



YEAR IN REVIEW

SHAPING THE FUTURE **2023**

Prepared By:

CITY MANAGER

ARMINÉ CHAPARYAN

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MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL



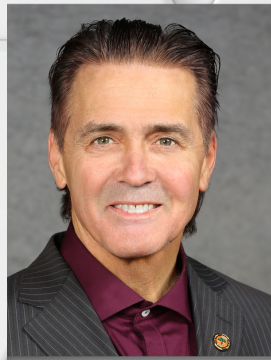
Mayor
Jon Primuth
District 3



Mayor Pro Tem
Evelyn Zneimer
District 1



Councilmember
Jack Donovan
District 2



Councilmember
Michael Cacciotti
District 4



Councilmember
Janet Braun
District 5



MISSION STATEMENT

The City of South Pasadena is committed to providing effective and efficient municipal services for the community while preserving our quality of life and small-town character in a 21st Century environment.

VISION

We are a culturally and economically diverse, and fiercely independent community that cherishes creativity, education, and our small-town character, committed to building a more just and environmentally and financially stable future.

Message From the City Manager

Dear Residents of South Pasadena,

As we bid farewell to another remarkable year in our beloved city, I am thrilled to reflect on the incredible progress we have made in 2023. Our collective dedication to enhancing the quality of life for our community has never been more evident. The year brought with it a wealth of accomplishments that would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our residents, dedicated staff, and City Council.



In a momentous stride towards progress, we successfully kicked off and broke ground on key infrastructure and transportation projects, including street repairs and improvement of major throughways. In addition, our focus on the Finance Department in partnership with our Finance Commission, which led to a timely budget and award winning audit from the Government Finance Office Association. This year, we also put a special focus on outreach and connection with our senior population, with additional resources and programming.

We continue to work toward our community's housing goals. The establishment of a Housing Division and passage of tenant protections that affect over 52% of our residents is great strides in housing and planning for the future of South Pasadena.

We look to unveil significant technology improvements to better facilitate user friendly services in early 2024, including, permits, program registration, public records requests, and more, making our services available at your fingertips.

We look forward to a fruitful year ahead, and working together toward a positive and productive 2024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Armine Chaparyan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Arminé Chaparyan
City Manager**

City Manager's Office

The City Manager is appointed by the City Council to oversee the activities of the City and to act as the Chief Administrative Officer. The City Manager's Office oversees Legislation, Economic Development, Communications, and Citywide Operational Projects including the Strategic Plan.

As we close the chapter on 2023, the City Manager's Office is delighted to share some of our year's accomplishments and initiatives. Throughout the year, the department remained dedicated to providing thorough communication to our community, and working with all City departments to implement the City's Strategic Plan.

One of the major achievements in 2023 was the development and continuous implementation of the City's Economic Development Strategy, known as "SouthPas 4Ward." This comprehensive strategy focuses on enhancing economic growth, fostering business innovation, and putting South Pasadena on the map. This strategy also launched the City Council Sub-Committee on Economic Development, where our team has worked closely with Councilmember Braun and Mayor Pro Tem Zneimer to discuss business friendly efforts. In response to the evolving digital landscape, the City Manager's office initiated a website redesign project after conducting a thorough Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The website is estimated to launch in Spring of 2024, and will create a user-friendly experience for the community and visitors looking to learn more about South Pasadena.



Recognizing the importance of community input, the department led a Strategic Planning Revisit process to gain valuable insight from residents and the community on city priorities. These results were then presented to the City Council for discussion. In addition to community input, community engagement played a large role this year in bringing the community together. The team launched the Experience SouthPas Program in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to promote local businesses and bring visitors to South Pasadena through uniquely curated trails that everyone can enjoy.

The City Manager's team was also proud to represent the City at various professional conferences this year and speak to our colleagues in the field about best practices when navigating communications, prioritizing diversity and inclusion, and how innovation can drive positive change. The team attended the California Association of Public Information Officers, League of California Cities, International Council of Shopping Centers, and the International City Manager's Association conference to learn and share how to best serve our community.



Community Development

The Community Development Department includes the City's Planning, Building and Safety, Community Improvement (code enforcement), Filming, and the Housing Divisions. The department oversees the planning and permitting of a safe, well-designed physical environment.

Several significant advanced planning projects were completed this year. The City received conditional approval of its 6th Cycle Housing Element from the CA Department of Housing and Community Development in May. This accomplishment launched the final phase of the adoption process for the City's new General Plan and Downtown Specific Plan, which was completed in early October. These new plans will facilitate attractive and compatible in-fill development in accordance with the State's mandate to streamline the production of new housing in California. Other accomplishments include the re-launch of the cultural landmark recognition program, where details are available on the department's website.

Other Planning Division accomplishments include the first phase launch of Accela Program - an online permitting system that went live for internal staff use to allow multiple departments to view and share information on development project review status, parcel information, and more. The second phase of the project that will go live in Summer 2024 will provide customers the opportunity to submit plans and view status updates. This year, the Design Review Board (DRB) reviewed the proposed building façade remodel and a new master sign program for the Former Vons shopping plaza at the northwest corner of Fair Oaks Avenue and Monterey Road. The DRB approved the project including a tenant improvement plan for a yet to be disclosed anchor tenant. Lastly, the division received 131 planning applications including 57 discretionary and 74 Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) applications.



The newly formed Housing Division conducted a joint study session with the Planning Commission to inform the community about affordable housing and recently adopted housing legislation. The division was formed to focus on housing legislation, affordable housing, and programs. The division also received a \$57,000 grant to develop its Missing Middle Housing Program. Additionally, the City Council approved an ordinance amending South Pasadena's Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance, prohibiting substantial remodel evictions after community outreach with renters, property owners, and community members.

The Community Improvement Division made major progress towards resolving the backlog of complex code enforcement cases, closing over 60% of these cases. In addition, the Division initiated a rental inspection program aimed at assisting tenants residing in substandard rental units in accordance with AB 838.

The South Pasadena Film Office issued 97 film permits in 2023 (Jan. 1 to Nov. 15) for a total of 128 days of filming.

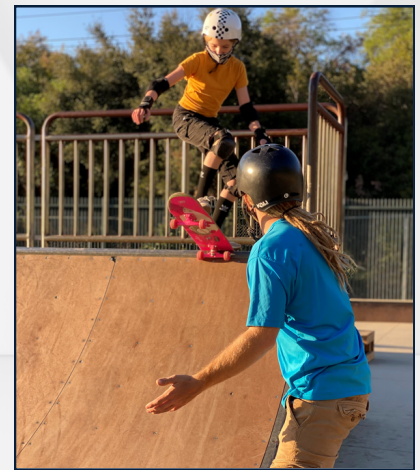


Community Services

The Community Services Department includes the Administration, Recreation and Youth Services, Senior Services, and Transit (Dial-A-Ride) divisions. The department is responsible for coordinating various activities, programs, classes, and events for the community, as well as overseeing various facility leases and contracts.

The Community Services Department had a successful year, implementing a new registration software for events and creating a co-sponsorship and special event application process. They co-sponsored several events, including the South Pasadena High School Homecoming, the SPEF Parti Gras Fundraiser, Eclectic Musical Festival, and more. Lease agreements were completed for I-Tennis and the Batting cages. The division also completed the Arroyo Seco Golf Course Study Session, a priority project for the City Council and received direction to conduct a Master Plan for the Arroyo. The department also saw a significant 109.5% social media growth on Facebook since last year, and also completed an organizational assessment.

The Recreation and Youth Services Division hosted various events and classes with over 3,800 participants. The events included Eggstravaganza, Pet Adoption, Concerts/Movies in the Park, Shakespeare in the Park, 4th of July Event, Halloween Spooktacular, Breakfast with Santa, and National Night Out. The 4th of July parade had 45 entries and over 3,000 attendees. Facility rental data included park gazebos and facilities such as the War Memorial Building and Youth House. Summer Camp Med saw a 24% increase in registration from 2022. The Department continues to prioritize staff training and prioritizes safe and fun experiences for Summer and After School programming.



The Senior Services division hosted dozens of themed lunch programming to promote socialization and community engagement among the older adult community. A new caterer that is dedicated to nutritionally balanced meals now provides lunch services to seniors in ensuring they enjoy healthy and delicious options. Health prioritization continued this year with a flu vaccine clinic event and two COVID-19 booster clinic events. New programming included Hispanic Heritage Month and Native American month events. 13 excursions were offered to seniors including trips to the SoFi Stadium, Festival of Arts of Laguna Beach, and Tanaka Farms. The senior division also launched their first Older Adult Resource Guide, which provides resources on employment, financial, legal, and social services.



The Transit Division also had many accomplishments this year including the launch of the Transit Division assessment and survey, 6,383 trips with 216 active riders, and the receiving of an all-electric van for Dial-a-Ride.

Finance

The Finance Department oversees all fiscal services, including the preparation of accounting and financial reporting for all City funds. In addition, the department is responsible for the coordination and management of treasury services, utility billing and customer service, and preparing the City's Annual Budget.

This year the team welcomed a permanent Finance Director as well as other key team members. They hit the ground running in reviewing the teams processes and policies. With this new leadership in place, the team is looking forward to a prosperous journey filled with innovation, efficiency, and stability. Keeping in line with goals from the previous year, the department delivered a midyear budget, timely budget, and audit to the council in a joint meeting with the Finance Commission. Fostering collaboration and aligning the cities strategies for the future.

For the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget, the team worked cohesively with all departments to complete a zero-based budget. Each department assigned staff to work with Finance on building each budget from the ground up. Through a rigorous review process, the budget was adopted in a timely manner. The City's Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report was awarded a Certificate of Achievement from the Government Finance Officers Association. This award shines a light on the City's dedication to transparency through financial reporting. With the current Annual Comprehensive Financial Report under way, we are on track with timely reporting and documents to help resume the priorities of the Finance Commission.



The department also introduced and is working closely with financial professionals, including Craig Hill from NHA Advisors, to create a comprehensive 5-year forecast. The firm is taking this task a step further by assisting in developing dynamic models that can be used to project different financial scenarios. Essentially, this tool can be used to help engage the community, commissions, and council in the city's financial prosperity. This new report will be presented in early 2024, with a focus on informing City Council on current and future finances to best inform policy and decisions. In September of 2023, the City Council approved the implementation of a new budgeting software with Qwestica. Finance has been building the infrastructure for the software and training on the different uses and capabilities. The department plans to implement this software for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget.

In October 2023, Finance staff were able to attend the annual Springbrook Conference allowing them to learn from specialized professionals how to utilize our software's tools to their full potential. They were able to gain insight into the software's advancements, giving them a glimpse into the future of governmental finance. The department also partnered with the City Manager's Office in bringing businesses in South Pasadena into compliance with business licensing. As the department continues to grow with the onboarding of Finance Manager, Terry Kim, and Accountant, Yana Pedan, the upcoming year has ample potential for continuous developments.

Fire

The Fire Department is a full service department providing fire, rescue services, paramedics, safety education, inspections, plan reviews, and emergency management. The department operates in conjunction with the other thirteen agencies affiliated with Verdugo Fire Communications.

This year, the Fire Department updated important documents that will serve in providing direction to the City in the case of emergencies, including the City Emergency Operation Plan and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is the strategy that enables implementation of local actions that reduce vulnerability and risk from hazards such as extreme weather events or natural disasters.

The department continues to prioritize staff development and training. There was a total of 4,453 hours spent on training for company, EMS, pre-planning, driving, hazmat, and officer training. As the team continues to prioritize retaining and recruiting quality employees, they were excited to welcome new firefighter paramedics this year.

The team continues to maintain their Emergency Response Times below the National Standard of 5 minutes. The department also was recognized this year by LA County Department of Health Services with the Gold Standard Award - High Level of EMS Care for Patients with Life Threatening Cardiac Emergencies.

This year's data from the Fire Department includes the following:

- 2,585 total responses
 - 2,118 EMS
 - 347 Fires
 - 109 Service
 - 11 Other
- The most common EMS calls for the year were falls, difficulty breathing, and chest pain.
- Of the 347 fire responses, 183 were structural buildings, 45 were brush/vegetation, and 31 electrical/power line.



Library

The Public Library is a welcoming gathering space for the community that builds connections, supports creativity, and encourages learning. The Library is responsible for maintaining a large collection of physical and digital resources for children, teens, and adults, and for helping meet their information needs. The Library also hosts various events and programs for a range of community members to participate in and enjoy.

2023 was a busy and productive year for the South Pasadena Public Library. Highlights include the adoption of the 2023–2027 Strategic Plan, the addition of a new Support Services Librarian and Children’s Librarian to our team, and the allocation of funds by the City Council to begin a Master Site Planning project for the Library and Senior Center.

More than 250 programs were planned by Library staff, which drew a total attendance of over 10,000 participants. These diverse programs encompassed the All Abilities Club, Book to Art programs, Storytimes, and notably, the Summer Reading Program, which alone attracted over 1,900 enthusiastic participants. In 2023, the Library added 8,173 new items to its collection and saw borrowing return to pre-pandemic levels, with 327,279 check-outs. Visitor numbers also rebounded to 205,794.



The Library’s achievements and successes for this year were aligned with four focus areas outlined in the Library’s 2023–2027 Strategic Plan.

Operational:

- Launched Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Staff Committee, with seven participating members.
- Held first ever Staff Summer Reading Challenge, with encouraged inter-departmental camaraderie.

Service:

- Installed an interior book drop to better meet customer needs.
- Continued to diversify the collection by adding a substantial collection of Teaching Company/Wondrium Great Courses on DVD, broadening access for our diverse customer base.
- Instituted the All Abilities Club, an engaging program geared toward adults with developmental disabilities that was attended by more than 50 people per meet-up.
- Digitized hundreds of historical photos belonging to SPUSD, with the help of SPHS volunteers, to make them available online.
- Secured a \$22,000 grant from the California State Library to fund “Sowing South Pasadena”, a sustainability-themed project, which includes establishing a Seed Library, a series of programs, and more.

Facility

- Replaced decades-old non-ergonomic workstations to accommodate four full-time and six part-time staff.

Technology

- Implemented a module that streamlines workflows, tracking, and shows customers items in the catalog when they are on order.



Management Services

The Management Services Department includes the City's Information Technology Division, Human Resources and Risk Division, and the City Clerk's Office. The department is responsible for recruitments, elections, and support of Citywide commissions and boards.

This year, the Management Services Department of South Pasadena has witnessed transformative growth and innovation across its various divisions. Their dedicated efforts have significantly enhanced citywide operations, reflecting a continued commitment to progress and community service. The Department expanded their team, welcoming two Deputy City Clerks, a Human Resources & Risk Manager, and two Management Assistants. These strategic hires have bolstered the department's capabilities, bringing fresh perspectives and expertise to their operations.

The Innovation and Technology Division made remarkable strides in modernizing the City's technological infrastructure. These accomplishments included an Office 365 Integration, which included transitioning all city personnel to Office 365, fostering enhanced productivity and seamless collaboration both within the City and with external agencies. In addition, they accomplished a VoIP System implementation that upgraded to RingCentral, a cutting-edge VoIP phone system, replacing our outdated phone infrastructure. Lastly, the division initiated a comprehensive hardware replacement phase, a crucial step in elevating the City's technological prowess to better serve the community.



The Human Resources and Risk Management Division accomplished several projects, including streamlining the City's hiring process, facilitating internal promotions, and launching NeoGov Learn for employee training. The division recruited for 55 positions, onboarded 26 full-time and 25 part-time hires, and processed 15 internal promotions. They also implemented the Onboard module for efficient staff onboarding and initiated a comprehensive analysis of job titles, career paths, and groups to align with market and internal structures.

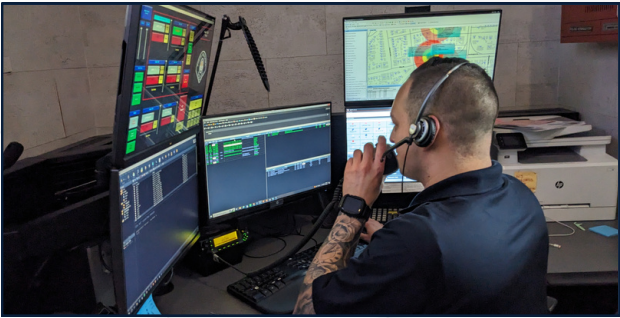
Lastly, the City Clerk's Office enhanced operational efficiencies this year by implementing various technological improvements and citywide training sessions. Advancements included the implementation of GovQA for public records requests and Peak for Agenda Management. In addition, the division initiated the upgrade of the City's electronic record management system. The division also had a wonderful time putting together this year's Commissioner Congress event that brought together City Commissions to discuss annual accomplishments while fostering an environment for networking.

Police

The South Pasadena Police Department is dedicated to providing community-oriented policing through community partnerships, crime prevention strategies, utilizing the latest technology, and social media to keep the community informed on safety programs.

The South Pasadena Police Department is dedicated to providing community-oriented policing through strong community partnerships, effective crime prevention strategies, utilization of the latest technology, and social media communication to keep the community informed on safety programs.

Throughout the year, the department worked closely with the City Council and the Public Safety Commission to address priorities as identified in the Strategic Plan and the Commission's workplan. Related community engagement included Coffee with a Cop events, National Night Out, and a catalytic converter etching event.



The Police Department installed the newly acquired Automated License Plate Reader cameras, which can alert police if a vehicle traveling in the City has been used in a crime, is stolen or wanted, or associated with a missing person. The department has also continued to make significant progress in moving forward with the all-electric fleet for the department's administrative and patrol vehicles. The Department has the detective and administrative fleet vehicles fully deployed. Numerous patrol vehicles have either completed or are nearing completion of the upfitting process, and the Department aims to have the patrol vehicles fully completed in early 2024.



Under the direction of the City Manager for all City departments, the Police Department is undergoing a department organizational assessment in order to analyze the current state of the department, review policies, and receive recommendations to improve upon the operations and incorporate industry best practices. The assessment is poised to identify specific and actionable priority management, resources, staffing, and community service improvement. The consultants completed extensive outreach to the community, department and City staff, and stakeholder groups, and are currently finalizing their findings report, which will go before the City Council and the Public Safety Commission in a joint meeting in early 2024.



Public Works

The South Pasadena Public Works Department operates the City's public works systems and programs such as water system management, sewer maintenance, waste management and recycling, water conservation, traffic management, street design and maintenance, public facilities, and more.

In line with the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and its continued efforts to improve streets, mobility, and water and sewer systems, the Public Works Department held a State of Streets Special Joint City Council & Commission session to review the status and strategies related to street improvement work. Subsequently, Public Works awarded the first street improvement contract of the fiscal year, and began pre-construction work. 2023 also saw significant progress towards electrifying the City's fleet, including the development of a 34-port charging system design at City Hall. In addition, Department staff completed a comprehensive report to the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Enforcement Unit on the status of the City's sewer improvements, and worked with a consultant to develop construction plans for a new grant funded San Pascual stormwater wetland and recreation area along Stoney Drive. The Department was also awarded funding for additional stormwater projects in 2023.

Infrastructure

- The Public Works team launched the Residential Slow Streets program, a temporary installation to showcase designs that incorporate traffic calming measures for residential streets: Oak Avenue, Hermosa Street, and Grand Avenue. Staff received over 700 survey responses and comments regarding the program. Staff also worked to develop the second phase of this program in the Mission Street business district which includes new parklet equipment and a reconfiguration of Mission Street.
- City staff from multiple departments partnered with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and ActiveSGV to hold the 2023 ArroyoFest Open Streets Event – closing Mission Street, Orange Grove and the SR-110 Arroyo Parkway for pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy. This event brought in about 40,000 visitors to the city!
- This year, the Public Works Department started the North-South Corridor Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Deployment Project, which upgrades traffic signals along Fair Oaks and Huntington Drive.
- The Department also initiated a comprehensive study along Marengo Avenue, and major transportation projects along Fremont and Huntington Drive. Partnering with a consultant, Staff conducted community design charettes for three main arterials in the City – Fremont Avenue, Huntington Drive and Fair Oaks Avenue. The engagement included approximately 27 stakeholders and 176 community members through public meetings, open studios, and stakeholder interviews, where attendees shared their feedback, and conveyed a shared vision for future.



Public Works Cont.

Water Division

As part of the Westside Reconstruction project design development process, the Water Division worked with the City's Engineering Consultant to complete a site assessment and structural analysis of the Westside Reservoir. Eight (8) water main breaks and nine (9) service leaks were repaired by the Water Division. In addition, the Water Division staff issued 162 conservation notices and took the opportunity to educate residents on the City's efforts to reduce water use, providing materials and rebate information.

The City of South Pasadena celebrated 24 years as a Tree City USA, hosting an Arbor Day Tree Dedication to meet Tree City USA requirements and planted 81 trees. This year, the Department awarded multi-year maintenance contracts for urban forestry services and landscaping services, and underwent a reorganization of its Operations Division to streamline parks and facilities maintenance work.



Sustainability

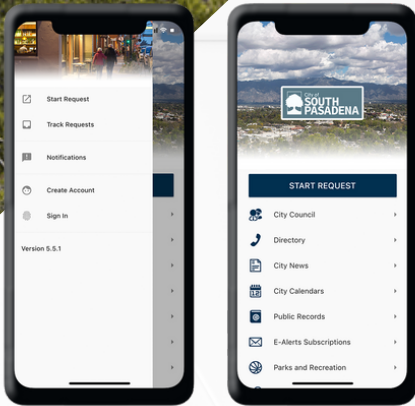
The Environmental Services and Sustainability Division hosted numerous events for the community this year including two compost and mulch giveaways, four electric leaf blower demonstrations, a Sustainability Fair at the vibrant Nature Park, a tree planting at Arroyo Park to celebrate Earth Day, and an informative Solid Waste Community Feedback Session. Staff continued efforts for ongoing initiatives including the implementation of organics recycling services for all community members, establishing edible food recovery programs, and the enforcement of the gas-powered leaf blower ban.

The division's Water Conservation Program issued over \$60,000 in Metropolitan Water District and City rebates, conducted over a dozen home assessments, and distributed free Water Conservation Kits. To finish off the year, the Environmental Services and Sustainability Division announced the City of South Pasadena's achievement in reaching the Champion Tier (the highest tier) in San Gabriel Valley Council Of Government's Energy Champion Awards which recognizes the City's efforts in increasing energy efficiency in municipal facilities and engaging in long-term strategic planning for energy efficiency.



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