

# City Manager's Weekly Update

February 4, 2022

## City Manager's Office

### Homelessness Response

The clean-up effort at the Cemetery encampment area is making good progress. In the first two days of work, the contractor removed over 38,000 lbs. of refuse. The work is expected to continue for the next two weeks. The Hell's Trail encampment area on CalTrans property adjacent to the Cemetery has seen an increase in the number of campers with the closure the Cemetery. CalTrans is planning to close this area in the next few weeks.

The Regional Coordinator of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Helene Schneider, visited Santa Cruz this week. City staff met with her and shared our current homelessness response efforts and challenges. We gave her a tour of the Benchlands camp and the new 1220 River Transitional Community Camp.

This week all the City department heads came together for a half-day planning session to develop a three-year Homelessness Response Action Plan. In this initial session, we focused on identifying goals and the projects, operations, and policy support needed to accomplish the work. We will reconvene at the Department Head meeting next week to prioritize the goals and objectives from this session.

### River Working Group

The City's Salmonid Habitat Conservation Plan was submitted to state resources and federal water resource agencies, a milestone 20 years in the making. Given that many of our local watershed folks will be involved in the Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference here in Santa Cruz this spring, we've opted to postpone the State of the San Lorenzo River Symposium until next year.

A regulatory success story, the bald eagle was delisting from the endangered species act recently. Check out the blog post on the eagle sitings nesting at Loch Lomand Reservoir and along the river in Santa Cruz..

<https://sanlorenzoriverblog.com/2022/01/11/river-beckoning/>

City Council approved the water rights EIR certified in December and the City is working with State Board of Water Resources to approve the water rights and all changes in the EIR.

## Library

**Santa Cruz Public Libraries presents: "Conversations for Change: *What's in a name? Exploring Local Institutional Name Changes*"**

Santa Cruz Public Libraries has a new time and venue for their popular series "Conversations for Change." The next conversation is titled, "*What's in a name? Exploring Local Institutional Name Changes*"

and will discuss how across the state of California, many organizations have already changed their names. San



Francisco alone has changed upwards of 40 school names. Cabrillo College is just one local institution considering a name change and going through an exploration process, and many students are in favor of this. Other monuments and landmarks have been revisited for potential name changes locally. What do you think? Join a local conversation to discuss name changes happening across our state and county. This talk will take place on Friday, Feb. 18, 2022 between 12-1 p.m. PLEASE NOTE: We will be meeting outdoors at Abbott's Square in downtown Santa Cruz. Registration is required to attend. Register on the Library Website:

<https://santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/8809417>

## Planning and Community Development

**135 Dubois St.** Building and Safety has issued the final Certificate of Occupancy for *Extra Space Storage* (Permit B18-0032), a 108,000 square foot self-storage facility in the Harvey West industrial area of the City.



## Police

### Traffic Enforcement B.A.D.G.E.S Operation Results in 138 Citations

This week on Feb. 2, 16 traffic officers from various law enforcement agencies throughout Santa Cruz County participated in B.A.D.G.E.S. (Before Aggressive Drivers Get Everyone Stopped), a traffic safety awareness effort to increase awareness in troubled areas throughout Santa Cruz County.

This operation focused on traffic education and enforcement in the City of Santa Cruz. Officers made more than 145 enforcement stops and issued 138 citations for various violations. The operation also yielded the arrests of three individuals for driving with a suspended license and for having outstanding warrants.



These planned multi-agency saturation deployments will continue in Santa Cruz County throughout 2022. Agencies participating in the Santa Cruz County B.A.D.G.E.S: Santa Cruz Police Department, Capitola Police Department, Watsonville Police Department, Scotts Valley Police Department, and the California Highway Patrol.

## SCPD Briefs Public Safety Committee

This week, Interim Chief Bernie Escalante reported to the Public Safety Committee (PSC) on current crime statistics, police activities, and efforts to advance the department’s staffing levels. The entire PSC slide presentation is available on the [SCPD TRANSPARENCY PORTAL](#).

Property Crimes are at a 10-year low for the city. Last year’s reported property crimes, for burglaries (246) and larcenies (1,615) were “numbers to be proud of, for sure,” coming in at a 10-year low for the department, said, Chief Escalante. The city’s reported 214 auto thefts also were the lowest rates since 2013

“The increase in violent crime is a common trend across the country. Many factors can contribute to crime rates within a community, so it’s difficult to pinpoint why,” Escalante said of the two-year crime rate statistic. “I’m sure COVID had a lot to do with it; economics probably had a lot to do with it. Just general stress in people’s lives.”

Overall, the crime rate range is within expected average values based on FBI Part 1 reported offenses for the past five years.

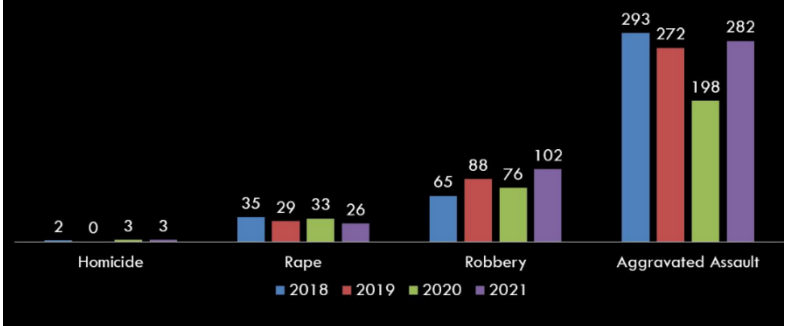
To better understand our current public safety priorities, findings, and policies, information is accessible online to keep our community informed, maintain public trust and accountability.

[www.santacruzpolice.com](http://www.santacruzpolice.com)

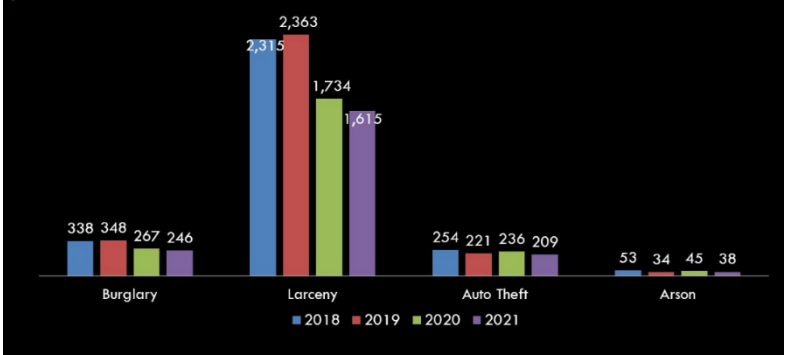
### TEN YEAR CRIME SNAPSHOT

| Date     | Homicide | Rape | Robbery | Agg Assault | Burglary | Larceny | Auto Theft | Arson |
|----------|----------|------|---------|-------------|----------|---------|------------|-------|
| 1/1/2012 | 3        | 33   | 83      | 313         | 527      | 2792    | 264        | 21    |
| 1/1/2013 | 4        | 33   | 82      | 278         | 546      | 2481    | 215        | 20    |
| 1/1/2014 | 1        | 63   | 109     | 351         | 420      | 2602    | 250        | 23    |
| 1/1/2015 | 2        | 44   | 116     | 337         | 431      | 2732    | 300        | 23    |
| 1/1/2016 | 4        | 45   | 106     | 366         | 354      | 2874    | 382        | 10    |
| 1/1/2017 | 1        | 57   | 103     | 248         | 412      | 2911    | 362        | 30    |
| 1/1/2018 | 2        | 34   | 66      | 289         | 336      | 2308    | 261        | 53    |
| 1/1/2019 | 0        | 27   | 84      | 285         | 365      | 2430    | 227        | 37    |
| 1/1/2020 | 3        | 31   | 76      | 207         | 265      | 1732    | 234        | 46    |
| 1/1/2021 | 3        | 28   | 102     | 282         | 246      | 1617    | 214        | 38    |

### OVERALL 45% ANNUAL INCREASE IN VIOLENT CRIME IN 2021 AFTER A DIP IN MOST CRIMES IN 2020



### OVERALL 6% ANNUAL DECREASE IN PROPERTY CRIME IN 2021



## Public Works

### Operations & Resource Recovery

Both our Operations and Collections teams are helping with clean-up at the unsheltered population camp behind Santa Cruz Memorial Cemetery. This is a large collaborative effort involving Public Works, City Manager’s Office, Police, and Water. We are clearing debris in four to six 20-yard roll-off boxes each day with about 36 tons of material disposed of as of Tuesday. Hazardous waste is being separated and disposed of properly. This clean-up is scheduled to take about 24 days.



## Water

Over the past year Water Distribution crews have been busy replacing about 2,600 feet of distribution main in Ocean Street Extension, including re-connecting water services from the old main to the new one for more than 30 residents in the area. This was a hugely complicated project because the road is narrow but chock-full of utilities, including two of the main transmission lines to the Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant, a high-pressure gas main, sewer lines and other utilities. Adding to the challenge was the need to preserve traffic flow along the narrow road so that residents could get in and out, not to mention the need to provide egress should an emergency like a forest fire occur. City staff coordinated closely with the neighbors with weekly emails, daily texts and face-to-face interactions to let them know what work was planned for the day/week and how they might be impacted. Our crews finished the last tie-in last week, completing the major construction activities (we will still need to retire a hydrant and do other clean-up and paving work). The project will be a huge benefit to the customers on Ocean Street Extension in terms of fire flow (including upgraded fire hydrants), water quality (the old main was small and corroded), and reliability (the line had a number of breaks in recent years). Many thanks to all who were involved in this challenging project!

Many of our customers were hit hard financially by the pandemic, causing some to not be able to pay their water bills. Legislation was passed to protect these customers from having their water shut off due to unpaid bills. Some of our customers set up payment plans, and some chose not to. This week, we received \$579,582 from the state to help with outstanding arrearages for water service between March 2020 and June 2021. While this money doesn't cover all of the outstanding account balances, it does take a big chunk out of them by covering just over 50 percent fees owed for water service during 15 months of the COVID pandemic.

Water industry best practices call for “flushing” the water system annually. Flushing is the practice of moving water through parts of the delivery system at high velocity and typically discharging it to waste. This is done to remove sediment and any other materials that may have accumulated on the insides of pipes. Because last year was so dry, we only flushed water at the dead ends of the system. Though this January was bone dry, the rain we received in October and December allows us to feel comfortable flushing the whole system again this year. In truth, it doesn't take much water to flush the entire system – only about 2.5 days' worth. But when it's as dry as it has been, we know it's hard for people to see water that they perceive as being “wasted.”

