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City Manager's Weekly Update

May 1, 2025

New Coastal Rail Trail Segment Opens on May 21 with Event at La Barranca Park

Public Works will officially open the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 7 Phase II with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, May 21, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. at La Barranca Park. The event will feature remarks from local leadership, a celebratory trail walk with Bayview Elementary School students, educational activities, and light refreshments.

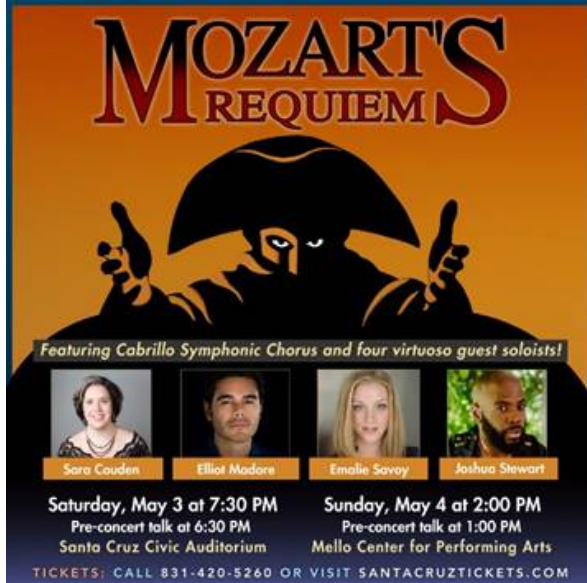
The [Coastal Rail Trail Segment 7 Phase II](#) project is a 0.8-mile-long paved bicycle and pedestrian path between Bay Street/California Street and Pacific Avenue/Beach Street. The trail runs along the coastal side of the existing rail line. Walkers and bikers of all ages and abilities will enjoy the rail trail, which provides connections to the popular Beach Street bikeway, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, and Municipal Wharf.



This recently completed segment of the Coastal Rail Trail serves over 800 active transportation users per day. Together, Phase I and Phase II create 2.1 miles of the Coastal Rail Trail between Natural Bridges Drive and Pacific Avenue at the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf. The two-phase trail will connect more than 30,000 residents who live within one mile of the project to schools, work, beaches, shopping and other activity centers.

**Learn More About the Coastal Rail
Trail**

Experience Mozart's



Requiem at the Civic on May 3

Join us at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium on May 3 for an unforgettable evening of music, emotion, and artistry. The Santa Cruz Symphony and Cabrillo Symphonic Chorus, joined by four outstanding vocal soloists, will present *Mozart's Requiem in D minor*—a timeless masterpiece of hope, despair, and redemption.

The program also features a new arrangement of Björk's *Overture to Dancer in the Dark* and the world premiere of *Lux Perpetua*, both by Maestro Daniel Stewart. This performance marks the final appearance of Cheryl Anderson as director of the Cabrillo Symphonic Chorus —

don't miss this special moment in our musical community. Celebrate the season finale of the 2024–25 classical series with us!

[Get Tickets](#)

City Council Approves Economic Development Initiatives and Vibrancy Ordinance

At its April 22 meeting, City Council approved a slate of economic development initiatives that incentivize new business activity in Downtown Santa Cruz and activate public spaces, including Downtown alleyways. The package includes:

- Improvement of Downtown alleyways to promote activation of these spaces and approval of temporary café license agreements to allow outdoor dining in alleyways.
- Creation of a Movie Theater Retention Incentive, a one-year pilot program that allows downtown movie theaters to give 2-hour parking validation with reimbursement by the City of up to \$50,000 in one year.
- Approval of the first reading of the Vibrancy Ordinance, which creates maintenance standards for empty storefronts. The ordinance requires registration of vacant storefronts after two years of vacancy and payment of an annual registration fee. The ordinance will be implemented as a pilot program on Pacific Avenue for one year, with an evaluation for citywide implementation scheduled for June 2026.
- Creation of a 12-month Window Covering Pilot Program for vacant storefronts as part of the Vibrancy Ordinance. The program will cover the cost of designing and installing decorative window coverings for empty storefronts on Pacific Avenue.



Pilates Sculpt is Back!

Recharge your workday with FREE Pilates Sculpt classes, led by Parks & Rec's Julie Graff and



for the first time.

sponsored by Human Resources! Stretch, strengthen, and connect with your coworkers and community.

Details

- Wednesdays, May 7 – December 17, 12 –1 p.m. at the Civic Auditorium or London Nelson Community Center. No class during Juneteenth, July 4th, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving weeks. **View schedule.**
- Open to all City employees — no cost, no registration required
- Community members welcome — [Register here](#). A suggested donation of \$5–\$10 benefits Friends of Parks and Recreation scholarships.
- Bring a mat, water, workout clothes, resistance band, and bender ball (limited supplies available).
- All levels welcome, whether you're returning or trying it

[Learn More](#)

Join Us for Pedal in the Park on May 3

Get ready to roll into Depot Park for an unforgettable day of biking fun and safety on **Saturday, May 3, from 1 – 4 p.m.**! Modo, the active transportation platform of Ecology Action and the Santa Cruz Police Department, is teaming up with 20 local businesses and nonprofits to host a free community event that celebrates the joy of biking and promotes road safety.



What to Expect

- Family-Friendly Group Rides: Join Modo for scenic rides along the rail trail and low-stress Westside routes. Learn skills like hand signaling, navigating intersections, trail etiquette, and more—all while enjoying a relaxed group ride.
- Bike Rodeo and Obstacle Courses: Engage in fun, skill-building challenges suitable for all ages.
- Giveaways! Helmets and More: Stay safe and stylish with a free helmet (while supplies last).
- Free Drawing: One lucky participant will win a brand-new bike.
- This event is made possible thanks to grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS).

Join the Movement

'Pedal in the Park' is a celebration of what makes Santa Cruz a vibrant, connected, and fresh-air-loving community. Bring your family, friends, and bike, and let's ride together!

[Register for Pedal in the Park](#)

Celebrate Affordable Housing Month with Over 20

Events in May!

May is Affordable Housing Month! The Economic Development and Housing Department is excited to share a full calendar of events highlighting local efforts to expand and support affordable housing in our community.

Check out the [2025 Event Quick Guide](#) to find workshops, tours, celebrations, and more happening throughout the month of May. You can also find Affordable Housing Month events on the [City Calendar](#).

Featured Event: Grand Opening of Natural Bridges Apartments

Friday, May 9, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
415 Natural Bridges Drive in Santa Cruz.
[Register here](#) by May 7, 2025

This all-electric development includes twenty new 100% affordable studio apartments for residents who earn up to 50% of our area's median income. Celebrate this milestone with local leaders, partners, and community members. All units are currently leased — for information on waitlists and vacancies, visit hacosantacruz.org.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING MONTH - MAY 2025

Schedule of Events - events are subject to change, check "View Event" links for details

Santa Cruz Housing Cruise
May 3rd @ 9:30 AM - [View Event](#)

Sip & Shop
May 20th @ 4:00 PM - [View Event](#)

March to End Homelessness
May 4th @ 10:00 AM - [View Event](#)

Faith-Based Organizations & Land Developers
May 21st @ 10:00 AM - [View Event](#)

Beyond The Bridge
May 7th @ 5:30 PM - [View Event](#)

YIMBY Social
May 22nd @ 5:30 PM - [View Event](#)

First Time Home Buyers' Forum
May 8th @ 6:00 PM - [View Event](#)

Cienega Heights Grand Opening
May 23rd @ 11:00 AM - [View Event](#)

Natural Bridges Apartments Grand Opening
May 9th @ 11:00 AM - [View Event](#)

WUI Research for Resilience: Exploring the Social and Environmental Dynamics of the Housing Crisis in Santa Cruz County
May 24th @ 1:30 PM - [View Event](#)

Affordable Housing Month '25 Keynote Event
May 10th @ 4:00 PM - [View Event](#)

Affordable Housing: What It Is & How to Get It (Virtual Event)
May 27th @ 6:00 PM - [View Event](#)

Nowhere To Go, But Still Here: A Data-Driven Look at Displacement and Homelessness in Santa Cruz County
May 13th @ 6:00 PM - [View Event](#)

The County of Santa Cruz Housing for Health Partnership & Continuum of Care Community Meeting
May 28th @ 1:00 PM - [View Event](#)

211 Website Tour (Virtual Event)
May 14th @ 10:00 AM - [View Event](#)

Celebrating 20 years of the SCCAR Housing Foundation
May 28th @ 3:00 PM - [View Event](#)

Landlord Appreciation
May 14th @ 5:30 PM - [View Event](#)

Hello ADU
May 15th @ 6:30 PM - [View Event](#)

Affordable Housing Finance 101
Virtual recording available ALL month - [View Class](#)

Una Conversacion con Lideres Comunitarios / A Conversation with Community Leaders
May 16th @ 6:00 PM - [View Event](#)

Housing Choice Voucher Program
Virtual recording available ALL month - [View Webinar](#)

For more information on Affordable Housing Month, visit:
www.cityofsantacruz.com/affordablehousingmonth

Learn More



Myths and Facts About Homelessness in Santa Cruz

MYTH: Most of the homeless people in Santa Cruz are not from Santa Cruz.

FACT: This myth circulates in many cities, and it's not based on facts. The majority of people experiencing homelessness in the area were members of our community prior to becoming homeless. 2024 Point in Time (PIT) Count data shows that 86% of people reported living in Santa Cruz County before becoming homeless. 2023 PIT Count data reflects that 75% of people reported living in our county before becoming homeless.

[Learn More](#)

Successful Community Clean-Ups Held in Lower Ocean and Beach Flats Neighborhoods

Planning and Community Development partnered with Santa Cruz Neighbors, Neighbors of Lower Ocean, Community Bridges, Grey Bears, and the City's Public Works and Parks & Recreation departments to sponsor these annual community clean-ups. Community participation was excellent! The City shared resources and information on recycling, affordable housing, homeless services, the leaf blower exchange program, and emergency preparedness.



City Proclaims May 5 London Nelson Day, Celebrating a Legacy of Education and Equity

At the April 22 City Council meeting, Councilmember Gabriela Trigueiro officially proclaimed May 5 to be London Nelson Day in the City of Santa Cruz, recognizing the enduring legacy and profound contributions of London Nelson.

Born into enslavement, trafficked to California as a slave during the Gold Rush, and later purchasing his own freedom, London Nelson was a pivotal figure in Santa Cruz history. Upon his passing in 1860, London Nelson left his entire estate to support public education—an extraordinary

act of generosity that empowered generations and continues to serve as a foundation of civic pride.

This proclamation honors Nelson's lasting impact and reaffirms the City's commitment to telling a fuller, more inclusive story of Santa Cruz's past, celebrating those who shaped a more just and equitable future for our community.

To celebrate, the London Nelson Legacy Initiative will host a series of events from May 5 – 17, highlighting Nelson's life and celebrating Black history in Santa Cruz. [View the full schedule of events here.](#)

In addition, the London Nelson Community Center, in partnership with the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, is updating the London Nelson Memorial located at the community center. Stay tuned for more information on the official unveiling, to be posted on the [Community Center's event page.](#)

[Learn More](#)



Paper Shred Event to Take Place May 10

Are you holding on to boxes of sensitive documents? Let us recycle them for you for free at the Paper Shred Event on Saturday, May 10, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event will take place in the Santa Cruz City Hall Parking lot at the corner of Chestnut and Church streets.

Event Details

- City of Santa Cruz residents only.
- Each attendee may bring paper documents up to a maximum of three banker-size boxes (15" x 12" x 10") or three brown paper bags of equivalent size.
- Documents are shredded on-site and then taken to a Stericycle facility for recycling.
- The event may end before 1 p.m. if the shredding truck reaches capacity.



Celebrate Drinking Water Week May 4–10

Drinking Water Week is a time to recognize the vital role clean, safe water plays in our daily lives. Celebrated each May, it highlights the importance of protecting our water resources and the hard work of water professionals who ensure our communities have reliable access to quality drinking water.

Drinking Water Week is the perfect opportunity to learn more about where our water comes from and how we can all safeguard it for future generations.

Learn more about the journey of your water from source to tap by visiting the [Santa Cruz Water Department website.](#)

Gas Powered Leaf Blowers Ordinance Begins July 1

Gas-powered leaf blowers are a significant source of carbon emissions that contribute to global warming and negatively impact public health. City Council adopted an ordinance that will prohibit the use of gas-powered leaf blowers citywide with limited exceptions, which will take effect on July 1, 2025. This regulation will help the City meet local and state goals of reducing carbon emissions to 40% of 1990 levels by 2030.

Residents and businesses may be eligible for rebates and incentive programs to help transition from gas-powered landscaping tools to zero-emission equipment.



New to Leaf Blowing? Follow These Safety Tips!

- Wear protective gear like safety goggles, earplugs, and a dust mask.
- Keep the nozzle away from people and pets, and avoid operating it on unstable surfaces, such as ladders or rooftops.
- Ensure all doors and windows are closed to prevent debris from entering your home.

[**Learn More**](#)

Join Us at Touch-A-Truck on May 21!

12-2 p.m. | Depot Park - 119 Center Street

Join Public Works on Wednesday, May 21, from 12 – 2 p.m. in Depot Park for an action-packed, family-friendly event to get an up-close look at the City's impressive fleet of vehicles and equipment. Learn about the tools and machinery that keep our City running smoothly and watch staff compete in the third annual Equipment Road-eo! Enjoy skills competition, educational booths, demonstrations, activities, and more!



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