

City Manager's Weekly Update

November 6, 2020

Economic Development

Business Development | Santa Cruz Continues in Orange Tier

The Economic Recovery Council of Santa Cruz County is releasing weekly reports on the County's current status within the Governor's Blueprint for a Safer Economy. We are publishing these reports on our website [here](#).

The County continues in Tier 3 – Moderate for this week. However, the adjusted case numbers have increased above the Tier 3 allowances and will need to shift back down to remain in this tier with the business operation levels it allows. If the County continues with this elevated case number next week, we could move back to the Tier 2 – Substantial level. This is an important reminder to continue wearing face coverings, practicing social distancing and avoiding gathering in large groups.

[View a chart of industry operations allowed under each tier here.](#) For more information on the State framework, visit covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy.

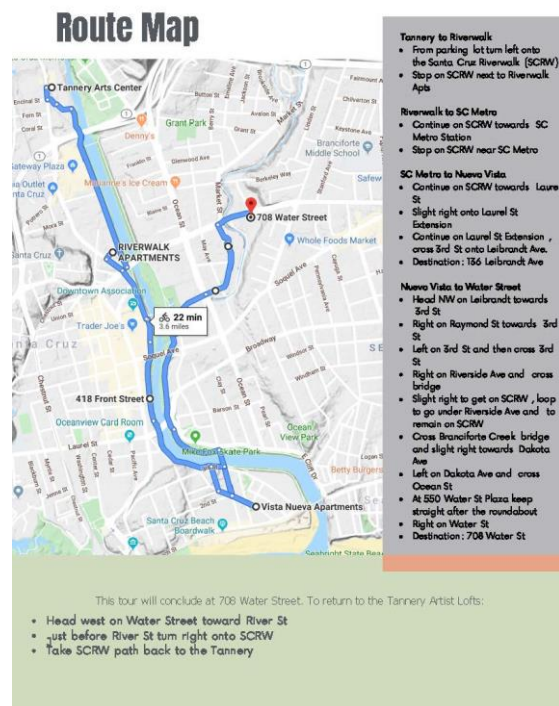
Infrastructure & Property Development and Management | Gilda's Reopening Under New Ownership

Gilda's Restaurant on the Wharf, an institution for nearly 50 years, will officially reopen soon and has planned a soft opening for the public this weekend. Dino and the Stagnaro family are working closely with the new owner, Charles Maier, to pass the torch. Maier, who also owns the Santa Cruz Diner and the Crow's Nest, is excited to join the close-knit family of Wharf businesses. He will be joined by many of the original Gilda's crew who are looking forward to carrying on the Gilda's tradition. Watch for expanded outdoor dining in the coming weeks, and come enjoy your favorite Gilda's dishes. As staff prepares to bring the Wharf Master Plan and EIR to City Council on Nov. 10, we are happy to support one of the Wharf's famous family-run businesses and preserve it through new local ownership.



Housing Development & Preservation | Looking For Something to Do? Take Our Affordable Housing Tour

Are you curious about affordable housing in Downtown Santa Cruz? Try [the self-guided Affordable Housing Bike Tour](#). Learn about the most recent affordable building properties in Santa Cruz and new ones that are on the horizon. The tour begins at the Tannery Arts Center and ends at the Water Street Apartments.



Chinatown Gate Dragon Sculpture Installed

The next big milestone in the Chinatown Gate project has been reached with the installation of Kathleen Crocetti's river dragon sculpture. Over the next year, interpretative signage for the Gate/Bridge site will be designed in conjunction with the Coastal Watershed Council and the Arts Commission. Be sure to check out the dragon in person the next time you're visiting Downtown and the Riverwalk.



Parks & Recreation

Dia de Los Muertos and All Saint's Day Ofrendas

On Sunday, Nov. 1, two new Ofrendas were set up at the Town Clock: one representing Dia de Los Muertos and one presenting All Saint's Day, in addition to the Black Lives Matter Ofrenda. These are part of an event held on that evening for Dia de Los Muertos and All Saint's Day, hosted by the Santa Cruz Equity Project. The event's purpose was to honor and remember the victims of police brutality, to erect a temporary community altar as a "living" art piece in memoriam.

The organizers are maintaining the current memorial at the Town Clock, and the Parks and Recreation Department continues its regular maintenance around the grounds. Nothing has been recently vandalized or damaged (e.g., graffiti).

Parks & Recreation staff are in communication with the organizers, and we continue to discuss possible long-term options for a memorial elsewhere than the Town Clock if desired by the community and supported by the City Council.

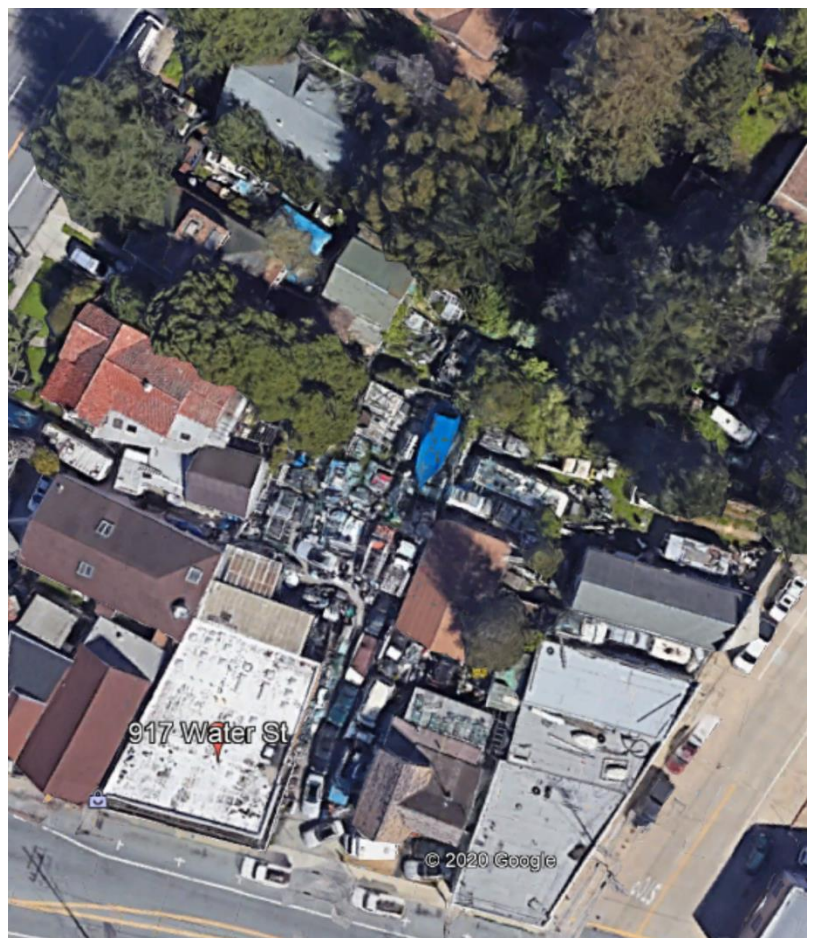


Planning and Community Development

Code Compliance Division

905-923 Water/908 North Branciforte. The Code Compliance Division of the Planning & Community Development Department works to protect the health, safety, and well-being of our residents and visitors. While the goal is to work with property owners to gain voluntary compliance, there are instances where Code Compliance has no other alternative but to pursue an administrative process. The following is an example where Code compliance had to use the administrative process to obtain a receivership to address the hazardous conditions on six adjacent parcels on Water Street between North Branciforte and Stanford Avenues due to the lack of response by the property owner. The case, involving a significant accumulation of junk, trash and debris, has been active for 11 years, with over 30 notices and several citations issued, as well as numerous calls and inspections conducted by City staff. The photos included below are a few examples of the exterior and interior condition of the properties which pose significant fire hazard and rodent infestation risks.

On October 23, 2020, a petition to appoint a third-party receiver was granted by Superior Court. The receiver now has authority over the property and can hire contractors and consultants to bring all the parcels into compliance with local and state codes. On November 2, 2020, a joint inspection was conducted by Code Compliance staff, the appointed receiver, contractors, County Animal Control, and Police and Fire Department staff to assess the property's conditions and create a timeline for cleanup. Six parcels and nine buildings that include sheds and outbuildings used for storage were inspected. Future updates outlining progress on the cleanup of the property will be provided.

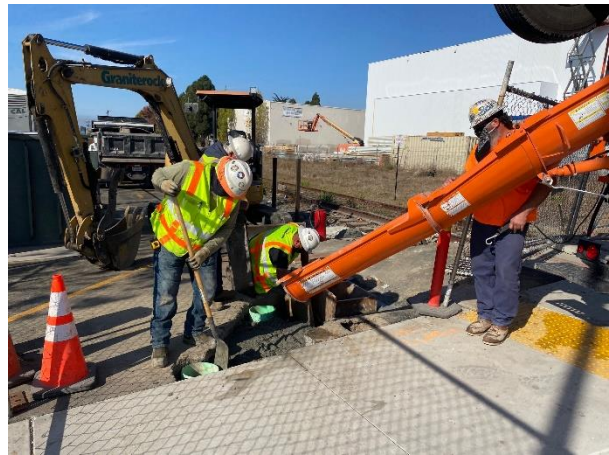




Public Works

Engineering

Rail Trail Segment 7/Phase I moves closer to completion expected in early December. Contractor Graniterock has been prepping the final trail section between Swift and Natural Bridges Drive, constructing curbs on the bridge approaches and placing base rock to make the final grade for next week's asphalt placement. Approximately 600 tons of asphalt-concrete will be placed, completing all the trail paving. The following week, they will finish the concrete section of trail, east of Swift next to the row of existing cypress trees, and begin the final demo and construction of the last three curb ramps on Swift's project and Natural Bridges. Closing out the project into early December will be the trail shoulders and slope protection, tree plantings, fencing, and signs and striping.



Environmental Lab / Environmental Compliance

A group of Water Environment Federation (WEF) members has gone above and beyond in their committee roles within the Waterborne Infectious Disease Outbreak Control subcommittee. Their work allowed WEF to provide water utilities and water professionals with critical information during the coronavirus pandemic. This information provided relevant, actionable information for utilities to protect essential workers and inform communities. This subcommittee was also responsible for several webcasts, podcasts and fact sheets and worked with WEF staff to review and validate website and publication content. This subcommittee includes our City Environmental Compliance / Environmental Laboratory Manager Akin Babatola. Congratulations Akin!



Transportation Engineering

Our HSIP8: Citywide Pedestrian Crossing Improvement Project has installed new curb ramps at 4 Soquel Ave intersections: Pine, Cayuga, Seabright and Mentel; also at Ocean and Dakota. Construction of new curb ramps near East Cliff and Jessie Street began this week and will continue through Monday, Nov. 9. Expect some delays here between Jessie and Buena Vista as the segment has been reduced to one lane -- your patience is appreciated! Thank you. This project is funded by the Highway Safety Improvement Program Cycle 8 grant.



New curb ramp at the intersection of Soquel Avenue and Pine Street

We submitted two grant applications to the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 10. One application would upgrade traffic signals citywide to improve visibility and safety. The other application would fund pedestrian improvements at six unsignalized intersections. The total grant request for both projects was \$1,500,000. Awards are anticipated in early 2021.

Our Street Smarts traffic safety campaign (which became a regional effort last August) has completed two new videos: [Watch for Me](#) and [Share the Road](#) to help further its mission of reducing traffic-related crashes and injuries in our community. ([Spanish Watch for Me](#), [Spanish Share the Road](#).)



Water

It looks like the first rain of the water year may be on the way this weekend. I know that this will be a relief from a long, hot and difficult summer for many of us. The rain, while welcome, will bring its own set of challenges after this summer's fire. We don't know fully what to expect when runoff starts getting generated from the burn areas. Still, we know that there are hazardous materials, ash, and sediment (among other concerns) primed for mobilization to streams and rivers across the charred landscape. There has been work to begin cleaning up the burn area and prepare for the rains, but the scale of work that is needed is daunting, and despite best efforts, there will be impacts – the magnitude and duration of which is really unknown. We are preparing the best we can. We're taking soil and water samples to characterize what's coming our way. Many agencies, including the EPA, California Office of Emergency Services, the County, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Resource Conservation District, among others, are working to remove hazardous materials and prevent erosion in the watershed. Operators and Supervisors at the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant are working on plans for enhanced treatment and solids handling that will be able to accommodate what comes at us. Our hope is that we can get a series of light rains to help some vegetation establish before a deluge comes.