

City Focus

Spring 2021

volume XXXVI, no. 2

A Report from the City of Monterey to its Citizens and Friends

A GLIMPSE AT OUR REOPENING STRATEGY - Message from the City Manager



Newly planted blossoming cherry trees in dedication to lives lost to Covid-19 and to thank health care workers

Springtime - it is the annual recurrence of the promise for new beginnings in nature, visible throughout Monterey in our gardens and parks. The trees lining most of our streets are showing signs of fresh new green leaves. Spring represents a time of hope and a time for finding new joy. Spring 2021 presents much more than this - thanks to science we have three vaccines with high efficacies at our disposal to fight the pandemic. Thanks to effective planning from our government, our nation has more vaccine doses allocated than we actually will need. More than 28% of our national population is fully vaccinated, and over half of Monterey County residents have had at least one dose (as of mid-April). A special thanks to our firefighters and other team members, who have organized and conducted more than 30 vaccination clinics. Monterey is the only City agency in our County authorized to administer the vaccines.

We have moved from a stay at home order to a tiered system of purple, red and are now operating in orange based on the [State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). Businesses, restaurants, hotels are open and welcoming customers. Our visitors from the adjacent Bay area have returned - equally seeking new beginnings and new experiences.

At City Hall your staff is working on preparing a new biennial budget while slowly returning to a more normalized mode of operations. We will present the budget to our community and elected officials with the shared understanding

**"Spring represents a
time of hope..."**

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that ultimately our finances will guide us by what we can afford. Monterey has been hit hard by the pandemic - statewide and according to the State Auditor's report, Monterey is one of 11 cities hit hardest due to the losses suffered in our tourism based industry - in the top 11 out of a pool of 483 cities!

But, there are things we must do: Ensure public safety - everyone expects services when calling 911; safe roads and other infrastructure assets; take the lessons learned from the summer of 2020 and apply them to our City organization. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are right now just three buzzwords - we will fill them with meaningful actions.

As we continue reopening, some services remain in a modified status; services such as our traditional programming in our Parks and Recreation Department including the Sports Center and Community Centers or certain services in our Library. Hopefully, soon, we can also reopen our Conference Center.

And lastly, we simply cannot support creating new programs. As a matter of fact, we will need to analyze what existing programs we may need to cut or reduce. Providing free year-round free trolley services come to mind as one of the ways of saving up to \$500,000.

As always, the wisdom, foresight and public discourse will result in an approved budget, which will be reflective of our community values. In 2020 Monterey turned 250 years old. Together with your help we will set up Monterey for the beginning of the next 250 years.

Please enjoy this issue of the City Focus newsletter - now in it's 36th year as a comprehensive publication for the City of Monterey! Anda!

City Manager Hans Uslar

Monterey Fire Department vaccination clinics continue

BY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER LAURIE HUELGA



The Monterey Fire Department is the only city agency approved to deliver vaccinations in Monterey County. We are proud of the work the Monterey Fire Department has provided as vaccinators. To date as of April 20, 3,299 doses of either Pfizer, Moderna, or Janssen (J&J), have been administered.

Vaccine distribution is determined by the Monterey County Public Health Department. Population sectors receiving vaccines from Monterey Fire include first responders (Fire, Police, EMT), other disaster service workers, public transit workers, hospitality workers, homeless, seniors and homebound individuals - all throughout the Peninsula cities. They also hosted a clinic at the Monterey Conference Center open to anyone over the age of 16.

Additional clinics are scheduled through May and continue to be added. If you have not had an opportunity to get vaccinated, please go to [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) and start the process. It is so important for as many people as possible to get vaccinated in order to stop variants of the coronavirus, and to reduce the spread. We can get back to what we know when everyone helps everyone else.

Here are photos from the recent clinic at the Monterey Conference Center:



Masks on, Sleeves up Monterey!

Speaking of getting vaccinated, it's fun to share the news! DOWNLOAD YOUR DIGITAL "I got my COVID-19 vaccine!" BUTTON at monterey.org/SleevesUp, and share on your favorite social media. Monterey Police and Fire staff are participating in #SleevesUpMonterey too.



Emergency Rental Assistance Program reopens with new CARES Act funding

CITY OF MONTEREY

**Covid-19
Emergency Rental
Assistance Program
REOPENED WITH MORE
FUNDING!**

Monterey residents who need help paying rent due to economic hardship caused by the pandemic can call United Way's 211 system, or apply online at MCRentHelp.com

THIS COUNTY-WIDE PROGRAM IS OPEN TO RESIDENTS OF OTHER CITIES AS WELL.

City of Monterey Housing Programs (831) 646-3995

In early April, the City of Monterey reopened the Emergency Rental Assistance Program with a new round of funding. Since March 1 of last year, the City has provided \$800,000 in assistance to 119 qualifying households. In collaboration with the County of Monterey from funding through the federal CARES Act, United Way Monterey County is providing a new round of financial assistance to eligible tenants who are experiencing unemployment and loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of April 15, we have about 100 clients participating in the emergency and utility rental assistance program, and we issued our first check run of \$38,072 to 19 households.

You can apply for this program through United Way by calling 2-1-1 or apply online at MCRentHelp.com. You will need to apply for this program even if you have participated in other rental assistance programs. Once you apply, you will be referred to an agency that assists applicants in the City you reside in. These agencies will work with you directly to collect the required documentation and pay your landlords directly. Please note that if you live outside of the City of Monterey you will be referred to another agency.

With this new program, applicants are eligible for up to 12 months of rent and utility assistance.

For questions, please email housing@monterey.org or call 831-646-3995.

Still time to stroll Friendly Plaza to enjoy the "Tree of Hearts"



The "Tree of Hearts" is on display through May. We've had many wonderful reactions from visitors, thanking us for creating a place to commemorate those who lost their lives to Covid-19, and acknowledge the first responders who helped the community get through this momentarily difficult year. The display is also a thank you to everyone in the community, for being strong, resilient, and helping your friends and neighbors. Together we are stronger.

Here are photos of some of the hearts, along with a couple quotes from visitors. Thanks to all the photographers who sent in photos, including Lilly Grossman and Esther Malkin.



"Thank you for dedicating this memorial to revere and cherish the lives of those such as our sister, in a place where she belonged and called home."

~ Kathleen





...I placed several hearts on the tree. One heart was for a loved one who had died of Covid-19 in France. I sent the family in France a photo of this heart in the tree. They were so heartened and touched. Even on the other side of the world, the Tree of Hearts has connected us all and managed to bring us closer during this difficult period of isolation. It has been a very healing and much appreciated tribute for so many!

With deep appreciation, Margaret



© 2021 Lillie Grossman Photography



"The small clinking chimes of the hearts really resonates as you sit with the tree. Glad to have a place to sit with their memories as well as many others."

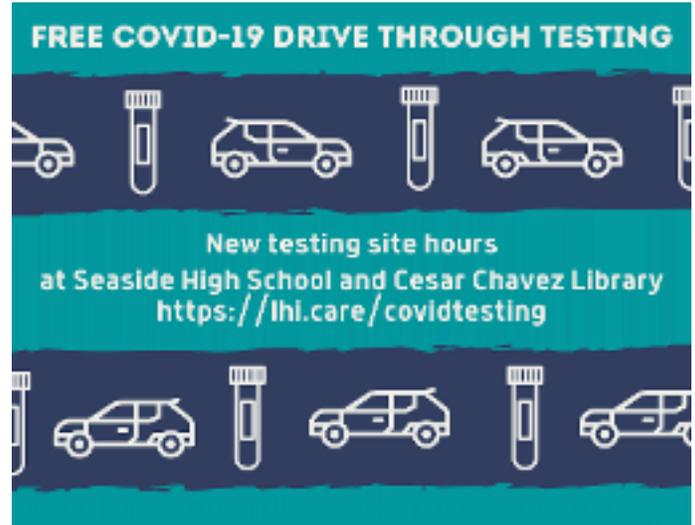
~ Dianna



Getting tested for Covid-19 is still important - NEW TESTING SITE HOURS

Why is testing important?

- Testing and vaccinations are complimentary strategies (not an either-or scenario)
- Testing helps to save lives and livelihoods: reduces transmission; breaks the chain of infection; improved targeting and monitoring of Covid-19 strategy, surveillance.
- Testing is still needed to protect against new variants, reinfection, and as a tool to help manage reopening.



Effective Thursday, April 22, Covid-19 testing sites have new hours:
Walk-ins: No appointment necessary from 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

SEASIDE:

- Seaside High School , 2200 Noche Buena St
- APPOINTMENT: 1-888-634-1123 or <https://lhi.care/covidtesting>
- NEW HOURS: Thurs - Mon (8 a.m. - 8 pm), WALK INS: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- COST: No cost.
- SERVICES: Open to everyone with or without symptoms & with or without insurance.

SALINAS:

- Cesar Chavez Library, 615 Williams Road
- APPOINTMENT: 1-888-634-1123 or <https://lhi.care/covidtesting>
- NEW HOURS: Thurs - Mon (8 a.m. - 8 pm), WALK INS: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- COST: No cost
- SERVICES: Open to everyone with or without symptoms & with or without insurance.
- Testing Site is located at the Building Healthy Community Room—Enter through the parking lot.

HOW TO FIND COVID-19 TESTING SITES?

BY CITIES: An online listing of COVID-19 Test sites by cities is posted at <https://allianceonaging.org/covid-19/>

Here are two comprehensive lists in PDF of all Monterey County testing sites:

- From Alliance on Aging: [IN ENGLISH](#) and [IN SPANISH](#)
- From the [Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce](#)

Have Your Say Monterey - Decision Point on Cannabis



A "Roadmap to Cannabis" in Monterey was first introduced in December 2020 at a City Council presentation. Since then, the Roadmap has been a strategic component to guide the City through the process of deciding if commercial cannabis should be an addition to our community. Next we introduced both print and online surveys, virtual town halls, special Council meetings to preview the results, and we kept the focus on what do the residents and business communities want.

Now we are at a key turning point in the road - a decision point. We have outlined, based on state regulations, the market outlook, and local feedback, where we could potentially put retail cannabis operations. Zoning maps and more are newly added at haveyoursaymonterey.org/cannabis.

At an upcoming Monterey City Council meeting we will have an opportunity to present to Council a staff recommendation. Council and the community will provide further direction. We hope if this topic matters to you that you will tune in and be a part of the conversation. Learn about the current status and process on the Cannabis web page at haveyoursaymonterey.org, and have your say!

**HAVE YOUR SAY
MONTEREY**

New city website coming late summer/early fall!



The digital face of City Hall, the City's website, is getting a new look and expanded functionality! We are excited to enhance city services with a more robust website that will help us provide a better service level to our community.

Easily accessible online services and program information provide a better experience for every one. We listened to feedback of what you think is missing from our current site and we will be using it to build a brand new look. Coming soon will be much better searchability, content layout, how to connect with the right staff person, easily usable calendar and news features and much more!

Every Drop Counts - time to conserve water

BY TRICIA WOTAN,
ENVIRONMENTAL
REGULATIONS
MANAGER

On March 24th, 2021, Governor Newsom issued an executive order to provide greater assistance to those communities who are still recovering from last year's devastating wildfires. As many communities continue to pick up the pieces, it's clear we must stay diligent in our home and business property fire preparedness.



Similarly, we're learning

that we must also stay diligent with our individual and collective water use, as California's water supply stores are lower than anticipated for water year 2021, which started on October 1st and concludes September 30th each year. This is the second dry water year in a row for California, whose current dry conditions can be viewed and regularly monitored on a broad scale at the U.S. [Drought Monitor website](#)

To understand statewide water conditions, it's helpful to follow the on-going and regular actions of state and federal agencies overseeing our statewide water supplies.

- On March 22nd, 2021, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) released a media statement confirming continued dry climatic conditions and provided an "early warning about potential water shortages".
- Recently, both the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) reduced their forecasted water allocations to communities and agricultural customers related to State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) water deliveries. Also in March, the DWR released an updated Drought Contingency Plan submitted to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). It summarized hydrological conditions and forecasts, SWP and CVP operations, monitoring efforts to inform operations, species status updates, areas of potential concern for implementation this year, and more. This update also highlights a Drought Toolkit under development as a guide for California to plan, coordinate, and identify drought response actions in drought years.
- Additionally, the April 1, 2021 DWR snow condition surveys confirm a less than average snow pack in the Sierra Nevada Range, as well as lower snow water equivalency (SWE) averages that should typically be at their highest on April 1 each year.

article continued next page

"Every Drop Counts" article continued from page 9

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) issued its updated California Water Supply Outlook Report (March 1, 2021) and concluded that despite some of the storms that have moved through California this wet season, California's water year may "end with a critically dry year on the heels of last year's dry conditions..." per DWR Director Karla Nemeth, who also noted, "With back-to-back dry years, water efficiency and drought preparedness are more important than ever for communities, agriculture and the environment."

Although no drought declaration has been issued by the Governor, all agency actions are pointing to everyone examining what we can do now to conserve water. See these resources to learn what we can do at home and at work:

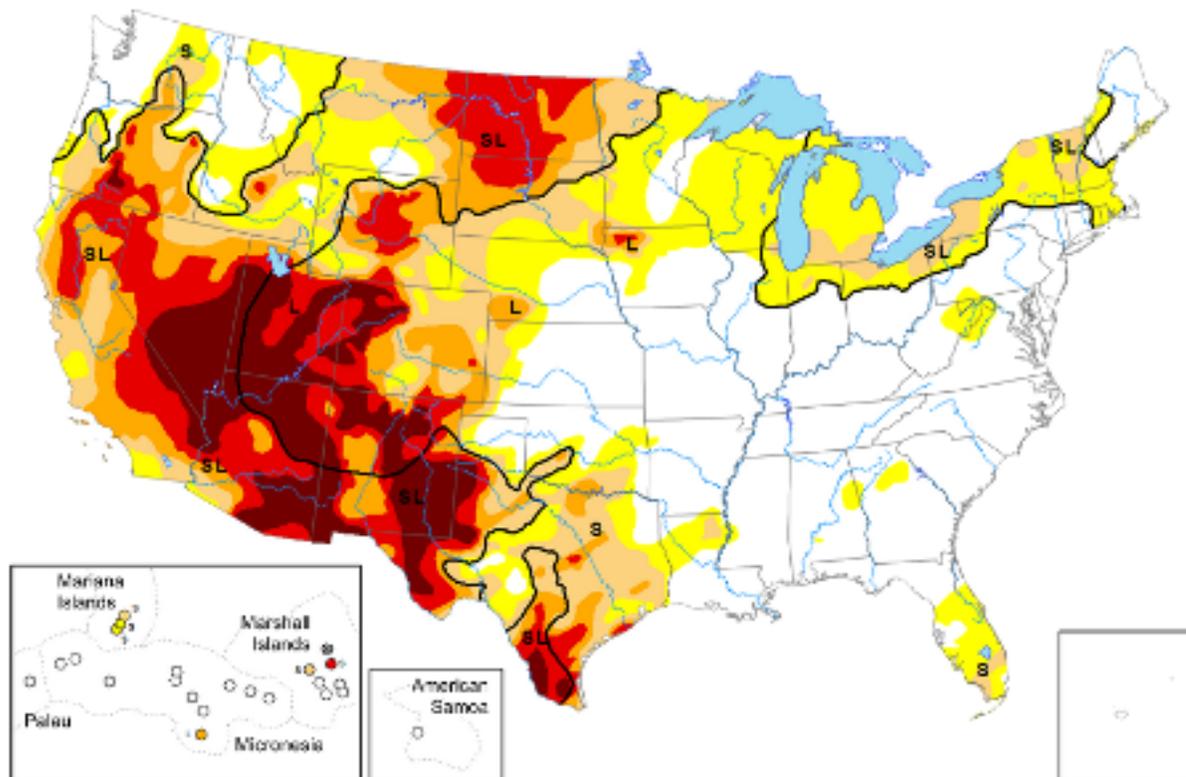
- <https://saveourwater.com/> (Save Our Water)
- <https://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/?view=list> (Water Use It Wisely)
- <https://www.mpwmd.net/conservation/> (MPWMD Conservation website)

To monitor statewide water conditions, see these resources:

- U.S. Drought Monitor regular updates and statistics for the US, West, and California
- Monthly USDA NRCS California Water Supply Outlook Report
- DWR Drought Contingency Plan
- SWRCB Drought Information and Updates
- <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Map released: April 8, 2021

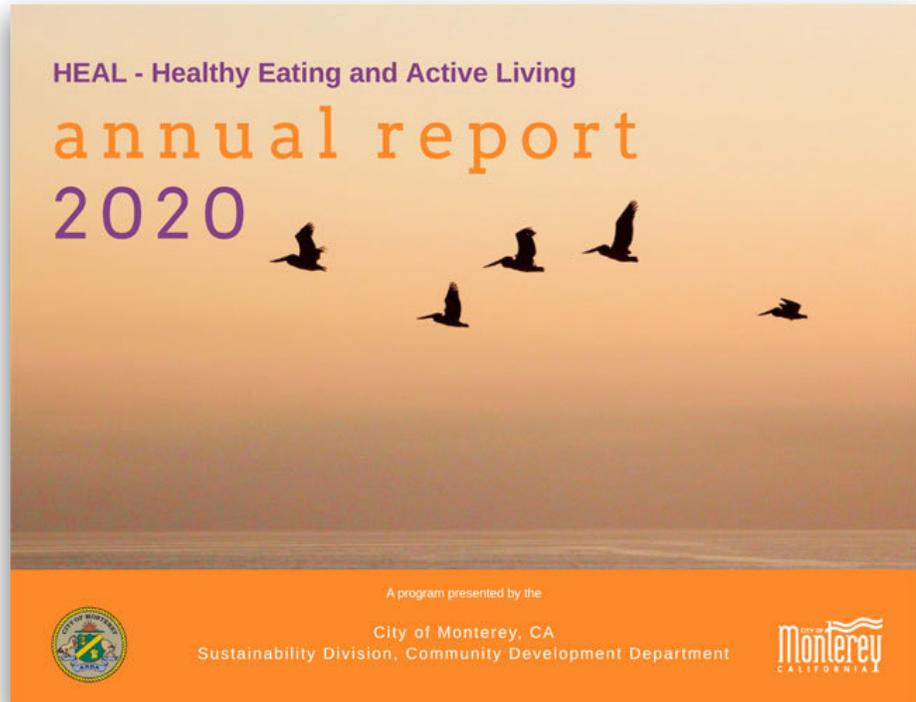
Data valid: April 6, 2021



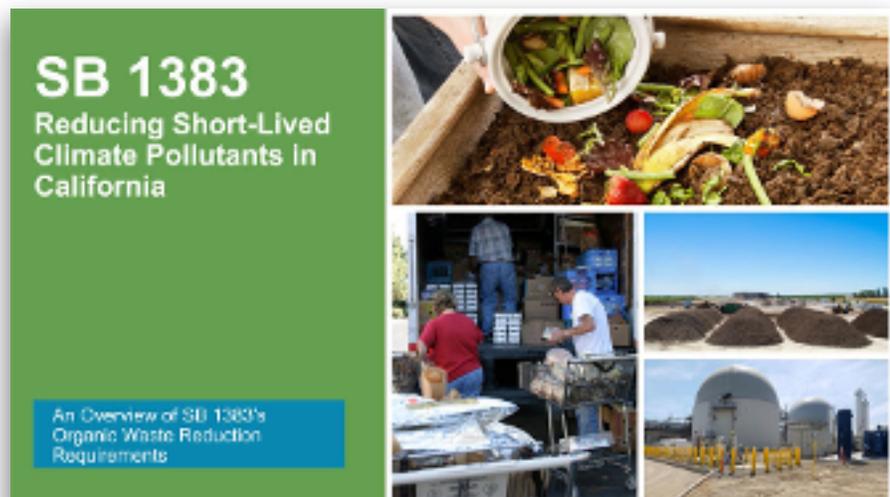
HEAL Report - Empowering healthy eating and active living

In 2017, Monterey joined with more than 180 cities throughout California in the [Healthy Eating Active Living \(HEAL\) Cities Campaign](#). The HEAL Cities Campaign aims to reduce and prevent obesity by engaging municipal leaders to champion healthy eating and active living in their communities through adoption of policy and promotion of opportunities for residents and municipal employees. The campaign provides coaching and technical assistance to support this process.

View the newly released [2020 HEAL Report in PDF](#), or the [mobile-friendly version](#). Thanks to intern Alexa Ortiz for helping produce this report.



In related news, Sustainability Coordinator Ted Terrasas made a presentation to City Council at the April 6 Council meeting about Senate Bill 1383, a bill adopted in September 2016 to reduce "short-lived climate pollutants" in California by reducing organic waste. The overview includes a background, the relation to climate change, key implementation dates, and jurisdiction requirements. [Review the presentation slides](#).



Parks Division giving out trees to celebrate Arbor Day

While most holidays celebrate something that has already happened and is worth remembering, Arbor Day represents a hope for the future. The simple act of planting a tree represents a belief that the tree will grow to provide us with clean air and water, cooling shade, habitat for wildlife, healthier communities, and endless natural beauty — all for a better tomorrow. <https://www.arborday.org/celebrate/history.cfm>

Arbor Day is Friday, April 30th. In honor of this day the City of Monterey is providing trees to residents to encourage the planting of trees in our community. The four photos below show samples of the trees available, and include Coast Live Oaks, California Buckeyes and a few Washington Hawthornes . Thank you for celebrating Arbor Day with a proud [Tree City USA](#) city for over 40 years!

For more information please contact Urban Forester Justin Prouty at prouty@monterey.org.



Volunteer Trash Clean-up at El Estero Park, April 24

The Communities for Sustainable Monterey County - Sustainable Monterey is partnering with the City of Monterey to conduct trash cleanups. A volunteer trash cleanup is scheduled at El Estero Park on Saturday, April 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Register at:

<http://info.bluezonesproject.com/montereycounty> or call 831-204-1666. Check in at the Visitors Center on Camino El Estero. Covid-19 safety protocols will be enforced.



HELP KEEP MONTEREY BEAUTIFUL WITH A COMMUNITY

VOLUNTEER TRASH CLEAN-UP

Saturday, April 24 10:00a - 1:00p
El Estero Park

Check in at Visitors Center on Camino El Estero. We will provide grabbers, gloves, buckets/recyclable plastic grocery bags, vests, hand sanitizer. But please bring your own of any of these that you can, along with your own water bottle.

Covid safety: masks & distancing required.

Register at: [info/bluezonesproject.com/montereycounty](http://info.bluezonesproject.com/montereycounty)

Questions or phone sign-up: Call 831-204-1666.

VIP Volunteers in Parks invite you to participate

The City of Monterey Parks Division invites residents to participate as a Volunteer in Parks VIP. All COVID-19 protocols are strictly followed. Volunteers in Parks (VIP) are a group of volunteers who assist in general maintenance and beautification of City parks and gardens. They assist with planting, pruning, weeding, and landscape maintenance. Information, tools, and instruction are provided. No experience is needed other than an enjoyment of the outdoors. VIP typically work on Tuesdays, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m. If interested, please contact the City of Monterey Parks Division, (831) 646-3860.



The City of Monterey invites you to

BE A VIP!

Volunteer in Parks
Tuesdays

Call the Parks Office at 646-3860
for information and details

Beautify your city!
Get outside!

Help build community!
Have fun!

monterey.org/parks

Parking Programs improve with customer service in mind

The City of Monterey Parking Division has made significant strides in the past couple of years to upgrade both the physical and technology infrastructure to enhance customer service and efficiency. Parking Superintendent Cristie Steffy summarized the advancements in a report to the Monterey City Council at the April 20 Regular Monterey City Council Meeting.

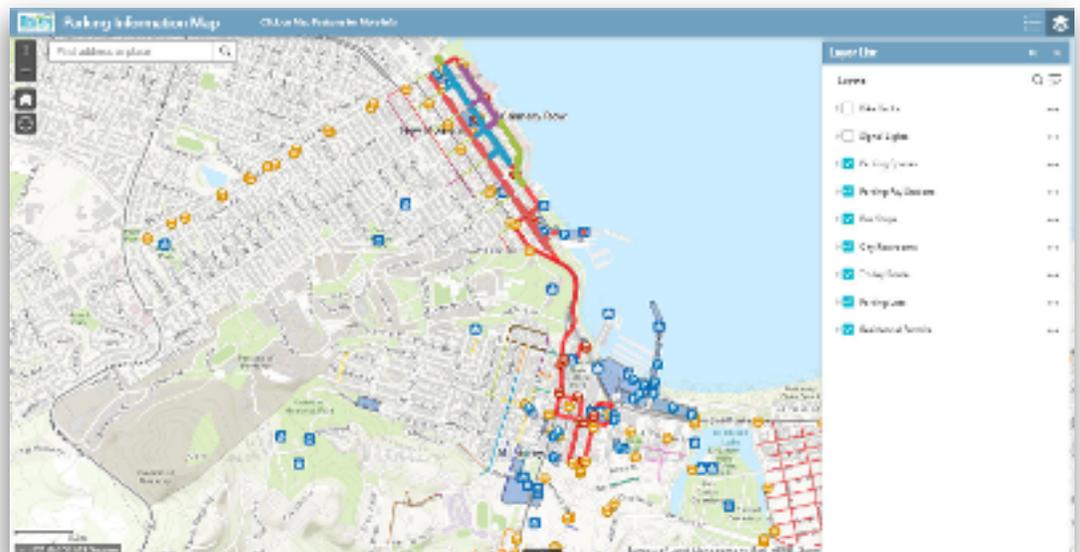


Here's [PDF of the presentation slides](#) and the [video on-demand of the presentation](#), also linked at monterey.org/parking.

Some of the key components to look forward to include:

1. Six new EV charging stations in progress to be installed Summer of 2021: (2) West Garage (Replacements); (2) Calle Principal (Replacements); (2) Cannery Row Lot 7 (new); Up to 15 units planned for East Garage rooftop (summer 2021)
2. Updates to the Resident Parking Program - watch for ways to participate
3. Phase 2 upgrades to the Waterfront Parking Lot (fall 2021)
4. Virtual permit system
5. New signage and pay stations
6. Breakwater (Coast Guard Pier) resurfacing
7. FlixBus Service (Trial starting in May)

We also updated the website with a [new interactive ArcGIS Map](#) of all the transportation infrastructure locations - see <https://www.monterey.org/Services/Parking/Public-Garages-and-Lots>

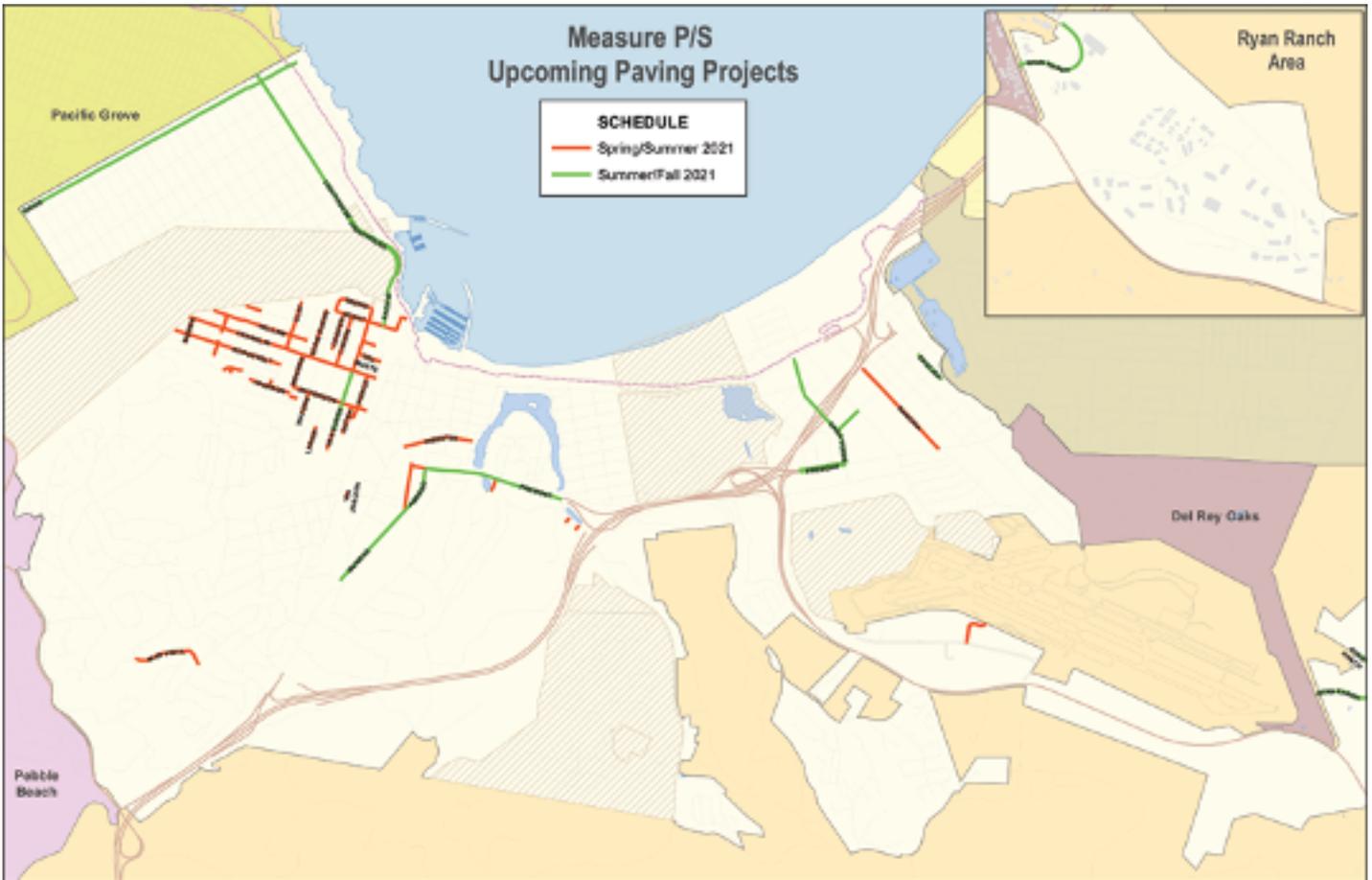




Measure S spring and summer slurry schedule

Weather conditions are best in the spring and summer months for street resurfacing. We have an extensive paving schedule set for May through September as shown on the map below. The full list of streets included is posted at monterey.org/fixingstreets and directly here:

<https://monterey.org/Portals/0/MeasureS/Paving-Schedule-Update-Map-2021.pdf>



Let's have fun this summer!



Monterey Recreation staff are working hard for you! Start planning a fun summer with summer camp programs in Recreation. The City is carefully planning programs to ensure important Covid-19 safety protocols are in place.

Visit monterey.org/rec for details.

Also ready to greet you are basketball courts, group picnic and barbecue areas. For group permit information go online to monterey.org/Services/Parks-and-Beaches/Group-BBQ-Reservations

If in case you missed it, Dennis the Menace Playground reopened! Here are a few photos of opening day, April 20.



The pool opens! Swim lessons and Summer Sports Camp return!

The Monterey Sports Center staff are so happy to be back and busy planning a fun summer for you and your family! Registration is open for Summer Sports Camp and Swim Lessons. Get all the details at montereysportscenter.org or call (831) 646-3730.



NEW EXPANDED HOURS!

- Monday-Friday 5:30 a.m. -7:00 p.m.
- Saturday 8:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m.
- Sunday Closed

Summer Sports Camp
at the Monterey Sports Center is back!

June 7th - July 30th

Camp Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 am - 4 pm
Offering over 30 fun, COVID safe sports & activities!

Due to the current CDC guidelines, participants must be signed up for **2 consecutive weeks** of camp at a time. This summer there are a total of 4, 2 week sessions!

Monterey Resident Fee: **\$310**
Fee: **\$360** **Ages 6 - 12 Years**

Upon registration, participants will be divided into 2 groups. 2 groups will be for ages 6 - 8 years while the 2nd group will be for 9 - 12 years.

Registration begins Wednesday, April 21st!
Sign up online at montereysportscenter.org or at the Monterey Sports Center!

This program will be modified and follow COVID-19 protocol including daily health screenings, face masks and cleaning and disinfecting. Space will be limited due to COVID-19.

Family Recreation Swim is Back!

Monday - Thursday 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Friday 2:00pm - 6:30pm
Saturday 12:00pm - 3:30pm

PRIVATE SWIM LESSONS
Registration Opens
April 21st!

Call the Private Lesson Line at 646-3738!

MSC SWIM LESSONS
NEW SESSIONS STARTING MAY 1st

Registration Opens April 21st!



Library Spring and Summer Programs

BY MONTEREY PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF MEMBER KIM SMITH

The Library doors may not be open yet, but we have a team inside hard at work for you. If you haven't tried the book bundle service yet, you're missing out! Head to our website monterey.org/library and fill out the brief form with your card number and what type of books or DVDs you're looking for. A librarian will curate a selection for you to pick up at our sidewalk holds pickup services.

New books are coming in daily thanks to the support of the Monterey Public Library Friends & Foundation. They have launched a campaign to support the Library during this crisis. To learn more or make a contribution, visit investinmpl.org/monterey-learns/ or email info@investinmpl.org.

It's spring, and many children are heading back to school for a few weeks before summer rolls around. Live tutors providing bilingual Homework Help are just a click away at bit.ly/3uxPmDt. We are gearing up for this year's Summer Reading Program – *Reading Colors Your World*. We'll kick things off on June 1st. Keep an eye on our website for programs and how to sign up for the reading challenge for all ages.



The Campaign for the Monterey Public Library (MPL)

In March 2020, the Library's doors closed because of the global pandemic. The pandemic's impact on tourism and the local economy drastically reduced City revenue. As a result, the City's library budget was reduced, resulting in a staff reduction of 80% and elimination of the book budget. The MPL Friends & Foundation began raising targeted funds for the collections in late 2020, and the *Monterey Learns!* Campaign was launched publicly in February 2021.

For ways to become involved or make a donation, please visit <https://www.investinmpl.org/monterey-learns/>

Monterey Learns!
The campaign for MPL

Discover

Create

Innovate

Grow



Thanks to Monterey Fire Department vaccinators, staff, and to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers for helping at the vaccine clinics! If you're interested in getting involved with the CERT program, visit <https://monterey.org/fire/Preparedness/Join-CERT> for details.
Watch for the summer issue of City Focus coming in late July

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