

Kim Shirley's Council Report for Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Wednesday, December 10th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Technical Advisory Committee Meeting- As usual, today's meeting was filled with lots of interesting technical information about our seaside basin. I'll try to sum up some of the larger points

We have a few different sentinel wells along the coast that are regularly checked for conductivity, which, when increased, can give an indication of seawater intrusion. In addition to testing our sentinel wells, we're also doing this conductivity testing (called induction logging) on a couple of other wells that are near sentinel well #4, which has continued to show increases in conductivity. Overall, we're continuing to see increases in sentinel well #4, but nothing that gives us a definite reason to believe there is seawater intrusion.

We received information that the private SNG well (Security National Guaranty), which is near our sentinel well #4 and has a steel casing that may be allowing seawater to leak downward into the deeper aquifer, will be destroyed and replaced in 2026. Given the location of this well, we may be able to directly sample the water at the required depths when they're installing the new well. This could give us important data that we're not able to gather from our sentinel well #4.

In an effort to learn more about what's happening in the ground around Sentinel Well #4, we reviewed the geophysical imaging work that was done in July of 2025. This work uses magnetic imaging to analyze how resistive the ground is in that area. Unfortunately, particular geologic structures can give similar resistivity measures to seawater, so we really need to do the study again this year to see what has changed (presumably seawater would change over time, whereas the particular rock strata would not). There were some indications that seawater may be intruding, but it was not conclusive.

We also reviewed and provided feedback on the 2025 Seawater Intrusion Analysis Report. While there were some slight changes, overall, there is nothing that would be a strong indicator that any seawater intrusion is occurring (again, increases at sentinel #4, but nothing conclusive).

We also reviewed and provided feedback on the preliminary draft of the Watermaster 2025 Annual Report.

Tuesday, December 16th- City Council Meeting- We started off our meeting with the swearing in of our new reserve officer, Issac Garcia. His friends and family packed the room, which always makes for such a heart-warming event. Seeing the tears of pride and

joy in his family members instantly brought tears to my eyes! I'm proud that this young man will be beginning his career in Del Rey Oaks!

Next, we passed our consent items, which included the Mayor's Select Committee Appointments and a contract amendment for City Manager Guertin. I was pleased that the Mayor did not make any changes to my committee appointment,s as I find the committees that I serve on infinitely interesting and academically stimulating. It also allows me to work with some really good people, which is always enjoyable. In regards to the contract amendment for the City Manager, we extended Mr. Guertin's contract through Aug. 10, 2029, and included increases in vacation leave, sick leave, and administrative leave.

Our new business included the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DRO police and the Community Human Services Street Outreach Program for homeless youth. It's good to know that our police will provide positive support for this important program, as we work collaboratively to provide needed assistance.

We also approved a consulting services agreement with Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$75,000. This agreement with our contract economic development agency will support the efforts to move forward with development on our Ft. Ord property, as well as give us some consultant time to talk about other economic development opportunities within our city. I'm hoping for regular updates on this contract.

Our last item was an update on the lease renewal negotiations with Hana Gardens, whose lease will be ending on December 31, 2025. It's unfortunate we had to terminate the lease because of the breaches in the contract by Hana Gardens, but we had to put public health first. I'm hoping the transition out will be smooth, and I look forward to the discussions about potential future uses of the property.

Thursday, December 18th- ReGen Monterey "Black Gold" Mural Celebration- I was happy to join in the celebration of our mural on the Farmers Insurance building at 1350 Fremont Blvd. in Seaside. This mural, which celebrates sustainability, culture, and community, was painted by local artist Hanif Panni, and its hope is to help raise awareness about food scrap composting to reduce methane emissions (SB 1383, California's Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Reduction Act). This mural was created as part of our "Sort with Heart" campaign and was developed in partnership with Blue Strike Environmental and the Arts Council for Monterey County. It's a gorgeous mural, and I so appreciate the use of art to inspire people to act in ways that benefit both our health and the health of the planet. Please check it out!

Wednesday, January 7th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Board Meeting- We began today's meeting by electing new officers for 2026, and I was honored to be elected as vice chair, with Mary Ann Carbone moving to chair from her vice chair position.

Director Wendy Root Askew will continue to serve as our Treasurer, and our Secretary is our new Administrative Officer, Toni Gibbs.

Next, we had a presentation from the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency on their work towards making 6 basins within the Salinas Valley sustainable. Since they are working with several basins that are already experiencing seawater intrusion, they're evaluating projects that may be used to combat that intrusion, mostly through injecting additional water into the basin to push the seawater back, in addition to better managing the water that's currently removed from the basins. Since our basins are linked through the Monterey Subbasin, it's important to keep up the communication, as they have the potential to choose a project that may end up affecting our basin (in the long run, in a positive manner, fingers crossed).

We also had a presentation from the Monterey County Water Resources Agency about the Deep Aquifer Monitoring Program, which led into our first order of business, which was the Memorandum of Understanding for the Deep Aquifer Monitoring Plan and the sharing of data. This led to a discussion about data that we're not collecting in the Seaside basin, which is data on stable isotopes, which can determine the age of the water we're pulling out of the deep aquifers. In other words, are we actively recharging our aquifers with new water, or does it have a different isotope profile, which would tell us we're still pulling old water out? Although we approved the MOU, we will be talking in the TAC about adding this new data point, which can then be shared with the other four water agencies, who will be sharing data.

Our next item was approving the Seawater Intrusion Analysis Report for 2025. I talked about this report in my Technical Advisory Committee report for 12/10/25. After receiving a presentation on the report, I did bring up our need to focus on either continuing to get access to our sentinel well #4 (it's on State Park land and is currently being re-vegetated which would prevent access in the future) or looking at finding another site for the well, which may be necessary to access water samples at the correct depths. Given that State Parks has the trail closed to build their campground, this seems like an ideal time to review the possibility, so I didn't want to leave this agenda item without sharing that information. We should be talking more about this in future meetings (both in the TAC and at the Board level).

We also approved the Annual Water Year 2025 Watermaster Report. With this item, I brought up an idea that was shared in our Ad Hoc Replenishment Water Committee back in July 2025 for changing the ability for "Carryover Credits." This happens when alternative producers (smaller users) don't use their entire allocation of water, and their leftover water that wasn't taken is given to the standard producers (larger). On average, if we stopped this carryover, it would keep an additional 600 Acre Feet of water in the ground, which seems like a good thing! It was noted that we'd like to discuss this at a future Board meeting. And with that, we approved the report.

Our last bit of old business was an edit to our water allocations for Water Year 2026. Seaside was there to ask about some questions about their water allocations, so we did not approve anything at the time and will collectively approve any changes at a future meeting.

Friday, January 9th- Public Meeting to Oppose California Offshore Drilling Proposal-

This evening, Kevin and I attended the “Stand Up, Save our Coast” public forum hosted by the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Save our Shores, Oceana, and Surfrider to oppose and gather public comments for the Administration’s proposal to open new permits for offshore drilling along the entire coast of California (two of which will be along the Central Coast). It was so energizing to be in a ballroom filled with people who are absolutely committed to protecting our coast, which plays such a vital part in our lives economically, culturally, and scientifically. Beyond the fact that this would be an illegal act within the Monterey Bay Sanctuary, drilling off of our coast would greatly increase the risk of a spill, which could create devastation along our coast and to the lives that depend on the health of this ecosystem (think fishers, tourism, our joy of living near such a magnificent and beautiful space). Since the Administration is refusing to hold public meetings regarding their proposal, non-profit and political leaders within the state are creating these opportunities for public outreach. Although the time for public comment on this proposal ends on January 23rd (before our scheduled January council mtg), I would love to bring this topic to our council so that we can take a stand and join the ranks of other cities and counties who are showing their opposition to this unnecessary and backwards-thinking proposal.

Monday, January 12th- Monterey-Salinas Transit Board Meeting- Please see the MST board highlights in our agenda packet.

Wednesday, January 14th- ReGen Technical Advisory Committee- This is not one of my usual meetings, but it’s a committee that I believe does really good work, and they had some interesting topics on their agenda, so I thought I’d attend. Also, it turned out that Del Rey Oaks was the only city that wasn’t represented that day, so I was happy to be there. The first item was talking about how peninsula cities will be reviewed this year for their compliance with SB 1383, which is California’s Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Reduction Act. This is the legislation that requires cities to compost food waste, set up edible food recovery programs, and purchase compost. The city is then responsible for enforcement (residential and commercial). Luckily, CalRecycle has a representative who is willing to help us review our implementation records so they can be ready to go once we get the letter from the enforcement branch of CalRecycle. Thankfully, Karen Minami has been on top of it and is ready to go with our compliance information.

We also talked about SB 1053, which is the new bag requirements (paper with at least 50% recycled content) that went into effect Jan. 1, 2026. Since DRO doesn’t have any ordinances around bags, we don’t have to worry about changing anything. I’m very happy

to see this new legislation, as it closes the loophole of the heavier-duty plastic bags that were in use but not getting recycled.

Lastly, I'll note that we'll be having some residential surveys distributed soon that will ask you questions about our waste hauler, GreenWaste Recovery. Our franchise agreement with GreenWaste is up in 2030, but we're deciding now if we need to go out for a request for proposals from other haulers, or if we're going to negotiate an extension with GreenWaste. Part of that decision requires us to ask residents what they think about our current hauler, so please fill out the survey if you're one of the chosen lucky ones. There will also be community meetings scheduled for feedback, so we'll share more about that once they're scheduled.

Friday, January 16th- City Finance Committee Meeting- Happy to report that the city continues to be in good financial health! At today's meeting, we reviewed our December financials and also received a presentation on our draft audit for FY24-25. Only one procedural item was noted (needing to go out for a more extensive request for proposals for a federally funded project over \$5,000), and now there will be a process in place moving forward. Overall, the draft audit was very positive.

We did discuss two more items that will be coming to the council. The first was increasing the purchasing ability of the city manager. His current limit of \$10,000 is pretty low and has not been raised in many years. We talked about increasing it to \$25,000 and then adding \$5,000 every 5 years (this is a similar policy to what Sand City has now).

The second item was a discussion about charging a fee for being added to the Short Term Rental (unhosted) Waitlist. Since it takes staff time to accept applications and to manage the list, it seems very reasonable that we should be asking for a fee to cover our costs.

Council Report from Councilmember John Uy
January 27, 2026 Meeting

I. Council Report: New Year Message



Happy New Year, Del Rey Oaks!

As we step into this new year together, I want to start with a simple but heartfelt message: **thank you**. Thank you for being the kind of community where neighbors look out for one another, where people show up at meetings, at events, and for each other, and where pride in our small city runs deep.

A new year always brings fresh hope. It's a chance to reflect on what we've been through, celebrate what we've accomplished, and recommit ourselves to what matters most: **safety, stability, and a strong sense of belonging for every resident**. Del Rey Oaks is special not because we're the biggest, but because we care about our streets, our parks, our local businesses, our seniors, our families, and the everyday quality of life that makes this city feel like home.

In the coming year, I remain committed to listening with an open heart, leading with integrity, and working collaboratively to make thoughtful decisions that protect and strengthen our community. Your voices, your ideas, and your concerns help guide the work we do, so please know my door is always open, and your participation is always valued.

May this year bring you and your loved ones **good health, peace of mind, meaningful moments, and renewed joy**, and may Del Rey Oaks continue to be a place where we treat one another with kindness, respect, and compassion.

Here's to a year of hope, progress, and community. **Happy New Year, Del Rey Oaks!**

II. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the DRO City Council on December 16, 2025



Dear neighbors,

Here's my warm Council report from our **December 16, 2025 City Council meeting**.

Welcoming a new reserve police officer

We began the evening by **swearing in our new Reserve Officer, Isaac Garcia**, a meaningful reminder that public safety is ultimately about people choosing to serve their community.

Keeping the basics strong: calendars, contracts, and clean public spaces

A big part of good local government is making sure the fundamentals run smoothly. On the consent agenda, we considered items that keep City operations steady like approving our **2026 meeting calendar** and authorizing routine service contracts.

One item I want to highlight because residents feel it directly: we approved moving forward with an agreement for **janitorial services**, including expanded cleaning to cover **park restrooms**, a small thing on paper, but it matters a lot to families, visitors, and anyone who uses our public spaces.

Supporting vulnerable young people with a practical partnership

We also considered and supported a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** between our Police Department and **Community Human Services (CHS)** Street Outreach Program for homeless youth.

What this means in everyday terms: CHS outreach teams work to build trust with young people (up to age 24), connect them to resources, and help them find safer, more stable paths forward while coordinating with law enforcement in a respectful, non-judgmental way. Importantly, the staff report notes **no fiscal impact** associated with the MOU.

Planning smartly for Del Rey Oaks' long-term future: Fort Ord and City assets

Council also considered a contract with **Economic & Planning Systems (EPS)** to support technical work tied to **Fort Ord reuse and public asset management**, including vetting development proposals, modeling fiscal outcomes, and helping the City be prepared for structured negotiations.

This work matters because decisions around former Fort Ord properties can shape Del Rey Oaks for decades, economically, environmentally, and in terms of services we can sustainably provide.

Hana Gardens lease update and due diligence findings

We also received an information update on the City's lease renewal discussions with **Hana Gardens**, along with findings from City due diligence as the lease approaches its scheduled end date of **December 31, 2025**.

The staff report describes serious concerns identified during review, including allegations that a potable water line was cut and capped, and that **non-potable water from a City irrigation well** was plumbed to supply the building without required non-potable water notices posted, creating risk to employees and the public.

Stay involved

As always, thank you for caring about our city and for staying engaged. If there's an issue on your block—public safety, traffic, neighborhood concerns, or quality-of-life ideas—please reach out. Del Rey Oaks is strongest when we keep talking, listening, and solving problems together.

III. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD) Board of Directors – January 13, 2026



Dear Del Rey Oaks neighbors,

Here are the key takeaways, in plain language, from the **Seaside County Sanitation District (SCSD)** meeting on **January 13, 2026**.

Keeping Del Rey Oaks' sewer lines clean and reliable

We received the **December 2025 Operations Report**, which is essentially the system's monthly "health check."

For **Del Rey Oaks**, crews **jettied 1,925 feet of main sewer line in December** as part of routine maintenance. Even better: **there were no reported stoppages or sewer overflows in Del Rey Oaks** during that period.

That matters because routine cleaning is what prevents emergencies—like messy backups, street spills, and expensive repairs. Preventive work is the kind of public service that doesn't make headlines, but it protects homes and keeps our community healthy.

Planning ahead: updating the Sewer System Master Plan

The Board considered a professional services agreement with **Wallace Group—up to \$247,125**—to update the District's **Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan**.

This plan is about looking forward and asking:

- Where are the system's weak points or capacity issues?
- What projects should be prioritized?
- How do we map out a **10-year Capital Improvement Plan (2026–2036)** so we fix problems *before* they become crises?

The work includes cost estimates, project timelines, and even developing a **hydraulic model** to understand flow patterns and capacity constraints—so we can make smarter, data-informed infrastructure decisions.

Protecting our pipes (and the Bay): strengthening the FOG program

FOG = **Fats, Oils, and Grease**, and it's one of the biggest reasons sewer lines clog. That's why the Board considered adopting **updated "Standard Conditions"** for the District's FOG Control Program.

This is about clear, consistent expectations for food service establishments—grease control devices, maintenance, recordkeeping, and inspections, so we reduce blockages and **prevent sanitary sewer overflows**.

The Standard Conditions also align with updated state requirements and emphasize public education and proper disposal practices.

Quarterly FOG inspection results: encouraging news

We also received the **Quarterly FOG Inspection Report**. In the second quarter of FY 2025/26, staff completed **38 inspections**, and **none** of the inspected locations had FOG/solids levels over **25%** in their interceptors. Staff did follow up with some establishments that were missing pumping records.

That's a good sign, and it reflects steady enforcement *and* cooperation from local businesses.

Good governance: annual election of officers

The Board also held its annual **Election of Officers for 2026**, a routine but important step that keeps the District organized and accountable.

What you can do to help (it's simple, and it works)

Even with strong maintenance and planning, everyday choices matter. The most helpful things residents can do:

- **Never pour grease or oil down the sink** (let it cool, wipe it, and toss it).
- **Avoid "flushable" wipes**—they aren't truly flushable and contribute to blockages.
- If you ever see something concerning in the street (odors, pooling water near a manhole), report it quickly—early reporting prevents bigger problems.

Del Rey Oaks is a small city with a big heart. I take seriously the trust you place in us to manage the basics well because the basics are what protect your home, your neighborhood, and our shared environment.

IV. Council Report: AMBAG Board of Directors Meeting – January 14, 2026

Dear Del Rey Oaks neighbors,

On **January 14, 2026**, I represented Del Rey Oaks at the **AMBAG (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments) Board of Directors meeting**, one of those regional meetings that may feel far away from day-to-day life, but actually affects things you *feel* every day: traffic, road safety, transit options, air quality, and how we plan for growth and housing in a way that protects quality of life.



Here's my recap.

Why this meeting mattered

AMBAG is the regional transportation planning agency for Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties. That means AMBAG helps set the long-range blueprint for transportation investments and strategies through 2050, and that influences what projects rise to the top, what funding we can compete for, and how we keep our region moving safely and sustainably.

Key actions and updates from the meeting

1) Setting leadership for the year

The Board held the **Election of 2026 AMBAG Officers**, which helps ensure stable leadership and clear direction for the year ahead.

2) Clear goals for AMBAG's Executive Director

We reviewed and approved **2026 goals for AMBAG's Executive Director**, including a major milestone: **adoption of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) targeted for June 2026**, plus ongoing work to strengthen partnerships and maintain financial stability.

3) Consent agenda items that keep the agency running well

The Board considered routine but important items such as:

- approving prior meeting minutes,
- receiving updates on sustainability programs,
- and accepting a financial update report.

One item worth highlighting: AMBAG considered an **AMBAG–Caltrans Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** required for comprehensive federal/state transportation planning and programming. In simple terms, this is part of keeping our region eligible and coordinated for transportation funding and planning requirements.

The big community item: Draft 2050 MTP/SCS + Draft EIR public hearing

The heart of the evening was the **public hearing on the Draft 2050 MTP/SCS and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**.

This plan is described as the region’s “blueprint” for a transportation system that improves quality of life, supports sustainability, and expands mobility options for people and goods.

It’s tied to SB 375 and the region’s responsibility to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets set by CARB.

My contribution: the comments I submitted (and why I did)

I submitted detailed written comments because I want the final plan to be **not only ambitious, but also clear, practical, and easier to implement**. In a nutshell, my feedback focused on seven “make-it-real” improvements:

- **Clearer climate accountability:** not just meeting the statutory GHG target, but communicating results consistently and transparently so the public understands what success looks like and how we’ll track it.
- **Implementation-ready funding:** a simple, usable appendix that compares realistic funding tools and connects them to near-term actions because plans don’t move without dollars and timelines.
- **Interim safety and mode-shift checkpoints:** practical 2030/2035 milestones (and a dashboard-style approach) so we can measure progress on safety, transit access, and active transportation, not just talk about it.
- **A light-touch toolkit for emerging tech (curbs/automation):** guidance local agencies can actually use when opportunities arise.
- **Stronger goods-movement decarbonization and safety:** pairing freight performance with a realistic zero-emission freight roadmap.
- **Equity commitments people can see:** translating analysis into visible accountability, like minimum equity “floors” and a public scorecard for investment and access improvements.
- **A two-year implementation workplan:** who does what, by when, with what funding, so the plan becomes a shared, trackable community roadmap.

I also provided comments on the **Program EIR** to strengthen transparency and sponsor usability, especially around explaining the “why” behind alternatives, improving mitigation monitoring templates, and making the GHG/VMT methodology easier to understand for everyday readers.

What this means for Del Rey Oaks

For Del Rey Oaks, this work matters because our residents live at the intersection of regional travel patterns—commuting, airport-area movement, safety on key corridors, and the ongoing need to keep the region moving without sacrificing health and quality of life. A good regional plan helps us compete for funding, prioritize safety, and advocate for investments that reflect **small-city realities**, not just big-city assumptions.

Closing thought

I left the meeting encouraged: AMBAG is doing serious work, and I’m committed to making sure Del Rey Oaks’ voice stays present, especially on **clarity, accountability, safety, and equity**.

As always, if there’s a transportation or safety concern you want me to raise regionally—speeding corridors, dangerous crossings, transit gaps, or better walking/biking connections—please tell me. Your everyday experiences are exactly what should shape these long-range plans.
