

City Manager's Weekly Update

September 24, 2021

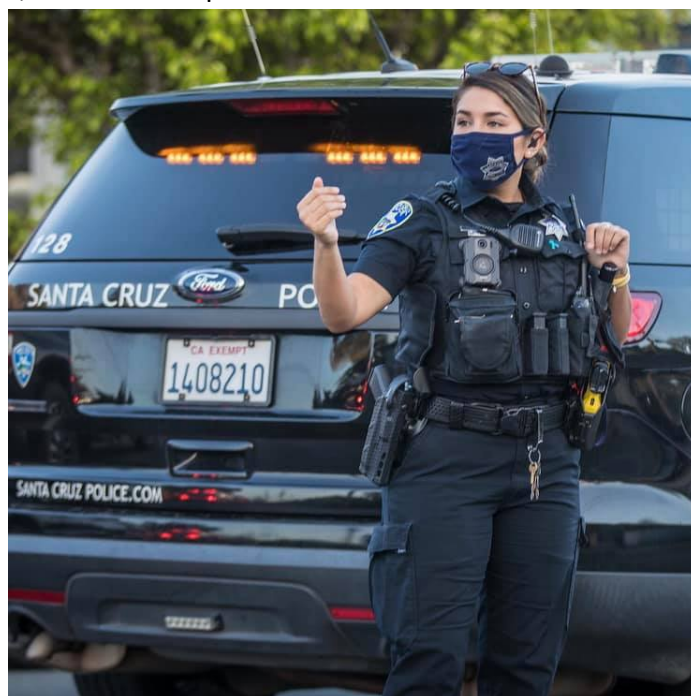
Police

National Police Women Day In Tune with SCPD Recruitment Effort

SCPD celebrated National Police Woman Day on Sept. 12. The day acknowledges and celebrates the contribution of female police officers who enforce law and order around the country. SCPD is proud of the amazing women wearing the badge to serve and protect the City of Santa Cruz. We thank all the women in our ranks for their dedication to protect, serve and inspire.

Today about 10 percent of the police force in the United States is made up of women. Santa Cruz Police Department aims to increase female representation in our ranks by encouraging more women to join the service. "We believe that recruiting more women in policing is critical to creating a more balanced public safety force," said Chief Mills.

SCPD encourages more women to pursue a career in law enforcement through ride-alongs, FAQ sessions, one-on-one meetings with our women police officers, mentorships, and career fairs. By doing so, we reduce uncertainty in the application process, offer guidance, and reassuring an applicants' decision to join law enforcement.



SCPD is hiring people from all walks of life with integrity, energy, ability to solve problems and communicate.

Do you know a woman in your life who would make a good police officer? Or are you that woman? Let's talk. Call Chief Mills at 831-420-5816, Deputy Chief Escalante at 831-420-5816 or email; bescalante@cityofsantacruz.com.

Start your journey with Santa Cruz PD. Apply today: governmentjobs.com/careers/santacruz

The Santa Cruz Police Department is an equal opportunity employer committed to building an inclusive and diverse team.

SCPD Highlights National Hispanic Heritage Month

During National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15), Santa Cruz Police proudly recognizes and celebrates our Hispanic community's rich heritage, culture, and contributions!

Hispanic and Latinx American team members contribute to SCPD's mission of keeping our city safe at all levels of the organization. Communities are strengthened by our diversity and inclusion.



New Officer in SCPD Ranks



Last week, Chief Mills swore in Officer Arturo Fletes. He took an oath to serve and protect our city supported by friends, family, and SCPD peers.

Officer Fletes is bilingual. He grew up not too far from Santa Cruz in Salinas, California. The next step for Arturo at SCPD is the Field Training Program, where he will be assigned a Field Training Officer who will teach them the Department's policies for the next 18 weeks.

Join us in giving Officer Fletes a huge welcome as he embarks on a career in public safety with Santa Cruz PD.

Public Works

Engineering

A group of 132 volunteers bagged 162 lb. of trash and 18 lb. of recycling at Cowell and Main beaches and three river levee sites Saturday! The City co-sponsored this Santa Cruz effort for Annual Coastal Cleanup Day led by Save Our Shores.



Operations

The annual San Lorenzo River vegetation management for flood control will start the week of September 27 and is expected to take approximately 4-to-6 weeks to complete. The Army Corps of Engineers requires this project before the rainy season starts and will follow the environmental guidelines of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The work will occur in sections from Hwy 1 to the Water Street Bridge, Water Street to Soquel, Soquel to Laurel, and Laurel to Riverside. [Read more.](#)



Streets

Streets crews have been conducting citywide road repair and driveway repair on Church Street, where a portion of the sidewalk was damaged due to fire trucks entering the driveway. Contractors conducted vegetation removal in Branciforte channel and Arana Gulch drainage channel in preparation for the winter season.

Facilities

Crews assisted in investigating access to water to the Armory and obtained a quote for a water line repair.

Fleet/Garage

The majority of FY22 vehicle orders with Enterprise Fleet Management have been placed; we are only waiting on specs and pricing for a few models.

Planning and Community Development

818 Pacific Avenue/Pacific Station South

On September 20, 2021, the Building Division of the Planning and Community Development Department received a building permit application to construct a 100 percent affordable, mixed-use development known as “Pacific Station South.” The project includes the demolition of three commercial buildings and the construction of a seven-story building with



ground-floor commercial and residential amenity space, a second-floor medical office, and five floors of residential apartments above. The project utilized State Bills AB 1763 and AB 2162 to allow the building to project three additional stories or 33 feet above the maximum permitted height, eliminate all on-site parking requirements, and streamline the permitting process. With these two state bills, the project only required approval of a Coastal Permit, which the Zoning Administrator approved on Dec. 2,

2020. The project was approved with 85 units; however, changes in funding regulations required an increase in the number of two- and three-bedrooms units, which resulted in an overall reduction to 70 units but an increase in bedroom count. The change in unit types provides more family-style housing, which better integrates with the medical clinic use within the building. Construction is expected to begin in the Spring of 2022.

Water

This week we're taking a big step forward with yet another major project. We're finalizing the sole source purchasing agreement for our Meter Replacement Project. This agreement achieves competitive pricing on the meters, radios, and advanced metering information (AMI) data services that will complete a wholesale replacement of our metering system.

Like much of Santa Cruz's critical water infrastructure, our meters have passed their useful life expectancy. This negatively affects the water system and our customers. It affects our water system because broken meters cause us to lose water due to leaks and other uses that aren't recorded and identified. It affects our bottom line because broken meters don't record use (and associated charges) accurately, and it affects our customers for both of the aforementioned reasons. In addition, a broad replacement of old meters with new meters will provide our customers with the tools they've been asking for: a way to more accurately track their water use (especially during restrictions) and a way to manage their water costs.

We've been replacing old and broken meters on a piece-meal basis. Being able to purchase and replace them on a wholesale basis reduces the costs significantly.



Last summer we hired temporary staff to inventory the condition of every meter in our system. With over 25,000 meters, the job took several weeks to complete.

Parks and Recreation

Celebrating the Reopening and Rehab of Central Park!

We celebrated the reopening of remodeled Central Park and Playground on Saturday, Sept. 18. This beloved neighborhood park has been renovated to meet today's safety and accessibility standards and includes improvements to pathways, landscaping, drainage, and irrigation systems. Wood fiber has been installed, and the new play area features structures for children of all ages and includes swings, a merry-go-round, a climbing rock and an active tower structure.



The Central Park project broke ground in 2019 and was shaped by community outreach and our engaged public. Along with collaboration with Economic Development, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and City Council, the City was awarded an \$86,000 Community Development Block Grant to make this project possible.

Updating this neighborhood gem has been an investment in our children and families. Thanks to the support of so many neighbors and community partners, this community now has a wonderful new space to enjoy!



29th Annual Aloha Outrigger Races!



The 29th Annual Aloha Outrigger Races held on September 19 were a total success with 28 teams competing and plenty of fun in the sun!

Teams entered a 4-person crew and were provided an outrigger, a stoker, a steer-person and all necessary equipment and instruction to get teams racing.

This family friendly event was run in partnership with the Pu Pu O'Hawaii Outrigger Canoe Club, The Northern California Outrigger Canoe Association and O'Neill.

Citywide Initiatives

San Lorenzo River Coordination Team Quarterly Report

The City and community groups continue to maintain the land adjacent to the river. The City provides trash service along the levee nearly every day of the week and the Fire Department is also conducting weekly fire inspections of the Benchlands encampment at San Lorenzo Park.

The Benchlands Encampment Stewardship Team continues to meet weekly to build community relationships and steward the river and its adjacent open space. The Estuary Project, another community group, recently planted 12 Buckeye trees with the City and a Girl Scouts Brownie troop, earning troopers their first service badge.

Santa Cruz County, based on recent sampling (August 24 and 26), has permanently closed the San Lorenzo River mouth to the public due to impaired water quality. The City is evaluating sources of water quality impairment and ways to improve the situation.

Targeting completion by July 2023, the City is continuing progress on certification of the San Lorenzo River flood control levee in order to retain discounted National Flood Insurance for those properties within the flood zone.

The City supported a storm drain mural project at Poet's Park in the Beach Flats neighborhood, led by the Coastal Watershed Council and artist Irene O'Connell.

The City will be conducting vegetation management of the dry riverbanks of the San Lorenzo River during September. Notifications to community members are taking place through various channels.

Homelessness Response

Programming

The City and the County are in conversation about continued operations at the Armory beyond the previously announced closure date, as well as for the siting of the first safe sleeping site. Program model options are being reviewed, and communications with potential operational organizations are underway. There will be more to report on the outcomes of the City and County's collaborative efforts before the end of October.

San Lorenzo River Vegetation Management

Over the next two months, the federally-required annual SLR vegetation management (for flood reduction) will be underway. Vacate notices have gone up for the project's first phase (Hwy 1 to Water St.). Benchlands Steward Staff have accompanied enforcement to connect campers to sites in the Benchlands and connect campers to County services. Phase 2 of the project (Water St. to Soquel) will include the clearing of debris and closure of the encampment adjacent to the Soquel bridge to allow for the staging of equipment required to complete the work. Phase 2 is expected to begin in approximately two weeks, and outreach has already begun to these campers. The closure is projected for the first week in October.