

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ

City Manager's Weekly Update

August 29, 2024

Santa Cruz Fire Department Welcomes New Members to Station 1

The Santa Cruz Fire Department is proud to announce the appointment of three new members to Station 1. Congratulations to Ian McPherson and Kieran O'Leary on their promotion to Firefighter/Paramedic with SCFD. Both Ian and Kieran have been dedicated community members for years, previously serving as outstanding Santa Cruz lifeguards.

In addition, we are pleased to welcome Ari Wargon, a new hire and lateral Firefighter/Paramedic from the Contra Costa County Fire Department. Ari's experience and skills will be a valuable enhancement to our team.

Station 1, located in the heart of downtown, is one of the oldest, busiest, and largest firehouses in the county. This multi-unit facility is home to a Fire Engine, a Ladder Truck, a Battalion Chief, and up to eight firefighters on duty at any given time.

Interested in jobs with the City? Click here!



Ari Wargon



Ian McPherson



Progress in Homelessness Response

In the Winter of 2023, the City began a strategic planning process to guide our homelessness response work with the goal of creating an enhanced, collaborative, and coordinated response to homelessness in our community. The Homelessness Response Strategic Plan (HRSP) builds on our work over the past two years and provides a compassionate approach to homelessness that supports people moving from encampments into more stable housing and rebuilding their lives.

Learn more about our programs!



OPINION FROM COMMUNITY VOICES

Santa Cruz remains committed to compassionate homeless solutions, despite Supreme Court decision

by Matt Huffaker

"There's been a lot written and said across the state about the Supreme Court's decision in Grants Pass v. Johnson, which permits the enforcement of laws regulating camping on public property and Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent executive order to clear homeless encampments throughout the state.

So, how does this really impact us here in Santa Cruz?"

Read the full article



We have made measured progress:

- 165 Tent-based Safe Sleeping Spaces
- 184 people moved to more stable housing
- 1100 new affordable housing units
- 300+ people served through severe weather shelter collaboration with the County
- 149 tons of homelessness related refuse has been collected throughout the City from neighborhoods, open spaces, and beaches
- 126 people have reconnected with family and friends through our Homeward Bound program
- 932 people served in City-run shelter and safe parking programs since our programs started in 2022

Santa Cruz Weekend Highlights & September Events

A big shout-out to all the Parks & Recreation team members who played a key role in making the weekend of August 24–25 a success!

- The Civic Auditorium was buzzing with excitement as it hosted *Who's Live Anyway?*
- Over at Mike Fox Park and Ken Wormhoudt Skatepark, the NorCASL Skate Contest drew in crowds, while the Santa Cruz Neighbors helped organize and support around 30 neighborhood block parties.
- The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History celebrated its impressive 119th birthday.
- The Coastal Watershed Council hosted River Jam, a vibrant celebration of the San Lorenzo River.

Looking ahead, September is packed with exciting events. Mark your calendars for the Ironman 70.3, the final Tuesday Night Live Concert of the season at the Wharf, the MAH's Commonground Festival at Cowell Beach, the Aloha Outrigger Races, and the California Coastal Cleanup, among many others. Stay informed and don't miss out—check out the full list of upcoming events on the **City's events calendar.**







Help Shape the Future of the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History

The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History is inviting the community to get involved in shaping its future. Recently, the museum hosted two community meetings with Parks & Recreation staff. These meetings focused on discussing the proposed improvements to the City-owned museum facility and the nearby Tyrell Park. Community input is vital for guiding these enhancements. For more information about this project, you can visit https://www.santacruzmuseum.org/improvement/.



Learn More!

Anchovies, Marine Mammals & Sea Birds — Check Out the Action at the Wharf!



The Monterey Bay is buzzing with wildlife, from schools of anchovies to rafts of marine mammals and flocks of pelicans. Right now, the annual migration of sooty shearwaters is in full swing, and it's a sight you won't want to miss. These incredible seabirds, known for their long flights and deep dives, are putting on a show as they move east to west along the Santa Cruz coast.

The Wharf, lovingly maintained by our Parks and Recreation Department, is the perfect spot to witness this natural spectacle. The Santa Cruz Sentinel even featured an article on the fall frenzy this past Saturday, which you can be **found here.** (photo: Shmuel Thaler, Santa Cruz Sentinel)

So grab your binoculars and come down to the Wharf—you never know what you might see!



Water Department Crew Repairs Water Main Break

Recently, a 6-inch water main on Floral Drive erupted, blowing off a large section of AC water pipe. Kudos to the water crew members who responded at 5:00 AM and worked around the clock to close isolation valves and make the necessary repairs.

Our team members did a great job handling the response quickly and safely.



Join Us Saturday, 8/31, to Learn About Bears in the Santa Cruz Mountains

We're excited to welcome Lisa Robinson of the San Lorenzo Valley Museum to Loch Lomond on Saturday, August 31! She will discuss the lore about bears in the Santa Cruz Mountains. One story will cover one of Santa Cruz's most colorful historic community members—Mountain Charlie McKiernan, pictured above.

The event starts at 10:00 AM, and admission is free! You can learn more about this topic **here**, but please be warned that – like most historical accounts – the stories at this link may be a little bit loose with the truth but fun, nonetheless!

Take a Survey to Guide City HUD Spending

On August 12, the City of Santa Cruz launched an online community survey to gather input on the 2025–30 Consolidated Plan and Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area. The survey will inform how the City spends its annual federal funding received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD provides the City with Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership funding that can be used for new affordable housing development, community programs, infrastructure improvements, and more.
The City will also host two community meetings with consultants from Grow America. The first meeting will be held at the London Nelson Community Center (301 Center St) on Wednesday, September 11, from 5:30 – 6:30 pm. The second event will be held on Zoom on Friday, September 20, from 12:00 – 1:00 pm. Both events will offer Spanish translation. Please join us to learn more about the HUD funding and provide your feedback.

If you have any questions regarding the consolidated plan, neighborhood revitalization, or HUD funds, please contact Principal Management Analyst Jess Mellor at <jmellor@santacruzca.gov>.

Take the Survey in

Take the Survey in

English | Spanish



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