

A Message from the Mayor...

If it feels like you're living through a major home renovation, you're not alone. Several projects around the city are in various stages of completion and you can get the latest status by going to the Del Rey Oaks website at delreyoaks.org



Here's a snapshot of each project:

FORTAG – The entire project is scheduled for completion in 2026 but the contractor has focused efforts on certain portions of the trail. The undercrossing at the Frog Pond is the most resource intensive and construction activity will continue for several months. Construction will also continue in the park and the area between Safeway and the Garden Center, and along Carlton Drive. In addition to the information on the city website, you can sign up for updates at: tamcmonterey.org/fort-ord-regional-trail-greenway-canyon-del-rey

Rosita Road – The portion of the road near Angelus Way has been eroding down the hillside for several years and temporary repairs have been made to slow the progress. Ultimately, the road had become unsafe and in desperate need of a permanent fix. This project will ensure the long-term safety of our residents and is scheduled for completion by the end of February.

Water Line Replacement – CalAm has completed pothole work along Portola Drive and the adjacent cul-de-sacs. Trenching and water main line replacement is now underway. Upon completion, a new slurry seal will be placed to return the roads to their original condition.

DRO Committees

For those of you looking for an opportunity to provide input and have a voice on a variety of topics impacting our community, the city has four committees designed to bring people together to share ideas and make recommendations to the City Council. We're in the process of scheduling meeting times and dates for the committees with the goal of having initial meetings in March or April. The four committees are:

Budget and Finance – Perfect for those of you wanting an in-depth look at the city's revenue streams and expenditures, and would like to provide input on funding recommendations for things like personnel, equipment, services and projects.



Parks and Recreation – Share your ideas on how to preserve, enhance and protect our open spaces, parks and facilities. This is an opportunity to offer input on park projects and recreation experiences, and help plan the future use of open space within the city.

Public Safety – Provide input to DRO Police regarding safety and welfare activities and procedures. Offer recommendations on how to approach our most pressing public safety issues and challenges.



Public Works – Help with reviewing and prioritizing city projects, and identifying future infrastructure needs and maintenance requirements. Provide input on neighborhood improvement ideas and potential projects.

These committees are a wonderful opportunity to get involved and help shape our community. Keep an eye out for details and please consider participating. Feel free to contact me directly at sdonaldson@delreyoaks.org if you're interested in participating.

Tree Planting

Lastly, you may have noticed all of the trees planted in the park. This team effort began when our Public Works Director, Ron Fucci, acquired the trees through a program sponsored by PG&E. The DRO Citizen's Action Group organized the effort under the leadership of Denise Wood and volunteers from the community and DLI spent a rainy Saturday morning putting the trees in the ground. All of the hard work resulted over 40 trees being planted and contributed to our Tree City status. Thank you to all who made this possible!



Boards and Committees

Below is a summary of meetings I attended in the past 30 days:

Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)



Highlights include:

- The election of new officers and committee members
- Presentation of the annual Transportation Excellence Awards
- Appointment of members to the California Association of Council of Governments
- Update on the Toro Park Traffic Pilot Program

For details on these topics, go to: tamcmonterey.org/files/53d928e3d/TAMC-Board+Highlights-+January+22%2C+2025.pdf

Monterey One Water (M1W)

Highlighted Action Items include:



- M1W's current Enterprise Resource Planning System is approaching end-of-life and will be unsupported in March 2027. It currently supports the core business functions of M1W including Accounts Payable and Receivable, Purchasing, Payroll, Utility Billing, Fixed Assets, Budgeting and Human Resources. Without a supported system, M1W would have increased cybersecurity risks and would not have access to important updates, including changing tax rates. The board unanimously approved a contract with Oracle NetSuite to provide the functionality.
- M1W owns and operates a 29.6 million gallon per day capacity Regional Treatment Plant (RTP) that provides wastewater treatment for approximately 279,000 people in north Monterey County. There are many reasons why the plant needs a comprehensive upgrade. The RTP is 34 years old and many treatment components have reached the end of useful life. Some components are in danger of failing. The RTP was

originally designed when energy efficiency was less important, thus is not very efficient. The board voted unanimously to enter into a professional services agreement with Black & Veatch for preparation of a Master Plan for upgrade of the RTP.

For more details and access to audio and video recordings, go to:
<https://www.montereyonewater.org/192/Public-Meetings>

Monterey Bay Defense Alliance

This organization is a membership-based nonprofit organized originally by the City of Monterey. It is committed to enhancing, growing and protecting the national security assets in the Monterey Bay Area. I attended a presentation along with other elected officials, business leaders and military representatives.



Highlights from the presentation:

- Monterey County is home to nearly 12,000 military personnel and DoD civilians, and more than 17,500 veterans
- The DoD, Coast Guard and Veterans Affairs invest more than \$2.4 billion

- The total economic impact of defense activity is \$4.9 billion, or nearly 15% of Monterey County's gross regional product
- Defense activity in Monterey County generates \$69 million in local tax revenue and \$254 million in state tax revenue

For more details, go to: montereybaydefensealliance.org

City Selection Committee

This committee consists of all 12 mayors in Monterey County and meets periodically to appoint members to certain boards and committees requiring representation in the county.

The committee met in February to appoint two mayors to the Local Agency Formation Committee (LAFCO), one representing the Salinas Valley and one representing the Monterey Peninsula. The mission of this organization is to promote orderly growth and development in Monterey County. LAFCO does this by: encouraging orderly growth of local government agencies, preserving agricultural lands and open space, discouraging urban sprawl and efficiently provide local government services.

The Selection Committee was provided with objective guidance from Government Code with regard to population and geography to assist in making the selection. With any decision I make, I always try to be as objective as possible. In this case, I used the Government Code provided to help guide my decision.

In the valley, Salinas has the largest population by far and its geographic boundaries touch on 4 of the 5 county districts and a large portion of unincorporated area. On the peninsula, Seaside has the largest population and its boundaries touch 4 of 7 peninsula cities.

I also considered input from the other mayors. 4 out of 5 Salinas Valley mayors supported Salinas for the valley slot, and all Monterey Peninsula mayors supported Seaside for the peninsula slot.

Based on the guidance provided to the committee and feedback from the other mayors, I voted for Salinas and Seaside to fill the two LAFCO seats.

Kim Shirley's Council Report for Tuesday, February 25, 2025

(These are my combined January and February Council Reports)

Monday, December 9th- Monterey-Salinas Transit Board Meeting- Please see the MST Board Highlights in our agenda packet.

Wednesday, December 11th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Technical Advisory Committee- This was a big meeting today as we were receiving the Seawater Intrusion Analysis Report for 2024. The good news is that after looking at all of their different data sets, there does not seem to be any seawater intrusion at this time in the Seaside Basin. It's clear with the basin levels where they're at (still many areas below sea level) we will very likely see seawater intrusion in the future, unless we replenish the basin with an additional water source. Based on their findings, they did recommend some actions that were mainly focused on a few coastal wells where we are seeing some increased conductivity in the water, which may indicate the beginning of seawater intruding in the area. In summary, we need to keep monitoring those wells, including additional data gathering through the use of electromagnetic land based measurements (already planned for!). There is also a private well in the area that we know is leaking, which could be introducing seawater into the basin. They suggested destroying it. It was reported that our lawyers have been trying to make contact with the lawyers of the landowners (the land is currently in litigation), with minimal success. I suggested to staff that they have the lawyers make a report to the larger Watermaster group as it seems we need to keep putting pressure to get this issue settled.

The other larger item on our agenda was reviewing the preliminary draft Watermaster 2024 annual report. This was a very thorough document that summarizes all the aspects surrounding the basin including— extractions, storage, administration costs, budget, water quality monitoring, and overall status of the basin. One issue that I brought up to staff prior to the meeting was the idea of carryover credits for those who are extracting water but not extracting their full allotment. I found it interesting, although not surprising, that these water producers get to accumulate water over the years, presumably for use in drought conditions. For this year, there was over 2,000 acre/ft that was left in the basin that was considered carryover credit. Makes me wonder if we should be a bit more focused on the health of the basin and taking a percentage of this and leaving it permanently in the basin. After talking to staff, they returned to tell me that the court decision for the basin does allow the Watermaster to “discount” these carryovers, so that might be something I bring up in the future.

Friday, December 13th- City Finance Meeting- As usual, this was a very positive finance meeting for the city. We reviewed the financials for both October and November. Our

revenues are slightly lower, but that's to be expected since we haven't received the most recent property taxes just yet. Our expenditures are right in line with the budget, so I'm grateful for the wise spending. We'll be doing mid-year budget adjustments probably in February. Our financial consultant also said that they'll bring back draft reserve policies at that time, too. This is something I've been anxious to talk more about, so I look forward to that discussion. I also asked about our plans moving forward in regards to our unfunded CalPERS liabilities. It was shared that there will be some work done by consultants who will be able to look at our liabilities (CalPERS liabilities are always complicated) to help us decide what would be the best path forward in paying those down. At this time, we pay the minimum and then we set money aside in a trust which can only be used for these liabilities. There may be other options or we may stick with what we're doing with some small changes. Regardless, I'm happy we'll be having that conversation, too.

Our other big discussion for this meeting was talking about the audit, which came with no findings (a clean audit!). The auditor will be at our next council meeting to present on this topic and our financial consultant will be there, too. It was great to hear his review of all the financial details of the city. Basically, if we had to do a fire sale, we'd come out in the positive, which is great news!

Tuesday, December 17th- City Council Meeting- Our last council meeting of the year was a celebratory affair with the swearing in of our newest council member, Mike Burger, my swearing in for a second term, and the swearing in of Mayor Scott Donaldson for his second term. I was happy to have my husband and kids in the audience, and my parents on-line to witness the moment. I'm very grateful to have this opportunity to serve Del Rey Oaks and I look forward to continuing to work hard to represent residents both in city hall but also regionally through my other board appointments (more on that later). I'm always open to any feedback and look forward to hearing from residents as we look towards the future in Del Rey Oaks.

Our next agenda item was also celebratory in nature in that we received the audit results from Fiscal year 22-23, which came out "clean." The staff and our finance consultants have done a good job throughout the year of making sure the revenue that comes in and goes out is properly categorized. They also did a great job working with the auditors so the process went smoothly. With their diligence, we ended up with an audit that didn't show anything that needed fixing which is something we should all be proud of.

Last was the consent agenda, which I ended up pulling a couple of items for further discussion. The first was our regional board appointments made by the Mayor. I was happy he appointed me to the same boards I've been serving on for the past two years. I love that work since I'm learning so much and it gives me the opportunity to work with other electeds and people in the community. If you're a regular reader, you'll know I spend a lot of time going to these meetings, but it's worth it because I find it so enriching. I did use this agenda item as an opportunity to make a plug for other council members to report

out on their meetings. Given one of our core values in the city is “Open Communication and Transparency” it seems these council reports are an excellent tool for fulfilling that value. I also asked for clarification regarding bringing items to the city committees. It’s difficult since we have three council members on each committee, so we can’t talk to even one of them about meeting since that would be a Brown Act violation. City Attorney Alex Lorca said that the process would be to go through the City Manager and then he would talk with the Mayor. I do hope they both are responsive to this process. These city committees generally don’t meet (except for the finance committee and once for the public safety committee), so I’d really like to see these committees begin to meet in the new year.

The other item I pulled was the item that promoted Police Chief Bourquin to Assistant City Manager. It’s not totally clear how much he will be utilized as Asst. City Manager, but I wanted to let him know that I support the promotion and that I trust he’ll do a great job in that position.

Wednesday, January 8th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster- We began this meeting by electing Mayor Ian Oglesby as Chair and Mayor Mary Ann Carbone as Vice Chair, keeping with the same leadership as last year. Supervisor Wendy Root Askew will continue as our treasurer and our administrative staff member, Laura Paxton will continue in the secretary role.

The two big items for this meeting were ones that were covered in our December Technical Advisory Committee (see above). The first was receiving a presentation and approving our annual seawater intrusion analysis report for 2024. The second item was approving the 2024 annual report which is required to be submitted to the courts every year. Both of these items were easily approved. I appreciated that Director Root Askew asked that we include a sentence in the annual report which states our acknowledgement that although we don’t fall under the same state sustainability requirements as other groundwater basins, we are still working towards becoming a sustainable basin using the powers we were given through the adjudication. I was very supportive of inserting this language as it reflects much of what I’ve been thinking about since the last TAC mtg in December. Having reviewed the seawater intrusion report and the annual reports, I’ve been asking questions of our staff over email about some of the terminology we use and its relation to the court decision. For instance, the court decision states that 3,000 Acre Feet per year is the “natural safe yield” which is the amount of water that can be taken from the basin (water in = water out). Unfortunately, that amount does not include the need to increase our basin to a protective elevation which would prevent seawater intrusion. Apparently, the “natural safe yield” several years ago was calculated to be a smaller amount (around 2,300), which I’m assuming would offer some protection to the basin. But, we have never changed these numbers to accurately reflect the needs of the basin. Another topic I brought up was the idea of carryover water and being able to hold some of that water back for protection of the basin.

With these thoughts, I brought up at the meeting that I felt we should be more proactive as a board and look at what we can be doing under the court decision that will protect our basin from seawater intrusion. This topic seemed to be well received and it was decided that we would have a more broad discussion on this topic at our February meeting. I'm looking forward to the discussion.

Monday, January 13th- Monterey-Salinas Transit Board Meeting- Please see the MST board highlights in our agenda packet.

Monday, January 20th- Democratic Women of Monterey County (DWMC)- I was happy to attend the annual membership meeting where our very own DRO resident, Frederica Jones will be vice president of the Democratic Women's club. Besides inspirational speeches from the outgoing (Dr. Lisa Berkley) and incoming (Dr. Kim Barber) presidents, we also had gubernatorial candidate Betty Yee deliver a thoughtful and uplifting talk. It was the perfect way to start off Dr. Martin Luther King day.

Monday, January 20th- Seaside's Dr. Martin Luther King March- After the DWMC meeting, my daughter and I attended the MLK march in Seaside. After greeting several people, we ended up showing our Lobo Pride and marched with the MPC group (my daughter and son are students at MPC and my husband and I both teach there). I always appreciate being amongst the many people who are there to celebrate the legacy of Dr. King and I am grateful for the work that goes into creating such a welcoming and positive event.

Friday, January 24th- ReGen Monterey Board Meeting- With our first board meeting of the year, after passing the consent agenda, we presented a resolution of appreciation to former board member Pacific Grove Mayor Bill Peake. I very much appreciated his time on the board as he persistently, but politely pushed the envelope in terms of questioning finances and asking for greater transparency. His participation on the board definitely left our organization better than when he arrived, so it was nice to acknowledge his work. We also presented an award to Luis Cazares who has worked for ReGen for 25 years. Our final presentation of the day was hearing about the organizations who received the Edible Food Recovery grant awards. Edible food recovery is part of SB 1383 and to help promote the efforts of those in the community who are feeding people in need, ReGen and Salinas Valley Recycles put \$90,000 towards grants that can help those entities increase their ability to take in food and/or deliver food to the community. The awards this year went to three churches, Dorothy's place, and two branches of the Salvation Army. In hearing who and how many they all serve, it really is shocking to think about how much food is provided for people everyday throughout the county. This is definitely one of those win/win situations where climate legislation is not only helping the environment but is also having a direct positive impact on those who are in need.

Our first item of discussion was formally asking our staff to develop protocols and procedures for emergency site closures, generally caused by extreme weather events, or any other reason where it may be unsafe to remain open. The fires in Moss Landing this past week certainly brought to light how important it is to have potential site closures fully flushed out before the need is there. We all agreed this was an important topic to move forward.

The next topic was exciting for our engineering staff and I'm excited about it, too. In 2023, the board approved a pilot study that looked at automated control systems for our landfill gas (LFG) collection wells (about 20). And since the pilot study had gone so well, they stopped it early and decided to implement this automated system on all of our LFG wellheads (about 100). It will be an investment of over \$800,000 but it comes with many benefits, some of which may allow us to make more money from the increased methane gas we collect from the landfill. It will also help us with compliance and we'll have better quality gas which could allow us to not only turn that LFG into more electricity, but also create renewable natural gas (RNG) that we can sell back to PG&E at a much higher rate than electricity. Without the automated control systems, we're adjusting wellheads every month, whereas with this automated system, the wellheads would be adjusted every three hours allowing us much greater control over what comes out of the landfill. It really does seem like the new direction for landfills and I was happy to approve this technology.

Our last item was approving a request for proposal for new legal counsel for ReGen Monterey. Our current counsel, Rob Wellington has been our lawyer for over 50 years! We've been so lucky to have someone so dedicated to our agency. We know this new contract will be more costly, but hopefully we can find someone just as dedicated to our industry as Rob has been for so many years.

My final action for the meeting was appointing members to our Finance and Personnel committees. Director Root Askew along with our new Directors Chaps Poduri and Mayor Dale Byrne will be on our Personnel committee. Mayor Bruce Delgado and Director Jerry Blackwelder will join me on the Finance committee.

Wednesday, February 5th- ReGen Special Board Meeting Workshop- I'd like to ask you all a question, which I realize may be hard to answer without additional details, but just go with it for the moment. **OK, would you be more interested in extending the life of our landfill and have higher prices at the scales (which would translate to higher garbage prices) or would you rather decrease the life of the landfill and have lower prices?** That's basically the philosophical question that the ReGen board will need to answer as we look towards the future when our largest outside contract (Green Waste, San Jose) ends in 2036. The waste we take in from San Jose makes up 50% of our total solid municipal waste stream and brings in roughly \$9 million/year. With that contract ending in 11 years, we've got some decisions to make as an organization. Do we slowly increase prices over those 11 years to make up for the eventual lost revenue and not

provide our landfill space to outside agencies or do we continue to seek outside sources of waste, charge them a fair price, all the while keeping our prices lower for our member agencies, knowing that the tradeoff would decrease the life of our landfill? What would you do? Previous boards established guiding principles for thinking about these decisions. For example, in 2007 they felt we needed to maintain at least 75 years of life for our landfill and then the “excess” could be sold to outside contracts. These guiding principles are what our current board will be revisiting in the coming months.

Today’s workshop was laying the groundwork to start helping us make these decisions. As you might expect, it’s actually very complex as we look at future projects to utilize all of our 475 acres of land (actually 315 acres are permitted for landfill use; we’re currently using 156). Moving ponds and relocating the compost and truck yards mean we need to either purchase adjacent land and/or move these operations to another location. At the same time, we need to evaluate how best to use our landfill gas. Do we continue using it just for electricity or do we start using some of it for the far more profitable renewable natural gas? All the while, maintaining the excellent service we provide and keeping our employees safe and happy. Balancing cost with our desired outcome is important, but I think we all need to agree on what that desired outcome might be. Certainly we need more details on all of these issues, but today’s meeting provided the board and the public with some foundational knowledge for what we need to be thinking. What are your thoughts on these big decisions? I’d love to know. Please email (kshirley@delreyoaks.org) or call (831-917-4115) to share what you’re thinking and to ask any further questions.

Wednesday, February 5th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster- It shouldn’t be a surprise (to me at least!), but I’m realizing more and more that I’m someone who really needs a plan or a path forward. Today’s Watermaster meeting was the beginning of trying to understand what exactly our path forward is for protecting the basin. Based on some questions that Supervisor Root Askew and myself came up with, staff provided a report that answered these questions and allowed us to have a discussion about what’s next. We had questions about Watermaster funding, the differences in authority between our adjudicated decision and basins under the state groundwater sustainability act, and overall control of water, in terms of acceptable amount of water that can be taken from the basin.

For me, I’d really like to see the Watermaster take a more proactive approach to protecting our basin. Right now, we work under the assumption that seawater intrusion WILL happen at some point. What if we tried to change the paradigm and work towards a basin that’s protected, as best we can, from seawater intrusion? We know more about our basin since the basin became adjudicated and with Pure Water Monterey expansion coming online this year, we’re now going to have more water. We also have the possibility of injecting some water from Marina Coast Water. In other words, we’ve got some options, but I feel we need to know what they are and collectively understand what we’re trying to achieve. And with that discussion, it was decided that we needed some dedicated time for presentations to help us and the public understand a bit more of the parameters for our path forward. I’m

guessing that the workshop will come in March or April, so stay tuned to learn more or maybe even attend!

Our other topic for this meeting was discussing whether we wanted to move forward with a spokesperson to help educate the public (through council meetings) about the basin. Given our previous discussion, we decided that it was premature to have a spokesperson, so we did not move forward with this option.

The last topic for our meeting was deciding that we would like to have our recorded zoom meetings posted online. Since staff did not know how to do this, a couple board members were going to talk to their staff to see if they could support this effort. I'm happy to know we'll be posting meetings in the future.

Friday, February 7th- City Selection Committee with County Mayors- This is a public meeting that I don't usually attend, but I was very interested in the outcome of their agenda item to appoint one of the south county mayors to LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commission). I know it seems strange to be concerned over a south county mayor appointment, but as it turns out, it was mostly about water on the peninsula. Mayor Anna Velazquez of Soledad has been the alternate on LAFCO (non-voting member) and clearly understood the importance of this vote, not only to gain representation for her city, which has only held a primary seat on LAFCO once in the last 25 years, but also for the Peninsula cities which voted strongly for checking feasibility and pursuing the public purchase of Cal Am. The other south county option was appointing Salinas, yet again, to LAFCO simply because of its large size and the support of the other south county cities (for reference, Salinas has held a primary seat on LAFCO for 20 of the last 25 years).

Voting for Mayor Anna Velazquez would have given her a rightful and earned seat at the table, but would have also been a vote for streamlining the public buyout of Cal Am, eliminating an expensive Cal Am appeal currently in the courts.

Voting for Salinas Mayor Donohue, a known Cal Am supporter, would prolong the appeal, increasing the cost to peninsula taxpayers.

To my extreme disappointment Mayor Scott Donaldson voted along with Salinas Valley cities, abandoning the peninsula cities and their efforts towards a public water solution. He voted in favor of Mayor Anna Velazquez in January at the Mayor's meeting, but for some reason changed his vote in February when it really mattered. When I shared my disappointment with him, Mayor Donaldson stated that he voted for Salinas because of its large size and because the other south county mayors were also supporting Salinas.

There are no guidelines that state LAFCO directors should come from large cities or that the vote should be determined by the south county cities. He knew this vote would ultimately cost peninsula taxpayers more money and would be turning his back on his

fellow political colleagues who have worked hard for peninsula public ownership of water. When Mayor Donaldson should have been looking out for Del Rey Oaks residents (who voted overwhelmingly for the Cal Am buyout), he was instead aligning his vote with Salinas and other Cal Am supporters. If you find this troubling, feel free to reach out to Mayor Donaldson to share your thoughts on his vote.

Monday, February 10th- MST Board meeting- Please see the MST board highlights in our agenda packet.

Wednesday, February 12th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Technical Advisory Committee- Today's action items helped us move forward some ideas that we've spoken about before. The first item was approving a professional services agreement for geophysical imaging around our Sentinel Well #4. This is the well that's been showing increased conductivity which may indicate seawater intrusion. This non-invasive, static surface testing creates a magnetic field that allows for subsurface imaging. We've never done this type of testing before, so I think everyone is anxious and interested to see the results. This contract will need final approval by the full board next month.

The next item we moved forward was a request for service to update our Seawater Intrusion Response Plan (SIRP). This update will replace our original plan from 2009. It will update data (figures, tables, etc.), review the triggers and associated actions, and incorporate the geophysical data that we will have received. My guess is that this will be an interesting process which will cause some good discussions regarding when and how far we need to go to prevent/stop seawater intrusion.

Our next item was looking at the best approach for updating the Seaside Basin Groundwater Model. It was recommended that we delay moving forward with this item, only until another model is released from the Salinas Valley Basin and Marina Coast Water District sustainability agencies. Waiting until that model is released will help us in developing our model so it was best to wait.

Our last item of note was talking about one of the recommendations that came from our seawater intrusion report from last year. Again, with the increased conductivity of Sentinel Well #4, we're hoping to get chloride concentrations and actual water chemistry from the 140-200 ft depths. Turns out this isn't easy! They looked at finding a new site for a monitoring well (too expensive, too difficult to find a site), adapting an existing well (no feasible approach for this option), and lastly looking into something called a Cone Penetration Testing drill rig. This last option is the least intrusive option and may be the most cost effective, therefore we suggested that staff move forward in trying to get more answers in terms of cost and whether it could reach the depths we need to test.

Friday, February 14th- DRO City Finance Committee- The main focus of today's meeting was reviewing the comprehensive fee study that the council commissioned last year. It has been several years since we've officially reviewed our pricing for permits and service fees in the city. Legally, we're only allowed to set fees at an estimated reasonable cost of service. In other words, we're not allowed to set fees to make a profit, but we set fees so that the cost of completing the service is recovered. Interestingly, some fees that provide a greater service to the community would have a lower cost recovery (ex. Facility use fees), versus a fee where there is only one beneficiary and so we'd have a higher cost recovery (ex. Building, engineering, and encroachment permits). Once all the factors that go into each fee is calculated, it's then compared with similar cities to make sure we're still in the ballpark. In the end, it looks like some of our fees are staying the same and some are increasing. In general, if adopted, this new fee schedule is estimated to bring in an additional \$60,000 per year in revenue that will go into the general fund. Once we have a public hearing and the new fee schedule is adopted, the city will have the ability to increase some of the rates on a yearly basis based on the annual consumer price index (CPI). Full fee studies would then be completed about every 5 years or so.

Additionally, we reviewed the January financials. We received our property taxes so our revenue is slightly over budget. Overall, our local sales tax revenue is down, which City Manager Guertin stated could be because of the administration change. We will be doing mid-year budget adjustments next month, which will give us another view of our overall revenue and expenses.

Council Report from Councilmember John Uy February 25, 2025 Meeting

I. Council Report: Annual Christmas Party of the Pilipino-American Solidarity Alliance on December 14, 2024

I am delighted to share a heartwarming experience that I recently had as your council representative. On December 14, 2024, I had the honor of being the guest speaker at the Annual Christmas Party of the Pilipino-American Solidarity Alliance (PASA). This opportunity allowed me to connect not only with our local Filipino-American community but also with the vibrant culture and cherished traditions that make the holiday season truly special.

Christmas, or *Pasko* as it is known in the Philippines, is a time of joy, family, and community. It is a season marked by generosity, faith, and hope, and being part of PASA's festivities brought back fond memories of my roots and reminded me of why I chose to serve in public office. As a Filipino-American who immigrated to the United States and made this beautiful country—and Del Rey Oaks in particular—my home, I felt a profound connection to the shared experiences of migration, perseverance, and the pursuit of the American Dream.

The evening was filled with laughter, traditional Filipino dishes like *lechon*, *pancit*, and *kakanin*, and the warmth of fellowship. From heartfelt carols to the traditional Filipino *parol* lanterns lighting up the venue, the event encapsulated the spirit of togetherness that the holidays inspire.



In my speech, I shared my gratitude for the contributions of the Filipino-American community in building bridges of understanding and unity here in Monterey County and beyond. I spoke about the values of *bayanihan*—the spirit of communal unity and effort—that resonate not only with Filipinos but with all of us as residents of Del Rey Oaks. I emphasized how these values strengthen the fabric of our community and inspire us to create a more inclusive, vibrant future together.



I left the evening inspired and filled with hope. Witnessing the energy and dedication of PASA's members reminded me of the importance of celebrating diversity and cultivating spaces where everyone feels valued.

As your council member, I am committed to representing all voices in our city and fostering connections that make Del Rey Oaks a welcoming place for all. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have shared in this celebration and for the chance to bring this experience back to our community.

Let us continue to embrace the joy, unity, and love that the holiday season brings, carrying its light into the new year ahead.



II. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the DRO City Council on December 17, 2024

I am thrilled to share a truly special moment from our City Council meeting on December 17, 2024. This gathering marked an inspiring milestone for our community as we celebrated the swearing-in of three of our councilmembers following the certification of the November 5, 2024, election results.

Please join me in warmly welcoming Mayor Scott Donaldson, Councilmember Kim Shirley, and Councilmember Mike Burger to their new terms. Their dedication and passion for serving Del Rey Oaks shine brightly, and I am excited to continue working alongside them to build on our shared vision for the city we love.



As we embark on this new chapter, I encourage all of you to stay engaged, voice your ideas, and connect with us. Together, we will tackle challenges, embrace opportunities, and continue to nurture the strong sense of community that defines Del Rey Oaks.

Let's celebrate this moment as a reminder of the power of civic engagement and the shared responsibility we all have in shaping the future of our city. Here's to a bright year ahead, filled with collaboration, progress, and pride in all that we accomplish together.

III. Council Report: New Year Message of Councilmember John Uy on January 1, 2025



Dear Del Rey Oaks Community,

As the New Year unfolds, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible spirit that makes Del Rey Oaks the wonderful place we all call home. From our close-knit neighborhoods to the beauty of our shared spaces, it's the people—each and every one of you—who bring this city to life.

2024 was a year of connection, resilience, and growth for our community. Together, we celebrated milestones, faced challenges, and strengthened the bonds that make us more than just a city—we're family. As we step into 2025, I am filled with hope and gratitude for all that lies ahead.

This year, let us continue to work hand-in-hand to create a future that reflects the very best of who we are. Whether it's caring for our environment, supporting local businesses, or simply waving hello to a neighbor, it's the little things we do that make a big difference.

I also want to thank each of you for your trust and support. Serving as your councilmember is an honor I hold close to my heart, and I promise to continue advocating for the needs and dreams of our community.

As we begin this new chapter, may 2025 bring you and your loved ones health, happiness, and countless moments of joy. Let's keep dreaming big and building a stronger, brighter future—together.

Here's to a year filled with purpose, progress, and pride in all we achieve as one community.

With heartfelt gratitude,
John Uy
Councilmember, Del Rey Oaks

IV. Council Report: AMBAG Board of Directors Meeting – January 8, 2025 (Canceled)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the AMBAG Board of Directors on January 8, 2025, has been canceled.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2025.



V. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD) Board of Directors – January 14, 2025



Serving as your representative on the **Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD)** board is a responsibility I hold with great honor. I am committed to representing the interests of Del Rey Oaks while ensuring transparency and fairness in all decisions that impact our community.

During the regular SCSD meeting on January 14, 2025, one agenda item stood out for its potential significance to our city: a proposal to direct staff to draft an ordinance to update the SCSD Code (Titles 1, 4, and 5). These updates aim to address enforcement of the Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Program,

sewer capacity fees for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), an appeals process for fee assessments, and revisions to outdated code references.

While this item was listed for approval to move forward, I pulled it from the consent agenda to advocate for a thorough review and greater transparency. After engaging with SCSD staff and posing key questions, the Board decided to postpone the matter to the next meeting, ensuring more time for stakeholders—including our jurisdictions, residents, and businesses—to assess the proposed changes.

Questions I Raised to Get More Clarity from SCSD Staff:

1. **Clarity and Rationale:**
 - What problems are these revisions designed to address? Are the expected outcomes clear?
2. **Stakeholder Impact:**
 - How will residents, businesses, and other groups be affected? Have they been consulted or informed?
3. **Implementation and Enforcement:**
 - What mechanisms are proposed to ensure effective and equitable implementation? Will fees or penalties disproportionately impact any group?
4. **Transparency:**
 - Can staff provide a redline version of the proposed code changes to clarify the revisions?
5. **Legal and Fiscal Considerations:**
 - Are there risks, such as legal challenges or unexpected costs?

My Recommendations:

I encouraged SCSD staff to:

- Provide a redline comparison of the proposed and existing code.
- Expand public engagement strategies, including outreach beyond public hearings.
- Ensure the revisions align with state and regional standards while maintaining fairness and equity.
- Clearly document the rationale for each proposed change.

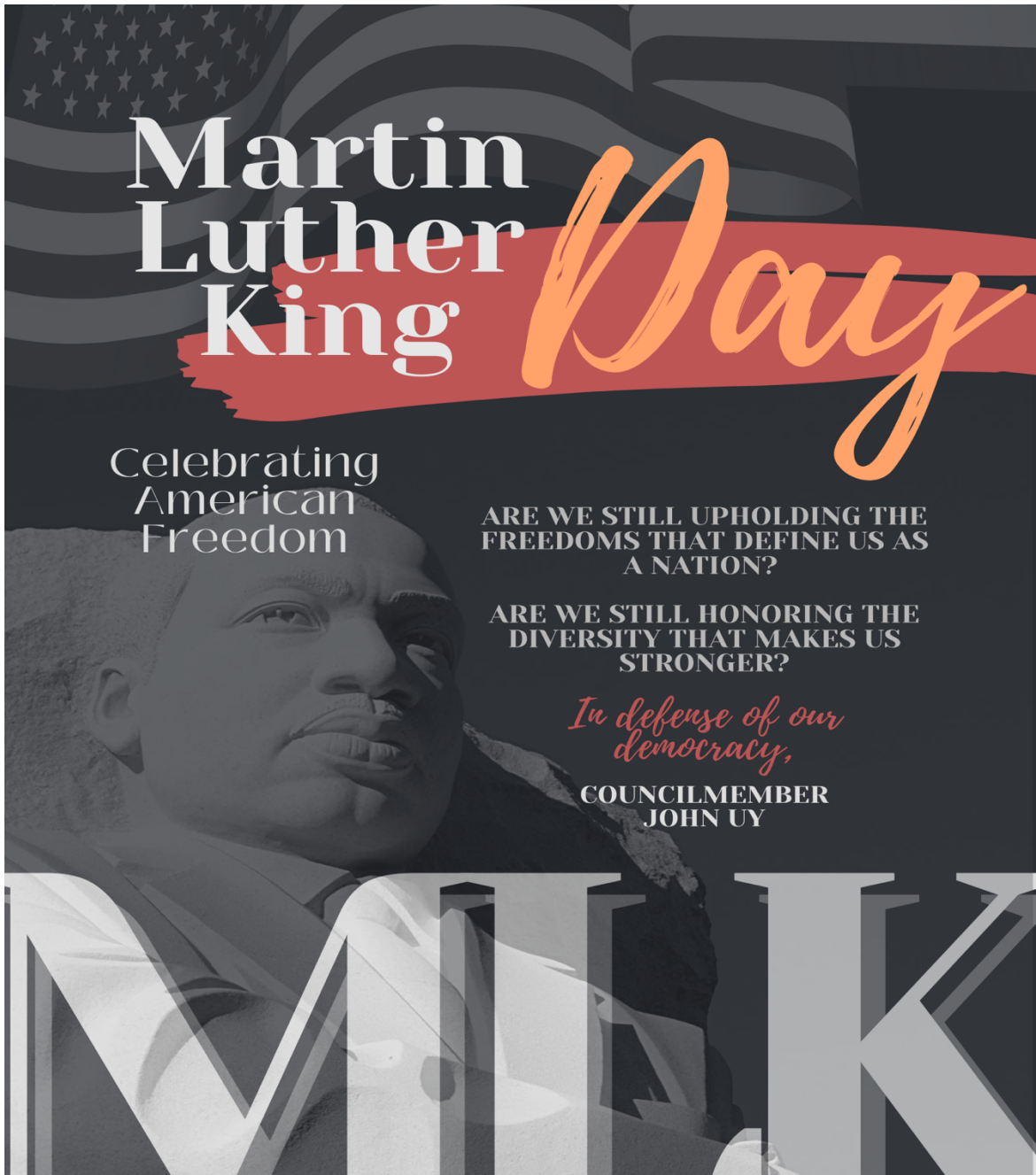
This approach reflects our commitment to fostering a collaborative and transparent decision-making process. By delaying the direction that the Board will provide, we've ensured all stakeholders have a voice, and the final ordinance will be one that balances progress with fairness.

I am grateful for the opportunity to represent Del Rey Oaks at the SCSD Board and will continue to advocate for solutions that uphold the values and priorities of our city. As always, I welcome your feedback and invite you to reach out with any concerns or suggestions.

Together, let's make 2025 a year where collaboration and community spirit lead us to achieve extraordinary goals. With your support and engagement, I am confident we will continue to build a Del Rey Oaks that future generations will be proud to call home.

Thank you!

VI. Council Report: MLK Day Message of Councilmember John Uy on January 20, 2025



As we observe **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** on January 20, 2025, we are reminded of the profound legacy of a leader who dared to dream of a more just, free, and inclusive America. Dr. King's vision was not just about civil rights; it was about the very essence of **American freedom—the right to live with dignity, to speak without fear, and to build a future unshackled by discrimination and oppression.**

Today, as we navigate an era of uncertainty and change, we must ask ourselves: **Are we still upholding the freedoms that define us as a nation? Are we still honoring the diversity that makes us stronger?** The fabric of America has always been woven from the threads of different cultures, beliefs, and experiences. It is this diversity that has made us resilient, innovative, and powerful. Yet, freedom is not self-sustaining—it requires vigilance, courage, and unity to preserve.

Let this day be more than a reflection; let it be a **call to action.** Let us stand together against forces that seek to divide us, weaken our liberties, and erode the progress we have fought so hard to achieve. Let us continue to **amplify voices of justice, defend the rights of the marginalized, and ensure that the American promise of freedom remains unbreakable for future generations.**

Dr. King once said, *“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”* My friends, let us never be silent. Let us be **fearless in our commitment to equality, bold in our pursuit of justice, and unwavering in our defense of democracy.**

Today, and every day, we reaffirm that the fight for freedom is not over, but together, we will ensure that it never fades.

VII. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the DRO City Council on January 28, 2025



For the scheduled Regular Council Meeting on January 28, 2025, there were no agenda items requiring Council action. After the City Manager consulted with the Mayor, they agreed to cancel the meeting. The City Clerk, Karen Minami, issued the official notice on January 24, 2025.

VIII. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD) Board of Directors – February 11, 2025



I am honored to share key updates from the Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD) meeting held on February 11, 2025. It was a significant meeting as we elected our Board Officers for the year and deliberated on key policy improvements aimed at enhancing efficiency, transparency, and service equity across the district.

Election of Board Officers

I am humbled and grateful to have been elected as the **Chair of the SCSD Board**. It is a privilege to serve in this capacity, and I look forward to working collaboratively with my fellow board members, district staff, and the communities we serve to ensure that our sanitation infrastructure remains reliable, efficient, and sustainable.

New Business: Strengthening District Policies

One of the critical agenda items was directing staff to draft necessary updates to **Title 1, Title 4, and Title 5 of the SCSD Code**. These updates are essential for:

- 1.) Strengthening enforcement of the **Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Program** to prevent sewer blockages.
- 2.) Establishing **sewer capacity fees for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior ADUs (JADUs)** to ensure fair and equitable cost distribution.
- 3.) Introducing an **appeals process for fee assessments**, providing property owners and businesses with greater transparency and due process.
- 4.) Updating outdated references in the district code to align with current regulations.

During our discussion, I raised key questions to ensure that any proposed changes uphold **fairness, accountability, and clarity** for all jurisdictions under SCSD:

- a.) **Project Fee Consistency & Transparency** – Are all jurisdictions within SCSD held to the same fee structures and assessment timelines? If there are differences, what justifies them?
- b.) **Building Trust & Accountability** – Given the concerns about transparency in processes, what measures can be implemented to enhance clarity and public confidence moving forward?

c.) **Balancing Responsibilities** – How does SCSD staff manage its dual role in serving both the district and the City of Seaside?

After thoughtful discussion, the Board **unanimously directed staff** to draft the necessary ordinances and bring them back for a **public hearing at our next regular meeting**.

These actions mark a step forward in our commitment to **fairness, transparency, and operational efficiency**. I encourage all residents and stakeholders to stay engaged as we move forward with these important updates.

As always, I remain committed to advocating for the best interests of Del Rey Oaks and ensuring that our city's needs are well-represented in regional sanitation policy. Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to providing further updates.

IX. Council Report: AMBAG Board of Directors Meeting – February 12, 2025

I am honored to share key updates from the February 12, 2025, **Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) Board of Directors Meeting**. This meeting reflected AMBAG's ongoing commitment to fostering regional collaboration, sustainable planning, and equitable transportation solutions for our communities.



Planning for the Future: Public Transit & Sustainable Communities

One of the focal points of our meeting was **Agenda Item 12A**, where AMBAG staff provided an overview of the **2025 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Development Process**. This plan is critical in ensuring that **transportation services meet the needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations across the Monterey Bay area**. The Board engaged in a robust discussion about how we can enhance mobility, close service gaps, and leverage funding opportunities to create a more inclusive and accessible transit network.

I emphasized the importance of ensuring that this plan reflects **the unique needs of Del Rey Oaks and other smaller jurisdictions**, ensuring that our residents have equitable access to transit solutions. The input from Board members will be instrumental as AMBAG refines this plan for final approval.

Building a Sustainable Transportation Network for 2050

Under **Agenda Item 12B**, AMBAG staff presented an update on the **2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) / Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)**. This long-term planning document serves as the **roadmap for transportation investments** across the region, integrating land use planning with sustainable transportation strategies.

Key elements of the discussion included:

1. **Projected funding sources and priorities** for regional transportation infrastructure.
2. **Strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion** while promoting multimodal transportation options.
3. **Collaborative planning with local jurisdictions** to align future development with transportation accessibility.

I raised key questions about how **smaller cities like Del Rey Oaks can ensure our voices are heard** in the development of this long-term strategy. AMBAG staff reassured us that extensive community engagement and local government input will continue to shape the plan's priorities.

Commitment to Regional Leadership

As the representative of Del Rey Oaks on the AMBAG Board, I am committed to advocating for policies that **enhance mobility, sustainability, and equity for our residents**. These discussions reaffirmed AMBAG's role in shaping the future of our region's infrastructure and ensuring that our communities are well-prepared for the decades ahead.

I encourage all residents to stay engaged and voice their priorities as these critical regional plans take shape. Your input is invaluable as we work toward a **more connected, resilient, and thriving Monterey Bay region**.

Thank you for your continued trust and support. I look forward to sharing more updates in the months ahead.