



# COUNTY CURRENTS

Santa Cruz County

www.santacruzcounty.us

Fall 2018

A publication of the County Administrative Office Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrator



## SALES TAX, SERVICES UP FOR NOVEMBER VOTE

On August 7, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to place a half-cent sales tax increase before County voters on the Nov. 6, 2018 general election ballot, known as Measure G.

Measure G would help provide services in the areas of homelessness and behavioral health, as well as construct new public parks facilities. Those needs include new North and South County homeless shelters, public safety and behavioral health outreach to low-level street offenders, and completion of several new parks, including LEO's Haven, the County's first all-inclusive playground for children of all abilities.

If approved, sales taxes in the unincorporated area would increase by half of one percent, keeping taxes there at or below those in local cities. The current unincorporated sales tax is 8.5 percent, and the increase would be eliminated after 12 years.



Several members of the public spoke to the Board August 7 about the need for additional County funding, including in support of Chanticleer Park and LEO's Haven, the first local park for children regardless of physical abilities.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

While the tax would only apply in unincor-

porated areas of the county, since all residents are expected to benefit from the programs and services, every voter in Santa Cruz County will be allowed to vote.

Among several priorities, the County is shepherding local efforts to establish year-round, 24-hour shelter and navigation centers in North and South County, servicing approximately 150 and 40 individuals, respectively. The County is also committed to \$1.125 million in matching funds to Chanticleer Park and LEO's Haven, a community park and playground with numerous accessible structures and features for children with disabilities.

Other needs include matching funds for a planned Felton Nature Park adjacent to the new Felton Library; the Heart of Soquel Linear Parkway connecting Soquel Village with Soquel Creek; completion of Mid-County's Farm Park; upgrades to Aptos Village Park; funding for South County parks; and restoration and upgrades to Simpkins Family Swim Center.

On July 27, former Supervisor **Neal Coonerty** joined his son, current Supervisor **Ryan Coonerty**, for a ribbon-cutting to celebrate the recently completed Twin Lakes Beachfront Project, which was more than a decade in the making.



### In This Issue

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- North Coast Cleanup
- Assessing Community Values on Homelessness
- South County Pump Track Completed
- ADU Fees Eliminated
- Animal Shelter's First Foundation Established

## Foundation to aid Shelter operations



The Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter is proud to announce the formation of the Animal Shelter Foundation.

Most of the Shelter's key preventive efforts, however, require private money. The vital programs that help animals and their guardians beyond the Shelter's doors – spay/neuter clinics, training classes, humane education, and community outreach – are dependent on donations from private individuals.

"Our goal is simple," said Foundation treasurer Brett Hennie, an executive with the Driscoll Company in Watsonville. "We want to ensure that the County Shelter will have a steady source of private funding to provide program stability and expansion of proven preventive outreach."

As a 501(c)(3) entity, the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter Foundation reach out to businesses and other organizations while offering potential donors a range of giving options not currently available through the Shelter.

To learn more about the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter Foundation or to make a donation, please visit <https://www.scanimalshelterfoundation.org>.

## Felton Library breaks ground

On September 21, the County, Santa Cruz Public Libraries and the Felton Library Friends welcomed more than 120 residents to the groundbreaking for the new Felton Library, which represents a leap forward in public services by pairing a modern library with an outdoor education center while reflecting the San Lorenzo Valley community.

Felton Library is also the first library project in Santa Cruz County to be funded by Measure S, which was approved by voters in June 2016. The 8,900-square-foot Felton Library will include new and expanded collections and programs, teen and children's areas, a courtyard and numerous site improvements.

"It's incredibly exciting to be breaking ground on this project, which the Felton community has been waiting many



Supervisor Bruce McPherson addresses the crowd in Felton.

years to be built," Santa Cruz County Supervisor Bruce McPherson said. "Once complete, the library will be a new community hub for the San Lorenzo Valley, a beautiful place to gather and learn."

Designed by local architect Teall Messer, the new facility will allow the Felton Library to move from its current location in the Belardi Memorial Building, which was built in 1893 as a Presbyterian Church and will be preserved for future use. In August, the Board of Supervisors awarded an \$8.3 million construction contract to Novato-based Thompson Builders. The library will be located adjacent to a new Nature Discovery Park currently under design, a combination that is believed to be the first of its kind in California. The County has secured \$440,000 in grants and other funding for the Nature Discovery Park, with an additional \$400,000 provided should voters approve Measure G on the November ballot.



## Economic Development website now open

The Santa Cruz County Office for Economic

**SCCVITALITY**

Development is proud to unveil its SCC Vitality website, which includes information about doing business in Santa Cruz County and serves as a hub for jobs creation and project info. Visit [www.sccvitality.org](http://www.sccvitality.org).

 COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF  
**PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES**



**2018-19 PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES**

Looking for something to do? Whether you're 8 or 85, the '18-'19 Parks Department's Activity Guide is a great place to start. [Check it out!](#)

## ***Elected officials, nonprofits, advocates talk homelessness***



On a Friday morning in Watsonville, numerous key elected officials, nonprofit staff, school officials, advocates and more came together to reassess the community's priorities when it comes to addressing homelessness.

Building on the "[All-In](#)" plan to address homelessness at the local level, the gathering served as a countywide check-in as the County and its partners ready themselves for what should be an unprecedented opportunity to address homelessness at the local level. The state is making millions of dollars available to local communities to address homelessness — however, the funds must be expended within a designated time frame or they will be returned to the state for redistribution elsewhere.

Unfortunately, Santa Cruz County has traditionally received one of the lowest amounts of per-capita federal homelessness funding in the U.S. To learn more about the local homeless population, read the [most recent Point-In-Time Count](#).

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## **Board to waive fees on accessory dwelling units**

Continuing to address the local housing affordability crisis, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors on September 25 took the unprecedented step of waiving County fees for small accessory dwelling units under a three-year pilot program.

Accessory dwelling units can be an effective and innovative way to increase local housing inventories, one of the goals under the County's first-ever Strategic Plan. Voting unanimously, the Board directed County Administrative Officer Carlos Palacios to bring forward a resolution enacting a three-year waiver program for ADUs that are 640 square feet or smaller.

"The Board has taken a number of steps to address the housing crisis, including making it easier to build ADUs through a step-by-step toolkit for homeowners and creating a fund to underwrite the construction of deed-restricted, affordable units," said Board Chair Zach Friend, who brought the proposal forward. "Fees can also be a barrier to new housing. By eliminating County fees for these affordable-by-design units, we can make a real difference in addressing a crisis that impacts every resident, from seniors to young families."

By many measures, Santa Cruz County is one of the least affordable places to live in the world, making it difficult for families to pay bills and stay together, creating barriers for employers trying to recruit and retain employees and affecting health outcomes for disadvantaged communities, among other impacts. When cost-of-living is factored in, 23.8 percent of Santa Cruz County's residents live in poverty — the second-highest rate in California, behind Los Angeles.

Recent changes have stimulated interest in ADU construction. Through the County's online toolkit, property owners and quickly determine if they are eligible to build an ADU, research financing and even work through cost estimates using a fee calculator. More information is available at <http://www.sccoplanning.com/ADU.aspx>.

With the Santa Cruz County community facing a critical housing shortage and high housing costs, the County is interested in expanding access to affordable housing for residents. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), sometimes called Granny Units or second units, are smaller housing units that can be built on residential lots that already have a single-family home.



**Looking for employment?**  
[www.santacruzcountyjobs.com](http://www.santacruzcountyjobs.com)





The County Parks Department and Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz recently collaborated on completion of South County's first pump track. While Santa Cruz County has a legacy of being a hotbed for mountain biking, until now there were few facilities for South County youth looking to learn the sport. Supervisors Greg Caput and Zach Friend helped coordinate installation of the pump track, which is now open at Pinto Lake County Park.

## After years of groundwork, LEO's Haven and Chanticleer Park to begin construction

After nearly \$2 million in private fundraising, the County is committed to building Chanticleer Park and LEO's Haven, the first playground for children of all physical abilities in Santa Cruz County.

Official groundbreaking ceremonies will kick off Oct. 13 at 10:15 a.m., followed by



a family fall festival with oversized lawn games, pumpkins, music, craft stations, a book giveaway, and a picnic area.

Food trucks with a variety of tasty options will be on site if attendees wish to purchase lunch.

If approved by voters in November, a large portion of the county's share of the cost would come from Measure G.

LEO's Haven was inspired by Lauren, Evelyn and Oliver Potts, and includes several accessible playground structures. For more information, go to [www.santacruzplaygroundproject.org](http://www.santacruzplaygroundproject.org).

# Litter pickups target North Coast beaches

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce new beautification efforts aimed at North Coast beaches and illegal dumping.

Through a new partnership between the County and Downtown Streets Team, a cleanup team began tours of North Coast beaches during a 4th of July holiday visit to Davenport Beach and Panther Beach. Team members collected more than four cubic yards of trash and debris during that initial visit alone, and an additional amount of recyclables, protecting marine life and the North Coast environment. The team consists of five members and is a pilot project established by the Board of Supervisors.

"The North Coast is one of the most beautiful coastlines in the world. I'm thrilled to have the Streets Team caring for beaches there," Supervisor Ryan Coonerty said. "Everyone benefits."

The yearlong pilot represents the first partnership between the County and the San Jose-based Downtown Streets Team, which operates in several California counties and provides homeless men and women with an opportunity to serve the community and gain work experience while working with a case manager and taking steps toward more permanent employment and housing.

"I've been doing this for more than seven years, and watched people go from completely down in the dumps to begin to work on their goals, including employment, housing and self-sufficiency," said Greg Pensinger, pro-



ject manager of the Downtown Streets Team. "This program can be an important first step toward getting off the streets."

Downtown Streets Teams currently operate in downtown Santa Cruz, on the Riverwalk/Levee, in the Harvey West neighborhood and Pogonip Park, as well as at Cowell's and Main Beach in Santa Cruz. The North Coast team will conduct routine beaches cleanups north of Wilder Ranch State Park, with augmented services during major holiday weekends, and is funded by the Department of Public Works and De-

partment of Human Services, with additional support from the Parks Department.

The Downtown Streets Teams augments the County's litter and illegal dumping prevention efforts. The County recently debuted a new website, [www.stopdumping.us](http://www.stopdumping.us), which includes resources to help clean up illegal dumping, information about fines and penalties and ways to properly dispose of large refuse.

Illegal dumping reports and other County services can also be reported through the Citizen Connect app.

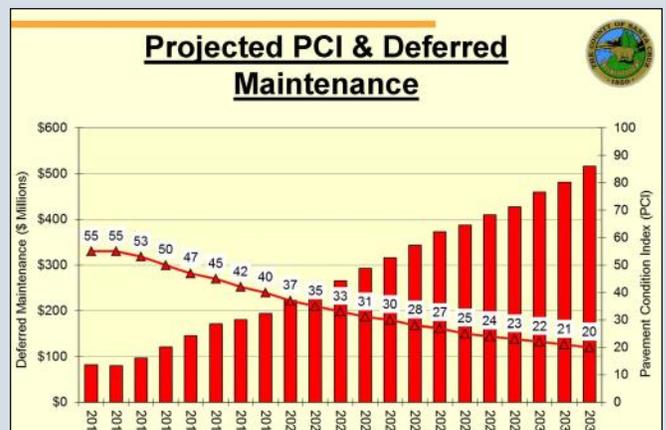
## Board of Supervisors opposes Prop 6, which eliminates road funding

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors has voted to oppose Prop 6, which would repeal SB1 and eliminate funding already being used for winter storm repairs and other critical local road projects.

Due to a number of factors including age, topography, land use patterns and severe weather, maintaining the County's 600 miles of roads is already a challenge. SB1 provides a much-needed infusion of funding to help improve the Pavement

Condition Index (PCI) of County roads, which are projected to deteriorate further if SB1 is repealed.

SB1 also provides matching funds to bring in state and federal matching dollars. This is the case with storm repairs from the storms of 2017, with several major projects — including Valencia Road, Soquel-San Jose Road, Soquel Drive near Aptos Village, Glenwood Drive and more — completed using a mix of local, state and federal funds.



## Meet Your Supervisor

### [John Leopold](#)

District 1 includes Live Oak, Summit Road Soquel and parts of Capitola and Santa Cruz.



### [Zach Friend](#)

District 2 includes Aptos, Corralitos, part of Capitola and the South County coast.



### [Ryan Coonerty](#)

District 3 includes much of Santa Cruz and the North Coast.



### [Greg Caput](#)

District 4 includes most of Watsonville and the Pajaro Valley.



### [Bruce McPherson](#)

District 5 includes the San Lorenzo Valley, Scotts Valley and parts of Santa Cruz.



Click on each supervisor to learn more about them and their responsibilities, including how to reach them during constituent office hours.

# McPherson named 'Ocean Hero' for MBCP leadership

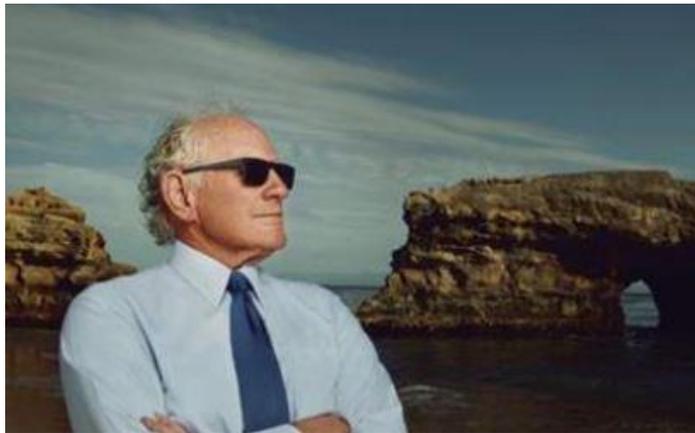
Supervisor Bruce McPherson has been recognized as one of the Monterey Bay Aquarium's inaugural class of "Ocean Heroes."

The new campaign recognizes Monterey Bay residents who exemplify Monterey Bay Aquarium's mission of ocean conservation.

McPherson is being recognized for his leadership in creating Monterey Bay Community Power, which gives local residents and businesses new, carbon-free energy options. He is one of six individuals or groups being honored.

"I'm absolutely humbled by this honor and even more thrilled that the Aquarium chose to highlight Monterey Bay Community Power," Supervisor McPherson said. "Bringing community choice energy to our region was a monumental effort that required a historic amount of collaboration. We did it together on behalf of future generations, and I couldn't be more pleased."

"Ocean Hero" profiles will appear across a variety of media, including display advertising, television, radio, online, and in movie theaters – from July through December of 2018. The Monterey Bay Aquarium is a leader in science education, and a voice for ocean conservation through compre-



hensive programs in marine science and public policy.

A County supervisor since 2012, McPherson led the effort to establish Monterey Bay Community Power, engaging local governments throughout Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey counties to reach an unprecedented agreement that will reduce the Monterey Bay region's carbon footprint and boost local economies. MBCP now serves 96 percent of customers in 19 jurisdictions.

Santa Cruz County is a leading steward of the environment and natural resources, encouraging recycling and waste reduction, prohibiting harmful offshore oil drilling, reducing plastics in the environment and establishing responsible agricultural practices.

For more information, visit <https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/heroes>.

## Quick Guide

Citizens rely on county government for many needed services. Use this handy guide to find who to call, or come find us on the web at: [www.santacruzcounty.us](http://www.santacruzcounty.us).

**Main Number**  
(831) 454-2000

**Board of Supervisors**  
(831) 454-2200

Agricultural Commissioner  
(831) 763-8080

Animal Services  
(831) 454-7303

Assessor's Office  
(831) 454-2002

Benefits  
(888) 421-8080

County Clerk/Elections  
(831) 454-2060

Economic Development  
(831) 454-2728

Environmental Health  
(831) 454-2022

Health Services Agency  
(831) 454-4800

Parks and Recreation  
(831) 454-7900

Planning Department  
(831) 454-2580

Public Works  
(831) 454-2160

Recycling Information  
(831) 454-2333

Sheriff/Coroner  
(831) 471-1121  
(call 911 if emergency)

Superior Court  
(831) 763-8060

Tax Collections  
(831) 454-2510