

City of Gonzales

City Manager Report

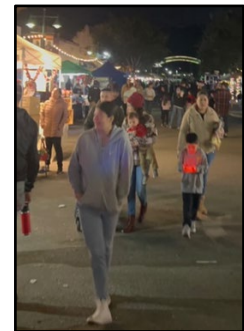
November and December 2023



The months of November and December were very busy for City staff, not only were staff working to plan the Holiday events, but they were also busy working to advance our local projects and ensure that the City is considered in important policy decisions that can impact our future growth opportunities.

During the first week of November, City Manager Gil attended the MBASIA Risk Summit. The Summit focused on liability prevention efforts Cities can take on to reduce liability. The Summit was very informative and provided a plethora of resources.

On November 16th, during lunch, the City held a Staff Thanksgiving Potluck which was great. One of the activities staff participated in was to try and guess which staff member was which baby. It was a great time and a great way to bond, as well as to Thank staff for all they do throughout the year. That same day, City Manager Gil also attended the monthly Senior Luncheon hosted by The Adventure Seeking Seniors.



On December 2nd, the City celebrated the annual Holiday Lights event. It was the perfect day as the weather cooperated with us, and we got to enjoy the festivities downtown surrounded by the Christmas lights that Public Works staff worked hard to put up to bring the Holiday spirit into town. A big Thank You to them for their hard work.

On Friday, December 8th, City Manager Gil attended the Monterey County Business Council's Annual Meeting that included presentations by Congressmembers Panetta and Lofgren. The Congressmembers discussed some of the challenges they are facing at the federal level, and how decisions being made at the federal level will be impacting us locally. They shared insights on housing, funding opportunities and disaster preparedness. It was a great event, and it's good to know that our representatives are always advocating on our behalf at the national level.

December 9th was the Christmas Lights Parade, which once again was a hit. Over 40 cars participated in the parade and the spectators enjoyed watching the creatively decorated cars.



Gonzales Community Center Complex

- The Dennis and Janice Caprara Community Center Complex project is well on its way. The Design Documents have been completed and the team is working to finalize the Construction Documents, leading us to the **Groundbreaking Ceremony on April 27th at 1:00pm** at the site on 5th Street. Make sure to mark your calendars for this momentous occasion!

Economic Development and Revenue Generation

- City Staff is working hard on identifying and submitting grants on behalf of the City.
 - They have submitted an application to T-Mobile and are working on three other grants that are due at the end of January.

Housing

- Staff is at the table with our Salinas Valley partner Cities, the County, and LAFCO staff working to ensure that the policies that the LAFCO Commissioners adopt, are in line with what we need at the City of Gonzales to support our future projects and help reduce barriers to housing construction.
- The Vista Lucia housing project is getting traction. The Environmental Impact Review (EIR) is almost finalized and is going through the internal review process. It should be ready for public review in February.
- The 6th Cycle Housing Element is also being finalized and will be going to the Planning Commission on January 22nd. It will be available for public review Friday, January 12th. You can find the link to it on the City's website.
- The Economic Development staff is also currently reviewing three Accessory Dwelling Unit plans.

Community Engagement

- City staff is partnering with the Blue Zones Project, Olinga Learning, and others to bring a Community Garden to the community. The Community Garden is set to cover a piece of the empty lot next to the Skate Park and the Gonzales Pool. We are excited about the opportunities this can bring to the community and the partnerships that are supporting this project. Stay tuned to hear more and to get involved as the plan progresses.
- Blue Zones is also working with City Staff to bring in more programming opportunities for our senior citizen population. In February, we will be starting a Chair Yoga program that will not only encompass exercise, but will also bring in educational components. The program will be hosted at the Vosti Center and is set to start February 3rd.



Save the Date for the upcoming events:

- **February 3rd - Chair Yoga at the Vosti Center**
- **April 13th - Gonzales Car Show**
- **April 27th - Dennis and Janice Caprara Community Center Groundbreaking Ceremony**

Water/Sewer Rates – The City's Water and Sewer rates were increased effective January 1, 2024. The average monthly bill for a single-family customer is estimated to increase from \$81.15/month to \$90.81/month. The rate increase was imperative to fund multiple projects, including an expansion and upgrade to our wastewater system, and the construction of a second pipeline to the City's water tanks.