



END OF THE YEAR REPORT 2016

Accomplishments

Presented by Kenneth W. Striplin, City Manager



City of
SANTA CLARITA



It is my honor to serve as your City Manager. 2016 has proven to be yet another successful year for Santa Clarita's residents and business community as we have enjoyed many accomplishments and have made great strides toward a prosperous future for our City. The leadership of the City Council has been imperative in the success we have realized over the last year.

2016 AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- 13th Helen Putnam Award from the League of California Cities in the category of “Public Safety” for the Special Needs Registry. Santa Clarita has received more Helen Putnam Awards than any other city in California.
- *Most Business Friendly City in L.A. County - 2016* Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC)
- 26th consecutive Tree City USA Award.
- District Transparency Certificate of Excellence from the Special District Leadership Foundation in recognition of our outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance.
- National Institute for Public Procurement (NIGP) – Achievement of Excellence in Procurement – 1 of only 72 cities within the US and Canada to be recognized for this award.
- National Association of Government Web Professionals (NAGW) – Pinnacle Award for the City’s Tourism website.
- Received five awards from the California Association of Public Information Officials for the City’s Seasons Magazine, Road Resurfacing program, Light Up Main Street event and the DIVERT Task Force.
- *First Place - Virtual Video Tour-One Time Special Programming* City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA)
- *21st in Retail Sales out of 482 cities in California* - California Retail Survey
- *Runner Friendly Community* – The City of Santa Clarita was selected by the Road Runners Club of America as a Runner Friendly Community for 2016.

GOOD FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

- For 2016, operating reserves were increased to 20 percent and we have continued to adopt an on-time and balanced budget every year since incorporation.
- The City continues to maintain a AAA credit rating by Standard & Poor's.
- Received the Certificate of Excellence Award from the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada for its Fiscal Year 2016-17 Investment Policy. This year marks the 22nd consecutive year the City has received the nationally recognized Certificate of Excellence Award from the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada for its success in developing a comprehensive written investment policy.
- Received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). This is the 27th consecutive year the City has received this prestigious award for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).
- Refinanced two separate bond obligations, totaling a savings to the General Fund of over \$4.8 million; the Golden Valley Road (GVR) bonds, yielding a present value savings of \$1.82 million, and the Open Space Preservation District (OSPD) bonds, yielding a present value savings to the OSPD of \$2.98 million.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- 1,039 new junior high and high school students signed up for the DFYIT program at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year. There are currently 2,732 active members; this is an increase of 10 percent from last year.
- Developed and launched a comprehensive Traffic Safety Plan, which includes the "Drive Focus Live" communication campaign and aims to significantly reduce vehicle and pedestrian collisions in the City.
- The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station graduated 38 participants of the Community Academy in 2016.
- Continued operation of the Domestic Intervention Violence Education Resource Team (DIVERT) to reduce and prevent domestic violence in Santa Clarita.

- Obtained funding and approval from the Board of Supervisors and City Council approval for the construction of the new Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station. We have issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the environmental, civil, and construction cost estimator. Staff will bring these contracts to the Council for consideration at the November 22, 2016, City Council meeting.
- Emergency equipment and supplies were purchased and received for the City's Shelter Operations container, which is currently at 70 percent completion.
- Held an active shooter training in partnership with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Tactics and Survival Training Unit in August for part-time City staff. Two additional active shooter trainings for City staff will be completed in November 2016. These trainings focus on how staff can prepare for potentially violent incidents.
- Hosted the Teens Talk Drugs Symposium; the sixth installment of the Heroin Kills series. This continues our efforts to increase awareness and reduce drug abuse among teens.
- Robberies and aggravated assaults are down a combined 10 percent for 2016 compared to last year.
- Partnered with the Santa Clarita Sheriff's Station to place an armored vehicle at our station to increase the safety of our residents and Sheriff's Deputies. The forward deployment of this protective armor puts our station at the forefront of policing.

BUILDING AND CREATING COMMUNITY

- Completed the construction of the Golden Valley Bridge Widening project and dedication of the bridge to Connie Worden-Roberts on September 30, 2016.
- Completed the site Master Plan for the new Canyon Country Community Center and awarded the environmental and civil design contracts.
- Approved the Funding Agreement with the Santa Clarita Valley Committee on Aging to award \$3 million for the construction of the new Senior Center facility.
- The Arts Master Plan was approved by the Arts Commission and adopted by the City Council on March 8, 2016. The first Annual Work Plan and the Public Art Planning and Selection Process proposal was developed by the Art Commission and both were adopted by the City on September 27, 2016.

- The Thursdays at Newhall series hosted 48 free events every Thursday from March to October. This year also saw the addition of two new monthly events; 10 by 10 Variety Nights and Note by Note. JAM sessions, Revved Up, and SENSES continued this year as well, with attendance for all events totaling approximately 24,000 during 2016.
- Constructed Marketplace Park, the project was built by Real Life Church in collaboration with Bridgeport Marketplace LLC. The park consists of approximately 2.6 acres of open turf parkland and includes a 2.5 acre parking lot with 170 stalls including electric vehicle charging stations. The ribbon-cutting event with the partners of this project is scheduled for December 15, 2016.
- Completed the Environmental Impact Review (EIR), designed and selected a contractor for the Newhall Ranch Road Bridge Widening project.
- Completed the parking lot improvements for the Gateway Ranch Open Space area. Currently designing a parking area to access the Taylor property off the Old Road. This improvement project includes fencing, signage, and parking spaces.
- Hosted the increasingly popular Light Up Main Street Celebration for the third time in Old Town Newhall, drawing more than 5,000.
- Over 6,000 volunteers assisted with City events and programs with a work value exceeding \$1 million. In the last five years, the number of City volunteers has increased by 66 percent and service hours by 92 percent.
- Contract for the new Traffic Control Management system was awarded on September 27, 2016, and the installation of the system is underway.
- The City's Community Preservation Division cleared 91 sites between January 1 to September 30, 2016, with approximately 95,700 pounds of trash and debris removed from encampments on public and private properties. This reflects a 20 percent decrease in the amount of sites cleared and a 6 percent decrease in the amount of trash removed, when compared to the same time frame in 2015.
- The City hosted the second annual Summer Bash in Canyon Country on Luther Drive on July 29, 2016, drawing over 2,000 residents who enjoyed live music, food trucks, and fun family activities.

ENHANCING ECONOMIC VITALITY

- The 22nd annual Cowboy Festival was held for the second time in Old Town Newhall and William S. Hart Park, drawing over 13,500 attendees. The event included the main festival taking place at Hart Park and ticketed performances at the Canyon Theatre Guild and the Repertory East Playhouse.
- Tourism advertising campaigns and targeted event attraction helped Santa Clarita hotels generate a record \$3.8 million in Transient Occupancy Tax, a 22 percent increase over the previous fiscal year, and the most in the City's history.
- The Amgen Tour of California and the Wings for Life World Run brought in over 1,000 room nights to Santa Clarita and \$1 million in economic benefit. 2016 marked the first year a Stage Finish was ever held in Old Town Newhall.
- The Red Bull's Wings for Life World Run was held at the Westfield Valencia Town Center for the third consecutive year drawing an estimated 2,500 participants.
- We are welcoming several new retailers to the Westfield Valencia Town Center including the Cheesecake Factory, Saddle Ranch Chop House, Bitter Root, Bunker Hill Bar & Grill, Xevichez Sushi Bar, Saje, J. Jill, Paradis Ice Cream, and the Grilled Cheese Factory.
- Purchase and Sale Agreements related to the development of the Redevelopment Block in Old Town Newhall were executed. This will bring a 7-screen Laemmle Theatre, 47 residential units, over 22,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space to Old Town Newhall, and a 374-stall parking structure.
- Maintained 100 percent tenant occupancy in the Business Incubator. The Business Incubator continues to grow. Since the inception of the program, four companies have been established and over 14 jobs have been created. This year, the Business Incubator partnered with the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation to promote Innovate LA, which allowed the City to promote Santa Clarita as the place for entrepreneurship and technological innovation.
- Additional notable retailers that have opened or expanded include a second Toppers location, a third La Cocina, and the highly anticipated Hobby Lobby. Old Town Newhall has experienced the growth of Newhall Refinery and Southern Smoke and Brewhouse.
- During the 2016 summer season, ridership aboard the Santa Clarita Transit Beach Bus service increased 6.6 percent, to 2,986 passengers over the previous summer.

- Awarded contract for the design and construction of the parking structure in Old Town Newhall.
- Created and commenced a new tracking mechanism to continuously evaluate the goal of 2:1 jobs housing balance.
- There were 83,206 jobs in the City in the first quarter of 2016, an increase of 1,682 jobs when compared to the first quarter of 2015. Our local businesses continue to add jobs at this pace; this is a positive sign for the economic health of our community. Staff continues to monitor this data as it is made available by the state.
- In Fiscal Year 2015-16, the City issued 528 film permits which resulted in 1,305 film days, generating an estimated economic impact of \$30,085,000 and \$385,231 in direct revenue.
- Negotiated terms and created a long-term fiber lease agreement with Wilcon to bring high-speed internet to the business community.
- The annexation of the West Creek/West Hills area was completed in November of 2016. The annexation area totals approximately 1.6 square miles, and includes an existing retail center, two future retail centers, 1,717 built residential units, 727 future residential units, two schools, a park, and additional trails and roadways. The annexation area currently includes approximately 5,000 residents, and at build-out it will total over 7,000 residents.

COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

- Completed the conceptual design and cost estimates for the median beautification project to remove grass from all major thoroughfares throughout the City.
- Completed the conceptual design to remove significant grass along Orchard Village Road based on public outreach.
- Completed the median beautification project along Valencia Boulevard, from Rockwell to Magic Mountain, to remove the median grass, upgrade the irrigation system, install drought tolerant plants, and make pedestrian safety and traffic enhancements.
- Completed the Sierra Highway Beautification Project to install pavers, irrigation, and landscaping along Sierra Highway from Via Princessa to Soledad Canyon Road. Also completed a triple left-turn pocket from northbound Sierra Highway onto westbound Soledad Canyon Road.

- Continued to manage water usage by purchasing a small hydro seeder that will be used as part of the annual sports field renovation program; this process helps germinate in one third the time, saving weeks of daily watering.
- Over 11,350 graffiti tags have been removed and 177 beautification projects have been completed City-wide in 2016, which includes painting wash channels, freeway underpasses, and paseo bridges.
- Three open space acquisitions were completed in 2016 adding 75 acres in Tapia Canyon, 12 acres in Soledad Canyon and 9 acres in Wildwood Canyon.

SUSTAINING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

- Repaired more than 105 city streets and more than 38 lane miles of roadway as part of our \$9.5 million Overlay and Slurry Seal Program, including the repair of Soledad Canyon Road from Sierra Highway to Camp Plenty Road.
- Repaired approximately 95,000 square feet of sidewalk and 80 access ramps as part of our annual Sidewalk Repair Program.
- The City continues to replace its fleet of diesel powered commuter buses with those powered by compressed natural gas (CNG). To date, we have replaced our fleet with ten CNG commuter buses.
- Received approximately \$13 million in Metro Call for Projects Funding, including:
 - Dockweiler Drive Gap Closure: \$5,475,000
 - Intelligent Transportation System Phase VII: \$2,122,816
 - Railroad Avenue Class I Bike Path: \$2,265,143
 - Vista Canyon Metrolink Station: \$3,276,783
- Completed a comprehensive evaluation of the City's Street Light System to assess potential energy savings and potential City ownership/operation.
- Completed a schedule for the maintenance and/or replacement of Transit customer amenities including benches, shelters, trash receptacles, and signage.
- Selected a consultant and awarded a contract to complete a waste diversion plan to increase recycling at multi-family complexes and select commercial facilities.
- Completed the construction of the Bridgeport Marketplace alternative fuel station.

- Acquired a grant to construct a second alternative fuel station at the Santa Clarita Metrolink Station.
- Completed a comprehensive analysis of all parks to determine a schedule for older parks and trails in need of rehabilitation.
- Completed a comprehensive maintenance plan for all newly constructed public facilities.
- Completed a comprehensive sustainability plan for all existing City facilities.
- Completed a comprehensive sidewalk monitoring and maintenance plan which identified over 600 sidewalk locations in need of repair.
- The City's Traffic division completed several restriping projects to improve safety and traffic flow including:
 - Triple left turn lane for eastbound Magic Mountain Parkway at McBean Parkway.
 - Dual left turn lane for westbound Magic Mountain Parkway at Valencia Boulevard.
 - Triple left turn lane on eastbound Valley Center Drive at Golden Valley Road.
 - Three eastbound lanes on Copper Hill Drive between Seco Canyon Road and McBean Parkway.

PROACTIVE, TRANSPARENT, AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT SERVICES

- In the 17th year of our efforts to prevent the operation of the CEMEX mega-mine in Soledad Canyon, we saw continued progress in 2016, including:
 - Working with our federal legislators regarding options in the wake of Congress' failure to enact legislation in 2014 and the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) decision to cancel CEMEX's two 10-year contracts to operate the mine.
 - Tracking the appeal process by which CEMEX is contesting the BLM's decision to cancel the contracts.
- We continued our efforts related to the California High-Speed Rail Project to ensure that any alignment selected for environmental study along the SR 14 is the least impactful to our community.
- Held a consolidated election with Los Angeles County, where the Santa Clarita City Clerk remained the Elections Official. The City Clerk's Office maintained responsibility for legal notice publications, election handbooks for candidates, a filing office for candidate nominations, ballot designations, and certifying candidates that appeared on the ballot.

BEHIND THE SCENES

- City staff have processed over 18,997 Resident Service Center requests from residents and continued our tradition of providing a high level of customer service. This year:
 - 90% of residents have rated Employee Effectiveness either “good” or “superior”
 - 90% have rated Response Time either “good” or “superior”
 - 89% have rated Employee Courtesy either “good” or “superior”
- The City’s Planning Division entered more than 1,256 over the counter plan checks and 203 Master Cases for minor and conditional use permits.
- The City’s Purchasing Division solicited for over 80 various projects, equipment replacements, and services to be completed.
- The City’s Community Preservation Officers have responded to approximately 2,032 Code Enforcement service requests.
- The City’s Special Districts Division responded to approximately 2,661 tree-related and 2,660 Landscape Maintenance District service requests and pruned 25,900 trees.
- The City’s Traffic Division responded to over 480 traffic related requests, ranging from improvements to signal timing or synchronization, modifying speed limits, and improving traffic signage.
- The City’s General Services Division field crews have replaced 1,325 signs, filled 811 potholes, completed 50 ramps at displaced sidewalks and repaired 410 displaced sidewalks at various locations throughout the City.
- The City’s Building & Safety Division conducted more than 18,200 inspections and issued more than 5,400 building permits.
- The court-appointed Community Service Litter Abatement Program has removed 115,000 pounds of litter from public right-of-ways.
- The City’s Engineering Services Division issued 1,201 right-of-way permits and completed 5,724 inspections.
- The City’s social media accounts reached milestones in connecting with the community, surpassing 15,000 “likes” on Facebook and over 26,816 followers on Twitter.
- The City hosted a total of 102,743 youth sports participants; 4,645 Camp Clarita campers; 76,367 adult sports participants; and 218,848 visitors to the City’s Aquatic facilities.

- The City processed 19,720 City facility rental reservations.
- 60 children were accommodated through Inclusion Services for participation in Camp Clarita, Contract Classes, Youth Sports, Aquatics, Child Development, and both Santa Clarita Community Centers.
- Through the City's S.C.O.R.E. (Santa Clarita's Opportunity for a Recreational Experience) program, 157 youth were awarded a scholarship for the spring, summer, and fall seasons.
- Visitor traffic for the City's Public Library website, santaclaritalibrary.com, totaled 455,343 visits in 2016.
- The Santa Clarita Public Library received more than 615,000 patron visits and circulated over 1 million books and materials.
- The Santa Clarita Public Library surpassed 81,000 Overdrive downloads for digital eBooks, audiobooks, and music.

ORGANIZATION/EMPLOYEES

- The number of recruitments this year has surpassed the number of recruitments since 2007 (pre-recession levels) with total recruitments expected to hit 90 by year end. A significant number of these recruitments have resulted in promotions of existing employees, which speaks to the high caliber of the City's workforce.
- Employee tenure with the City remains high, representing strong employee commitment and satisfaction. Of the current 386 full-time employees, 29 percent have worked for the City for 10 – 15 years; 16 percent for 16 – 20 years; and 11 percent for more than 20 years. Similarly, employee turnover remains low at 8.6 percent, compared to the 16.4 percent average for state and local agencies in 2014.
- The City hosted seven Information Sessions to increase employees' organizational awareness on topics including cyber security awareness, transit, employee wellness, Santa Clarita 2020, and information on the legislative process.
- Ongoing professional development remains a priority. This year the City offered a variety of training and development opportunities to employees including a year-long series focused on customer service and a new training series for employees whose specialty is in the field or a trade. The City also developed a new series specifically designed for employees in the professional support field. This new series will launch in January 2017.

