey with your friends and family!



**Take the 7-Minute Survey
Now**



El Centro Residential Apartments Waitlist is Open!

The [El Centro Residential Apartments \(1110 Pacific Ave\) waitlist](#) is now open! El Centro consists of Project Based Vouchers for extremely low-income seniors aged 60 or older. For waiting list information, please visit the [Housing Authority website](#) or call the Housing Authority waiting list information line at 831-454-5950.

El Centro Amenities

- Each 180 square foot room has its own bathroom, small refrigerator, microwave, and sink.
- Each suite of units has a shared kitchen and separate men's and women's showers.
- Library on the 4th floor
- Community room
- Patio
- Laundry Facilities on each suite floor
- All within walking distance of shopping, bus/transit station, USPS office, Social Security office, City Hall, and Senior Center.
- Resident Service Coordinator and Property Manager on-site

For more information on other affordable housing projects in the City of Santa Cruz, visit
www.cityofsantacruz.com/housingassistanceinformation.

Join the West Cliff 50-Year Vision Community Conversation

February 29, 2024
5:30 – 7:00 pm

Join us on February 29 to dig into the 50-year vision for West Cliff and provide feedback!

London Nelson Community Center
301 Center Street
Santa Cruz



Learn More!

[**Click here for PDF!**](#)



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