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– MEDIA ADVISORY –

**CITY OF SANTA CRUZ LAUNCHES NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART WEBSITE,
INCLUDING NEW ADDRESS: www.cityofsantacruz.com**

The City of Santa Cruz has launched a new website with a new address: www.cityofsantacruz.com. A press conference and demonstration of the website's features has been scheduled as follows. The event is open to the public, and all are invited to attend. Mayor Cynthia Mathews, City staff and community members who helped shape the new site will be in attendance.

11:00 a.m.
Wednesday, November 18, 2009
Santa Cruz Police Department
155 Center Street

Note: Guests will be met outside.

The City website was redesigned with user friendliness in mind and to better accommodate the needs of our residents, visitors, and business community. The new site allows faster and easier information gathering and enables some city business to be conducted online (see attached sheet of major features). Further, cityofsantacruz.com reflects Santa Cruz' unique beauty and is an attractive portal to City services.

The redesign process was a true team effort involving an interdepartmental group that consulted with users, including representatives from the Conference and Visitors Council, Chamber of Commerce, Santa Cruz Neighbors, UCSC, as well as members of the social services, business and arts communities.

The new website uses advanced technologies that make the site significantly easier to navigate and keep up-to-date so that visitors can find useful and current information quickly. Electronic government (eGov) features were integrated to allow users to conduct some City business online, such as paying municipal utility bills, changing refuse service levels, and registering for Parks and Recreation classes.

The initial response has been very positive. Maggie Ivy, Executive Director, Santa Cruz County Conference and Visitors Council said about on the new website: "The City's new website makes a strong statement. At first glance you notice the striking photos, easy navigation, and user-friendly format. What a terrific resource for residents and a wonderful first impression for visitors with helpful links to the Visitors Council for more information."

This is only the beginning. The City plans to expand its eGov services by offering additional online options in the near future, including payment of parking citations and building and other permits, geographic information system (GIS) maps, and land use data.

City of Santa Cruz New Website Features

www.cityofsantacruz.com

Get The Information You Want, When You Want It

Programs and services are easier to locate. Visitors to the website do not need to know how the government is organized. They can use the many built-in paths (menus and links) to get to the information they want without having to know which department provides that service or program.

Current News and Events

The newly designed website features “Latest News” and “Upcoming Events” sections. Those viewing the webpage can access a comprehensive up-to-date calendar of events, as well as view and search for press releases.

“I Want To...”

Use our new eNotification system to have e-mail sent directly to your inbox on the items you want to be informed about. eNotification subscription is quick, secure, and easy. Change your subscription at any time or opt out whenever you like.

Want to sign up for classes? Pay a utility bill? Apply for a job or a business license? Reserve space in a park? Check out the “I Want To...” menu.

Electronic Government (eGov) Services

Modern government websites strive to bring services directly—electronically—to their citizens. That is another goal of our new website. We will continue to build our “library” of eGov services to help our users take care of business, online at any time. Check out eGov under the “What’s New” menu (or use the link under the home page image). We will continue to add to this section of the website and bring our users more eGov services in the future.

Business Gateway

The new website makes it easy for those wishing to conduct and start a business in the City of Santa Cruz. Use the Business Gateway link on the home page to get to the information and tools you need.

Increased Access for Individuals with Disabilities and Spanish Speaking Community

We have also worked to make our site more accessible to our disabled community with features such as “alt tags” on images and hyperlink “pop-up” descriptions that work with screen-reading technology. The Site Map also allows vision-impaired users to navigate the website more easily.

Much of the website’s content can also be viewed in Spanish by simply clicking on the Español quick link button located on the upper right hand side of our home page.

Tell Us What You Think

We want our website to bring you the information you want in the clearest, quickest, and easiest way. While this is going to be an ongoing effort, we need to hear from you, our website visitors. If you have suggestions about what to add or how to make the site better or easier to use, please e-mail us with your ideas: webmaster@ci.santa-cruz.ca.us. We hope you enjoy exploring www.cityofsantacruz.com!