

# STAGECOACH EXPRESS



VOLUME 11, NUMBER 3

CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE

SEPTEMBER 2004

## ARROYO GRANDE AND GROVER BEACH FIRE DEPARTMENTS JOIN FORCES TO IMPROVE SERVICES

Effective July 1, 2004, the City of Arroyo Grande entered into a

Cooperative Fire Services Agreement with the City of Grover Beach.

Some of the operational benefits from this Cooperative Agreement are a single Fire Chief serving both agencies; a single Administrative/Fire Training Officer serving both agencies; continued nurturing of a volunteer/reserve firefighter force; reduction of response times; access to specialized skills and equipment by both departments; creation of pathways for future cost savings; a shared radio frequency for full interoperability; retention of identity and local control by each City; and improvement in the training programs of both departments under the leadership of the Administrative/Fire Training Officer.

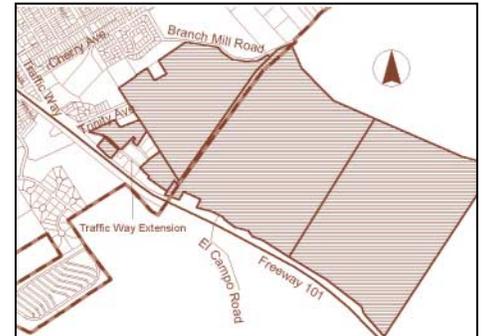
Joint training was immediately implemented on a daily and weekly basis to ensure that both departments are familiar with each other's training practices, equipment, and apparatus. Recruitment was completed and the departments are now jointly providing firefighter training to seventeen new recruits. The transition to the new organizational structure has been proceeding smoothly, and the change is another example of the City's efforts to increase effectiveness within existing resources.



## SPHERE OF INFLUENCE SURVEY RESULTS

The City thanks all those who took the time to respond to the Sphere of Influence Survey included in the last issue of *Stagecoach Express*. Well over 600 completed surveys were received and tabulated. The purpose of the survey and recent workshops is to obtain public input to be used in future planning of appropriate land uses for the 500 acre-area southeast of the City along Highway 101.

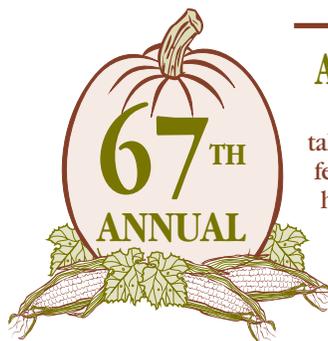
Some of the uses that a large percentage of respondents found favorable include agricultural related businesses; quality restaurants, hotels and bed and breakfast operations; research and development center; high tech and/or light manufacturing; education, medical and childcare facilities; parks and open space; bike/walking trails; equestrian centers; and workforce, entry-level and market rate single-family housing. Uses that a majority of respondents indicated they disagreed with included automotive dealers and repair facilities; regional retail shopping center; specialty medical



facilities for personal improvement; development of a separate new town; mobile home parks; and golf courses and commercial recreational facilities.

Compatibility with the character of the community was identified as a strong concern by those that participated in the survey. Planning for and ensuring projects can fund necessary circulation improvements also received a high level of importance.

Information from these efforts will be used in evaluating proposals for the area. Please contact City Hall at 473-5400 or access the City's website at [www.arroyogrande.org](http://www.arroyogrande.org) for a complete copy of the survey results.



## ARROYO GRANDE VALLEY HARVEST FESTIVAL

The 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Arroyo Grande Valley Harvest Festival will take place in the Village on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. The festival is a cherished community celebration of the area and its history. Coordinated by the Harvest Festival Committee, the City is a co-sponsor of the event by providing facilities and public safety staffing.

Friday evening will include the fish fry, booths and entertainment. Saturday will feature the parade, booths, contests, games, entertainers, bounce house, kids' train ride, hay ride, the big ditch derby and more! Some of the activities require preparation, which include a pumpkin contest, bread baking contest, chili cook-off, salsa contest, vegetable decorating contest, business decorating contest, Big Ditch Derby, and kid's coloring contest. There will be activities for all ages so come join in the fun. For information on how to enter these activities or other questions, please call 473-5400.

## EFFORTS TO ADDRESS LONG-TERM WATER NEEDS

During the development of the City's 2001 General Plan and Urban Water Master Plan, water resources was identified as a significant issue to be addressed in the future. This past calendar year, the community has utilized 95% of the annual available water supply and the potential impact of one or more possible dry years is cause for concern.

Water use is difficult to accurately project because it fluctuates substantially based primarily on weather patterns. As a result, the City is working on options for both lowering per capita consumption and expanding water supply in order to increase long-term reliability of the City's water service to its residents. The City Council recently reviewed an initial study of 17 options, which were narrowed to seven for further study.

In order to reduce per capita consumption, expanding the City's water conservation program will be an important part of the effort. A new program was recently implemented, in which the City will retrofit single-family residences built prior to 1985 with new low-flow water fixtures at no cost to the property owner. Residents are encouraged to also take other steps to reduce their water use. Install landscaping with low water demand, only water as necessary, repair all leaks and defective plumbing, and make sure faucets are running only when in use. These voluntary activities can reduce the need for future mandatory measures during water shortages. The City will be distributing additional educational materials on how best to conserve water in future water bills. For information on the Water Conservation Program, call the Public Works Department at 473-5460.

## COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE DISTRICTS

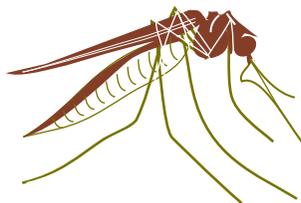
After several public hearings, the Planning Commission has completed their review of zoning revisions to establish mixed-use districts for the following areas:

- Commercial districts on East Grand Avenue;
- Office districts along Halcyon Road;
- Commercial and industrial districts for El Camino Real;
- Office, motel and senior housing sites on Camino Mercado;
- Commercial area at Oak Park and James Way;
- Small commercial and office developed sites, including a convalescent hospital on Farroll Road, a store and vacant site at the Pike and Elm Street, and an office and vacant site at Valley Road and Sunrise Terrace; and
- Regional Commercial district off of West Branch Street.

The 2001 General Plan designates most of the commercial districts in the City as mixed use and provides objectives and policies to revitalize these areas. The zoning amendments are proposed to implement the General Plan and provide consistency required by State law. The City Council previously adopted Development Code Amendments establishing mixed use districts in the vicinity of the Village and Traffic Way.



This proposal addresses the remaining commercial, office and industrial districts in the City and also includes Design Guidelines and Standards for the East Grand Avenue corridor and a portion of El Camino Real. The Guidelines are provided to facilitate quality development and includes conceptual drawings, as well as a public art policy that was previously established by the City Council.



## PREVENTION OF WEST NILE VIRUS

West Nile Virus is a major concern and evidence of the virus has been found in San Luis Obispo County. The City is implementing preventive measures where possible. City staff performs mosquito abatement in areas with significant existing water, such as retention basins. The City is also coordinating with the County Department of Health Services to perform testing in identified areas.

There are steps residents can take to help protect themselves. It is important to prevent standing water on your property where mosquitoes can breed. Repair leaking exterior faucets, maintain swimming pools and spas, avoid over-watering flowerbeds and lawns, stock ponds and fountains with mosquito-eating fish, and change water in birdbaths at least once a week. When outdoors, you can help avoid mosquito bites by wearing long sleeve shirts and pants, especially at dawn and dusk, secure window and door screens, and use mosquito repellents containing DEET.

For questions or more information, you may contact the County at 781-5544 or obtain online information at [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov).

## ARROYO GRANDE MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Your vote is your voice in the decisions that shape our daily lives. On November 2, 2004, Arroyo Grande registered voters will be electing one (1) Mayor, two (2) Council Members, one (1) City Clerk, and one (1) City Treasurer. To cast a ballot on November 2nd, you must be registered to vote by no later than October 18, 2004.

Registration is easy. You can either pick up a registration form at City Hall in the Administrative Services Department, the San Luis Obispo County Registrar of Voters Office, or you can download a form at [www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov). For your convenience, after regular business hours, City Hall will remain open until 7:00 p.m. on

Monday, October 18th for voter registration. You will also have an opportunity to register to vote at the Arroyo Grande Harvest Festival on Saturday, September 25th in front of City Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. U.S. citizens who will be at least 18 years old by election day and who are not currently in prison or on parole for the conviction of a felony are eligible and encouraged to register and vote. Additionally, if you have recently moved, you need to reregister with your new address. To have a form mailed to you, please call 473-5412. Your vote makes a difference!



**VOTE**

## HOUSING ELEMENT

Last November, the City Council adopted the 2003 Housing Element and submitted the document to the State Department of Community Development (HCD) for certification. In March, HCD responded with a list of items that must be addressed prior to certifying the document, including an expansion of programs and opportunity sites for the development of affordable housing. The City Council will be considering Planning Commission recommendations for amendments to the 2003 Housing Element on September 28, 2004 that are expected to result in a State certified document.



The purpose of the Housing Element is to provide residents with a clear understanding of the City's housing needs and provide policies and programs to address those needs. The pending amendments contain updated information, policies and specific actions that will be an integral part of the General Plan to address the City's housing needs. For more information about the Housing Element, please contact Associate Planner Kelly Heffernon in the Community Development Department at 473-5420.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CITY EASEMENTS IS IMPORTANT

The City maintains a number of easements on private properties in order to allow City staff access to perform repairs and maintenance to underground utilities or reserve areas for future utility and/or other public improvements. It is important to know if there are any such easements on your property before constructing improvements. If the improvement requires a building or other City permit, City staff will check when reviewing your application. However, if no permit is required, an easement may exist without your knowledge. The City needs to maintain these easements for their original purpose and wants to prevent the unpleasant situation of requiring a resident to remove an improvement after they have gone to the expense and work of installing it. Therefore, please contact the City of Arroyo Grande Public Works Department at 473-5440 before starting a project if you have a question regarding potential easements.

## VALLEY GARDENS STREET RECONSTRUCTION

The City has awarded a construction contract to Union Asphalt Company to repair streets in the Valley Gardens housing tract, which is located west of Valley Road. Since the tract was originally constructed in the 1950's, the streets have deteriorated beyond a point where it can be addressed by routine maintenance. The project will repair numerous failed street sections and place an asphalt concrete overlay for Leanna Drive, Turquoise Drive, Pearl Drive, Diamond Circle and Opal Circle. As preparation for the project, the Public Works Department Utility Division recently evaluated and replaced the existing water services and valves within the project limits. The Street Division is also repairing sections of concrete sidewalk, curb and gutter. Construction is scheduled to begin in September and be completed by the end of October.



## SEWER BACKFLOW VALVES

Did You Know?? In all buildings where the floor elevation is below the elevation of the nearest upstream sewer manhole, an approved backflow valve needs to be installed. Sewer backflow valves prevent sewage from sewer mains flowing back into your home when a sewer main becomes plugged. If you require a sewer backflow valve on your sewer lateral, contact a licensed plumber to have one installed. If you are unsure, please contact the Public Works Department at 473-5460 and a representative will help determine your requirements.

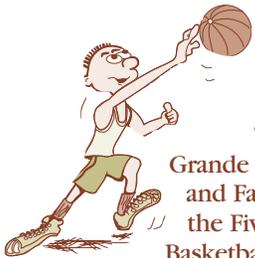


## CITY ACCEPTING CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS

As part of an ongoing effort to improve services to the public, the City of Arroyo Grande is now accepting VISA, MasterCard and Discover credit cards for payment of utility (water and sewer) bills. Bills can be paid in person at the customer service counter located in City Hall at 214 East Branch Street. The counter is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Debit cards can be used if there is a VISA or MasterCard logo on the face of the card. Payments with a credit card can also be made over the telephone by calling 473-5438.

Another alternative for paying utility bills is to arrange for an automatic debit from your checking account each month. Automatic debits can be set up at the customer service counter in City Hall. You will need to bring a voided check from the bank account you want to have debited. For further information, call 473-5438.

## YOUTH BASKETBALL SIGN-UPS



The City of Arroyo Grande Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department, the Five Cities Youth Basketball Advisory Board, and the San Luis Obispo County YMCA are organizing the 2004/2005 Five Cities Youth Basketball League. Registration will be September 15th, 16th, 20th, 21st and 23rd, from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. at the City of Arroyo Grande and Woman's Club Community Center, 211 Vernon Street in Arroyo Grande. This program provides instruction and competition for boys and girls in 1st - 8th grades. The cost is \$50 per player and \$40 for each additional family member. For more information, contact the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department at 473-5474 or pick up the Fall 2004 Activity Guide at City Hall, 214 E. Branch Street.

## HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL AND HAUNTED MAZE

The Arroyo Grande Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department will hold its annual Halloween Carnival and Haunted Maze on Saturday, October 30th. Children of all ages and adults are invited to enjoy carnival games for candy and toy prizes, cookie decorating, hot dogs and hamburgers, the haunted maze, a pumpkin decorating contest, and a costume contest. The event will be held from 4:30 p.m. to



## YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Your presence and participation at City meetings are contributions to good government! The following Council, commissions, committees, and boards meet at City Council Chambers, 215 East Branch Street:

### CITY COUNCIL

2nd and 4th Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.

### PLANNING COMMISSION

1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

2nd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

### SENIOR ADVISORY COMMISSION

1st Wednesday, 3:00 p.m.

### ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

1st Monday, 3:15 p.m.

### TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Monday previous to 3rd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.

### DOWNTOWN PARKING ADVISORY BOARD

Meets as needed

7:30 p.m. at the Nelson Street Green Space on the corner of Nelson and Short Streets. The cost is \$1.75 per child for tickets purchased before October 28, 2004, or \$2.50 per child on the day of the event. Tickets for accompanying adults are \$1.00. For more information, please call the Arroyo Grande Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department at 473-5476.



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