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Birthstone: Emerald  
Flower: Lily of the Valley

# Pathfinder



CITY OF SANTA MARIA EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



*Word has it ...*

*From your City Manager*

Rick Haydon



**Good communication is essential to every healthy work environment. It helps build trust, provides for mutual understanding of issues, and helps all City employees work together harmoniously. I encourage all employees to understand what is happening within their departments, in other departments, and in the City overall.**

By expressing ideas clearly and instilling purpose, we all know what is expected and how to achieve our objectives.

Clear communication breeds teamwork. Teamwork is what makes our City operations function so well; especially when we depend on each other in our daily activities.

I would have to say that based on my past experience, employees are more engaged when information flows freely and they are aware of the City's activities and management decisions. Therefore, I cannot overemphasize the need to share institutional knowledge amongst employees – especially from a succession planning standpoint. In that regard, we would be remiss if we did not as a work team, as a division, as a department or an organization, use every misstep, every snafu, every mistake, as a learning opportunity to know what we did right – and what we did wrong – and to learn from it.

All of us are in a constant learning mode, and one way to learn more is to read and become more aware of things. My efforts to share information with employees include not only my monthly columns in the

Pathfinder, but by also attending brown bag lunches held throughout the year at various departments to engage in question-and-answer sessions about City issues with employees. There always are lots of good questions, which I appreciate, and hopefully I have been able to provide those in attendance some good answers.

Communication is a two-way street. I have been encouraging Department Heads to have monthly face-to-face group meetings with their employees to inform them about those noteworthy activities that are happening in the City, and to make themselves available to listen to your issues and concerns. I encourage you to attend those meetings, be involved - ask questions, discuss issues, and express ideas. Together, we can find better ways of getting our jobs done, nip rumors in the bud, and better serve our customers.

Feedback is essential to performance. Share ideas, best practices, and feedback with your supervisor and/or department head and share your thoughts with them. As a team, we continue to find solutions to challenges and provide exceptional quality services to our community. Together, we want to maintain and further develop employee enthusiasm and commitment.

All City employees are ambassadors of our organization. All of us should be aware of significant programs within our departments, so that we are in a position of knowledge to tell others about it and answer questions. Who can be more credible in telling the City's story than its employees? When you are informed and accurate, that sends a positive message to your family, friends, and neighbors about the City and our operation.

*Rick*