

Community Development & Infrastructure Newsletter

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Building communities from the ground up. Striving to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public by providing essential services for daily life.

The Sustainability Update Project

Natisha Williams, Planner IV



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The Sustainability Policy and Regulatory Update (“Sustainability Update”) is a comprehensive update to the County’s General Plan/Local Coastal Program and modernization of the County Code. The project also includes preparation of new Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines and rezoning of key opportunity sites. The goal of this update is to implement new policies and code regulations that support more sustainable communities in Santa Cruz County, streamline permit processes, and ensure that County policies and regulations are consistent with recently adopted state laws, and regional and local plans. This update will shape land use and transportation planning, as well as future development, in Santa Cruz County for many years to come.

Public hearings are currently underway and will continue through the end of the year before final certification at the Coastal Commission, expected in Spring 2023. *Explore the project website to learn more and follow the progress of the Sustainability Update:* <http://www.sccoplanning.com/SustainabilityUpdate>. For questions and comments, please contact the Policy Division at SustainabilityUpdate@santacruzcounty.us.



Camino Online Permit Guide

Carolyn Burke, Assistant Director

CDI has partnered with Camino, a technology company that builds customer service software for permitting agencies to create online permit guides for typical development projects. Using a project's location and the applicant's answers to questions, Camino permit guides provide a customized checklist that leads applicants through the entire process of submitting a building permit application. One reviewer called it "Turbo Tax for permits."

Each guide will include application submittal requirements, as well as alerts regarding locations that could affect the feasibility or design of a project. Alert examples include locations within a flood area, sensitive habitat, or zoning conflicts.

Camino's Permit Guide will offer these benefits and more:

- A knowledge hub that provides a single place to learn about the process of submitting for a permit before formally doing so.
- A guided process that automatically provides every applicant with a list of the forms and documents that are required for their unique project.
- A regulation guide that knows the up-to-date code requirements by the actual location of the project.

Consistent, rules-based information to ensure that staff and customers are on the same page.

From a PRIMO! process improvement standpoint, the permit guide will better prepare applicants for inter-agency issues that may come up during plan review and encourage pre-application consultations or redesigns in the concept phase as opposed to during County review of the project. More complete applications at the outset will reduce the number of review comments needed by each agency as well as the overall number of routings and resulting backlog in the review queue for each section.

Initially, we will offer Camino Permit Guides for residential building permit projects such as new homes, additions, remodels, and ADUs. Over time, permit guides will be expanded to include commercial building permit projects and, eventually, discretionary projects such as coastal permits. Applicant use of the Camino permit guides will be optional, but we are anticipating that our customers will find the permit guides to be an essential first stop on the path to a permit.

To provide customers with this type of functionality County staff must build the logic and content that power the Camino per-

mit guide, with rules governing which Code requirements are triggered by specific criteria. This ambitious task has been a collaborative effort of staff members who have spent time mapping, testing, and analyzing their own section processes to assist. Annette Olson, Forrest Revere, Heather Reynolds, Michael Hettenhausen, Jessica deGrassi, Jeff Nolan, Nate MacBeth, Leah MacCarter, Brian Rubin, and Laura Mellish have been integral to this effort. Staff will be testing the permit guide during the first two weeks of October, and the pilot will go live on the Planning Division website in early November 2022.

Questions or suggestions related to the Camino Online Permit Guide may be directed to:

CaminoCDI@santacruzcounty.us.



Camino

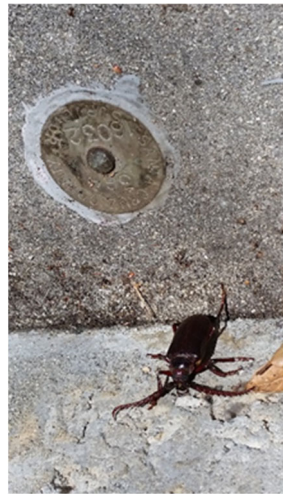
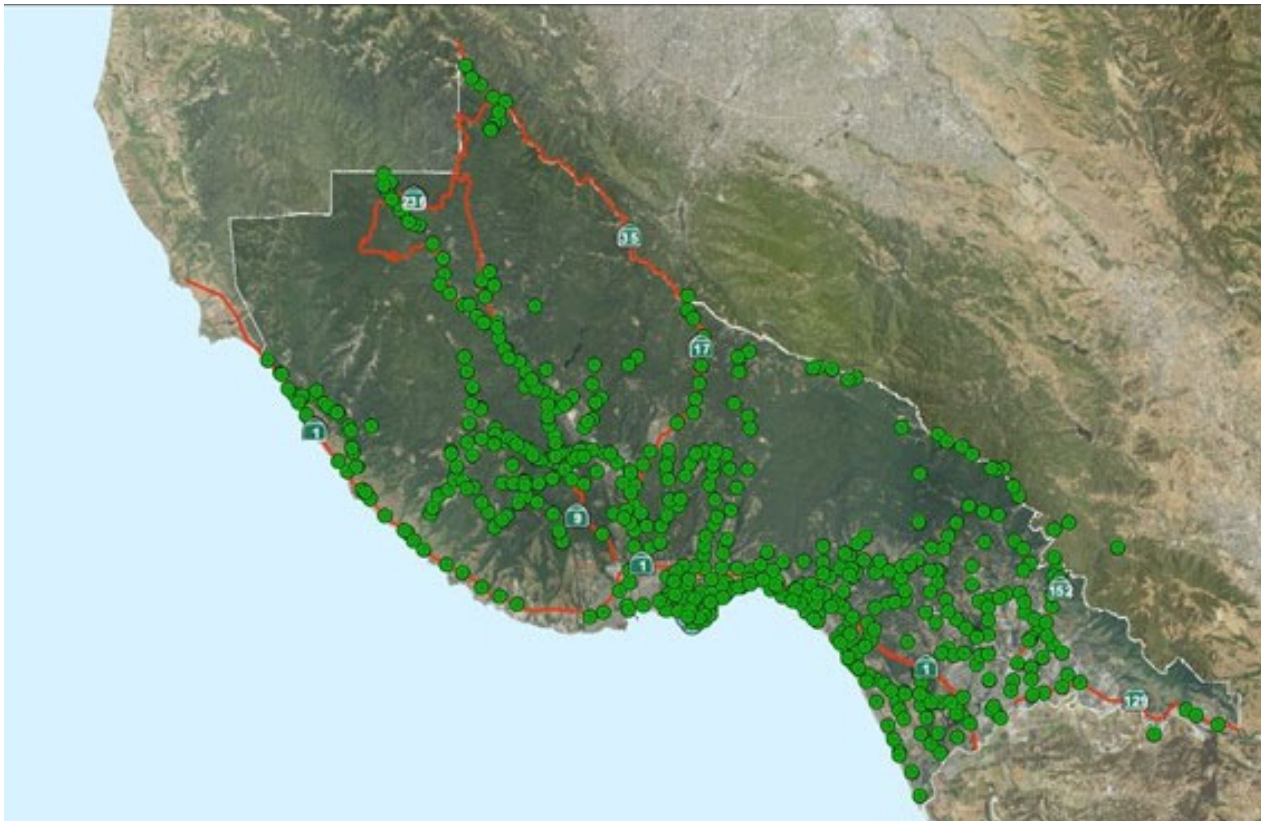


Elevation Datums & Benchmarks

Greg Jones, County Surveyor

A question that is asked of the survey department quite frequently is regarding elevation datums and benchmarks. There are various datums that we use in the surveying and engineering world. These datums have been established to model the elevation of sea level. Geodetic Scientists, those who study the earth's size and shape, have come up with different ways to model sea level in the US and Canada over the past 100 years. The first elevation datum was published by the USGS in 1929, which we refer to as NGVD'29 – National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929. It was originally called MSL29 -Mean Sea Level of 1929. This datum was based on 26 different tidal gauges around the United States and Canada. Eventually, scientists realized that the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans were at different tidal heights, so they came up with a different way to measure North America. In 1988, the decision was made to use a tidal gauge in Quebec, Canada and recalibrate the elevations of the NGVD'29 datum. The new datum was called NAVD'88 – North American Vertical Datum of 1988. This is the datum that the County of Santa Cruz requires as the datum of current and future projects.

Counties and cities maintain their own benchmark networks that have been established using the benchmark systems that the USGS created. The County of Santa Cruz used the NGVD'29 until the early 2010's. The reason for this was that many legacy projects were dependent on that datum. The change came because FEMA decided to update the Flood Maps (FIRM maps) to reflect the NAVD'88 datum. In 2013, the County Surveyor's office worked with the GIS department to create the ELEVATION BENCHMARK layer in the GISWeb. Users can now locate benchmarks throughout the county and easily find important related information, including elevations in both NAVD'88 and NGVD'29 as well as photos of the benchmark. The County benchmark system is constantly changing, in which benchmarks are added and updated. With the advent of GPS systems, geodetic scientists are currently working on an even more accurate benchmark system to replace the existing systems. We anticipate the new datum will be published some time this year. For now, the County GISWeb only reflects the NGVD'29 and NAVD'88 datums.



CDI UPDATES



“Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection” - Mark Twain

NEW EMPLOYEES

Leslie Hernandez Espinoza
Cashier Disposal Site - Extra Help

Christopher Chacon
Treatment Plant Operator In Training

Jeremiah Wright
Accountant I

Michael Sapunor
Resource Planner IV

Jesse Guzman
Sanitation Maintenance Worker I

Elias Chavez
Disposal Site Maintenance Worker

Aimee Gonzalez-Zarate
Personnel Payroll Clerk

Nicolas Carrillo
Disposal Site Maintenance Worker

Samuel McGolpin
Student Worker IV - Extra Help

Brandon Cobbs
Cashier Disposal Site - Extra Help

Mathew Sundt
Planner IV

Jessica Kygar
Accounting Technician

Alexandra Corvello
Planner II

Victoria Miller
Planner I

Nicholas Brown
Planning Technician

PROMOTIONS

Ricardo Trujillo
Supervising Heavy Equipment Mechanic

Francisco Marquez
Sanitation Maintenance Worker III

Jeanette Whittingham
Personnel Technician

Steven Garcia
Public Works Maintenance Worker IV

Jose Avila-Medrano
Engineering Aide I

Reginald Beltran
Public Works Maintenance Worker III

Gilbert Maciel
Public Works Maintenance Worker IV

Mark Sanguinetti
Civil Engineer

Morgan Bouchard
Public Works Maintenance Worker III

Thomas Dunham
Public Works Maintenance Worker III

Blanca Martinez
Executive Secretary

Rosa Ortiz-Rocha
Departmental Administrative Analyst

Humberto Salazar
Supervising Heavy Equipment Mechanic

Shawna Rooks
Building Counter Technician II

John Hunter
Planner I

John Cairns
Resource Planner III

Logan Thompson
Resource Planner III

RETIREES

James Smrt