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Priority Projects, Service Cutbacks, Future Budget Plans Fill City Plate

It promises to be another busy year in our community – so stay tuned and participate in your City process. Plans to reduce staffing and service levels in order to maintain a balanced budget have been implemented this year. And we've identified our annual list of priority projects that will guide our work program. In addition, we are looking ahead to next fiscal year in order to deal with another multi-million dollar budget gap.



In this issue of City Focus, we outline how customer service levels have been affected due to citywide cutbacks.

We also talk about the City Council priorities for the current fiscal year and provide some information about the status of ongoing projects. [Click here](#) to learn more about our goals and objectives.

As has been the case for a few years, economic issues continue to be a focal point. Expenses continue to outpace revenues, largely due to State take-aways and increased costs of health and retirement benefits. As a result, we are gearing up to fill a \$2-million budget gap estimated for fiscal year 2005-06. Whether it will be filled by new revenues or additional cutbacks in staffing and services is still uncertain.

A proposal to increase local sales tax will go before voters this fall. In the meantime, we will re-examine the organization to see where additional cutbacks might take place. See the budget article for details.

For now, we need community members to tell us where we should cut and what services should be considered for reduction or elimination. Fill it out a [comment form](#) online and send it in today. Please note in your response that this refers to cutbacks in services.

Thank you for taking the time to support your community.

Keep Your Community Celebration Alive

Support Monterey's family-oriented Independence Day celebration and preserve the Fourth of July community tradition.

If you enjoy the festivities, do your part by contributing funds and/or time to support the parade, picnic, fireworks and cleanup.

More than 75,000 people from throughout the area come to this community event. Although the City is committed to continuing the 17-year-old tradition, it does cost some \$250,000 to make it possible.

Due to budget concerns, we are asking the community for the first time to financially support the event. Contributions from individuals and businesses are tax deductible.

"The parade, lawn party and a beautiful fireworks display give us the best show on the West Coast," states the most recent edition of the Casanova Oak Knoll Neighborhood Association newsletter.

To support the Fourth of July event campaign, make your checks payable to the City of

Monterey – Fourth of July Celebration or make a donation via credit card.

[Print out the PDF postcard here](#) and mail contributions to: Director Kay Russo, Recreation and Community Services Department, City Hall, Monterey, CA 93940.

For more info, call 646.3866 (russo@ci.monterey.ca.us); or to volunteer for next year's event, call 646.3719.

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Status of Major Development Projects a Click Away

Track major development projects through the planning review and construction process online at www.monterey.org/updates.html. Community members can now keep abreast of ongoing projects via the status report Web page that is updated once each month. Check out the progress on projects such as Cypress Center shopping plaza on North Fremont or the 13-Plex Theaters at Del Monte Center. Each project includes the title, address and a brief update. Long-term projects, which usually require a more extensive review process, are updated less frequently. These include progress on the General Plan update, the Public Service Center, Monterey Peninsula Hotel and Ocean View Plaza.

For more info, visit the Web or call the Plans & Public Works Department at 646.3885.

ON THE WEB

Enroll in Recreation Classes, Programs From Home, Work

Sign up and register for a recreational or educational activity online.

A limited offering of recreation programs, including golf, dance and music for toddlers, is now available for online registration.

Our secure Internet-based system provides immediate access 24 hours

a day, from home or office, and is similar to shopping online.

Steps to enrolling online

Visit the Recreation Administration Office at 546 Dutra Street to activate your online account today by selecting a "user name" and "password." Then enroll for programs and activities at

www.monterey.org/rec/online.html.

Activities available for online registration have a shopping cart icon next to the entry in the Activities Guide. You can browse the registration offerings as a guest anytime via the Web. More classes will be added each season.



For more info, call 646.3866, visit us online or stop by.

View Monterey Crime Reports Anytime

The daily police log, which summarizes the types of crimes reported in Monterey, is now available on the Police Department's Web page at www.monterey.org/mpd.

To access it, just go online and click on "Police Log."

The log is updated each weekday morning and is kept online for one calendar year. The names and addresses of victims who report crimes are omitted to protect privacy. The names of persons arrested for crimes are listed.

Research City Laws, Search Codes Instantly

Find out about the laws and ordinances that govern your community. Visit the Monterey City Code online by going to www.monterey.org and clicking on [City Code](#).

The code, which is updated quarterly, is displayed in an easy-to-use format with a robust search

capability.

Search the code to review ordinances; to find out about building requirements and economic incentives; and to learn about necessary permits and licenses. *For more info, call the City Clerk's Office at 646.3935.*

Keep Current on City Council Projects, Issues

Review and print City Council agendas and minutes from www.monterey.org/cityclerk.

(Due to budget issues, agendas are no longer printed in the local newspaper).

Attend City Council meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 4 and 7 p.m. or watch them live on cable Ch. 25. For rebroadcast info, visit the Web at www.monterey.org/tv or check out a VHS copy from the Monterey Public Library.

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In the News

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Final Answer on Streetlights

Streetlights illuminate our neighborhoods, streets, parks, plazas, wharves, trails, hotels, motels and parking lots.

But how do streetlights work?

Contrary to popular belief there is no master on/off switch in the City that turns the lights on at dusk and off at dawn. Each streetlight works individually and goes on and off with a photocell, attached on top. If the light is out, the photocell probably needs replacing, instead of the bulb. Bulbs, which range in wattage from 70 to 400, last three to four years.

What about saving energy?

Conservation efforts are ongoing. For example, we replaced all 110 lights in the tunnel with energy efficient bulbs, reducing them from 400- to 360-watt lights. In addition, many of our streetlights on traffic poles have been reduced from 250 to 225 watts.

How can you help?

Community members are encouraged to let us know when a light is out (locate the number on the pole and [report it online](#) or call 646.3927).

Posting Signs, Legal or Not?

Garage Sale this Saturday, House for Sale by Owner, Elect Joe Brown for Dogcatcher.

We see these signs every day, posted on telephone poles, erected in front yards and placed in various public places. But are these signs legal?

The City's sign ordinance prohibits posting signs on any tree, shrub or utility pole located on public property or placing signs so they encroach upon a public street or sidewalk.

Unlike other signs, political signs are allowed on most public lands, unless they create a dangerous condition (such as signs placed in the roadway median) or interfere with upkeep of the property. A City ordinance also prohibits political signs around the City Hall complex and grounds and Colton Hall.



For more info, call our Community Development Department at 646.3885 or stop by the office at Colton Hall, corner of Pacific and Madison streets.

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ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

Back Basics - Preventing, Dealing with Back Pain

At some point in our lives, nearly 80% of us will experience low back pain. In some cases, this may be a simple dull, annoying ache. Or we may experience intense and prolonged pain requiring medical attention.

Why does back pain affect so many?



1) Our core body strength is insufficient. That means we don't keep our abdominal and spinal muscles in good shape. Without sufficient, functional core strength, we are susceptible to injury, particularly when lifting, bending or twisting. Other activities commonly associated with low back pain include pushing, pulling, slipping, tripping or falling.

2) We sit down a lot. Long periods of sitting or driving, especially with vibration, can often lead to low back pain.

3) We may put ourselves at greater risk by our lifestyle choices. Personal health factors such as obesity, smoking, poor posture and mental stress all contribute to the development of low back pain.

How can we avoid low back pain?

The most important strategy for preventing low back pain is education. We can learn how the back works; about techniques for lifting; optimal posture positions; exercises to relieve back tightness and stress; and the management of stress itself. If you have lower back pain, consult a professional for treatment.

As with many other health conditions, the best way to avoid low back pain is to participate in daily fitness activities and make smart lifestyle choices. Check out the Monterey Sports Center for a number of aquatic and land-based classes and activities to make your exercise motivating and fun.

The Monterey Sports Center features more than 100 weekly group exercise classes including Yoga, Pilates, water aerobics, indoor cycling and more. Many of the group exercise classes offered include functional components to develop good abdominal and spine strength.

For more info, call the fitness department at 646.3495 or visit us online at www.monterey.org/sportscenter.

Voices Heard, Votes Count on November 2

In Monterey, throughout the state and across the nation, voters will make important decisions on Nov. 2 as part of the general election. Exercise your right to vote.

The first step is registering to vote. For citizens who are at least 18 years old, it's easy to register.

Forms are available at the Monterey Public Library, City Clerk's Office, the Post Office and Monterey County Elections Office. Download a copy from the Web:

www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections.htm

Remember to re-register whenever you move.

Get a form, fill it out and send it in before Oct. 18.

Upgrade Your Community, Nominate an NIP Project

Send in your project ideas for the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) and help your community.

What is a project?

A Neighborhood Improvement Project is any upgrade (not on private property) to public streets, storm drains, sewers, sidewalks, walkways, lighting, traffic control devices, landscaping and beautification, parks, recreational facilities or other public buildings.

Nominate a project today!

You can nominate a project by completing the nomination card online at

www.monterey.org/publicworks/nip/nipform.html

What happens to submissions?

All nominations are sorted by type of improvement and area. Community members may be contacted to clarify submittals – so include your name, address and telephone number on the

card.

Costs are estimated on valid project nominations; and then the NIP committee, composed of community members, votes on the projects. **The deadline to submit projects is Feb. 11.**

For more info, call the City's Construction Management Division at 646.3997.

City TV Offers Council Meetings and More

City Council Meetings:

LIVE first and third

Tues., 4 and 7 p.m.

Re-cablecast

Tues./Thurs., 4 and 7 p.m.

Sat. 10 a.m.; Sun. 2 p.m.

**cable
Ch. 25**

CITY TV

Monterey up to date – Daily 9:30 a.m.
and 6:30 p.m.; Mon/Wed at 10:30 p.m.

Eye on Monterey – Daily 9 a.m. and 6
p.m.; Mon/Wed at 10 p.m.

**Monterey County District Perspectives
with Supervisor Dave Potter**
Mon/Wed/Fri 10:30 a.m.

Monterey County programming:

cable Ch. 28

For more info, visit www.monterey.org/tv

Missed the LIVE City Council meeting on cable Ch. 25?

Catch rebroadcasts on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4 and 7 p.m. between meetings.

Or check out a VHS tape copy from the Monterey Public Library.

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FOCUS ON TREES -

Save Water, Time at Home – Consider Native Flora

Native and drought-tolerant landscapes are beautiful and help conserve limited water resources. Here are some recommendations and tips for growing an attractive, earth-friendly garden or landscape.

Plant in the fall and early winter and apply water only as needed during the cool morning hours to reduce evaporation.

Various soils require different amounts of water.

For example, sandy soils need more frequent watering, while heavy clay soils need less water. For deep-rooted trees and shrubs, water slowly so water will cover the entire root zone. While native and drought-resistant plants can survive on low water amounts, sufficient moisture during the first two years will ensure good root development.

Some of the commonly recommended drought tolerant trees and shrubs include:

- **Trees**

Arbutus marina (no common name)

Geijera parviflora (Australian Willow)

Metrosideros excelsus (New Zealand Christmas Tree)

Olea europaea (European Olive)

Podocarpus gracillior (African Fern Pine)

- **Shrubs**

Ceanothus griseus horizontalis (Carmel Creeper)

Coleonema pulchrum (Breath of Heaven)

Correa pulchella (Australian Fuchsia)

Dietes vegeta (Fortnight Lily)

Polygala dalmatiana (Sweet-Pea Shrub)

Echium candicans (Pride of Madera)

For more info and other common plant options, call the City's Urban Forestry Division at 646.3860 or visit www.monterey.org/publicworks and click on "local trees, plants."

Rate your City this Spring

Look for the community survey in the spring issue of City Focus.

Tell us what you think about City services, programs and projects. With recent budget challenges and service cutbacks, we want to stay on top of exactly how these changes affect our community.

Use the time between now and then to participate in City meetings, attend a class or visit our

offices, facilities or Web site; then you can let us know about your experiences. Or send in your comments and suggestions anytime; see contact info on the back page.

Automated Greetings Ease Staff Workloads

"Thank you for calling the City of Monterey," says the automated phone system now greeting calls to the Planning Division and Public Works Department.

Staff cutbacks have forced changes in service levels citywide, and these automated systems help fill in some of the gaps. These changes allow callers to find the right staff person and get questions answered quickly while giving staff needed time to concentrate on projects and juggle demanding workloads.

And there's no voicemail limbo; just hit "0" to speak with a staff member anytime.

Locals Day Means Free Parking at Wharf

Park for free on "Locals Day" at Old Fisherman's Wharf, every Tuesday and Wednesday.

The City offers two hours of free parking in the Waterfront Parking Lot for Monterey County residents (any person residing in the 939 zip code area) as part of the program coordinated by the Old Fisherman's Wharf Association.

The local's program offers lunch, dinner and shopping specials in various participating restaurants and shops.

To secure your free parking on "Locals Day," present valid identification at the restaurant or store and collect a special parking permit. When exiting the parking lot, present the permit and your identification once again.

For more details on this or any other parking program, call 646.3953 or visit the City's Web site at www.monterey.org/parking.

Ruth M. Vreeland Folklore Collection Dedicated

Family and friends of the late Councilwoman Ruth Vreeland gathered at the Monterey Public Library this summer to dedicate the Ruth M. Vreeland Folklore Collection.

Memorial donations to the Library which exceed \$10,000 will be used to purchase books for the folklore collection and present folktales and storytelling for children and adults.

The collection is easily identified by a sign featuring the artwork of Youth Arts Collective (YAC) member Julia Kodl. The sign was unveiled by Vreeland's grandchildren (pictured).



For more info, contact Youth Services at 646.3934 (ysdesk@ci.monterey.ca.us).

Give Your Time, Energy - Volunteer Today

- **Museum docents:** An orientation is scheduled for early October for new volunteers interested in local history and in helping at the Presidio of Monterey and Colton Hall museums or other special venues.
- **Special events:** Mark your calendars for Oct. 23 Make a Difference Day to participate in your community. Work on special projects with friends, family or co-workers to change your neighborhood for the better.
- **Volunteers in Parks (VIPs):** VIPs meet every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to noon and work in different public gardens citywide. From the Coastal/Recreation Trail to the Sensory



Garden, VIPs assist staff in maintaining the health and beauty of open space and parks.

- **Monterey Volunteers in Policing (MVPs):** Learn about police work and help keep your community safe. Jobs vary from data entry and records management to patrol and special events.

For more info on other volunteer positions, call the Community Resources Office at 646.3719 (www.monterey.org/volunteer).

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For History Buffs Only...

Support Here to Preserve Historic Resources

Repairing historic buildings can be a challenge. The process of preserving the original building materials while making needed repairs and paying for them can seem overwhelming.

The City can help take some of the mystery out of historic preservation, and our comprehensive program provides a wide range of incentives to support your efforts.

The Mills Act is a tax savings program for owners of historic buildings. Property owners agree to maintain the historic resource according to specific standards in exchange for a lower tax rate. This program primarily benefits property owners who have higher tax rates and have recently purchased a property.

Grants for required reports and repairs are also available. Before any repair work on historic structures gets underway, a certified historian must prepare a report on the building to ensure that improvements meet certain standards. The City grants \$2,000 to help pay for the report. Property owners may also apply for grants up to \$10,000 to pay for health and safety repairs, such as leaky roofs.

Zoning incentives can also be part of the package. Property owners of historic structures can apply for waivers for parking, setbacks and floor-area standards.

Other incentives include allowing office uses in multi-family residential areas and/or multi-family housing in single-family areas.



For more details or to get started with your own history project, talk with [Senior Planner Kimberly Cole](#) at 646.3759 or visit www.monterey.org/commdevelop and click on "historic preservation."

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Arts & Culture

Randall Reads Columns at Library Fundraiser

Award-winning writer and columnist Sharon Randall will read some of her favorite post-Monterey Herald columns at a fundraiser for the Monterey Public Library on Dec. 2 at 7 p.m. in the Steinbeck Forum at the Monterey Conference Center.

The Friends of the Library will host a "Meet the Writer" reception immediately afterward with refreshments and desserts.

Randall is the author of *Birdbaths* and *Paper Cranes* and her column is currently syndicated by the United Feature Newspaper Enterprise Association.

For ticket info, call 646.3949 or visit us on the Web at www.monterey.org/library.

Mayan Sculpture Art Topic of Upcoming Lecture

Artist/docent Robin Domiter of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco resumes her popular art slide lecture series at the Monterey Public Library on Nov. 15 at 7 p.m.

Domiter will discuss Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya.

The sculpture of the ancient Maya is unprecedented for its aesthetic excellence and majesty. In 150 years from 650 to 800 A.D., Mayan kings, queens and nobles, while living in the tropical rain forests of southern Mexico and adjacent Guatemala, transformed Mayan art. They achieved a peak of dramatic expression and naturalism unmatched in the ancient New World. Admission to the lecture is free, but reservations are required.



For info or tickets, call 646-3949 or send an email to mccombs@ci.monterey.ca.us

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Odds and Ends

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TRASH TALK

Recycle Beverage Cans, Bottles

We are drinking more packaged beverages every year in the United States.

In 2002 alone, we used 18 billion single-use cans and bottles. That's two per day for every person – man, woman and child. Half of the containers are aluminum cans and the rest are plastic.

Recycling is more important than ever. And we are doing a great job with aluminum cans; 75% of all aluminum cans are being recycled. Plastic is another story, only 40% of plastic bottles are recycled.

We need your help to increase this rate, especially since more and more beverages are being sold in plastic containers, and it takes a substantial amount of energy to produce plastic.



How can you help?

Get paid back for your efforts. Collect 4 cents per bottle and 8 cents for 2-liter bottles on your drink containers, including water and juice bottles.

While at home, work or on vacation, take the time to recycle. Collect the containers and either place the containers in your curbside recycling bin or take them to a buyback center and get some money back.

Centers are located behind Whole Foods Market (Monterey), at Costco (Sand City) and at Nob Hill Foods and Safeway on Forest Avenue (Pacific Grove).

Let's do our part. Save the planet; save money. Don't let those bottles go to waste.

For more info or other recommendations, visit www.monterey.org/recycle or call 646.5662.

Traffic Update

Traffic patterns are changing on Reeside and Dickman avenues. Look for Reeside and Dickman avenues to become one-way streets between Hawthorne Street and Lighthouse Avenue.

Holiday Events

- **Christmas Tree Lighting** (all ages)
Dec. 3 – 6:30 p.m., free
Colton Hall (animals prohibited)
- **Frosty's Snow Adventure** (ages 3-5)
Dec. 11 – 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
\$20 Monterey resident; \$26 other
Casanova Oak Knoll Park Center



- ***A Trip to the North Pole*** (ages 6-12)
Dec. 10 – 6 to 9 p.m.
\$20 Monterey resident; \$26 other
Casanova Oak Knoll Park Center
- ***Saturday Afternoon with Santa*** (ages 3-8)
Dec. 11 – 2 to 4 p.m.
\$15 Monterey resident; \$20 other
Hilltop Park Center

Please note:

La Posada as well as the holiday display at the corner of Madison and Pacific streets will not be presented by the City due to budget cutbacks. Pick up the winter/ spring Activities Guide later this fall for info on 2005 events, classes and activities or visit the Web at www.monterey.org/rec

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