



MEMORANDUM

TO:	Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Sean Rabé, City Manager
DATE:	February 10, 2025
SUBJECT:	City Manager Report for February 10th City Council Meeting

Mayor and Council Members,

The following report provides an update on some of the major activities City Staff has been working on recently:

City Manager's Department:

- *Cannabis Ordinance Underway:* As Council knows, Staff was directed last year to begin the process of bringing a recreational cannabis ordinance to the City Council for consideration. Staff has been working through how that process would look, which includes everything from the types of cannabis that would be allowed to potential areas in the City that would allow recreational cannabis. Staff took a field trip to Grass Valley in the Fall to speak to the City's management, planning and police departments about the process that city used in preparation of bringing its recreational cannabis ordinance forward to their City Council. Staff also toured a dispensary in Grass Valley. We anticipate bringing more information to Council in the Spring for a study session.
- *Ongoing Technology Improvements to City Hall:* You may notice television monitors placed throughout City Hall. These monitors are part of the ongoing City Hall technology project, being funded with ARPA funding, that is being spearheaded by City Clerk Amy Lind. The monitors will provide directional signage, provide a listing of meetings occurring in the building, and will provide a digital listing of City officials. The remaining technology upgrades will focus on the City Council Chambers to make City Council meetings smoother. Amy has done a great job with this project and has really worked to create a more inviting City Hall using technology. I'm looking forward to the final result.

Police Department:

- *APD Works Through Elder Abuse Case:* APD is pleased to recognize the exemplary efforts of our patrol officers working the front end of the week, Jarod Collins, Zach Hopping, and Sgt. Anthony Davis in solving a recent elder abuse case. On February 3, 2025, officers responded to a report of a verbal altercation

at the train station and were quickly able to identify and follow up on leads that ultimately led to the identification of two suspects involved in a violent incident. Through diligent investigative work, including securing video evidence and interviewing key witnesses, officers were able to quickly piece together the details of the incident. The case involved a serious assault on a 76-year-old victim, and the swift response and professionalism of our officers were key in bringing the suspects to justice.

- *New DUI Vehicle Arrives:* APD is excited to announce the arrival of our new DUI enforcement vehicle! This specialized unit was made possible through a CHP grant prepared by Sergeant Neri, further enhancing our ability to keep Auburn's roads safe. The vehicle will be instrumental in DUI enforcement efforts, helping officers detect and deter impaired driving more effectively. This addition underscores our commitment to traffic safety and ensuring the well-being of our community.

Planning/Economic Department:

- *Follow Explore Auburn Socials Online:* The Community and Economic Development Department was able to partner with the Old Town and Downtown Business Associations to hire Jump Ramp Media to start to generate content for the stagnate Explore Auburn Instagram and Facebook. The sites will be used to put out information for all things Auburn.
- *Wells Fargo Bldg. Owner to Pitch to HDRC:* On February 18th the Historic Design Review Committee will get an early preview of the plans for the Wells Fargo Building in Downtown. This is a fairly new concept where property owners pitch ideas to the HDRC before they are fully developed to get feedback so that they can better ensure that what they are planning will pass the committee's future review. This meeting will take place at 6pm in Room 10.
- *Mark Your Calendar:* It was announced by Barry Miller at the work session on January 27th that there would be two more community engagement meetings for the public to get information on the developing plan for the city and provide input. These meetings have been set for March 5th from 6:00 PM-8:00 PM PM and March 15th from 10:00 AM - noon. Both will take place in the Rose Room at City Hall and both will feature refreshments.

Finance Department:

- *Mid-Year Financial Update News:* This week Council will receive an update on the FY 2024-25 budget as of the 2nd quarter of the fiscal year (i.e. mid-year) that takes revenues and expenditures incurred through December 2024, updated budget requests from departments and updated revenue trends, to produce the first year-end FY 2024-25 projection for the General Fund. The City's other funds such as Airport and Sewer Enterprises, and Special Revenue Funds will be included though not an area of intense focus as the General Fund continues to be. It's been a year since the discovery of a structure budget deficit in the General Fund and several strategic steps taken by City leadership in

cooperation with City Council have occurred. A hiring freeze in April 2024, budget reductions and reallocation of one-time funding solutions as of July 2024, and in October 2024 a resolution for labor cost reductions of \$1.1 million in the General Fund needed by June 30, 2025. In parallel, a timely opportunity to address the City's history of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) limitations resulted in the voter passage of Measure F to increase TOT taxes and expand the collection to short-term rentals, are resulting in more ongoing revenue for the City. The Mid-Year Financial Update will report the positive news that these efforts are achieving the desired target to close the budget deficit on an ongoing basis. Closing the budget gap is step one; however, the City requires an ongoing surplus to address deferred priorities such as labor, replenishment of reserves to policy levels, stormwater, building and equipment maintenance. With a small surplus now projected in the multi-year financial forecast for the General Fund, City leadership and City Council have their work cut out for them to prioritize how best to allocate this resource for the fiscal sustainability of the future.

Fire Department:

- *Auburn Fire Department – Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council:* has been working diligently to improve fire safety not only in the City of Auburn but also in the surrounding communities of Bowman, Newcastle, and Penryn. In recent weeks, their board members have been meeting with external stakeholders to establish effective lines of communication and address concerns regarding hazardous vegetation on both public and private lands. I would like to recognize their efforts and thank them for their commitment to enhancing fire safety in the greater Auburn area, as well as for their continued support of all fire agencies within their jurisdiction.
- *Bureau of Reclamation – Auburn Shaded Fuel Break:* The Auburn Fire Department attended a site visit of the Auburn Shaded Fuel Break on Wednesday, January 29th. Chiefs Rogers and Jelle joined representatives from the Bureau of Reclamation's (BOR) Central California Area Office, Placer Resource Conservation District (RCD), and State Parks to assess the condition of the fuel break between Highway 49 and Robie Point. BOR is collaborating with CALFIRE, State Parks, and RCD to conduct ongoing maintenance. On January 30th, Battalion Chief D'Ambrogi revisited the fuel break with CALFIRE Battalion Chief Hale and RCD representatives to provide historical context on past fuel reduction efforts. If all goes as planned, crews will soon begin retreating select areas that require maintenance. Stay tuned for additional updates from BOR and the Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council.

Public Works Department:

- *Wastewater Treatment Plant Honored AGAIN:* At the California Water Environment Association awards banquet on Friday, February 7, 2025, the City's wastewater treatment plant was honored for the 12th consecutive year with the Small Plant of the Year award, along with the Small Collection System

of the Year award. These achievements, received by staff, are a testament to the City Council's commitment to maintaining top-tier operations that align with long-term growth objectives.

- Additionally, on the same day, City staff received an update from Union Pacific regarding the sewer upgrades associated with the roundabout at Hwy 49 and Borland. While explicit approval to proceed was not granted as hoped, Union Pacific requested three additional items:
 - The original license agreement for the undocumented sewer line being removed (City staff is working with Placer County records to locate any relevant documents).
 - 2 & 3. Additional plan sheets for two sewer line segments north and south of the intersection (which Caltrans staff is preparing).

Although this was not the ideal outcome, with prior research already underway and Caltrans eager to move forward, staff remains confident that the project is still on track for the spring construction season.

QUESTIONS? Please contact me at the phone number below or by email at srabe@auburn.ca.gov.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean Rabé". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Sean" and the last name "Rabé" clearly visible, followed by a short horizontal line.

Sean Rabé, City Manager