

City Manager's Weekly Update

April 29, 2022

City Manager's Office

Escalante Named Police Chief

City Manager Matt Huffaker announced today the appointment of Bernie Escalante as the next Police Chief for the City of Santa Cruz, effective immediately. To inform the appointment, Huffaker conducted a community survey in March that garnered more than 400 responses and two internal surveys, one for Police Department employees and another offered Citywide.

A Santa Cruz native, Escalante is a 25-year veteran of the department. He began his career at the Santa Cruz Police Department as a community service officer in 1996 and soon after transitioned to a patrol officer. He was promoted to sergeant in 2003 and served as a property crimes detective and tactical team leader, among other assignments. Escalante earned the promotion to the position of lieutenant in 2009, where he managed the Investigations Division and was the Commander of the Emergency Services Unit Tactical Team and distinguished himself as the primary lieutenant in the Neighborhood Policing Unit. He was appointed to the rank of Deputy Chief in February 2020.



The City Council Public Safety Committee will host a community engagement event in May where the residents will have the opportunity to weigh in further on the future of the department's policies and practices and share their thoughts and ideas with our new Chief of Police. Details on the event will be forthcoming.

Economic Development

Business Development | Business Outreach for Pacific Station South

The Pacific Station South project is almost ready to break ground. The developer For The Future Housing is now preparing to clear the project site of the existing buildings, which will require abatement and demolition work that will begin next week. In preparation for this new construction activity, the Business Development Team conducted public outreach to the over 30 businesses surrounding the Pacific Station South Project this week. Staff spoke with each business owner, discussed the upcoming construction work, fielded concerns, and provided printed flyers with project timelines and contact information.



Task	Start Date	End Date	Impacts
Site Fencing Install	4/26/22	4/26/22	Minor Truck Delivery
Equipment Mobilization	4/26/22	4/29/22	Minor Truck Traffic, Noise
Abatement and Demolition	5/2/22	5/20/22	Noise, Dust Mitigation. Demolition will use excavators
Soil Excavation and Off-haul	5/23/22	5/27/22	Noise, Truck Traffic on Front St.
Soil Backfill and Compaction	5/30/22	6/3/22	Noise, Truck Traffic on Front St.
Foundation Work	6/6/22	7/1/22	Noise, Some Truck Traffic, Concrete Trucks
Vertical Construction	7/5/22	5/1/24	Noise, Truck Delivery, Concrete Trucks, Utility Work



Staff was able to hear feedback about impacts from the current construction in the area already and will be coordinating with the project managers to help mitigate these concerns. Many business owners and managers also gave positive feedback about the development and appreciated the City providing updates. Staff will continue conducting outreach and provide updates as the development project progresses.

Arts & Culture Development | Live Music in the Parks!



“Making the music of the past come alive in the present” is the motto of the Santa Cruz Baroque Festival. With support from the City Arts Recovery Design (CARD) Pilot Grant Program, they are hosting two free performances this weekend. The concerts will feature the big sound of the Mariachi Eterno de UCSC.

This group has the mission to create sustainable spaces for people of color on campus to express themselves through traditional Mexican music and find performance opportunities. Come experience the varied music of Jalisco harpist William Faulkner who has been playing harp since 1979, both as a soloist in the style of Zapotiltic, Jalisco and mariachi.

Dates/Location:

Saturday - Laurel Park – 5:30 p.m.

Sunday - Beach Flats Park – 5:30 p.m.

Cost: Free, all are welcome, no ticket required

Housing Development & Preservation | HOME-ARP Draft Plan is Available for Review

The City has received one-time federal funds under the HOME Investment American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) and has been collecting feedback on utilizing this funding. The Housing Division has prepared a [draft HOME-ARP Allocation Plan](#) for public review. This Plan will be presented with the Annual Action Plan (AAP) to the City Council on May 10. If you have any comments before the meeting on



May 10, please submit them to the Housing Division at jmellor@cityofsantacruz.com. The survey is also still available in case you would like to respond ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)).

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Hosts a Booth for Kids Day Downtown

Parks and Recreation participated in Kids Day Downtown on Saturday, April 23, where there were theatre and musical performances and plenty of exhibitors with free, family-friendly activities. The Parks and Rec booth included dynamic activities such as mask making, sidewalk chalk art, Giant Connect 4 and Corn Hole. Kids Day Downtown was well attended, providing fantastic opportunities for outreach to parents about our summer program offerings. A big thank you to Downtown Santa Cruz and its partners, Growing Up In Santa Cruz and Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, for hosting such a wonderful community event!



Police

SCPD VOLUNTEERS | National Volunteer Appreciation Week.

This week, we're taking time to reflect on and honor SCPD VIPS (Volunteers In Policing Services) for Volunteer Appreciation Week. Our volunteers are a dedicated group of community members who work with SCPD to make our City safer. They don't ask to be paid for their hundreds of hours of selfless service and certainly deserve our utmost respect and appreciation. SCPD is deeply indebted to the VIPS individuals who donate their time to increase public safety by augmenting our department's ability to serve the needs of our diverse populations through their added people power. See what they do in our [VOLUNTEER PROGRAM VIDEO](#).

DEAR SCPD VOLUNTEERS,

Ana Matheson, Brian Perales, Brody Bowden, Dante Corona, David Giannini, Deb Elston, Diane Lamond, George Stagi, Hallie Richmond, Janis Ost, JD Sotelo, Jeanette Smith, Jim Carraher, Mitch, Jon Krupp, Julie Francis, Katelyn Praly, Kyle Wade, Louis Beltran, Luis Miranda, Maggie Ramirez, Nick Moless, Robert Orrizzi, SLV Steve, Suresh Sethuraman, Veronica Chohrach, Bill McBride & Zelma Fennell

**WE
APPRECIATE
YOU!**



Thank you for your dedication and service
to our department and community.

VOLUNTEER
APPRECIATION WEEK

With volunteer contributions, both inside and outside the agency, we are more prepared to protect and serve our community with safety resources, educational outreach, senior support & crime prevention programs, neighborhood patrolling, and traffic assistance.

VIPS, we are lucky to have you! Thank you for sharing your skills, knowledge, and can-do attitude. Thank you for being so dedicated to serving our community with SCPD. Thank you for participating in a dynamic volunteer program where people of all backgrounds can come together.

SCPD is grateful to our incredibly talented volunteers for their commitment and support. More about the [SCPD Volunteer Program](#).

SCPD in the Community



This week, it was an honor to meet the community, hand out swag and safety resources, and cheer on everyone at the Mercy Housing Health Fair and at the Kid's Day event Downtown.

SCPD was honored to partner with some great organizations in the community to provide Mercy Housing families with health and wellness resources. Mercy Housing helps low-income families, seniors, and people with special needs learn skills and gain perspectives that make dreams of stability and hope a reality. Kid's Day was a fun day of activities for children and their families. It is also a resources fair with providers on hand to engage parents and provide information.

Public Works

Engineering

Construction of our West Cliff Storm Repair Project has removed the damaged asphalt path and started to grade the area for future installation of grade beams and retaining wall. Construction will continue with drilling the piers and installing rebar cages inside the drilled-out holes. These piers will be used to support the cantilevered walkway.



Traffic Engineering

Street Smarts was one of six booths at the City's Earth Day celebration in Beach Flats Park on Saturday, which also included Parking, Parks & Rec, Environmental Compliance, Climate Action and Waste Reduction's Food Too Good to Waste. Street Smarts bike/ped safety booth also hosted the Bike Church to provide free bike repairs for those in need. The event was inspired by the City's Spanish community liaison, who perceived the need for bike repairs to help community members stay safe when cycling: about 24 bikes were repaired.



Resource Recovery

Earth Week was a hit for the Waste Reduction Team! Master Recyclers hosted a table at the Seymour Center Climate Action Market. This booth offered a recycling game, low waste prizes and information about the City Food Scrap Program and Product Packaging Ordinance. The Waste Reduction Team provided reusable food ware for visitors at a Beach Flats Earth Day event on the other side of town. Lots of trash was avoided, and there were lots of smiling faces from those who enjoyed a meal on the reusable dishes.

We also concluded our “Food Too Good To Waste” contest promoted during Earth Day week. Several winning photos in the graphic below show that composting close to home is a great way to keep food out of the landfill: 1) Black Gold; 2) DIY vessel composting; 3) Bokashi composting—a method that is great for small spaces/apartment dwellers. Congrats to our winners, and many thanks to all participants for showing off how they keep their food out of the landfill!



Water

We’re proud of Loch Lomond Recreation Area Chief Ranger Gar Eidam, who successfully performed CPR to save a person from overdosing during a walk through San Lorenzo Park this week. People often idealize the work of park rangers, but their work is usually less glamorous than we imagine.

Speaking of Loch Lomond, Bass fishing is picking up, and successful trout fishing seems to be more skill-based than luck-based and better from a boat – although some fine examples are still being landed from shore. Bluegill are just starting to bite, but the ever-elusive catfish are still boycotting bait and hook. This weekend we’ll host an interpretive bird walk at the lake. The 9 a.m. Saturday hike is a great opportunity to learn more about the wide variety of birds that call our neck of the woods home. If you would like to attend, please call us to register your name. Be sure to wear comfortable clothes and sensible shoes, and bring a pair of binoculars, sunscreen, a snack, and water.



Supply Chain Woes Threaten to Halt the Meter Replacement Project

Despite our best efforts to manage inventory and confirm shipping dates, the Meter Replacement Project is in danger of running out of meters and meter lids in the next few weeks due to supply chain delays. For the last several weeks, vendors have been assuring us that the product was still on its way; however, this week, both the Meter and Lids vendors have indicated that they won’t fulfill orders on time. Without meters or lids, the installers can’t install. And installers get paid per installation—so with these product delays comes the threat of losing installers. The team is working all the angles to figure out a way forward.