

# City Manager's Weekly Update

August 30, 2019

## WATER

During the month of August, we hosted our state regulator, the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) as they conducted a very detailed review of almost every aspect of the water system. This detailed system inspection, sometimes referred to as a Sanitary Survey, is conducted every 3 years and as staff at DDW may have turned over between one inspection cycle and the next, we are often starting from scratch in presenting our system and its many complexities to a new DDW regulator. Various teams of Water Department staff accompanied DDW staff on field trips to sources, tanks, treatment facilities and, I believe, almost every backflow prevention device in the system. Along with helping DDW check the box for completing the inspection, and receiving feedback from them on any things they'd like to see us address and improve, the multi-day inspection provides a great opportunity to establish and/or enhance our working relationship with these important regulators in our business. In speaking with them at the wrap-up of their inspection it was clear that they were pleased with our operations and impressed by the way we work together as an organization to both provide water service to our customers as well as proactively plan for the future.

Speaking of proactively planning for the future, this week the Water Commission had a comprehensive presentation on the impacts of climate change on water utilities and how utilities can prepare. Climatologist Shawn Chartrand provided the 100,000' perspective of the science of climate change vis-à-vis impacts to water systems, and Bob Raucher talked about trends in impacts to and responses from utilities. We are way ahead of the game here in Santa Cruz, as we have been actively planning treatment and system upgrades for the past couple of years to deal with the impacts of climate change.

Related to proactive planning, as a department we have put a focus on safety this year to ensure that we continue to be one of the safest-operating departments at the City. We've undertaken many new efforts to ensure that our practices both in-house and in the field are safe. Including a work-plan for our WD safety committee; contracting with a safety officer to ensure our protocols and trainings are current best practices; implementing a number of new safety polices and safe practice guidelines; implementing a web-based safety data collection; beginning regular worksite/office space safety inspections; and updating each work section's employee safety training matrixes.

Last, we are proud to announce the completion of ADA improvements at the upper Loch Lomond Recreation Area picnic facility. The new restrooms and picnic area look great!

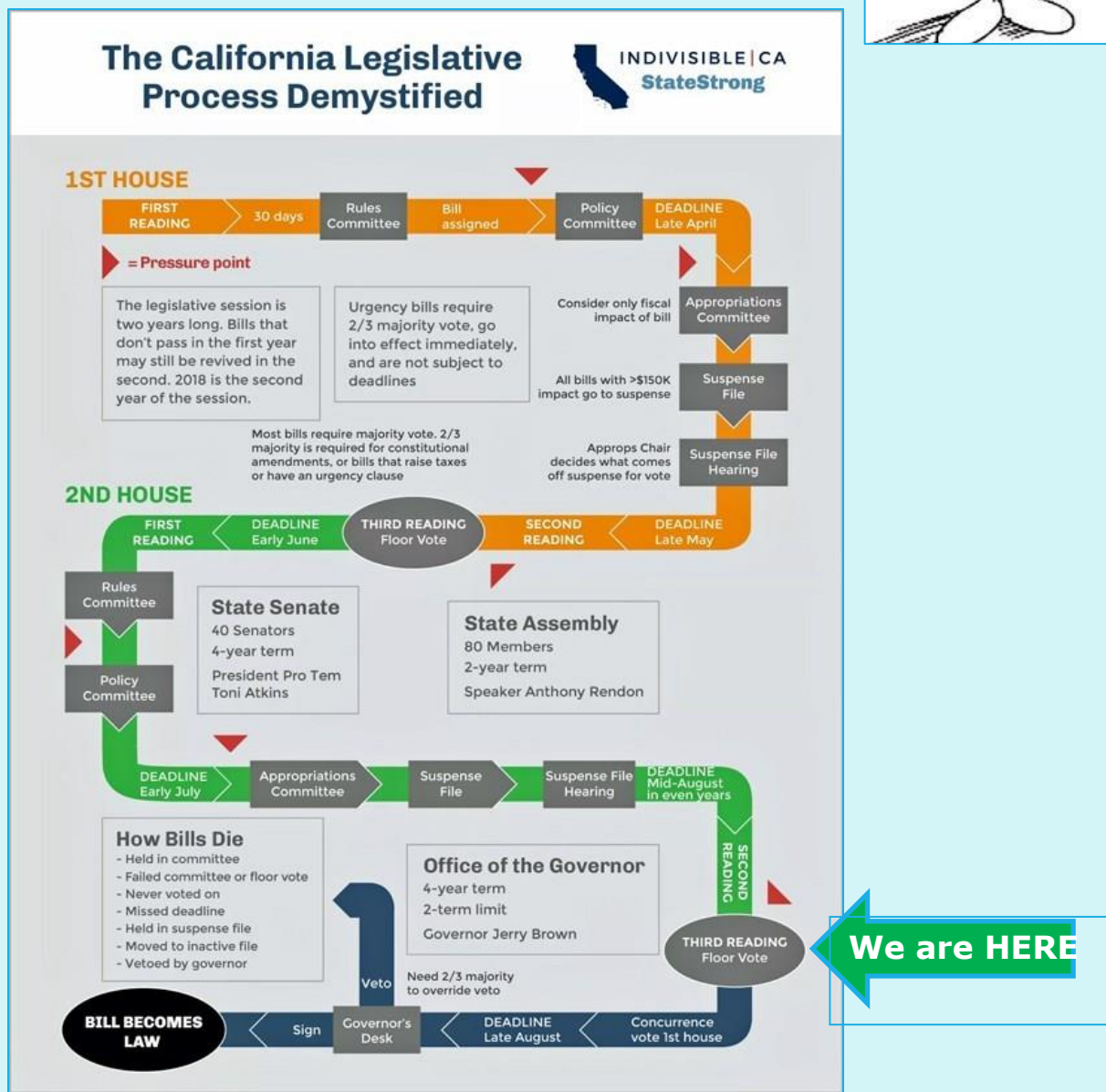
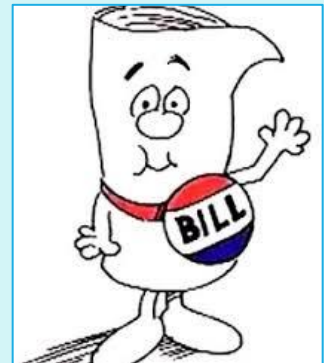


## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ED: Housing Update

AB 411 PASSES ANOTHER HURDLE!

AB 411 passed out of Appropriations Committee successfully today and is now moving on to the Senate floor! AB 411 is the Santa Cruz bill that would allow the City (Successor Agency) to utilize \$16 million of frozen bonds for local affordable housing creation. We will keep you informed about the progress at the bill moves forward.





## ***ED: Asset Management Update***

### **SANTA CRUZ STREETCAR TROLLEY OFFICIALLY RETIRES ON LABOR DAY 2019**

It's been a good ride! Join us as we bid farewell to the beloved Santa Cruz streetcar trolley, which will be replaced by electric shuttles starting summer 2020 thanks to a generous grant from the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD). The trolley retirement party takes place Labor Day, September 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. downtown at the Del Mar Theatre stop, 1124 Pacific Avenue. Bring the whole family to enjoy a proclamation from the mayor and have fun in a photo booth inside the trolley. The first 100 attendees receive special candy “trolley lollies” and all attendees receive a free trolley ride coupon. Other refreshments TBA. Kids are encouraged to create trolley artwork to be displayed inside the trolley during the last day's ride. Be sure to catch a ride after the event. The trolley runs from 12 p.m. – 8 p.m. Please send inquiries to Alison Cameron, [acameron@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:acameron@cityofsantacruz.com) or call 831-420-5158.



### **CITY AWARDED GRANT FOR HOMELESS GARDEN PROJECT – POGONIP FARM**

The City has been awarded a grant for environmental assessment of a former skeet shooting range at the Homeless Garden Project's planned farm at Pogonip. In June, Staff submitted an application to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) under their Targeted Site Investigation (TSI) grant. As a result of this award, a DTSC contractor will assess environmental contamination on the farm's East Meadow. The value of these services is estimated at up to \$75,000 and the work is expected to be completed by April, 2020. DTSC will coordinate with a City consultant to fully characterize the site and develop a work plan for any environmental remediation that may be necessary. Parks and Recreation is currently reviewing submissions and hopes to finalize the City's consultant selection by October. This joint approach to assessment will reduce costs and help to expedite the construction and operation of the Homeless Garden Project Farm which has been impacted by the discovery of environmental contamination originating from an old skeet shooting range dating to the 1930's-1950's. The Homeless Garden Project provides a sense of community, as well as transitional employment, and workforce training for homeless residents and volunteer supporters.



## ED: Business Support Update

Q1 2019 Sales Tax Receipts Flat Countywide Year over Year



The first quarter of 2019 saw a drop in sales tax revenue from Q4 2018 after the holiday shopping season, a typical cycle that occurs every year after the busy holiday shopping season. The dip was shown most from family apparel, sporting goods, and specialty retailers which pulled the larger category of general consumer goods lower. New car sales saw a decline as well in Q1 which is a trend being felt regionally and statewide. However, used car sales did see an increase of 40%. The State is still working through some technical issues with their payment meaning some returns are still missing and these figures could change once those payments are received. Without these aberrations, the taxable sales for Santa Cruz County were flat compared to first quarter 2018 and the Central Coast region was down 2.1%.

## ED: City Arts Update

### STORM DRAIN MURAL PILOT PROGRAM A SUCCESS!

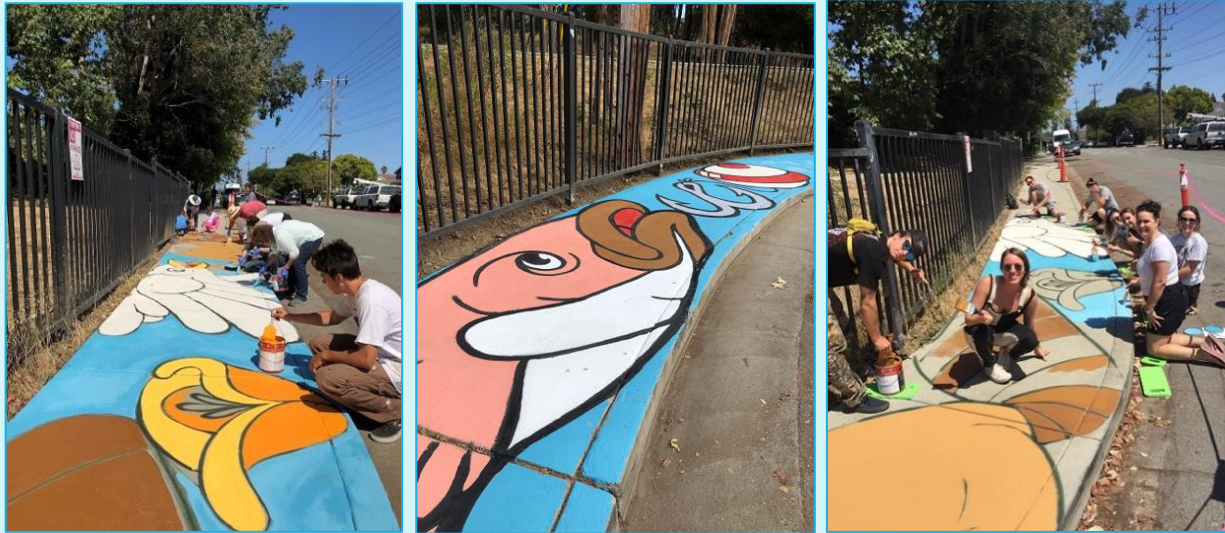
In March of this year the [Santa Cruz Arts Commission](#) approved three storm drain mural designs for installation in neighborhoods along the San Lorenzo River at Beach Flats Park, the end of Felker Street and the end of Pryce Street. The goal of this program is to raise awareness that these drains flow directly into the San Lorenzo River and to inspire stewardship of the drains and the River through meaningful neighborhood engagement and beautiful artwork.

The Storm Drain Mural Program is a collaboration between the City of Santa Cruz and the [Coastal Watershed Council](#) (CWC) and grew out of discussions with people living in riverside neighborhoods and the City's Public Works Department, which determined that many of the storm drains along the San Lorenzo River are magnets for trash and other pollution. The water going into these drains flows directly into the San Lorenzo River and impacts river health and the fish, birds and other wildlife living in the San Lorenzo River ecosystem.

With funding from the City's Public Art program, Coastal Watershed Council staff and neighborhood leaders organized and conducted outreach in the neighborhoods with the artists. Neighbors helped to

select artists, shared their input and feedback on each mural's design and on installation day, picked up paintbrushes to help install each mural.

### Felker Street



A strong turnout of 56 attendees (including 15 youth and 41 adults) and plenty of sunshine powered the latest storm drain installation in Santa Cruz on Felker Street.

The design for [Daniel Velasquez](#)'s storm drain mural was developed through two neighborhood meetings with outreach done in both English and Spanish. The mural leads to the storm drain at the end of the sidewalk and features:

- Wildlife of the San Lorenzo River – Including steelhead, cranes, ducks and raccoons.
- Flowers of the San Lorenzo River.
- A beach ball – tying in the recreational link to the beaches and ocean.
- "Eddie the Cat" a beloved neighborhood pet and mascot, whom the neighbors felt strongly about including!
- The artist was further inspired by totems from his own and other indigenous cultures
- The artist's approach of creating a black outline made it possible for people of all ages and abilities to help with its installation – creating strong connections between neighbors and increased sense of stewardship for the storm drain and San Lorenzo River.





*The mural will be coupled with signage about keeping the storm drain clear of trash.*



## Beach Flats Park







Artist Irene O'Connell paints Tlaloc – a personification of water according to precolonial Mexico codices.



[Irene Juarez O'Connell](#)'s Beach Flats Park design was developed through three neighborhood meetings, including a "Storm Drain Mural Social" held in the Beach Flats Park. All outreach was done in both English and Spanish. The mural was installed on July 7, with the help of 15 youth and 20 adults. The Beach Flats storm drain mural features:

Animals and plants found in the San Lorenzo River and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary including the [red legged frog](#), steelhead trout, great blue heron, mallard duck and [tule reeds](#).

- A central figure in the design is “[Tlaloc](#)” - a personification of the energy of Water, according to the precolonial Mexica codices found in central Mexico. In this design, Tlaloc is a kind of gatekeeper and protector of the storm drain, with arms drawing the viewer’s eyes to it.
- The sea turtle in the middle came directly from the suggestion of some middle school youth and reminds us of the indigenous world view of North America being “[Turtle Island](#).”

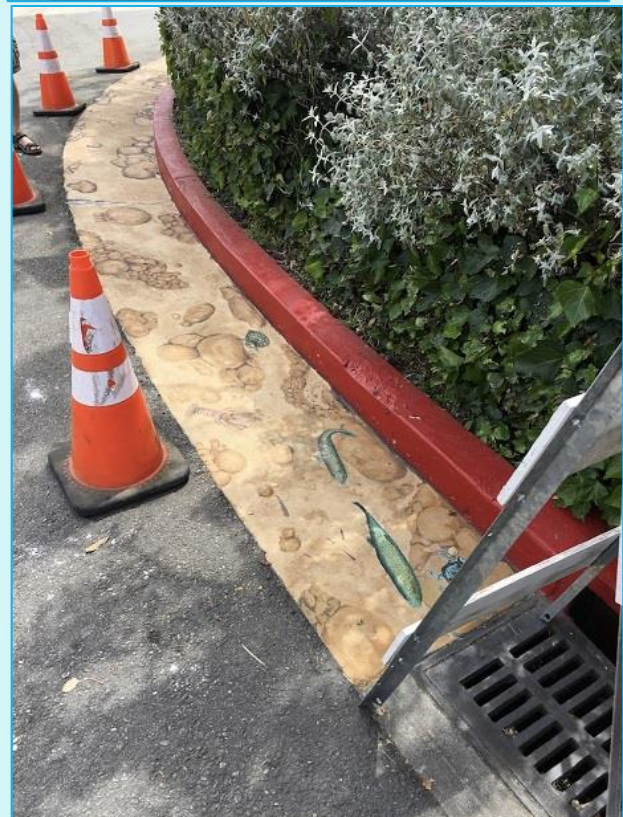
### Pryce Street



*This might be the smallest painter we’ve seen so far!*

The Pryce Street designs were developed through two meetings with neighbors on Pryce Street and all outreach was done in both English and Spanish. There are two storm drains that connect with each other on Pryce Street. The mural was installed on June 9 with the help of 20 event attendees of all ages!





*Pryce Street neighbors pitch in!*





*A faux drain features a local raccoon who was living in one of the storm drains for a short time.*

- In meetings with the neighbors, several talked about a family of raccoons that had lived in the storm drain for a short time – including one affectionately nick-named “Fatso the Raccoon.” Ralph has delightfully included a faux drain – painted on the curb--with the neighborhood’s favorite raccoon peeking out of it!
- Connecting to the second storm drain is a river – including fish – that create shadows in a 3-D effect. (It’s hard to see in the image below but is quite beautiful in a higher resolution format!)

For more information please contact Arts Program Manager, Beth Tobey, at (831) 420-5154 or [BTobey@CityofSantaCruz.com](mailto:BTobey@CityofSantaCruz.com), or Coastal Watershed Council River Scientist Whitney Reynier at (831) 464-9200 x104 or [wreynier@coastal-watershed.org](mailto:wreynier@coastal-watershed.org).



## POLICE

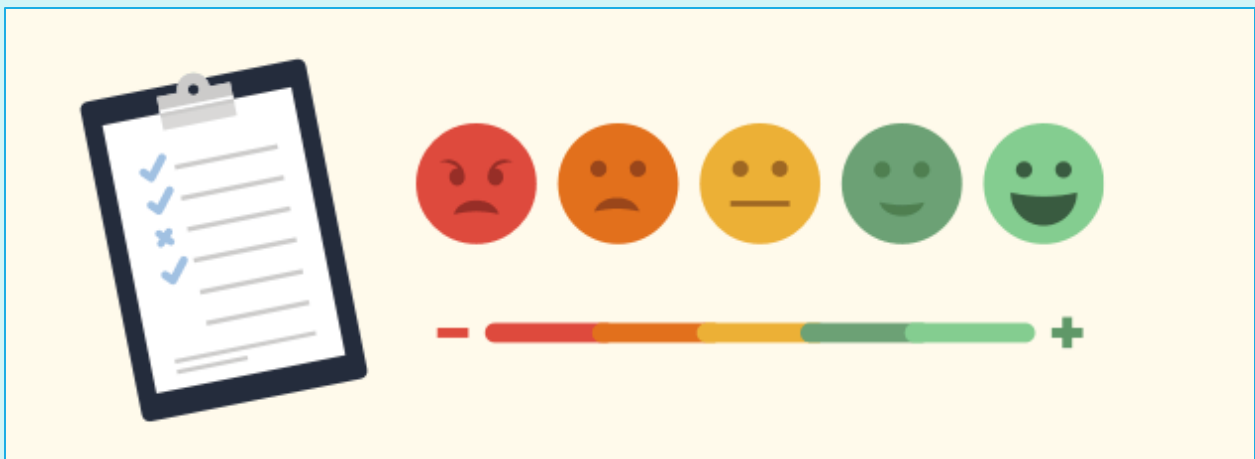
### SCPD Continues To Grow



This week, two of our newest officers graduated from the police academy. We are proud to welcome Marlin Kidd and Virginia Valencia. Join us for the swearing-in ceremony for the new academy graduates along with department awards and recognitions on Monday, September 9th at 3:00 pm in the SCPD Community Room.

### SCPD Addressing Morale in the Workplace

SCPD leadership is taking proactive steps to prevent low morale from becoming an ongoing department issue. Chief Mills personally conducted staff interviews and studied the POA survey for feedback to improve employee morale.



Highlights learned from the interviews and the survey presented to all members of the department. Sworn, professional staff and civilian enforcement staff were all included. Employees were encouraged to ask questions, comment, and engage in productive discussion throughout the morale recap presentation.

"If low morale is present, management must take a proactive stance to identify the cause," says Chief Mills. "If you don't address it, it takes on a life of its own and sends the rumor mill into overdrive."

There were fifteen concerns identified. The department has directly addressed some issues. The remaining 11 issues with goals to remedy are as follows:

Issue	Goal	Status
1. Staffing	102 in sworn staffing	Underway
2. Increase pay	Increase pay	Underway
3. Specialty teams	Schedule deployment	Develop
4. Communications	Design Internal Comms	Develop
5. Scheduling	Determine scheduling	Underway
6. Internal distrust	Provide training	Develop
7. Reduce calls	Work w/ Netcom	Underway
8. Reduce paper	Reduce # of reports	Develop
9. Policy on calls	Define calls to wave	Develop
10. Involve Command	Engage command	Underway
11. Training	Define classes	Develop

Improving morale is everyone's responsibility, but our idea is to improve morale in a way that creates the most significant positive impact. Each identified issue was assigned a group leader to formulate a plan, engage personnel, and their intention to resolve the problem. The groups include a cross-section of staff members who will report back on September 25th with a timeline it will take to accomplish their recommendations.

Overcoming these challenges requires that everyone from the top down seek creative strategies to improve and maintain employee's confidence, optimism, discipline, and willingness to contribute.



## PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### **2035 North Pacific Avenue**

Our department recently received an application to demolish an existing commercial building and construct a mixed-use building on this property located in the North Pacific Subarea of the Downtown Plan. The proposed three story building includes underground parking, 4,300 square feet of office space and parking on the first floor, two floors of 26 studio and one-bedroom apartment units, and a roof deck providing open space for residents. Because this site is adjacent to the toe of the Mission Hill bluff, a Slope Variance is likely required, and the Planning Commission would therefore be the approving body for the project.

As this project falls under the “large development” category of the Community Outreach Policy, there will also be a community meeting on September 17th at 7:00 pm in the Tony Hill Room at the Civic Auditorium. Information will be posted on our department’s website and noticed in accordance with the policy. If approved, this development will provide additional multi-family housing to the downtown area and will complement the mixed use buildings on the adjacent property to the south, 2027 N Pacific Avenue, as well as the mixed use complex at 2030 N Pacific Avenue across the street. Clara Stanger is the planner working on the project.

## LIBRARY

### Tech Talks at the Branciforte Library

Discuss and explore the most useful apps and settings for optimizing your tablet or smartphone.

Thursdays in September • 10:30am-12:00pm  
Branciforte Library • 230 Gault Street



- September 5th: Smartphone 101 - Get the most from your basic features and settings.
- September 12th: Productivity - Discover the apps that can help you become more organized.
- September 19th: Own Your Data - Leverage settings and apps to protect your data from being taken
- September 26th: Unlimited Learning - Know the apps to learn languages, tech and how to do just about anything

### Citizen Science: The Art & Science of Spinning

Spinning: A Verb for Staying Warm

Santa Cruz Public Librarian and Master Spinner, Julie Soto presents a talk about the art and science of hand spinning. She will discuss the history and tools of hand spinning, fibers of all kinds, and the basic technology required to produce one's own yarn. The presentation includes plenty of time for questions and there will be time for a hands on exploration.



Thursday • September 5th, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm • Downtown Library • 224 Church St.

Julie Soto is an SCPL Librarian at the Live Oak Branch Library. She is also an avid spinner with 16 years' experience in the fiber arts. She has owned her own yarn business in Southern California, and sold hand-dyed roving and yarn at craft fairs, yarn stores, renaissance fairs, and SCA events.

Citizen Science is a collaboration between the Santa Cruz Public Libraries; the Santa Cruz Children's Museum of Discovery (SCCMOD), and the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC).

We invite you to join us every first Thursday of the month for a presentation and Q&A with local experts and researchers in the field discussing life science, ecology, geology, genetics, climatology and more. Let's connect, inspire and inform each other!

For more information contact [pro@santacruzpl.org](mailto:pro@santacruzpl.org) • 831-427-7717

## PUBLIC WORKS

### Wastewater Treatment Facility

Maintenance and operations have continued a rehabilitation project by replacing 400 fine-bubble membrane diffusers in Solids Contact Tank #1.



### Engineering

Rail Trail Segment 7 Phase I is currently out to bid, with bids due on Sept. 11. The project consists of general construction of a 1.3 mile, 12-16 foot wide HMA-paved multi-use trail with a prefabricated pedestrian bridge and soldier pile retaining wall. Work includes demolition, clearing and grubbing, earthwork, soil testing for hazardous waste, tree removal, manufacture and installation of prefabricated pedestrian bridge, concrete bridge abutments, drilling for piles, concrete sidewalks, storm drainage, retaining wall, driveway approaches, driveway conforms, curbs, gutters, curb ramps, roadway and parking lot lighting, intersection reconfiguration, pedestrian activated beacon systems, trash enclosure reconstruction and relocation of utilities, plastic curb system, signs and striping.

### Storm Water

The Neary Lagoon Vegetation and Sediment Removal Project has started. The project, performed every other year, helps maintain the health and habitat of the lagoon.





### **Traffic Engineering/Community Relations**

Many thanks to all who participated in our Street Smarts Family Bike Ride with Mayor Watkins, our Santa Cruz Police Officers, Ecology Action and other community partners. The traffic safety open house, bike ride along the Riverwalk and the free Penny Ice Creamery cones were enjoyed by all!





With school back in session, our weekly Street Smarts message provides driving tips to help keep our kids safe. Our [message](#) can be heard on KAZU, KSCO, KZSC and [Spanish language](#) stations KLOK and KSES.



### **Resource Recovery**

The Food Waste System Electrical Feeder Installation Project is ongoing. The contractor is setting the electrical pull box and trenching for conduit installation. The tentative schedule for completion is: electrical trenching next week; RFP for the structural concrete that the equipment sits on at the end of September; finished structural pads estimated by December; equipment installation December – January; and equipment testing in January.

The Waste Reduction team has been working with the Tannery Arts Residential Housing complex on a small scale food waste collection pilot. The project kicked off with two outreach and education sessions with residents highlighting the guidelines of the short term pilot program.

Based on several citizen complaints, the Recourse Recovery Collection team set up a sweeping pilot at the 2200 and 2300 block of Delaware using alternating no parking and tow away areas on each side of the street on Monday and Tuesday mornings. With the assistance of the Police Department, we were able to do a thorough cleaning of an area that is usually packed with recreational vehicles.



Recycling Processing has shipped out four loads of mixed paper this week. Approximately 85 tons were loaded into overseas containers and shipped for recycling.



*Delaware Special Sweep*



*Electrical Feed Installation*