



MEMORANDUM

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

- *Employee Appreciation Lunch:* This past Friday was Employee Appreciation Day, and City Staff gathered on Thursday for a pizza lunch to share some fellowship and delicious old Town Pizza.

I've said before that cities are in the people business – whether those people are residents, business owners/patrons, or employees. Our employees are the driving force behind this City, and we simply can't do the work we do without them.

I know that the past year has presented a number of challenges because of the City's fiscal situation, but I do want to express my appreciation to our employees for their resilience and adaptability. They consistently rise to the occasion, and their commitment to excellence shines through in everything they do.

- *KAHI Interview:* I was able to go on KAHN radio for the first time last week, when I was interviewed on my background and a couple of pressing things that the City has been working on lately. Since I've been told I have a face for radio, KAHN has asked me to be on for about 15 minutes on the first Thursday of each month at 8:14 am.

Police Department:

- *Auburn PD Saying Goodbye to Exceptional Team Members:* Dispatcher Zavala is wrapping up her time with Auburn PD as she joins Roseville PD. A dedicated professional, she earned Dispatcher of the Year (2019) and multiple Employee of the Month awards. Beyond the radio, she mentored new dispatchers, improved efficiency with key programs, and played a crucial role in the 2018

Butte Fire mutual aid deployment. Her leadership and impact on officer safety will not be forgotten.

Officer Schnetz is transitioning to the Amador County Sheriff's Office after nearly three years of service. A leader in DUI enforcement, he earned MADD's "Rookie of the Year" for 67 DUI arrests in 2023 and multiple MADD and 10851 (Stolen Vehicle) awards. His dedication to public safety and relentless work ethic have left a lasting mark on Auburn PD.

Officer Hatcher, well known in the community simply as "Tommy," is transitioning to the Placer County Sheriff's Office after his time with Auburn PD. Known for his calm demeanor and dedication, Officer Hatcher has been recognized for his ability to handle unexpected situations, including catching a horse while on duty. He also served with the Auburn PD Honor Guard and assisted with fire-related operations during the Palisades Fire, further demonstrating his commitment to the community.

- ***Auburn Police Department Responds to Detached Garage Fire on Finley Street:*** On March 4, 2025, at approximately 0328 hours, the Auburn Police Department responded to a fully engulfed detached garage fire in the 400 block of Finley Street. Upon arrival, emergency responders from Auburn Fire, Cal Fire, and Newcastle Fire Departments worked swiftly and efficiently to contain and extinguish the blaze. PG&E was also on the scene to assess and address a downed power line damaged in the fire. The cause of the fire remains under investigation to determine the exact cause. The Auburn Police Department thanks the firefighters, first responders, and utility teams for their prompt response. Their swift action quickly brought the situation under control, minimizing damage and preventing further risks to the community.

Planning/Economic Department:

- ***Auburn Recreation:*** After contributing to the development of Specialized Bikes' R&D facility in Auburn, it's become clear that strengthening the City's connection with the Auburn Recreation Area (ARA) is crucial. In a meeting last week with Lauren Shoemaker, the State Park Superintendent II, we discussed opportunities for the City to support the growth of recreational activities, particularly mountain biking, which is rapidly becoming a key user group in the park. One of the City's primary challenges now is to establish better connectivity between Auburn and the Recreation Area, ensuring that residents and visitors alike view Auburn as the gateway to outdoor adventure and recreation in the ARA.
- ***Station A:*** The conversation surrounding the preservation of Station A (the historic Post Office) in Old Town is taking an exciting new direction. The City Historian and Placer County Historical Society are collaborating with the Community and Economic Development department to explore the possibility

of reopening the building as a tourist welcome center and museum. Discussions have begun with the building's owner, who appears open to this idea. A team is currently working on a business plan to cover the costs of rent and utilities. This plan will be developed through partnerships with the Old Town Business Association, the City, and the Historical Society. More updates on this promising project will be available soon.

Finance Department:

- *Undergoing upgrades:* The Finance Department is continually making improvements. This week, two major upgrades are underway. The first is the "go live" of the City's new budgeting software.

Staff have been working behind the scenes for months to design, program, and beatify the budget software user interface in preparation for the month of March 2025. The software went live on March 6th and Department Heads are actively taking their first steps to learn the new software and enter their FY 2025-26 budget requests. Finance wants to thank our partner department, Human Resources, for their huge lift to enter hundreds of lines of data for employee costs into the system. The City now has a one-stop shop for calculating employee costs, which will be a tremendous time-saver for Finance, Human Resources, and City leadership.

The other upgrade is an update to the Finance Department pages on the City's website. A year ago, the former Administrative Services Department split into separate departments, but the City's website did not get updated until now as Finance takes the wheel to perform a refresh. Finance is working closely with our City Clerk who is the current website guru for the City. The Finance website continues to be the landing place for State requirements to post specific financial data.

During this past year, the State required the publication of the Successor Agency payment plan ("ROPS") and upcoming this April 2025 is a new requirement to publish City sales tax rebate agreements. In addition, information sharing with the public has become increasingly important with respect to business licenses, transient occupancy tax, transparent budgeted and financial reporting.

The Finance area of the City's website will soon incorporate all of these things in an easily accessible format.

Fire Department:

- *Auburn Fire Department – Structure Fire on Parkside Terrace:* On March 4th at approximately 3:30am, the Auburn Fire Department, along with engines from Placer County Fire/CALFIRE and the Newcastle Fire Protection District, responded to a reported structure fire in a detached garage on Parkside Terrace. Upon arrival, Auburn Fire units found the single-car garage well

involved with fire. Battalion Chief McCarthy assumed command of the incident. Crews successfully contained the fire to the building of origin and conducted salvage and overhaul operations. The incident was fully mitigated in approximately two hours. The Auburn Police Department and PG&E also responded to provide incident support.

- *Auburn Fire Department – Attends Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Zone 0 Workshop*: On March 4th, Battalion Chief McCarthy attended a public workshop hosted by the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF) to discuss updates to the state's Defensible Space regulations. A key takeaway from the workshop was the establishment of Zone 0 requirements, which will be added to the state's existing 0-30 and 30-100 foot Defensible Space zones. The City of Auburn proactively implemented this requirement for all new construction in July 2024. The BOF announced that once Zone 0 requirements are implemented, existing structures will have a three-year grace period to comply with new the new requirements. The Auburn Fire Department will continue monitoring these changes and provide recommendations for local updates as needed.
- *Auburn Fire Department – Supports Placer County Fire/CAL FIRE with Automatic Aid*: On March 5th at approximately 10:30am, the Auburn Fire Department provided automatic aid to Placer County Fire/CALFIRE for a reported structure fire on Merry Knoll Road. Captain Rendon and Engine 1282 arrived to find a single-family home with light smoke showing. Crews quickly assessed the situation and discovered a working oven fire with minor extension into the structure. One occupant was evaluated for smoke inhalation, but declined further treatment. Auburn Fire personnel assisted Placer County Fire/CALFIRE with extinguishment and overhaul operations. During the incident, Newcastle Fire Protection District's Engine 41 provided city coverage.
- *Auburn Fire Department – Supports the Auburn Police Department with Badges and Books*: Captain Rendon, Engineer Rea, and Firefighter Steil supported the Auburn Police Department on March 5th with their Badges and Books program at the Palm Terrace Apartments. Personnel spent time answering various fire department and safety related questions. The kids received a tour of the fire engine and finished with a group photo in front of the engine.

Public Works Department:

- PW has begun replacing the backup generator at the Police Department. While the new generator is installed and operational in case of a power outage, we are still waiting for some final cleanup items currently being shipped from Canada. Due to ongoing border issues, delivery is taking longer than usual.

- Staff is exploring alternatives to purchasing biomass energy credits from the Desert View biomass facility to help meet the City's SB 1383 procurement target, instead of purchasing and handling compost. Over the last year, Desert View has experienced mechanical failures, leading to its closure. Staff has met with one potential provider and is actively evaluating other options.
- Similar to the Aeolia Dr. project, City staff is coordinating with PCWA to replace a sewer line along Sawyer St., from Chamberlain Ave. to Placer St. PCWA is in the planning phase of replacing a century-old water line, which will require roadway reconstruction. Since this area is known for sewer issues, addressing the City's underground infrastructure at the same time would be a cost-effective approach. As the project develops, it will be brought to the Council for further consideration.

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



Sean Rabé, City Manager