

## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

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January 12, 2016

The City Manager's Report from City of Benicia City Manager Brad Kilger is published twice monthly highlighting the activities of the departments of our full-service city. Previous editions are available on the City of Benicia [City Manager's page](#). For additional information on any items in this report, please see [Contact List](#) at the end of this report.

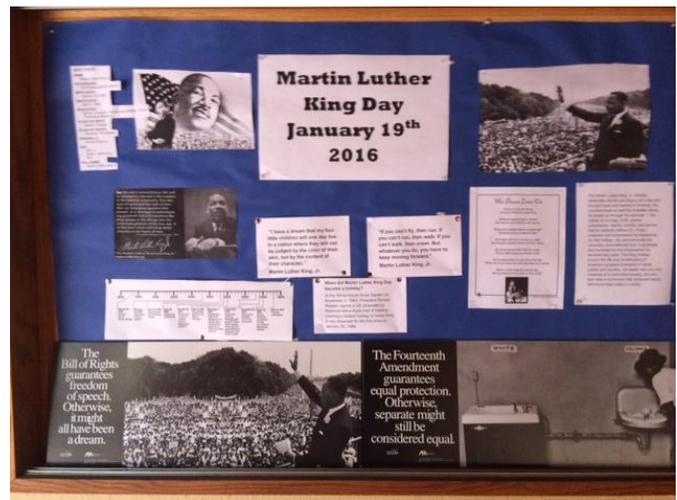
**HOLIDAY CLOSURE:** Benicia City Offices, the Benicia Community Center and the Benicia Public Library will be closed **Monday, January 18** in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

Requests for emergency water and sewer service may be made at the Benicia Police Department, 200 East L Street or 707.745.3411. – *City Manager's Office*

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday is a day of education, service, and remembrance. It was created to honor an inspiring man who fought for racial equality in the United States. MLK was a leader in the civil rights movement who emphasized the use of nonviolent protest as a means to spark social change.

"If you give your life to a cause in which you believe, and if it is right and just, and if your life comes to an end as a result of this, then your life could not have been spent in a more redemptive way. I think that is what my husband has done." - Coretta Scott King, April 9, 1968

The holiday is traditionally observed by doing service in your community. This is to honor MLK's life of dedicated service to others. To learn more about Martin Luther King, Jr., see the bulletin board outside of the City Attorney's Office at City Hall created by Admin Clerk Serina Harbinger. – *City Attorney*



**LONGMIRE IS COMING!** Are you a fan of the A&E/Netflix hit series Longmire? If so, Benicia Public Library has a treat for you. Longmire author Craig Johnson will be at the Library on **Thursday, January 21** at 6:30 PM. You'll watch an episode of Longmire,



followed by a presentation with Q&A by Mr. Johnson and book signing for his latest novel, *Wait for Signs*, a collection of twelve Walt Longmire stories, and other volumes.

Bring your Longmire books to be signed by Mr. Johnson or Bookshop Benicia will be on hand with books for sale.

This event is sponsored by Friends of Benicia Public Library and Shorelight Inn/Inn at Benicia Bay and Lucca's Bar &

Grill. Please RSVP for this free event at [www.benicialibrary.org](http://www.benicialibrary.org). – *Library*

**PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP:** The City of Benicia Planning Commission will conduct a workshop meeting to consider a conceptual proposal for the Northern Gateway Mixed Use Development, a proposed mix of industrial, residential and commercial land uses on a vacant 527-acre site located north of East Second Street and south of Lake Herman Road. The proposed residential uses would require rezoning and an amendment to the General Plan.



The purpose of this workshop is for the applicant to present the conceptual proposal and receive preliminary feedback from community members and Commissioners. No formal action will occur at this meeting. The workshop is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 26** at 7:00 PM in the Benicia City Hall Council Chambers, 250 East L Street.

Another workshop is expected to be held at a City Council meeting. An announcement of the date and time of the Council workshop will be made once it is scheduled. If the project goes forward, more public meetings will be held and a Specific Plan/Master Plan, as well as an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), will be required.

A project summary and proposed plans will be available for public review on the City's website ([www.ci.benicia.ca.us](http://www.ci.benicia.ca.us)), at the City's Community Development Department, and at the Benicia Public Library, no later than Wednesday, January 20. For further information, please contact Suzanne Thorsen, Senior Planner in the Planning Division at [sthorsen@benicia.org](mailto:sthorsen@benicia.org) or 707.746.4279. – *Community Development*

**GREAT DECISIONS SERIES:** Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. It provides background information and policy options for eight critical issues facing America each year. After the discussion participants can complete a national opinion ballot to communicate their views to Congress and the White House.

Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching the DVD and meeting in a Discussion Group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today.

Series events are on Mondays, 7:00 – 8:45 PM in the Dona Benicia Room at Benicia Public Library. Topics in the series include:

- **January 25**, Middle East Alliances
- **February 1**, The Rise of ISIS
- **February 8**, The Future of Kurdistan
- **February 22**, Migration
- **February 29**, The Koreas
- **March 14**, The United Nations
- **March 21**, Climate Change
- **March 28**, Cuba and the U.S.



The Great Decisions 2016 Series is co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters and Foreign Policy Association. Look for more upcoming dates on the Library's website: [BeniciaLibrary.org](http://BeniciaLibrary.org). – *Library*

**RESIDENTIAL SOLAR INCENTIVE PROGRAM:** The City of Benicia has launched the second



phase of its Residential Solar Incentive Program. Residents who purchase and install a 1.5 kilowatt (kW) AC solar system (PV not thermal) or larger system are eligible for a \$0.30 per watt rebate up to \$1,000. In addition, the City has partnered with solar contractors to offer an additional discount of \$0.30 per watt rebate up to \$1,000.

If you are interested in applying for a rebate, please download an application on the [City's website](#) or pick one up at the City's Community Development at City Hall, 250 East L Street (lower level). Completed applications can be delivered to the Community Development Department or emailed to [aporteshavwer@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:aporteshavwer@ci.benicia.ca.us). If you are a solar contractor interested in partnering with the City to offer these discounts and promote the continued growth of solar in Benicia, please email [aporteshavwer@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:aporteshavwer@ci.benicia.ca.us) for more information.

The first phase of this program resulted in 34 Benicia homes installing solar systems, with an estimated savings of 1,200 metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) over the life of the system. This helps the City meet its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals and helps residents reduce their energy bills. – *Community Development*

**CELEBRATE BENICIA'S RESTAURANTS:** Visit California has designated the month of January as **California Restaurant Month**. Benicia Main Street is promoting [downtown eateries](#) throughout the month and has a great contest for you. When you dine downtown, take a photo of your meals for a chance to win \$100 in Downtown Dollars! The more places you eat and snapshot your food, the more chances you have to win. Email your dining photos to [info@beniciamainstreet.org](mailto:info@beniciamainstreet.org) and they will enter you in the drawing. The contest runs

through **January 31**. The winner will be randomly selected shortly thereafter.

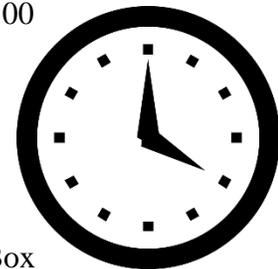


Celebrate [Downtown Benicia Restaurant Week](#), **January 17-23** with the Dining Passport for a 15% discount at these participating eateries (conditions may apply): Aroma, Dianna's Bakery Café, Double Rainbow, First Street Café, Got Plate Lunch, Kinder's BBQ, Lucca Bar & Grill, Mai Tai, Rosanna's Bakery, Sailor Jack's, The

Rellik Tavern, The Union Hotel & Venticello's. Download the Dining Passport or pick it up at Benicia Main Street, 90 First Street, or at participating restaurants and downtown businesses. – *Economic Development*

**NEW HOURS FOR FINANCE DEPT:** Effective January 4, the City of Benicia Finance Department counter hours for serving the public will be 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday - Friday.

The new counter hours are consistent with the availability of Public Works Utility Division staff to respond to water-related call-outs, which will allow us to better serve our walk-in citizens by ensuring that the Public Works staff will also be available to respond. Payments may continue to be placed in the Utility Billing Drop Box located in front of City Hall, should customers arrive at City Hall when the office is closed. – *Finance*



**FIRE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT:** The Benicia Fire Department monthly report for December 2015 is now available. It contains an end-of-year wrap-up on Emergency Operations, Prevention, Training, and Response Times. [Click here](#) to read more. – *Fire Department*

**WHY I RIDE:** Soltrans is hosting the [SolanoExpress Facebook Contest](#) through **January 31**. If you're a rider of [SolanoExpress](#), you could win a monthly or a yearly pass!

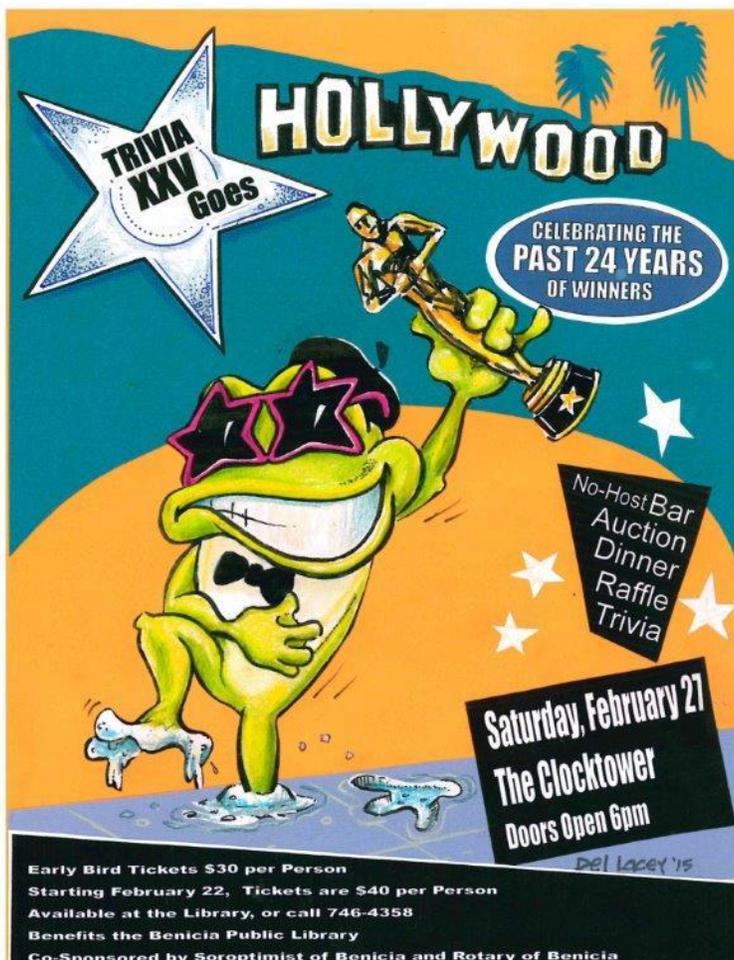
Official Rules for Entry:

- Go to [www.facebook.com/solanoexpress](http://www.facebook.com/solanoexpress)
- Click on the contest page tab
- "Like" the SolanoExpress Facebook page
- Tell them why you ride SolanoExpress and what route you ride the most
- Use #SolanoExpress in your comment

Contest details are available at [Soltransride.com](http://Soltransride.com). For additional information, email [solanoexpress@sta.ca.gov](mailto:solanoexpress@sta.ca.gov). – *City Manager's Office*



**TRIVIA BEE GOES HOLLYWOOD:** The annual fundraiser to benefit the Benicia Public Library is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year on **Saturday, February 27**, with plans to honor the winners from the past 24 years.



This fun-filled Trivia contest consists of up to 21 teams of 3 players each. The team entry fee is \$300 which includes dinner for all three players and a chance to win the coveted Trivia Bee plaque, which will be in the possession of the winner for one year. Trivia questions will pertain to geography, history, local history, entertainment, sports and a wild card. There is also a raffle and a silent auction for further entertainment.

Tickets are \$30/person for early birds and \$40/person starting on February 22. Tables of 8 or more may be reserved. Tickets are available at Benicia Public Library or call 707.746.4358 for more information.

Library staff are looking for donations for raffle and silent auction prizes. Sponsorships are available starting at \$100. The fun filled evening is co-sponsored by Soroptimists of Benicia and Rotary of Benicia. - *Library*



**MEET YOUR LOCAL OFFICIALS:** The League of Women Voters Benicia is hosting the annual Meet Your Local Officials event on **Friday, February 5, 5:00-7:30 PM** at Carter's Biz Café, 1 Commandant's Lane in the historic Benicia Arsenal. Many City of Benicia elected and appointed officials and City staff will be in attendance. Enjoy conversation and exchange of ideas with your local officials. For more information, email Susan Street at [sustreet@pacbell.net](mailto:sustreet@pacbell.net). – *City Manager's Office*

**ARE YOU PREPARED?** The City of Benicia crews have been working hard preparing for this year's predicted winter storms. Recent storms have caused minor flooding during high tides when rain runoff cannot drain into the bay. You are encouraged to please drive safely and obey all posted signage.



Looking for a refresher on safety during this time of year? The [Winter Storms](#) page on the City's website for helpful information, and check out our [Flood Preparation](#) pamphlet for info on what to do before, during, and after a big storm. – *Public Works*

**YOUTH BASKETBALL:** The youth basketball league kicked off the 2015 - 2016 season with a clinic on Saturday, December 12. The Benicia High School Girls Basketball team, coached by Randy Saitz, helped run the clinic this year. They did an amazing job teaching the kids the fundamental skills while maintaining a fun environment.

The league continues to be popular with players and parents with approximately 560 participants. Games started on Saturday, January 9. A very special thank you goes to Dominguez Dickerson, Recreation Specialist, for all of his hard work, dedication and organization running the league this season. – *Parks & Community Services*



## PERSONNEL NEWS:

**City of Benicia Job Opportunities:** The Human Resources Department is accepting applications for the following positions:

- [Management Analyst I/II](#), full-time, closing 01/22/16
- [Principal Engineer/Sr. Civil Engineer](#), full-time, closing 01/22/16
- [Recreation Leader](#), part-time, closing 01/22/16
- [Assistant Water Operator/Water Operator](#), full-time, closing 02/05/16
- [Wastewater Operator I/II/III](#), full-time, closing 02/05/16
- [Police Officer - Lateral \(currently working\)](#), full-time, open continuously

To apply, the application and supplemental forms can be filed online at: <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/benicia/default.cfm>. City of Benicia employment

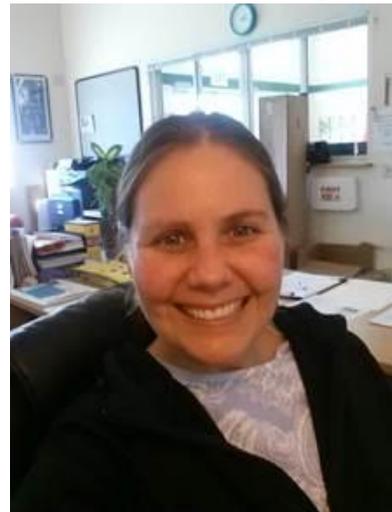


applications may also be obtained from and must be returned to the Human Resources Department at 250 East L Street, Benicia.

These job opportunities are open to any current City of Benicia employees (full or part time) as well as the general public. If you know of someone who may be interested in applying, please let them know. - *Human Resources*

**New Rec Supervisor:** The Benicia Parks & Community Services Department is excited to announce the hiring of their newest team member, Wendy Stratton Monahan. Wendy is the new Recreation Supervisor overseeing Adult/Youth Sports & Indoor/Outdoor Facilities. She has over 10 years of experience and has experience in creating and coordinating a wide array of recreation programs for individuals of all ages and abilities.

Wendy has a Bachelor's from Cal State Fresno in Physical Education/Teacher Education, a Master's from Oregon State University in Movement Studies in Disabilities/Special Education and is in the process of completing her EdD in Education Administration and Leadership. For the past two years Wendy was the Recreation Coordinator for the City of Napa, prior to that she was the Director of Recreation Programs, Services and Facilities for the University of the Pacific for six years. She has extensive experience in many areas of recreation and we look forward to her sharing her talents here in Benicia.

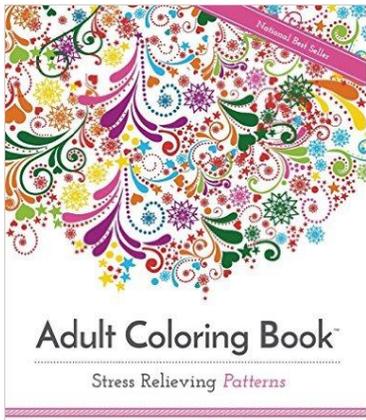


Wendy's first day on the job was January 4. – *Parks & Community Services*

Please join me in welcoming Wendy to the City of Benicia family. – *City Manager*

**BEST PLACES FOR YOUNG FAMILIES:** We know it, but now it's official. Benicia was named one of the [Top 20 Places for Young Families in Northern California!](#) Nerdwallet.com based the rankings on home values, education, income growth, and a crime risk score.

Their recent announcement says, "Northern California has a reputation for pricey living, but young families are still finding affordable homes and good public schools in the suburbs of Sacramento and Fresno, as well as areas east of San Francisco." – *Economic Development*



**LUNCH BREAK COLORING:** Benicia Public Library has lunch break coloring on Monday's from noon – 1:00 PM in the Edna Clyne Room at Benicia Public Library.

Come experience the latest trend in relaxation...coloring books for adults! Studies show coloring can have a calming effect on the adult mind and helps promote overall wellness.

No supplies needed. The Library will supply coloring pages and color pencils and crayons. – *Library*

**BENICIA YOUTH COMMISSION:** The BYC hosted their first dance of the 2015-16 school year on November 20. Commissioners made decorations, volunteered at the door, sold refreshments, and set up and cleaned up for the Clock Tower black light dance.



Special thanks go to Officer Roberson and Officer Keffer of the Benicia Police Department for working the dance and helping maintain a safe and fun environment for Benicia Middle School students. The BYC had a great turn out and collected hundreds of cans that will be donated to the Benicia Community Action Council. – *Parks & Community Services*

**WATER WORKS AWARDS:** Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Scott Rovanpera recently received three awards from the California-Nevada Section of the American Water Works Association (Cal-Nev AWWA): the George A. Elliott Award, the Chair's Award, and an award for Section Leadership. It's a pretty big deal in the water industry for an individual to be recognized by AWWA, let alone to receive three awards at a conference!

The George A. Elliott Award is the highest recognition for volunteerism bestowed on a member of the CA-NV-AWWA Section. The award is presented in recognition for demonstrating outstanding service to the Section through creativity, exceptional effort, and innovation to improve water reliability, safety, and public confidence. Sue Mosburg, the Cal-Nev AWWA Chair who honored Scott with this award at the 2015 Annual Fall Conference in Las Vegas, NV., said, "Scott went above and beyond with an ongoing dedication to educate the industry we work in by putting together extraordinary events, building seminars and technical programs that were expertly planned and well received by the participants".



*Rovanpera, center, holding his Elliott Award.*

The decision to award the George A. Elliott to Scott is due in part to his 35 years of service to the water treatment industry, including the past three as the Section's Education Director; for which Scott received the Chair's Award and the Section Leadership Award. During his tenure as Education Director, Scott transformed a "stale" package of generic seminar topics into "mini-conferences" of information exchanged between qualified presenters with recent, relevant experience to those members directly and often immediately impacted by changes in the water industry, e.g., regulatory, technological, equipment innovations, and the responsibilities of publicly funded project management. Scott would typically canvas the two-state section and locate speakers willing to volunteer their time and present an interesting topic for 50-min (equivalent to 1 contact hour). For one conference, Scott organized 12 theme tracks running with 6 presentations per track, simply put, 72 speakers for a three-day conference. Continuing with this effective format meant Scott had to find a lot of speakers and develop fresh topics each year; which he did with tremendous success!

Being active on three Water Quality Division committees (Water Treatment, Distribution System Water Quality, Water Quality Analysis) and serving as chair for the Education Committee impacted Scott's personal and professional life significantly these past three years. It was Scott's commitment to delivering the highest quality product, much as he does in his role as Water Superintendent that set the template for achievement. Scott also found time to teach a Jar Testing Workshop for Water Operators at the Cal-Nev training facility in West Sacramento, which was very successful, and also attended every Section Governing Board meeting (twice a year).

The City of Benicia thanks Public Works Water Superintendent Scott Rovanpera for his countless contributions toward improving the City's water quality, and in maintaining those standards of quality throughout the water industry. – *Public Works*

**T**OURISM GETS A BOOST FROM SF GATE: Spud Hilton, the Travel Editor of the San Francisco Chronicle/SFGate published a New Year's Eve article on visiting Benicia, [Benicia deserves a closer look as history and art haven](#).

The article highlighted many unique features of our city and says, "Those who take the exit, however, find themselves in a walkable water front city with a gazebo-in-the-park small-town vibe, a burgeoning arts community, a low-key wetlands preserve and a surprising historical timeline that crosses paths with the [Pony Express](#), the Gold Rush, the Transcontinental Railroad and [Jack London](#)'s drinking habits. Oh yeah, and it was the state capital for about a year."



Photo: Spud Hilton, *The Chronicle*

Well known in the travel industry, an article from Spud Hilton speaks volumes about a destination. We are very happy to have Spud highlighting a visit to Benicia. – *Economic Development*

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES:** Benicia seniors enjoyed a holiday banjo performance by Jack Convery at the Benicia Senior Center in December. Jack lives here in Benicia and has been a popular performer at the Senior Center over the past few years. He performed classics and holiday favorites for everyone to enjoy and to sing along. The seniors tapped their toes, sang, smiled and visited with their friends. The performance was followed by a light lunch catered by the Raley's deli. Everyone in attendance has a great time and was put everyone in the holiday spirit.



Speaking of holiday spirit, the ladies from the Senior Center Craft Class spent the year knitting hats, mittens and blankets to donate to foster children. In December, they were very excited to donate over 200 sets of hats and matching mittens to the Foster a Dream Winter Wonderland event benefiting foster children in Solano and



Contra Costa County. A representative from Foster a Dream came by to graciously accept their donation during the last craft class in December. – *Parks & Community Services*

**CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT SUCCESS:** At the December 15 City Council meeting, it was announced that Benicia’s Clean Energy Project is surpassing originally expected financial performance by over \$850,000, garnering over \$5 million in energy savings and rebates as a result of energy upgrades. The City of Benicia has worked in partnership with OpTerra Energy Services to leverage the energy program as part of a broader initiative to achieve aggressive climate action goals.

Finance Director Karin Schnaider shared the financial and environmental achievements that the Clean Energy Project has accomplished through December, including:

- Over \$2.5 million in electrical savings (through 2015)
- Over \$2.5 million in rebates (including projected), with California Solar Initiative rebates exceeding predicted rebates by over \$200,000
- Out-performing promised electrical savings by 23%
- 9,305,848 kWh saved, equivalent to 466 passenger vehicles taken off the road for one year

The project was structured financially such that no capital outlay was required by the City, and finance payments are covered by the savings and rebates, with a net positive benefit to City coffers. [Click here](#) to read more about ongoing initiatives. – *Community Develop*



**OPTERRA**  
ENERGY SERVICES

**TINY TOTS PRE-SCHOOL:** December was a fun and busy month for preschoolers as they prepared for the holidays. Santa paid a visit to all the Tiny Tots classes before their Holiday Party and the children were so excited to see him! Each child was able to sit on his lap, tell him what they wanted for Christmas and take a picture with him, too. Each class also did a small Christmas performance for their



parents and grandparents to enjoy. After singing Jingle Bells & Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, parents and grandparents enjoyed cookies and refreshments with the children and their teachers.

Community Center staff were all smiles when they heard the children say over and over to their parents that they got to meet “The REAL Santa”, they were SO excited. – *Parks & Community Services*



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### CONTACT INFORMATION

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[City Manager/Human Resources/I.T./City Clerk](#): 707.746.4200

[City Attorney](#): 707.746.4216

[Community Development](#): 707.746.4280

[Economic Development](#): 707.746.4202

[Finance Department](#): 707.746.4225

[Fire Department](#): 707.746.4275

[Library](#): 707.746.4343

[Parks & Community Services](#): 707.746.4285

[Police Department](#): 707.746.4265

[Public Works](#): 707.746.4240