

# Pathfinder



CITY OF SANTA MARIA EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



*Word has it ...*

*From your City Manager*

Rick Haydon



**As 2016 draws to a close, on behalf of the Mayor and City Council, I want to thank all of you for your diligent efforts during this challenging year. By working together as a team rather than as individuals, we were able to successfully accomplish so much in 2016. Looking back, some of the City's more noteworthy achievements were:**

- Coordinating with eight other agencies in "Operation Matador" – the most ambitious such operation in the City's history - which halted a violent crime wave by arresting 17 suspects of multiple homicides.
- Successfully launching the first season of *Downtown Fridays*. Crowds settled in around 2,000 per week at Town Center West. The event will resume in the spring.
- Initiating infrastructure improvements for the Enos Ranchos development, including undergrounding of utilities and constructing curb, gutter, road and landscaping improvements, as well as and placement of the Smith-Enos House on a future park site. The project will bring a Costco, Lowe's, and many other large retailers to the City.
- Coordinating a community-wide fireworks education campaign involving video PSAs, posters, and enforcement, which dramatically reduced the prolonged use of illegal fireworks, and then raising funds from the community for the City's fireworks show.
- Reopening the upgraded Oakley Park with two Little League fields, soccer field, snack bar, restrooms, lighting, and a paved parking lot.

- Extending the *Safe and Strong* after-school program beyond its summer timeframe to serve thousands of elementary school-age students seeking help with homework or fitness.
- Responding to the City's growing homeless population through patrols and removal of encampments, while also participating with C3H for case and referral and coordinated outreach to those needing assistance.
- Achieving significant community-wide water conservation – nearly 1.2 billion gallons – exceeding State requirements during the drought.
- Implementing a new smoke-free parks and City facilities initiative in response to public feedback, ensuring that City properties are safer and cleaner for everyone.
- Creating the Santa Maria Tourist Improvement District (with a two percent increase in T.O.T.) in conjunction with the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce, and launching the visitor destination website [www.santamariavalley.com](http://www.santamariavalley.com) to attract more tourist-generated revenues.
- Providing more tutor and online tools via the free Homework Help program at the Main Library and Los Alamos Branch Library, and new portable Wi-Fi hotspots for ease in checking material out to the public.
- Helping the environment by the construction of a denitrification bio-filter system to treat nutrient-rich agricultural flows in Bradley Channel prior to the flows entering the pond located in Jim May Park.

The above is only a sample of some of our accomplishments, we were also able to begin free mattress recycling; roll out on the City website the Online Trip Planner, Crime Mapping, the public records request portal, an updated Municipal Code portal,

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## *City Manager's Message*

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and a redesigned Human Resources webpage; we collaborated with residents and property owners of the apartment buildings to clean up and relocate numerous Dumpsters; we completed the SMAT automated bus wash facility; built a new crime scene van to replace the 16-year-old vehicle; launched the City Manager's *Speaker Series* and also continued succession planning academies; produced nearly 20 video public

service announcements about traffic safety and common Municipal Code concerns and City programs; relaunched the Adopt-A-Road program; participated in Serve Santa Maria to beautify the City; relocated Greyhound to the Transit Center, and chartered the City's first Toastmasters club, among many other accomplishments.

And as we close 2016, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and your families during the upcoming holiday season, and wish you all the best in 2017.

*Rick*

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