



## ***Features***

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### ***City Services, Programs Rated High by Community***

We asked and you responded, yet again. Thank you for your input.

In the 1998 Citizen Survey distributed last fall, community members had the opportunity to let the City know how we are doing at various levels.

Many of you – nearly 700 responses were recorded – took the time to let us know.

The survey, which rates our present programs and projects and shapes future ones, provided us with a mountain of valuable information and insights. You said we are doing a great job in most areas, but in some we need to improve.

This City Focus includes articles about some of the major issues raised by respondents and discusses some of the ways the City has been or will be addressing these concerns.

In general, respondents continue to be very satisfied, as they were when we distributed a similar survey almost two years ago, with the services they receive from the City, whether it be fire, police, library or recreation services. Overall, 85% of respondents rated the job the City is doing as either “excellent” or “good.”

When asked if the City should add, reduce or eliminate services, about 18% of those with an opinion said the City offered services that should be reduced or eliminated, but no overall consensus on a specific service or program was voiced.

However, more than 60% of respondents (an increase of nearly 10% from the 1997 survey) said the City should expand or provide new services not currently offered. Potential expanded or new services that ranked high include street maintenance, crime prevention and safety and parking. Street maintenance and zoning enforcement are areas that citizens said we could improve upon. These and other issues related to the survey will be discussed in upcoming City Focus articles.

As for issues that are important to the future of our City: over-development or slow/balanced growth; traffic concerns; and preserving open space and historic sites ranked highest.

The City will continue to use your responses and other input to evaluate programs and activities and plan for the future.

Again, thank you for sharing your opinions. Please keep telling us what is on your mind.

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### ***Police, Community Partnerships Help Create Safer Neighborhoods***

Innovative, non-traditional methods, creative problem solving – that’s the philosophy behind public safety at the Monterey Police Department.

“We – the police – can’t control crime by ourselves. We must form partnerships with you, our citizens,” says Police Chief Gary Brown.

“Working together we can identify and address the causes of crime and fear as well as other quality-of-life concerns.”

Under the umbrella of Community-Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS) our Police Department continues to promote a more proactive approach to dealing with public safety issues such as those identified in last year's Citizen Survey.

Survey respondents said they wanted to expand some existing crime prevention and safety programs or create new ones.

While respondents said they felt safer in business districts compared to other years, the Recreation Trail and City beaches and parks continue to raise concerns among respondents. In response to the 1997 Citizen Survey, we began waterfront patrols, using bikes and all-terrain vehicles, that put officers in contact with community members on a routine basis. Based in part on the most recent survey input, we have added new programs and enhanced others to address safety concerns and perceptions.

As an example, two patrol lieutenants assigned to equal portions of the City are working closely with the neighborhood and business associations to develop a framework for identifying problems and working on community solutions. This complements our Community Action Team (CAT) officers already assigned to specific neighborhood/business areas, who continue to target local issues.

Our Monterey Volunteers in Policing (MVP) patrol unit is a fixture downtown and very recently began patrolling neighborhoods in a specially marked MVP police car. And this year, the renewed Traffic Division is again specifically developing strategies for dealing with City traffic issues.

Additionally, some four-legged friends have joined our team. Argo and Charp, German Shepherd police dogs, are now on patrol and the Mounted Horse Patrol Program will continue to focus on community events.

Active community participation, along with these programs and activities, will help the City continue to improve the quality of life in Monterey.

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## ***Team Effort Helps Resolve Traffic Issues***

Traffic. Analyzing, regulating and managing it – that's part of our job.

The City continues to meet and work with community members and neighborhood associations to find ways to resolve traffic problems and alleviate speeding and congestion as much as possible.

Respondents to the Citizen Survey indicated that traffic is an important issue that needs close attention. Our Police Department and traffic engineer have been looking at ways to improve traffic flow while slowing traffic in residential areas.

"We work directly with community members, those with the first-hand knowledge about specific conditions in their area to design solutions to meet everyone's needs," says City Traffic Engineer Rich Deal.

Our Police Department reinstated the traffic division this year to focus attention on specific residential and commercial areas. As a team our police and traffic engineer listen to community concerns, enforce traffic laws and try to find solutions that will improve the situation, not move it elsewhere.

For example, individuals often ask that stop signs be installed to slow traffic. Unfortunately, surveys show that speeds between intersections actually increase when a new stop sign is installed. The City prefers to promote traffic calming methods that change the geometry of the road so drivers naturally want to go slower. Depending on the conditions of the roadway, several different types of modifications can be made including traffic circles, spot narrowing, medians, entry islands and intersection realignment.

Successful examples of spot narrowing are at the intersection of Euclid and Ramona avenues as well as the school crossing on Via Gayuba. In both locations, the curbs extend toward the center of the street making the lanes narrower and forcing traffic to slow down.

Another community collaboration was the installation of a traffic light at Monroe and Franklin streets. With the reopening of Larkin Elementary School, neighbors knew that traffic and pedestrian levels would increase. The neighborhood brought their concerns to the City and the

solution was to install a new traffic signal.

Bring your traffic concerns to us. For more information, or to make a speed reduction request, contact your neighborhood representative or the Traffic Engineering Division at 646-3920.

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## ***Development, Growth Impact City's Future***

Growth and development – how does it affect our community?

In the 1998 Citizen Survey, 18% of Monterey community members identified “slow or balanced growth and over- development” as the most important issue for the future of the City – the highest single topic response in the survey.

“We are equally concerned about growth and the impacts of growth,” says Plans & Public Works Director Bill Wojtkowski. “We continue to analyze new projects and renovations with the entire community in mind.”

The preservation of the natural and man-made features that make Monterey such a wonderful place to live, work and visit – the forested hills, Bay setting, historic buildings and viable downtown – is stressed by the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. And we work to ensure that growth does not negatively affect our residents.

Many residents remember the traffic and parking gridlock when the Monterey Bay Aquarium opened in 1984.

In contrast, with the opening of the new wing in 1996, Aquarium attendance once again increased but this time the impacts on traffic, parking and everyday comfort of residents was substantially reduced because of additional parking in Cannery Row and reliance on the WAVE shuttle system.

In addition to handling the impacts of new growth, the City is also reversing some past patterns, as evidenced by our efforts to reunite the City with the Bay.

The former railroad tracks are now the Recreational Trail, and Monterey Bay Park – also known as Window on the Bay – and San Carlos Beach Park are examples of public ownership that provide public views and public access.

Growth concerns also spark water issues. The availability of water for new development is minimal. The City has an allocation system for our remaining water with priority given to projects that benefit the general public as well as remodels of single-family homes.

Overall, the City reviews new growth to ensure that it will be of benefit to residents. Growth has provided jobs, neighborhood improvements, entertainment, shopping, restaurants and recreational opportunities for residents.

We will continue to work to minimize the impacts of growth and increase the benefits for residents.

Parking, alternate transportation, sign programs help minimize traffic. Balancing Resident, Visitor Needs Takes Creativity. Striking a balance between tourism and residential needs is not always easy, and it requires a diverse approach emphasizing education, visitor transportation and parking management programs.

“The City benefits greatly from the tourist dollars spent in the area,” City Manager Fred Meurer says. “We are able to fund a host of programs and activities that other cities aren’t able to.

“However, we always strive to minimize the impact that tourism has on everyday life in the community, while continuing to promote the area as a visitor destination.”

The recent Citizen Survey indicated that tourism, along with its effects on the community, is an important issue for the future of our community. Some respondents said the City spends too much time on visitor related matters while others said we need to do more to attract tourists. In weighing these divergent viewpoints, the City continues to work to balance both needs. Some examples of the programs the City uses to address the needs of our residents and visitors include:

- Residential permit parking programs, which place one-hour parking limits for non-residents of a neighborhood.
- The Waterfront Area Visitor Express (WAVE), a visitor transit program used to efficiently

move visitors and residents around the City during the summer months.

- Smart Parking brochures and visitor-serving maps provide clear, easily understood directions to minimize the time visitors spend looking for parking.
- The City-sponsored Visitor Information Center distributes destination and parking information and encourages the use of the WAVE.

This has proven to be very successful in minimizing the time visitors spend driving City streets searching for their destination.

In addition, the City's updated sign program helps direct visitors to their destination quickly and efficiently. Electronic parking signs have been installed on Del Monte Avenue and Washington Street to inform visitors about parking availability. These signs can be adjusted as parking demands warrant.

These methods will continue to be utilized and others may be added in the ongoing effort to make the City an even better place to live, work and visit.

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## ***In the News***

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### ***City, School District Collaborations Abound***

As the City continues to explore unique ways to meet community needs and interests, we have begun to establish a track record of successful collaborations with local organizations and agencies. One of our partners in these collaborations is the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District.

Following are some of the highlights of our many recent partnerships:

Community of Caring Monterey Peninsula – The City and MPUSD are two of many partners that helped start Community of Caring Monterey Peninsula. Since July 1997, the nonprofit has trained more than 500 community members and become involved with a variety of events, programs and activities.

Institutional Network and Access Monterey Peninsula – We are working with TCI on a fiber-optic network linking City and School buildings, which will improve services and save money. We are also working with others to help start Access Monterey Peninsula, a new nonprofit that will help create and stimulate community programming on local cable.

School Area Improvements – The City's Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) has underwritten landscaping and play area improvements at Bay View Elementary School. In exchange, the areas are available as a neighborhood park after school hours. Similar improvements, funded by NIP, are scheduled to go in at Monte Vista Elementary School as well.

D.A.R.E. – The Drug Abuse Resistance Education program has proven to be successful in helping prevent substance abuse by young people. The City and MPUSD recently introduced D.A.R.E. in our schools.

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### ***Countywide Survey Rates Quality of Life of All Residents***

Another tool the City uses to gather community input is the TELLUS/DIGANOS Survey, which offers an opportunity for those who live and work in Monterey County to rate the quality of life in the County.

The 1999 TELLUS/DIGANOS Survey focuses on five key County issues: health, public safety, education, environment/economics and social environment. Hundreds of people and many organizations, including the City, helped develop survey questions that will provide answers that are important for the future. Telephone and face-to-face interviews will occur over the next month.

While the City gathers local survey data, this countywide analysis will provide a regional perspective on the issues and concerns that face our entire community and help in our planning



efforts. This is the second TELLUS/DIGANOS Survey conducted in the County. To learn more about this project, please call 831.647.7656.

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## ***Volunteering is Just Plain Fun***

Who: Gordon Paul Smith and Ramona C. Smith, founders/maintainers of The Sensory Garden\* at Custom House Plaza, which celebrated its 5th anniversary in February. Last year alone the Smiths recorded 758 volunteer hours and over 3,000 miles for nursery and gardening work.

Background: In the early 1980s, the dirt road behind the Pacific House – Olivier Street – with its unsightly dumpsters inspired the Smiths to action.

After receiving the blessings of both the City and the State parks department, the Smiths pursued the dream of a sensory garden. With Ramona Smith as chair, they began a campaign to raise \$300,000 and build a garden. "This garden was developed by the private community on public property for the benefit and enjoyment of all residents and visitors,"

Gordon Smith says.

Why Volunteer? "We enjoy this garden and we're proud of it. It's a great community resource enjoyed by many," Ramona Smith says. "As long as it continues to be fun for us, we will keep doing it!"

\*Planted to enhance the senses of sight, smell, touch and hearing, The Sensory Garden was constructed to be accessible to all ages, including those with visual impairments or other disabilities. Donations to assist with garden upkeep can be made through the Monterey History and Art Association. To volunteer at the garden or to find out more about volunteering call the City at 646.3719.

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## ***Budget Approval Process Underway - Community members asked to help shape City priorities***

It's budget time at the City and you play an important part. Monterey community members are encouraged to attend meetings, study sessions, public hearings and other community forums designed specifically to hear from you.

"We need to hear community members' interests and issues," says City Manager Fred Meurer. "Each year we ask everyone to help shape the priorities for the coming fiscal year to guide our budget and work program."

Last year, citizens participated in a public forum held to gather suggestions and comments regarding City priorities. This year's Community Connections public forum is scheduled for Weds., March 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Monterey Conference Center.

Other public meetings and hearings are planned during the budget development process. Attend and let us know what you think, or call, fax or e-mail your suggestions and ideas.

Call 646.3940 for more budget information or find material on-line at [www.monterey.org/budget](http://www.monterey.org/budget)

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## ***Preparations for Y2K on Track***

Y2K, the Millennium Bug. What is it and what will happen when the year 2000 rolls around? As you probably have heard, the Y2K problem refers to the potential inability of older computer programs and systems to correctly calculate date functions for the year 2000 and beyond. Be it a TV, a personal computer or traffic signal; the system may "think" that the date is the year 1900 and calculate information incorrectly.

The City has been working for almost two years to ensure all of our systems are ready to ring in the new century. From the Library circulation catalog to the traffic signals, all systems are being analyzed.

"We have been working as a team to identify all City systems that need to be tested and/or

replaced," says Information Services Manager John Pfeiffer.

Throughout the City, checks are being made to ensure that elevators, irrigation control systems, wastewater pump stations, refueling stations as well as fire, burglary and flood alarms are able to function in the year 2000.

For example, some of our older traffic control systems are being replaced this fall to avoid any problems. In addition, the majority of our computer software programs have been upgraded and by August all modifications will be complete.

We also are keeping abreast of Y2K efforts at other local agencies. Pacific Bell, California-American Water Company and PG&E each plan to have identified and corrected expected problems well before Dec. 31, 1999, officials say.

Ensuring that all City operated systems will function properly at the turn of the century is an ongoing process and we will continue to search for, identify and correct any potential problems.

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## **City Briefs**

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### **City, Military Team Up for a Better Monterey**

Did you know ...?

1. the Army now pays the City's costs to operate and maintain the wastewater, storm-water and street systems at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center & Presidio of Monterey (DLIFLC & POM);
2. the City, under contract, provides refuse collection and recycling services to DLIFLC & POM and the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS); and
3. the City recently leased the lower Presidio Historic Park to maintain and preserve it for public use.

Our community benefits greatly from the resources, jobs and expertise brought to the area by DLIFLC & POM and NPS, and we always look for unique ways to build upon our mutually beneficial relationships.

We recently worked with DLIFLC & POM officials to develop a Web site that outlines some of the ongoing efforts between the City and the Army.

Log on to [pom-www.army.mil/partnerships](http://pom-www.army.mil/partnerships) to learn about how these successful efforts are making a difference in Monterey.

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### **Building Codes Make City Safer**

Where were you at 5:04 p.m. on Oct. 17, 1989? If you were in Monterey, you probably noticed the ground shake quite a bit from the Loma Prieta earthquake. Fortunately, our City experienced only minor damage.

Thanks to effective enforcement of building codes, U.S. residents have one of the highest degrees of seismic and fire safety in the world.

To learn more about the people and programs that keep our buildings in top form, join us for National Building Safety Week from April 5 to 9.

During this week, you can ride along with City building inspectors to get a first-hand look at what goes into making homes and businesses safer places. Or stop by our Building Safety and Inspection office Mon. to Fri. from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Colton Hall to ask questions or pick up information on home remodeling, seismic retrofitting and selecting a contractor.

Call 646.3890 by April 2 to schedule your ride-along.

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## ***History Buffs***

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### ***Plaques to highlight historic Sesquicentennial moments***

How do you choose the 24 most important events in Monterey history from early times through Statehood in 1850?

Over the past year, the City has wrestled with that question and with how best to Recognize these events as part of Monterey's Sesquicentennial commemoration.

Later this year the City will unveil 24 bronze plaques set into the walkway from Pacific Street to Colton Hall, each one marking a different historic event.

A 48-inch-diameter bronze replica of the State seal will also be installed in the walkway, commemorating the adoption at the Constitutional Convention in 1849 of the design as the Great Seal of the State of California.

Some of the past events and people that will be highlighted include: the first people to live in this region; the naming of the Port of Monterey in 1602 by Sebastian Vizcaíno, a Spanish explorer; and Monterey's designation in 1828 as the only port of entry for Alta California.

Join us for the unveiling of the plaques on Oct. 13, the 150th anniversary of the signing of California's first state constitution that happened in Colton Hall.

Also look for other Sesquicentennial events happening throughout the year. For event information see the Web page at [www.monterey.org/150years](http://www.monterey.org/150years).

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### ***Library Turns 150 Years Old***

Celebrate the Library's 150th birthday. Attend exhibits, lectures by distinguished historians and a gala party!

As California's first public library, the Monterey Public Library has a distinct place in history and will celebrate the anniversary with events and activities for all ages, including:

- A discussion of the literature spawned by the California Gold Rush, presented by Dr. Michael Kowalewski, on Tues., March 23, at 7 p.m. at the Library.
- A special Sesquicentennial Children's Day, on October 6, with storytelling, tours and an author visit.
- This fall, Dr. Kevin Starr will speak about "Monterey: the Once and Future Capital of California." And don't miss "Shades of Monterey," a photo exhibit chronicling day-to-day life in Monterey's history collected from the photo albums of area residents (see photo above).
- It will be party time at the Library on October 1 during a rededication ceremony followed by entertainment, exhibits, tours and refreshments.

For more information call the Library at 646.3949 or e-mail [mccombs@ci.monterey.ca.us](mailto:mccombs@ci.monterey.ca.us)

Throughout the year, commemorative bookmarks and a keepsake edition of "The History of Monterey Public Library" will be available at the Library, and a limited supply of Sesquicentennial merchandise including mugs, bookbags, T-shirts and caps will be on sale.

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## ***Odds N Ends***

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[Teens Help Design Skate Park](#) | [Legal Beagle](#)

### ***Reminder About Posted Signs***

Garage Sale this Saturday; House for Sale by Owner; Elect Joe Brown for Dogcatcher. We see these signs everyday posted on telephone poles, erected in front yards and placed in various public places.

But are these signs legal?

Posting any sign to a tree, shrub or utility pole located on public property or placing signs so that they encroach upon a public street or sidewalk is illegal.

Unlike other signs, however, political signs are allowed on most public lands unless they create a dangerous condition or interfere with normal upkeep of the property.

When you have a question about sign location, call our Plans & Public Works Department at 646-3885 or stop by the office at Colton Hall, corner of Pacific and Madison streets.

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### ***Street Sweeper Coming to Every Neighborhood***

Please review the new street-sweeping schedule included in this issue of the City Focus. All City streets will be cleaned on a regular basis under the new schedule. Please take out the insert and keep it for future reference.

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### ***Teens Help Design Skate Park***

More than 40 skateboarders from around the area have been working with the City over the past several months to design a local skate park. Funded through the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP), the park is being tailor-made for the City's skateboarders.

Skateboarders such as 15-year-old Dane Carraher said the City listened to the comments he and his friends made. He is looking forward to having a place designed specifically for skateboarding.

"It's going to be good," said Dane, who attends Monterey High School.

"The City included our suggestions about obstacles, ledges and concrete."

Local teens and young people met with the designer at workshops to share their ideas, which have been incorporated into the design. Located behind Frank Sollecito Ballpark next to Dennis the Menace Park, the park will be nearly 8,000 square feet.

Construction is scheduled to begin this spring with completion by summer.

For more information, call our Construction Management Division at 646.3997 or to see the park design stop by the Recreation and Community Services Department at 546 Dutra Street.

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## ***Legal Beagle***

### **Laws Apply to Public Officials, Pending Projects**

#### ***The Brown Act and ex parte communications***

Talking directly with elected and appointed officials about upcoming projects seems natural, but sometimes such discussions can be illegal.

When a project is pending before the City Council, a board or commission, individuals may want to approach members before the official meeting to express support or opposition to a pending issue. However, when dealing with the “public’s business,” this may be illegal and improper. California’s anti-secret meeting law, the Brown Act, allows contact with public officials; however, it does not permit discussions that allow a majority of a council or commission to arrive at a “collective concurrence.”

That is, if before a meeting enough of the council or board agrees to support or deny a project, the law is broken. This occurs even if the members didn’t know what the others had decided.

The Brown Act mandates that all “public business” must be done in public.

Even if such discussions don’t violate the Brown Act, such “ex parte contacts” may result in an unfair proceeding. In an ex parte contact, the proponent or opponent is allowed to present ideas or opinions to one or several officials that the rest of the public never hears, violating the Constitutional due process rights of the opposing point of view.

The best way to communicate with public officials is to write a letter or send a fax/e-mail expressing a point of view; or attend a meeting about the project and tell public officials about the issues and concerns.

Voicing an opinion in public view ensures that public officials hear the information and are able to legally consider it when making a decision.

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## ***Community Tips***

### ***Safety Tips***

#### **Raccoons and You**

Raccoons, though cute and fun to watch, can be a risk to our health and to household pets. Here are some tips on how to protect your family against raccoon roundworms and your pets and property from damage.

- Protect your family: Don't let children play in areas that may be contaminated by raccoon feces. Cover sandboxes to keep animals out. If you have raccoons living nearby, wear gloves and mask when gardening or working in soil, dry raccoon feces can become air-borne. Wear a mask to help prevent inhaling parasite eggs when cleaning feces from garages, attics or outbuildings.
- Protect your pets and yard: Don't keep raccoons as pets – it's against State law. Don't feed raccoons or other wild animals – it's against the law. Don't leave pet food and water outside; and keep garbage cans tightly covered. Secure your home to prevent raccoons from living in chimneys, outbuildings, attics and under decks.

For more information please call our Animal Control Officer at 646.3820. Please note, the City does not trap wild animals.

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