

The CAO Weekly Report

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Monterey County Administrative Office

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Office of Emergency Services Takes Hazard Plan to the Public

What natural dangers are of the most concern to county residents? Floods? Fire? Earthquakes? The Office of Emergency Services (OES) wants to know, as it updates the County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

OES has been promoting a hazard survey for the public, and this month held two community meetings to talk about the plan, which identifies local policies and actions that can reduce risk and future losses.

“The Hazard Mitigation planning process began last August and both the county and incorporated cities have been actively engaged,” explains Office of Emergency Services Manager Sherrie Collins. “Updating the plan will allow us to incorporate and address new hazards such as agricultural emergencies, drought and sea level rise and focus on strategies for mitigating risks rather than a list of projects.”



Hazard Mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from hazards and their effects.

The County's original plan was developed and adopted in 2007 and is a 'must have' in



Office of Emergency Services Director Sherrie Collins (above left) and Darrin Punchard, Senior Project Manager of AECOM (above right) discuss the hazard mitigation objectives at a public meeting in Salinas. The meeting was recorded and can be seen on the Monterey County Government Channel, Comcast Cable Channel 28.



order to receive certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance. The 2013-2014 plan update process has unique partners: the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and National Association of Counties (NACo).

Monterey County has been designated a national pilot community for incorporating the data and tools available through NOAA's Digital Coast into local hazard mitigation planning. The Digital Coast is a web-based platform designed to address

the needs of local communities and other organizations that manage the nation's coastal resources. As part of this project Monterey County will leverage the data, tools, and training made available through Digital Coast in all aspects of the hazard mitigation plan update.

The plan update is scheduled to be completed in June. Information about the updating process and the original hazard mitigation plan are online at: <http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/oes/hazard-mitigation.asp>



Laguna Seca Mazda Raceway General Manager Honored

Gill Campbell, the Chief Executive Officer of the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP) will have to make room on her achievements shelf for two new awards.

Campbell has been selected by the Salinas Chamber of Commerce as its Businesswoman of the Year and by the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce for lifetime achievement.

Campbell has been working at the renowned Mazda Raceway at Laguna Seca since 2002. While Laguna Seca itself is a county park, Campbell manages the raceway for SCRAMP, which is the contracted operator of the track for the Parks Department.



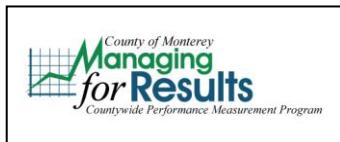
Gill Campbell.

“We thank Gill for being a valuable partner at Laguna Seca Recreation Area and for providing support to the economic vitality of Monterey County,” says Michael Ferry, Parks Director of Ms. Campbell’s prestigious awards.

Campbell will receive her Businesswoman of the Year award from the Salinas Chamber of Commerce at its Annual Awards Luncheon on February 27th. She will be recognized on March 15th by the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce when she is presented the Robert C. Littlefield Award for Lifetime Achievement.



RMA-Planning Sees Success in Performance Standards



RMA-Planning has posted its performance standards and results for the last seven years for all to see. The numbers tell the story of what can happen when staff works together to identify needs and create measures to resolve those issues. They are also numbers worth celebrating.

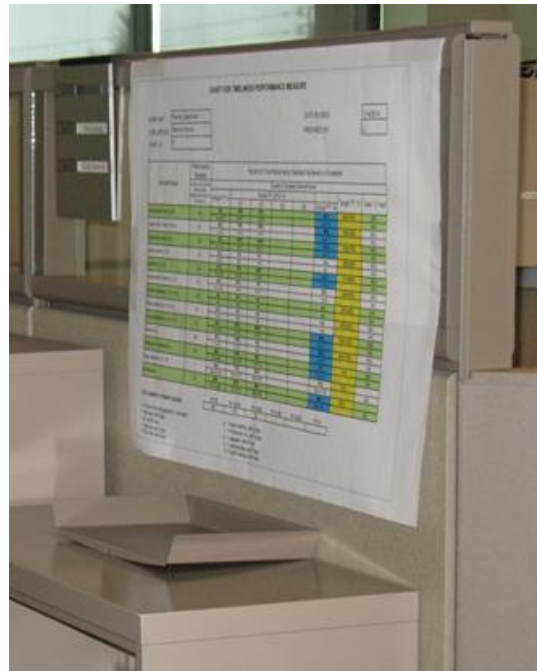
Charts with performance standards and results dating back to 2007-08 are posted along a main hallway in the Planning Department, which is located on the second floor of the County Administration Building. The large chart is easy to read and lists definitions of standards for easy reference.

“We were consistently measuring performance on a quarterly basis but talking about our efforts with staff only occasionally,” says Laura Lawrence, Planning Services Manager in explaining how the chart postings came to be. “We realized we need to keep staff more engaged in our efforts and educate them about what we were measuring, why we were measuring performance, why we chose the targets, and celebrate our successes.”

RMA-Planning started strategic planning efforts which included creating performance standards back in Fiscal Year 2007-08. Those standards included measures of effectiveness efficiency and workload – targets the department felt it should be meeting. However, when measured against current work at the time, the results were both surprising and disappointing: the department had just a 40% success rate for getting projects to final decision.

To find out why, staff began delving into department practices and procedures for answers. One example of this effort was the in-depth look at the department’s application process. This is the very beginning of the permit process, where a resident requests an application. When that request is made, the request is assigned to a planner to give out the application materials. Research showed quite a lag time between the request and the wealth of information the applicant receives on how to apply. What was the hold up?

Through the performance standards process, a time of two weeks had been established for planners to respond to an application request, but it turns out that timeline was not being met. To meet that target, staff developed new ways to speed up the process. Since they started collecting data on the application request process, RMA-Planning has seen an improvement in meeting the target.



The performance measurements chart showing the dramatic improvements made by the Planning Department.

Since the department started educating their staff on the process, their success rate for getting projects to final decision improved considerably.

“We have seen our performance improve from 40% in 2007-08 to 84% at midyear for 2013-14, despite an economic downturn and a significant staff reduction,” notes Lawrence. “Looking even closer at the upward trend, in the last three years since we expanded our measurements, our performance has improved from 69% in 2010-11 to the current 84% accomplishment rate.”

