



END OF THE YEAR REPORT | 2017

Accomplishments

PRESENTED BY KENNETH W. STRIPLIN, CITY MANAGER





City of
SANTA CLARITA



It is my honor to serve as your City Manager. 2017 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.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

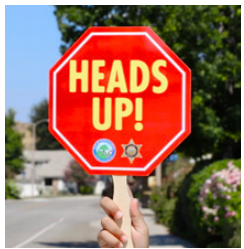
- Received two Helen Putnam Awards from the League of California Cities in the category of “Public Safety” for the Heroin Kills program and in the category of “Internal Administration” for the Employee Development program. Santa Clarita has received more Helen Putnam Awards than any other city in California, bringing our total to 15.
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- fDi Magazine named Santa Clarita a “Small American City of the Future” because of the City’s economic potential, business friendliness, human capital and lifestyle, cost effectiveness, and connectivity.
 - Received the 27th consecutive Tree City USA Award.
 - Received the National Institute for Public Procurement (NIGP) – Achievement of Excellence in Procurement – 1 of only 68 cities within the US and Canada to be recognized for this award.
 - Received two awards from the California Association of Public Information Officials in the category of “Crisis Communications/Public Safety Education Campaign” for the Sand Fire Communications and in the category of “Website” for SantaClaritaArts.com.
 - Received two awards from the City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA) in the category of “Most Innovative” for Drive.Focus.Live and in the category of “Digital Interactive” for SantaClaritaArts.com.
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- Named 21st in Retail Sales out of 480 cities in California by the California Retail Survey. This is within the top five percent of cities in the state. Additionally, the City is one of only 42 cities with a retail market above \$2 billion, higher than Beverly Hills, Burbank, and Pasadena.
 - Named Healthiest Cities in America by WalletHub.
 - Named 50 Safest Cities in CA by Safewise.com.

GOOD FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

- For 2017, operating reserves remained at 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 our Fiscal Year 2017-2018 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 our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).
- Refinanced Redevelopment tax allocation bonds, which produced a net present value savings of 4.2 percent or \$1.424 million. Average annual debt service savings is approximately \$165,000 per year. In addition, approximately \$82,500 will be available annually beginning in FY 2019-2020 for loan repayment, of which 20 percent is allocated to the Successor Housing Agency.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- The City's drug free program was rebranded as Drug Free Youth in Santa Clarita Valley (DFY in SCV) for the 2017-18 school year and new elements were implemented at both the elementary schools and high schools.



- Continued implementation of the Traffic Safety Plan which included the "Heads Up" communication campaign that aims to significantly reduce vehicle and pedestrian collisions throughout the City. The collision rate is projected to decrease by 9 percent by the end of 2017 in addition to a 30 percent decrease in pedestrian involved incidents.

- Achieved a 73 percent accident reduction from 10 traffic signal modifications – notable completed projects included:
 - Orchard Village Road and Wiley Canyon Road – protected left-turn phasing.
 - Soledad Canyon Road and Sierra Highway with added advanced blank out lane designation signs for eastbound dynamic lane.
- The Santa Clarita Valley Sheriff's Station graduated 18 participants of the Community Academy in 2017.



- Acquired and installed 11 new automatic license plate readers (ALPRs) in the community to assist with capturing stolen vehicles.

- Acquired three additional electronic ticket writers for motor deputies to increase efficiency during routine traffic stops.

- Added one full-time sergeant position and one full-time motorcycle unit to continue driving both crime and the traffic collision rates down.



- The Sheriff's Station issued 13,481 traffic citations between January – October 2017. This reflects a 40 percent increase in the amount of traffic citations issued when compared to the same time period in 2016.

- Continued operation of the Domestic Intervention Violence Education Resource Team (DIVERT) to reduce and prevent domestic violence in Santa Clarita.

- Completed the installation of four multi-way stops with three placed along Vista Del Rio Drive in the West Creek annexation area and one at Kelly Johnson Parkway and West Rye Canyon Road.

- Awarded a Systemic Safety Analysis Report Program Grant to conduct a Citywide analysis focusing on pedestrian and bicycle collisions to create a prioritized project list.

- Emergency equipment and supplies were purchased and received for the City's Shelter Operations container, which is now 100 percent complete.

- Held active shooter training in partnership with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Tactics and Survival Training Unit in September 2017 for City staff. This training focused on how staff can prepare for potentially violent incidents.



- Hosted the Parent Resource Symposium; the seventh installment of the Heroin Kills series. The symposium was designed to educate and inform parents about drugs and encourage them to be proactive participants of helping Santa Clarita students make good choices.

- Completed the implementation of the multi-year Crime Reduction Plan that prevents and combats crime, as well as maintains the City's "Safe City" designation.

- Launched a public outreach program to educate residents on trending Community Preservation issues. Public meetings began in October 2017.

- Installed and upgraded new surveillance cameras at the Aquatic Center, Skate Park, Transit Maintenance Facility, and the McBean Regional Transit Center.

BUILDING AND CREATING COMMUNITY

- Approved an Amendment to the Funding Agreement with the Santa Clarita Valley Committee on Aging to award an additional \$500,000 towards the construction of the new Senior Center facility.



- Approved a donation of \$350,000 to Habitat for Humanity (now known as Homes 4 Families) towards the construction of affordable housing for veterans.
- Completed the site selection for the Saugus Library and Arts Center and began the property acquisition process.

- Completed the installation of a new Traffic Control Management System to accommodate adaptive signal controls and prepare the City for technological advancements in driving, vehicles and connected traffic signals.
- Completed upgrades by replacing traffic signal controllers to the Traffic Operations Center in 7 of 28 intersections. The remaining 21 intersections will be completed in early 2018.
- Completed the conceptual design plans for the Railroad Avenue Trail. Staff is now working with adjacent developer to analyze alternate track alignment that will interconnect with the development to the trail.
- Completed the construction of Phase III of the Sand Canyon Trail and completed the design for Phases IV-VI.
- Began construction of the Newhall Ranch Road Bridge. The project is anticipated to be completed in late 2018.
- Developed the 2018 Arts Commission Work Plan. The revised plan identified five priorities for the coming year, including developing a temporary public art program, exploring a creative live/work facility, convening an arts education collaborative, creating a board leadership and placement program, and launching a marketing campaign for the arts. The public art program was also relaunched and a Civic Art Policy was approved by the City Council. Additionally, consultants were hired to develop an Amphitheatre Feasibility Study.
- Completed the environmental review process for the Sheriff's Station. Staff has finalized the conceptual design of the new station and awarded a design contract to complete Phase II work on the project.



- The Thursdays at Newhall series hosted 48 free events every Thursday from March to October 2017. This year also saw the continuation of two new monthly events; 10 by 10 Variety Nights and Note by Note. JAM sessions, Revved Up, and SENSES continued this year, with attendance for all events totaling approximately 30,000 during 2017.



- Over 6,500 volunteers assisted with City events and programs with a work value exceeding \$1.75 million.
- The City hosted the third annual Summer Bash in Canyon Country drawing over 1,500 residents who enjoyed live music, food trucks, and fun family activities. The 2017 event included a partnership with KHTS on their Country Showdown contest.



- The City took over the management and operations of an arts venue in Old Town Newhall, called The MAIN (Municipal Arts In Newhall). The MAIN serves as a mini-arts center for the community and has featured music, comedy improv, theater and visual arts in the lobby gallery, and serves as a welcome center for visitors to the area.

ENHANCING ECONOMIC VITALITY

- The 24th annual Cowboy Festival was held for the third time in Old Town Newhall and William S. Hart Park, drawing over 12,500 attendees. The event included the main festival taking place at Hart Park and ticketed performances at the Canyon Theatre Guild and at The MAIN.
- In FY 2016-17, tourism advertising campaigns and targeted event attraction helped Santa Clarita hotels generate \$3.6 million in Transient Occupancy Tax over the previous fiscal year, which was the second highest total in City history.



- The Amgen Tour of California and the Wings for Life World Run brought in over 755 room nights to Santa Clarita and an estimated \$1 million in economic benefit. This year marked the 13th stage Santa Clarita has hosted since the race began; Santa Clarita has hosted more stages than any other City.

- Several new retailers made Santa Clarita their home. In 2017, Hook Burger, Presto Pasta, Chop Salad, Bowl of Heaven, The Backyard Grub n' Brews, Shredded Tacos, Azabu Sabu, The Pie Tin, Nealie's Skillet, Temakitto, Nekter, Bodhi Leaf, Saddle Ranch Chop House, and Painting with a Twist, all opened their doors. The following establishments are expected to open by the end of 2017: The Canyon Club, 85 Degrees, and Zankou Chicken.
- In Old Town Newhall, Cake Goodness, Coffee Kiosk, Brewery Draconum, The Press Room, and Double Trouble (a co-tasting room with Hoi Polloi and Pagter Brothers Wineries) have opened up in the past year. New retailers expected to open towards the beginning of 2018 include The Old Town Junction and Cali Shrimp.
- The Redevelopment Block achieved a number of key milestones in 2017. Construction commenced on the City's parking structure and is expected to be complete in spring 2018. Escrow closed with Old Town-Main, LLC, for the development of the Newhall Crossings project. Newhall Crossings is currently under construction. The final piece of the Redevelopment Block is the Laemmle Theatre. Escrow is expected to close with Laemmle in early 2018, and construction is expected to begin in spring 2018.



- The Business Incubator continues to grow and 100 percent tenant occupancy was maintained in the Business Incubator during 2017. Since the inception of the program, four companies have been established and 14 jobs have been created. This year, the Business Incubator focused on graduating two of the existing companies and selecting new tenants to participate in the program.

- Executed a dark fiber network lease agreement, netting the City \$70,000 in annual reoccurring revenue.
- Completed 50,071 feet (9.48 miles) of new fiber optic cable throughout the City, which provides greater bandwidth access to the community.
- During the 2017 summer season, the Santa Clarita Transit Beach Bus serviced 2,572 passengers.
- There were 86,684 jobs in the City in the fourth quarter of 2016, an increase of 1,960 jobs when compared to the fourth 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 2016-17, the City issued 545 film permits which resulted in 1,265 film days, generating an estimated economic impact of \$30,147,000 and \$439,472 in direct revenue.

- Annexed the West Creek/West Hills area from the County of Los Angeles.

- Initiated the Eastern Open Space annexation.

- Approved the Sand Canyon Plaza mixed use project that includes 580 residential units, a 140-bed assisted living facility, and 60,000 square feet of commercial/retail uses.

- Construction activities commenced at the Needham Ranch business park.

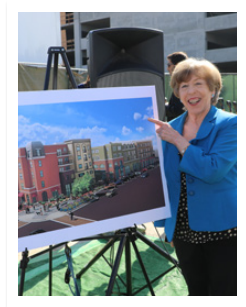
- Approved four hotel buildings consisting of an additional 609 rooms and six hotel brands (Residence Inn, Springhill Suites, Holiday Inn Express, Homewood Inn, Hampton Inn, Element by Westin).

- Completed the Three Oaks 30-unit affordable housing development on Newhall Avenue.

- Completed new residential neighborhoods including Trestles and Phantom Trail.

- Adopted amendments to the Old Town Newhall Specific Plan that support and establish a pedestrian-oriented, Arts and Entertainment District in Old Town Newhall.

- Approved the Providence Health Care facility at Soledad Canyon and Mammoth Lane.



- Facilitated the formation of private vanpools from Antelope Valley to Santa Clarita. This helped to meet the desire for single transportation between Antelope Valley and job locations in the Commerce Center, in addition to being able to measure demand for expanded commuter bus service between these two areas.



COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

- Completed the refurbishment of medians along Avenida Rotella, Sierra Highway between Linda Vista Street and College of the Canyons, and Lyons Avenue between Wiley Canyon Road and Orchard Village Road; this included replacement of plant materials and an updated drought tolerant design and modified irrigation.
- The City's Community Preservation Division cleared 153 sites between January to September 2017, with approximately 148,550 pounds of trash and debris removed from encampments on public and private properties. This reflects a 42 percent increase in the amount of sites cleared and a 22 percent increase in the amount of trash removed, when compared to the same time frame in 2016.
- Successfully hydroseeded two multipurpose fields at Central Park. The hydroseeder helped to continue water management by using 50 percent less water during germination and establishment of the new Bermuda grass seed; this process helps germinate in one third the time, saving weeks of daily watering.
- Installed 875 new trees along major thoroughfares, residential areas, and within parks, including the Earth Arbor Day and Santa Clarita 9/11 Remembrance events, as part of the Citywide Reforestation program.
- Installed additional landscape and hardscape to enhance the Lyons Avenue/I-5 Freeway Beautification Corridor.
- Awarded a construction contract for the median beautification project along Orchard Village Road to remove remaining grass, upgrade the irrigation system, install drought tolerant plants and install pavers, inclusive of Fourth of July Parade viewing areas.



- The City's Community Preservation Division removed 9,567 graffiti tags and completed 195 beautification projects between January to September 2017. This included the painting of wash channels, freeway underpasses, and paseo bridges Citywide.

- Three open space acquisitions were completed in 2017, preserving 240 acres in the Newhall Pass to complete protection of the former Las Lomas development, adding 78 acres to Golden Valley Open Space, and 26 acres for Via Princessa Park in Canyon Country.
- Completed the Saugus Aquifer Treatment Plant for groundwater cleanup at the Whittaker-Bermite site.



- Completed the Edwards Outdoor Advertising Company’s billboard agreement and removed 13 of the last 47 billboards.
- Continued implementation of the Lyons Corridor Plan with commercial remodels of Aldi’s, Starbucks, and the Post Office buildings.
- Continued implementation of the Soledad Corridor Plan with commercial remodels of McDonald’s and Carl’s Jr.
- Completed 13 outreach presentations and 16 surveillance operations in conjunction with the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department to deter graffiti vandalism.
- Completed parking improvements and signage for the Taylor property.
- Completed environmental clearance and coordinated with the County of Los Angeles regarding the Mint Canyon Channel for the new Canyon Country Community Center.
- Acquired adjacent properties for the new Canyon Country Community Center.
- Adopted business-friendly sign code amendments.



SUSTAINING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

- Repaired more than 145 city streets and more than 45 lane miles of roadway as part of our \$9.5 million Overlay and Slurry Seal Program, including the preventative maintenance of Soledad Canyon Road from Bouquet Canyon Road to Valley Center Drive, and the repairs to McBean Parkway from Del Monte to Avenida Navarre.
- Repaired approximately 68,000 square feet of sidewalk and 32 access ramps as part of our annual Sidewalk Repair Program.



- Reduced the sidewalk repair backlog to one year.
- The City continues to replace its fleet of aging vehicles, as well as diesel powered commuter buses with those powered by compressed natural gas (CNG). This past year the City took delivery of four new CNG dial-a-rides and five CNG powered commuter buses. With this delivery, we have a total of 15 CNG powered commuter buses in the fleet.
- Completed a Purchase and Sale Agreement to acquire over 16,125 streetlights from Southern California Edison.

- Installed 72 new streetlights on Sierra Highway, from Soledad Canyon to the East College of the Canyons Campus and 24 new lights on Bouquet Canyon Road between Seco Canyon Road and Alamogordo Road.

- Installed new playground shade structures at Valencia Summit, Fair Oaks, and Circle J Ranch.

- Installed new decorative way-finding signage along Newhall Avenue, directing motorists to Main Street, the Old Town Newhall Library, and Hart Park.



- Completed refurbishments to Fair Oaks Park including reconstruction and expansion of the sand volleyball courts, concrete walking path, construction of a second covered picnic area, and installation of new park lighting.

- Acquired a permanent sewer connection to resolve nuisance groundwater disposal within the Shangri-La community.

- Completed a waste diversion plan to increase recycling at multi-family complexes and select commercial facilities including presentations of findings to property managers at 10 select facilities.



- Completed the construction of the City Hall and Santa Clarita Metrolink Station electric vehicle charging stations.

- Continued a comprehensive analysis of all parks to determine a schedule for older parks and trails in need of rehabilitation.

- Completed a comprehensive sidewalk monitoring and maintenance plan which identified over 900 sidewalk locations in need of repair.

- The City's Traffic division completed 14 restriping projects to improve capacity, safety and traffic flow including:

- Valencia Boulevard and Magic Mountain Parkway – added separate northbound right-turn lane.
- Soledad Canyon Road and Sierra Highway –now providing two southbound left-turn lanes, three through lanes, and one right-turn lane.
- Golden Valley Road and Centre Pointe Parkway – 500-foot southbound left-turn pocket.

PROACTIVE, TRANSPARENT, AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT SERVICES

- For the 18th year, we continued our efforts to prevent operation of the CEMEX mine in Soledad Canyon.
- Continued efforts related to California High-Speed Rail Authority project to ensure that any alignment selected as the preferred route through the environmental review process is the least impactful to Santa Clarita.
- Worked with County of Los Angeles Fifth District Supervisor Kathryn Barger and her staff to identify and develop partnership opportunities; including continued development of the new Sheriff's Station, ensuring the City receives an appropriate level of homeless services funding from Measure H, coordinating Supervisor Barger's inaugural SCV Transportation Summit, securing \$3.5 million in County Bridge and Thoroughfare funding for the Newhall Ranch Road widening project, and obtaining Metro Board of Directors approval for a \$500,000 study of the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line.



- Developed a Legislative Matrix for bill tracking. Increased the number of federal and state bills that staff is tracking and bringing more bills to City Council for adoption of formal positions. Placed the Legislative Platform and City Council actions related to specific bills on the City's website for increased transparency by making information readily available to the public.

- Produced lobbying materials including printed, video, and social media outreach highlighting the City's excellent use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in the wake of President Trump's proposed elimination of the program in his FY 18 budget. Both the Senate and House have proposed retaining the program at FY 17 levels. As a direct result of Santa Clarita's efforts, Congressman Knight secured an additional \$100,000,000 for the program in the House version of the FY 18 appropriations legislation.



- The City successfully migrated to a new Land Management System called Accela in November 2017. This new system is used by divisions such as Building and Safety, Planning, and Engineering Services to address the needs of our residents when it comes to planning, building permits, inspections, and code enforcement.
- Designed and implemented SmartSheet as a new tool to monitor and track Santa Clarita 2020 performance measures.

BEHIND THE SCENES

- City staff processed over 18,192 Resident Service Center requests from residents and continued our tradition of providing a high level of customer service. This year:
 - 88 percent of residents have rated Employee Effectiveness either “good” or “superior”
 - 87 percent of residents have rated Response Time either “good” or “superior”
 - 89 percent of residents have rated Employee Courtesy either “good” or “superior”
 - 88 percent of residents have rated Expectations Met either “met” or “exceeded”
- The City’s Planning Division entered more than 1,392 over the counter plan checks and 208 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 Code Enforcement Officers have addressed 3,196 code enforcement cases between January to September 2017. This reflects a 57 percent increase in the amount of cases addressed, when compared to the same time frame in 2016.
- The City’s Special Districts Division responded to approximately 2,590 tree-related and 2,235 Landscape Maintenance District service requests and pruned 23,000 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 352 signs, filled 4,040 potholes, completed 84 ramps at displaced sidewalks and repaired 684 displaced sidewalks at various locations throughout the City.

- The City’s Building & Safety Division conducted more than 18,000 inspections and issued more than 5,000 building permits.
- The court-appointed Community Service Litter Abatement Program has removed 100,000 pounds of litter from public right-of-ways.
- The City’s Engineering Services Division issued 1,362 right-of-way permits and completed 5,361 inspections.



- The City’s social media accounts reached milestones in connecting with the community, surpassing 18,000 “likes” on Facebook and over 31,400 followers on Twitter.



- The City hosted a total of 104,757 youth sports participants; 4,605 Camp Clarita campers; 77,142 adult sports participants; 323 preschoolers for the 2016/17 school year in the Primetime Preschool program; 71,894 attendees at the SCSC Gymnasium; and 221,860 visitors to the City’s Aquatic facilities.

- The City processed 21,364 City facility rental reservations.

- 68 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, 222 youth were awarded a scholarship for the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

- Visitor traffic for the City’s Public Library website, santaclaritalibrary.com, totaled 471,720 visits in 2017.

- The Santa Clarita Public Library received more than 623,000 patron visits and circulated over 1,000,000 books and materials.

- The Santa Clarita Public Library surpassed 86,000 Overdrive downloads for digital eBooks, audiobooks, and music.





ORGANIZATION/EMPLOYEES

- For the second year in a row, the number of total recruitments is expected to hit 100 by the end of the year. These numbers surpass the number of recruitments since 2007 (pre-recession levels). A significant number of these recruitments have resulted in promotions of existing employees, which speaks to the high caliber of the City's workforce.
- The City has welcomed over 50 new employees since January. In fact, 34 percent of City employees have been with the City for less than five years. Employee tenure continues to remain high, however, representing strong employee commitment and satisfaction. Of the current 377 full-time employees, 28 percent have worked for the City for 10 – 15 years; 16 percent for 16 – 20 years; and 10 percent for more than 20 years. Similarly, employee turnover remains low at 10 percent, compared to the 18.8 percent average for state and local agencies in 2016.
- The City hosted seven Information Sessions to increase employees' organizational awareness on topics including business sponsorship, transit, homeless services, Drive.Focus.Live campaign, Canyon Country Community Center, the Sand Fire, residential permit process, and the use of social media in the community.
- Ongoing professional development remains a priority. The City's award winning Mentoring Program is culminating its 15th year in existence this December. This year marks the Employee Job Shadowing Program's 10th anniversary. This year the City continued to offer a variety of training and development opportunities to employees including culminating a new training series for employees whose specialty is in the field or a trade. The City's Leadership Academy continues to prepare employees for leadership positions throughout the organization. The City also developed a new series specifically designed for employees in the professional support field which culminates in December. The City was honored to receive a Helen Putnam Award in recognition of the employee development programs offered to City employees.

