



Winter 2020 – Volume 1



CITY ADMINISTRATION

CITY COUNCIL (current)

- Ryan Toussaint, Mayor
- Robert Clarke, Mayor Pro Tem
- Jim Thomas
- Karen Waite
- Daniel Johnson

CITY COUNCIL (as of 12/14/20)

- Charlie Uhrig, Mayor
- Robert Clarke
- Jim Thomas
- Mark Infanti
- Claudia Orona

CITY MANAGER

Xenia Bradford

Spreading Holiday Cheer in the Midst of the Pandemic

A Message from Xenia Bradford, City Manager

As our City prepares for the holiday season, we would like to share with you a few positive holiday cheer activities that you and your family can enjoy in these trying times of COVID-19. It is even more important for us to work together as a community to overcome the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic. The shut-down of the economy has impacted each and every individual. We are committed to continuously work with our community, advocate for adequate State and Federal assistance, and to work collaboratively with our non-profits to help those in need.

We have created this first issue of “City Hall Nyheder” to stay connected and inform you of notable programs, changes and

news coming out of City Hall. We hope you look forward to this quarterly edition of Nyheder, which means “news” in Danish – the newsletter that we deliver to your door.



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A look at the 2020 Edition of Julefest

Modifications in place, but Christmas spirit still abounds

Solvang Julefest will return this holiday season with a modified version to meet Santa Barbara County COVID-19 guidelines. Festivities are set to kick off Saturday, Nov. 28, and run through Friday, Jan. 1.

Please note that events are subject to change due to the pandemic, but preliminary plans include:

- The annual **Nisse Adventure**, where participants join in a citywide hunt for the mysterious Solvang Nisse — Christmas elves — hidden throughout downtown Solvang. Clues pointing to various hiding spots around town will be provided online at www.NisseAdventure.com. With every Nisse found, elf trackers can scan a QR code to continue along the adventure, earning a special prize upon completion of the hunt.
- Every Saturday throughout the month, **educational and entertaining tour options** also will be offered to the public.
- Foodie experts at Eat This, Shoot That! will lead holiday-themed "**Solvang Food Tours**," providing food and photo opportunities to touring foodies.
- **Candlelight tours** through Solvang will be offered to the public, led by holiday docents as a way for participants to explore the history-filled village on foot during the town's most festive time of year.
- More than 100 local merchants participating in a **tree-decorating contest**, similar to the Solvang Scarecrow Fest, will display their vibrant Christmas spruces throughout the town's streets, and will welcome guests during the day and in the after-hours for shopping and dining.

For Julefest event updates and announcements, visit www.SolvangJulefest.org.



Send a Holiday Smile to those Most in Need

For some, especially in 2020, it's the loneliest time of year

The holidays can be a lonely time for our eldest residents. Compound that with the current restrictive health guidelines that have secluded seniors more than ever before, and it's clear that NOW is the time for making spirits bright.

It's the season for GIVING, so why not send our seniors a smile? While you may not be able to pay a visit, or sing carols, you can still make a difference. Just pick up a pen and paper, write a letter or card, and send it to the Atterdag Residents. It may not be your typical Christmas tradition, but this simple activity is sure to bring you and your senior friends the Christmas spirit!



Send your cards and greetings to:

Atterdag Residents
636 Atterdag Road
Solvang, CA 93463



Letters to Santa Program is Back Again

During December, Santa Ynez Valley boys and girls can receive a letter from Santa Claus and his Elves! Children should mail their letters to Solvang Parks and Recreation and we'll be sure to get them to Santa. You must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and be postmarked by December 18. Letters received after this date, or letters without a return stamp/envelope have no guarantee of a return response.



Recreation Calendar:

Stay tuned for the **2021 Parks and Recreation Activity Calendar** coming soon! All programs follow current state and county guidelines.

Wondering What to Do With Your Tree?

Despite COVID, tree pickup service returns for 2020

The annual tree burn is still up in the air due to COVID-19, however, Solvang residents will again have the option to have their Christmas trees picked up by Waste Management.

Waste Management will be collecting trees during the week of January 4th (the first full week of January). Please contact us at CityHall@CityofSolvang.com or call us at 805-688-5575 with any questions.





Updated General Plan Coming to Solvang Public Encouraged to Participate in Planning Process

The City of Solvang will be kicking off a comprehensive General Plan update project in the coming weeks, after the City Council approved a contract with consultant firm Mintier Harnish at its October 12, 2020 meeting.

A General Plan is a broad planning guideline to a City's future development goals that provides policy statements to achieve those goals. Typically, a General Plan sets a vision for the foreseeable horizon of 10 to 20 years and should be updated every 10 years.

Local jurisdictions have freedom as to what their general plans include, however there are certain requirements. Under California state law, each General Plan must include the vision, goals, and objectives of the city or county in terms of planning and development within eight different "elements" defined by the state as: **land use, housing, circulation, conservation, noise, safety, open space,** and **environmental justice.**

Solvang has updated elements of its General Plan at various times in its history, most recently in 2015. One of the most important portions of Solvang's general plan is its **design** element, which requires the City's unique Danish architecture in its Tourism Related Commercial (TRC) district. This section, which is not required by law, was originally established in 1987, shortly after the City's incorporation.

The project, which will be led by the consultant firm Mintier Harnish, will include a large involvement from the Solvang community and City staff. The effort is scheduled for an 18-month duration, with an anticipated completion in Spring 2022.

One of the unique approaches of this General Plan effort will be its thorough outreach efforts with the public, especially in the initial months of the project. Various community members will be invited to participate in stakeholder interviews. Additionally, a series of community workshops will be held throughout the project, as well as numerous engagement avenues to keep the public constantly informed, such as a project website, a community survey, social media posts, email blasts and other community events. Given the current pandemic state, many of these forums will be held in virtual settings.

If you would like to ensure your participation in the project or have other questions, please contact us at CityHall@CityofSolvang.com or call us at 805-688-5575.

COVID-19 FISCAL OUTLOOK:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Solvang declared a local health and economic cessation emergency in the Spring of 2020. Throughout the summer season we began to see partial recovery of the tourism industry reaching as high as 68% occupancy in our hotels in the month of August. However, the City lost approximately \$1.5 million in general fund revenues in the Spring and projections for current fiscal year revenue from the hotel tax and sales tax are \$2 million lower than revenues generated prior to COVID-19 on an annual basis (\$7 million per year generated compared to \$9 million on an annual basis).

The City will continue to practice safe guidelines for tourism throughout the Julefest season.

Portion of Copenhagen Drive Closed

Closure in Effect through October 2021

In anticipation of changing COVID-19 restrictions in September 2020, the City Council approved a Resolution to maintain closure of two blocks on Copenhagen Drive between Alisal and Second Street through October 31, 2021. Unfortunately, Santa Barbara County has been moved into the most restrictive COVID-19 Tier (Purple) again by the State of California Health Order. In the purple tier, dining is only allowed outdoors. If the County meets requirements to move into the next stage of re-opening (Red), restaurants will be allowed to operate indoors at 25% capacity. The next stage (Orange) allows for 50% capacity for indoor operations.

The City of Solvang general fund, which funds the services provided to our community, is highly dependent on sources of revenue from tourism. About 50% of the general fund balance is generated by transient occupancy tax (hotel tax).



Another 15% of Solvang's general fund comes from sales tax. Tourism is the primary industry for the City of Solvang.

The Copenhagen Drive closure provides space for dining outdoors and social distancing. The businesses located in this area are required to adhere to the City of Solvang's Design Guidelines. The two blocks of Copenhagen Drive will also be decorated with lights and holiday decorations during the Julefest season.

Current Development Projects Update:

539 Alisal Road

- Three story facility with 11 residential units
- Approved by Planning Commission – 11/2/20



1660 Copenhagen Drive

- 300 sq ft for commercial retail/restaurant use
- Approved by Planning Commission – 9/8/20

1420 Mission Drive

- Boutique hotel with 11 units
- Approved by Planning Commission – 11/2/20



New Energy Provider to Begin Service

Accountholders may choose to opt out

Beginning January 2021, Central Community Coast Energy (3CE) will be the new electricity provider for the City of Solvang. In addition to Solvang, service begins in January 2021 for the following: Arroyo Grande, Del Rey Oaks, Guadalupe, Grover Beach, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach, Santa Maria, and other Northern Santa Barbara County communities.

3CE, which supports clean and renewable energy sources, will now be in charge of how and where your electricity is generated. PG&E will continue their role delivering electricity, maintaining infrastructure and billing customers. Customers still receive one monthly bill, containing both 3CE and PG&E charges.

There is an option to opt out of 3CE service, which can be done by calling (888) 909-6227 or visiting www.3CE.org/opt-out. There is no fee to opt-out before enrollment or within 60 days after 3CE service starts on January 1, 2021. After this period, an opt-out fee of \$5/residential account and \$25/commercial account applies.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call: (888) 909-6227

Visit: www.3CE.org/opt-out

Email: info@3ce.org

Enroll in upcoming webinars at

www.3CEnergy.org/2021-enrollment

12/8/20 - 6 pm: Residential customers

12/10/20 - 6 pm: Residential (Spanish)

1/12/20 - 12 pm: Commercial/Ag customers

2/9/20 - 6 pm: Residential customers

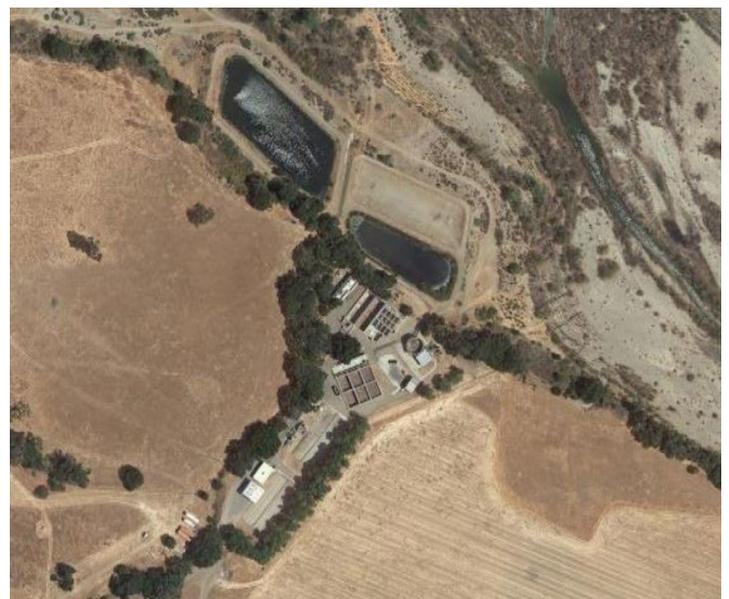
2/11/20 - 6 pm: Residential (Spanish)

Phased Upgrades to Occur at Solvang's Wastewater Treatment Plant

The existing Solvang Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is well over 20 years old and many components are antiquated or nearing the end of their useful life. In addition, new State regulations are requiring major changes to how the wastewater is being treated. Therefore, the WWTP is in need of major upgrades.

The upgrades are being implemented in 3 phases:

- **Phase 1** includes complete replacement and upgrade of the aeration system. The aeration system is one of the major treatment components. The construction drawings and specifications for the aeration system replacement project are 95% complete. Construction of the aeration system replacement project is expected to begin in April 2021.
- Design of **Phase 2**, which includes a new plant control office/laboratory, new clarifiers and numerous other upgrades, will begin in Spring of 2021. Construction of Phase 2 is anticipated to begin in 2022.
- **Phase 3** includes recycled water treatment and distribution facilities. Technical memos regarding Phases 2 and 3 will be presented to the Solvang City Council in winter 2021 for their further direction on the project.



Aerial view of Solvang's Wastewater Treatment Plant

Fifth Street Sidewalk Nearing Completion

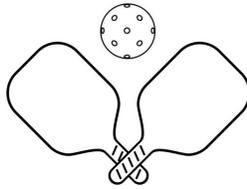
The Fifth Street Sidewalk project includes the minor widening of the east side of Fifth Street between Oak Street and Mission Drive, and the addition of new sidewalk along that same widened section of Fifth Street. The project is needed to improve the safety of school children and other pedestrians traveling between the multi-family residential area to the south and Solvang School to the north. Grant funding was secured by staff to cover 40% of the construction cost. Work is 80% complete but has unfortunately been delayed due to delays by PG&E to move overhead wires from the old poles to new poles set behind the new sidewalk. Construction is expected to be completed by February 2021.



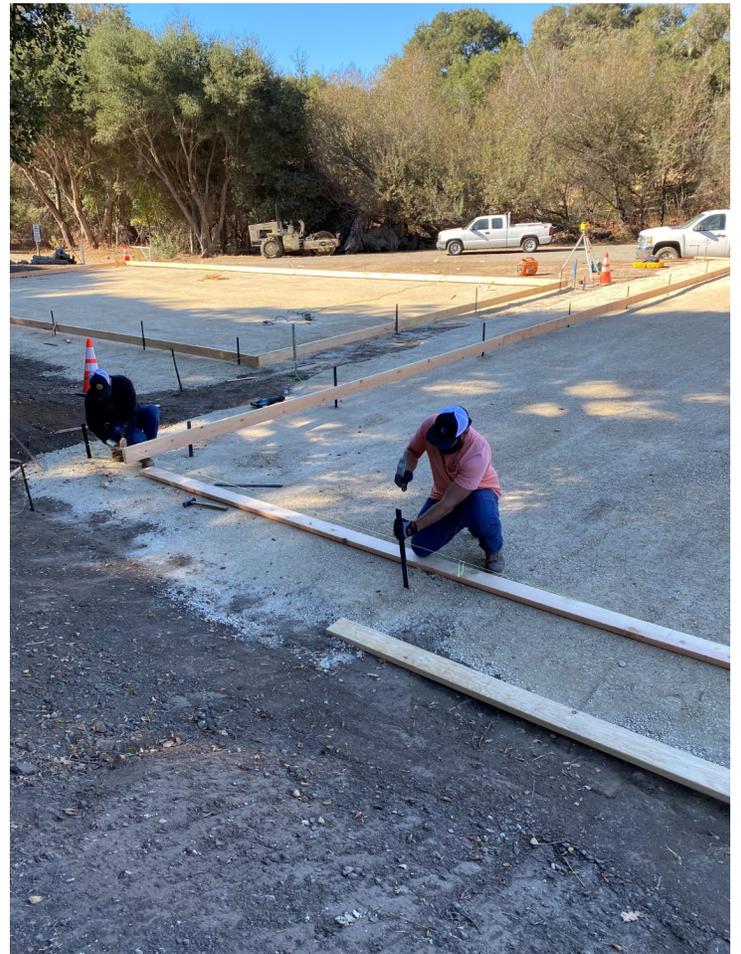
Two Pickleball Courts Coming to Solvang

Pickleball is a sport that has increased considerably in popularity over the last decade. For the past three years, the City has received numerous requests from residents to construct pickleball courts in Hans Christian Andersen Park. The need has been magnified during the current COVID-19 pandemic as residents have sought outdoor recreation activities.

In the past, the high cost of the project has prevented this from moving forward. However, Public Works staff recently devised a plan to utilize City forces and some community donations to significantly reduce the overall project cost and move the courts forward. All design work was completed by City staff. Construction is now in progress and about 35% complete. The project is expected to be completed in late April 2021.



The City of Solvang is seeking to reach **\$10,000** in **community donations** for the pickleball courts. If you'd like to donate, please send payment to 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, CA 93463 or contact us at CityHall@CityofSolvang.com or 805-688-5575.





City of Solvang
 1644 Oak Street
 Solvang, CA 93463

PRSRT STD
 ECRWSS
 U.S. Postage
 Paid
 Mailed from
 Zip Code
 92899
 Permit #146

*****ECRWSEDDM*****
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Solvang's Election Races Determined

Numerous local election measures were decided during the General Election on November 3rd. The outgoing City Council will preside over the first half of the December 14th City Council meeting. At the halfway point, Mayor **Charlie Uhrig**, and councilmembers **Mark Infanti** and **Claudia Orona** will be sworn in. The new City Council will preside over the second half of the meeting. Councilmember **Jim Thomas** was sworn in on November 30th and **Robert Clarke** will remain on the City Council through 2022.

City Council meetings are broadcast live on **Channel 23** in the Santa Ynez Valley, and **stream live** on the City's website. Due to COVID-19, the number of individuals attending in person is limited and remote public participation is encouraged. Those wishing to participate can attend the meeting via **Zoom** (Meeting ID 306 652 9195) or via **telephone** at 1-888-788-0099.



Advisory Board Openings

There are currently openings on the following Boards:

- Planning Commission
- Branding & Design Committee

Stay tuned for more information. The process for applications will be announced in late December / early January.

Calendar of Events

City Council Meetings

- 2nd and 4th Mondays
- 6:30 pm

Planning Commission Meetings

- 1st Monday
- 6:00 pm

Branding & Design Committee Meetings

- 2nd Thursday
- 6:00 pm