



City Manager's Weekly Update

City of Santa Cruz
February 27, 2023

Local Sculptor Jenni Ward to install Feast of Flowers along Rail Trail

At the January 2023 meeting, the Arts Commission recommended moving forward with the City Arts Recovery Design (CARD) Pilot Grant Program project submitted by local sculptor Jenni Ward.

The installation, A Feast of Flowers, will be placed along a corridor segment of the Rail Trail between Natural Bridges and Swift Street that was identified in the Santa Cruz Rail Trail Arts Master Plan. The series of six flower umbels fabricated in ceramic and steel will silhouette dramatically against the sky, making it an impactful visual experience for visitors. The work is meant to generate a curiosity about plant structures while creating a playful space of oversized flowers. Jenni has installed umbel themed works both locally and internationally.



For the project, Jenni was awarded a grant of engineering services by Oakland based RBHu through their competitive RBHu Gives Back program. This minority- and women-owned business specializes in engineering large scale artwork and entertainment structures. Santa Cruz will now be on their map as CARD Pilot Grant program funding is leveraged by this donation.

City Arts staff will now work with the Regional Transportation Commission to exercise the Cooperative Agreement for Rail Trail Right of Way access which was executed in 2021.

EV REFUSE TRUCK

Thursday, March 2, 12:15 – 12:45 pm

Santa Cruz City Hall Courtyard
809 Center Street

(Rain location:
Corporation Yard
1125 River Street)

1ST IN
SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY

RIBBON-CUTTING



cityofsantacruz.com

Join Mayor Fred Keeley, government officials, industry representatives and regulators to celebrate the City's new **ALL-ELECTRIC REFUSE TRUCK**—the first in Santa Cruz County! The grant-funded, quiet, zero-emissions Mack LR® truck will help meet climate action goals.

Celebrate the City's First Electric Refuse Truck

To help meet climate action goals, we have procured the first all-electric refuse truck in Santa Cruz County! The new Mack LR® Electric Vehicle was purchased with grant funding of \$400,000 from Monterey Bay Air Resources District and \$200,000 from Volkswagen Mitigation Trust. The community is invited to celebrate with us at our EV Refuse Truck Ribbon-Cutting on Thursday, March 2, 12:15–12:45 p.m. at City Hall Courtyard, 809 Center Street. We hope to see you there! [Read more.](#)

Resource Recovery's Food Scrap Collection Program to be Featured on NPR

Three Resource Recovery staff members and three community members were interviewed by NPR reporter Saul Gonzalez this week for a two-part story on our City of Santa Cruz Food Scrap Collection Program. The broadcasts will occur next month on The California Report, KQED's statewide radio news program. The show airs locally on KAZU weekday mornings, on KQED Friday afternoons and evenings and on other NPR stations across the state.



Left: Grocery Outlet Manager Ryan Stack is interviewed by KQED Reporter Saul Gonzalez



Right: Collected food scraps are mashed at the Resource Recovery Facility before they are turned into animal feed.



Five CWEA-MBS Awards Received by City's Wastewater Treatment System

The City's Wastewater Treatment System was recognized with five awards by the California Water Environment Association-Monterey Bay Section (CWEA-MBS). The 2022–23 awards honored Wastewater Collections and Flood Control Manager Rome Norman, Environmental Compliance and Laboratory Manager Akin Babatola, Supervisor Armando Deloera, the "Sewer Snatcher," (Collection System Gimmicks and Gadgets), and the Wastewater Treatment Facility Tour community engagement video.

Wastewater Field Crew Leader Jim Locatelli and Senior Wastewater Collection Maintenance Technologist Erik Pedersen (pictured above) won the Collection System Gimmicks & Gadgets Award. Their innovative "Sewer Snatcher" creatively removed a gasket lodged in the sewer main avoiding replacement of the sewer line which would have cost thousands of dollars in supplies and staff time.

[Read other award details here.](#)

Master Recycler Program Visits City Resource Recovery

Waste Reduction staff welcomed participants to a six-week-long Master Recycler Volunteer Training Program for a half day education session and tour of the City of Santa Cruz Resource Recovery Facility. The trainees learned about the many programs that support waste reduction, landfill operations and recycling processes.



Akin Babtola's Work in Water Environment Research is Among Internationally Top-Cited Papers

We are proud to announce that Environmental Compliance and Wastewater Lab Manager Akin Babatola's work published in Water Environment Research is among the international journal's top cited papers. Read the [publication](#).

Planning Commission Approves Development at 915–923 Water Street

On February 16th, the Planning Commission approved a project at the northwest corner of Water Street and Stanford Avenue. The project will involve a number of entitlements including a density bonus to construct a four-story, mixed-use building with ground floor commercial space. The project includes 105 single room occupancy (SRO) units, including 14 units (20% of the base project (70 units)) restricted at the very low income level (50% AMI). Planning commissioners and members of the public were supportive of the design. Areas of concern involved traffic impacts and parking. The project is consistent with all applicable objective standards and the requested waivers (rear yard setback, height and floor area ratio) were found to meet density bonus criteria, therefore the city is required to approve the project pursuant to the State law. The applicant declined a voluntary contribution of two additional affordable housing units as suggested by one of the commissioners and a motion failed to require the two additional inclusionary units as a condition of approval. The final motion included two additional conditions of approval that require the applicant to design the commercial tenant space to accommodate future potential restaurant use, and a requirement that the applicant provides two additional electric vehicle parking spaces on the site. The applicant indicated agreement with the conditions as recommended and amended and the motion carried 5–2. The project is appealable to City Council. The appeal deadline is February 27th at 5:00 pm. Assuming the approval remains intact, the applicant estimates that a building permit application could be submitted before the end of the year. Tim Maier is the planner working on the project.



Terra & Self Opens Downtown Pop-Up

The Downtown Pops! program welcomes its newest participant, Kenne Johnson-Scianna, owner of Terra and Self. Terra and Self is a sustainable brand focused on celebrating all beauty through fun and simple formulas. Best of all, it is vegan, cruelty-free and Black woman-owned! The official opening of her Downtown Pop-Up was held on February 26th at 1349 Pacific Ave, with a ribbon cutting by the Downtown Association.

Downtown Pops! is the City's pilot program designed to lower the barriers to entry for businesses looking to open a brick and mortar space. In addition, the program intends to reduce the risk for property owners to take on new tenants during challenging times.



Street Safety Banners Installed Near Local Schools

Our Street Smarts banners were installed on street poles and in front of elementary and middle schools. The traffic safety reminders will remain up for about two months and then be reinstalled again at the beginning of the school year in August.

Spring Sports Are Around the Corner!

Sports staff are getting the fields ready for our nine Spring Softball leagues which start on March 5 at DeLaveaga Park. We have four Basketball leagues with 26 total teams, and Bocce will start up in March with 12 teams. Most of the Adult Recreational leagues are back to pre-COVID numbers.



Water Department Successfully Completes High-Risk Hydrant Replacement

The Water Department has been talking about retiring a fire hydrant on Ocean Street Extension for over a year. The hydrant is tied into the main transmission line out of the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant, and the city's water supply would be at risk if someone were to hit that hydrant. However, because the hydrant was tied into the main, retiring it forced us to shut down the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant. That's always a nail-biting situation and requires a lot of pre-planning and efficient work to ensure that we don't affect supply to our customers. A huge shout out to Water Department staff for their work modeling the system and lining out a detailed procedure for the event. The process went very smoothly, and the hydrant was retired ahead of schedule with spot-on modeling predictions for tank storage.



City of Santa Cruz
City Manager's Office
809 Center Street, Santa Cruz CA 95060
cityofsantacruz.com
831-420-5030