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Morro Bay Overview

Morro Bay is located along Highway 1, halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

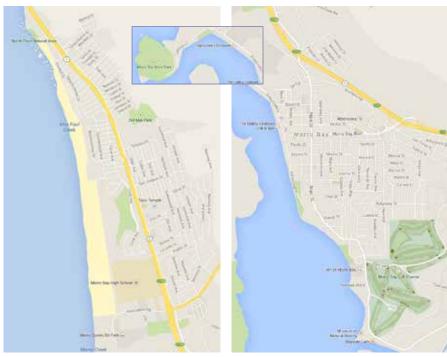


North Morro Bay

Offering full ocean views capped with North Point, a park with a beach access stairway to great tide pooling.

South Morro Bay

The heart of the city and home to the Embarcadero, which boasts great dining, shopping and activities.



GOOGLEMAPS.COM/DATA CSUMB SFML, CA OPC, DIGITALGLOBE, LANDSAT, USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY

History & Demographics

- California's scenic Highway 1 runs through the city.
- The modern history of Morro Bay as a town began in 1864 when Franklin Riley built a home on land in the current downtown. Morro Bay incorporated as a city in 1964, mostly as a result of Pacific Gas & Electric Company's construction of a power plant in 1955.
- The power plant, which closed in 2014, is situated on 100 acres of prime coastal land.
- Morro Bay's annual general fund budget is approximately \$12 million.

Transient occupancy taxes (a lodging tax paid by visitors) accounts for 20% of revenue.

- Morro Bay's economy has become more dependent on tourism since the closing of the power plant.
 Hospitality and retail sector employment comprises approximately 35% of total local employment. Morro Bay is one of 15 working fishing ports in California. The commercial-fishing industry based in Morro Bay is a significant part of the local economy. The 70 working vessels comprising Morro Bay's commercial fishing fleet are 70 small
- businesses in a city that also has fish-processing operations and vessel services. The total amount of fish caught commercially, and its cash value, has increased over the past seven years after years of decline.
- A moderate El Niño weather system during the winter of 2015-16 brought the seasonal rainfall total (July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016) to approximately 12 inches in Morro Bay. Morro Bay's historic seasonal rainfall average is 17.5 inches, so the drought continues into its fifth year.

© **2016 Morro Bay In Bloom** | America in Bloom Community Profile Submission **On the Cover:** Bonnie Johnson, whose vision and organizing skills made the Morro Bay Bike Park possible.



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Morro Bay is a coastal city in San Luis Obispo County, California. Morro Bay was incorporated as a city in 1964.

- Population (2010 census): 10,461;
 US Census Bureau 2014 population estimate: 10,544.
- Morro Bay in Bloom Website: www.MorroBayInBloom.org
- Morro Bay Website: www.morrobayca.gov
- City Staff Contact: David Buckingham, City Manager, 805-772-6205, dbuckingham@ morrobayca.gov
- **Mayor:** Jamie Irons, 805-550-6595, jirons@morrobayca.gov
- City Area in Square Miles: 10.3
- Acres of Active Recreation: 51.4
- Acres of Passive Recreation: 10.9
- Volunteer Coordinator: Walter Heath, 805-550-4492



President's Message



CITY OF MORRO BAY

CITY HALL 595 Harbor Street Morro Bay, CA 93442

March 8, 2016

On behalf of our community, welcome to Morro Bay! Our beautiful natural setting on the Central Coast of California is bookended between the coastal mountain range and the Pacific Ocean. Blessed with such a spectacular backdrop, we have a special challenge to enhance our public spaces in ways that honor these gifts from nature.

An attractive community draws visitors and is a source of pride for local businesses and residents. Raising the aesthetic appeal of our city also attracts realtors and developers, enticing commercial development and providing appealing neighborhoods for families.

Morro Bay in Bloom is much more than just planting flowers to beautify our neighborhoods and business districts. Morro Bay in Bloom's vision includes increasing the number of attractive gathering places in our city, focusing on environmental stewardship and honoring our community's fishing and agricultural heritage. Along with the visual beautification that Morro Bay in Bloom promotes, appropriate plant selection for our climate and best practices for conserving our water provide critically important benefits for our community's sustainable future.

The City of Morro Bay is proud to partner with Morro Bay in Bloom in our third year of participation as an America in Bloom city. The added excitement of welcoming America in Bloom's annual symposium to San Luis Obispo County this fall is cause for celebration. Our

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all of Morro Bay's dedicated civic-improvement volunteers and organizations who tirelessly continue to build pride in our community. Our city is a better place to live due to volunteers' efforts.

Junio L. Spons

Iamie Irons, Mayor

www.morrobayca.gov | (805) 772-6201 | www.facebook.com/CityofMorroBay

Welcome to Morro Bay in Bloom!

Morro Bay in Bloom experienced a year of considerable growth since the publication of our 2015 Community Profile. Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers, admiringly referred to as **Bloomies** throughout this *Community Profile*, engaged their interests and through collaboration advanced projects that are significantly improving our community. The following 2015 project outcomes exemplify the breadth of interests of our volunteers and the merits of the America in Bloom program that facilitates their dynamism:

- One **Bloomie** suggested that a rainwater-harvesting system at Morro Bay's busiest plaza, Centennial Parkway, would show thousands of passersby that rainwater can be collected and used during dry periods. The tanks are installed, full of rainwater and ready for pumping!
- Interest by Morro Bay residents in a grove of eucalyptus trees where Monarch butterflies overwinter at the Morro Bay State Park golf course has increased since volunteers planted 50 Monterey cypress trees there in November, 2014. The introduction of monthly tours at the site in 2016 and the planned formation of a "Friends of the Monarchs" group are positive signs for greater community participation in the effort to educate the public about the importance of the monarch butterfly, its life cycle and its threatened extinction.
- Bloomies teamed up with the Guerrilla Gardening Club, other residents, and City of Morro Bay Public Works staff in October 2015 to plant 18 street trees in a single afternoon in vacant wells throughout downtown Morro Bay. In the past two years, 28 new street trees have been planted this way. The trees are irrigated weekly by two enterprising Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers, using a 200-gallon

water tank that is on loan from the Guerrilla Gardening Club.

- Bloomies regularly care for the areas that we planted in 2015 beneath four welcome signs at gateways to the city, as well as plantings at Centennial Parkway, the Harbor Walk, the Chamber of Commerce/Visitors Center, the Library, and the new Bike Park.
- A group of Morro Bay residents who are leaders of volunteer groups that are engaged in civic beautification, historical preservation and art, fueled by their aspirations and the America in Bloom judges evaluation, formed the Citizens Beautification and Heritage Committee (CBHC) in 2015. The CBHC engaged a process of identifying and prioritizing unmet community needs in the aforementioned areas and proposed a list of objectives to the annual citywide objectives-setting process.
- The Morro Bay Surfboard Art Festival, produced by Morro Bay in Bloom, is entering its third year. The exhibit of art that is created on surfboards no longer in regular use will take place over a 60-day period in 2016, beginning October 1st. The presence of art in ordinary places retained its appeal as an estimated 10,000 visitors saw 37 pieces exhibited in 2015.

The premise behind **Morro Bay in Bloom** is simple. Our organization is a vehicle for people who want to improve their community. It's a premise that is shared by many community organizations in Morro Bay. You can read about other projects, large and small, in this Community Profile. I feel privileged to be the one who gets to brag about what Morro Bay volunteers do.



2 Hours at a Time!

The premise behind Movio Bay in Bloom is simple and shared by many organizations in our city. Our organization is a vehicle for people who want to improve their community.

> WALTER HEATH **Morro Bay in Bloom President**

Floral Displays

Municipal

- The Public Works Department has 11 volunteer groups active in its Adopt-A-Park program.
- Morro Bay in Bloom partnered with the City of Morro Bay to create a demonstration garden that shows the variety of colors provided by water-saving succulents.
- The City of Morro Bay purchased a portable 20-gallon watering system for use by MBIB volunteers who planted and maintain colorful drought-tolerant plants beneath welcome signs at three gateways to the city.
- The Morro Bay Boulevard Roundabout, located at a major gateway to the city, was planted by city staff to include drought-tolerant color from bougainvillea and other plants.

Commercial

- Local businesses support Morro Bay in Bloom's efforts by sponsoring pieces of surfboard art that are then exhibited at their places of business.
- Local businesses distribute Morro
 Bay in Bloom's "You've Done an
 Awesome Job!" Door Hangers, so
 that their customers can perform
 "random acts of recognition."
- Several businesses maintain public spaces as participants in the Adopt-A-Park program. (See page 9)

The earth laughs in flowers. RALPH WALDO EMERSON

- Coalesce Bookstore maintains a delightful courtyard where floral displays and bromeliads are mixed in a calming landscape design.
- Examples of colorful floral displays featuring drought-tolerant plantings and/or drip irrigation in commercial settings include:
- Full Moon Pottery Studio & Gallery, 345 Harbor Street
- Dorn's Restaurant, 801 Market Street
- Garden Gallery, 680 Embarcadero
- The plaza outside Dolphin Shirt Company, 715 Embarcadero
- Pleasant Inn, 235 Harbor Street
- Sea Air Inn, 845 Morro Avenue
- Beach House Bungalow Inn & Suites, 1050 Morro Avenue

Residential

Residents are well aware of the need to save water and have created colorful displays featuring drought-tolerant plantings and/or drip irrigation in residential settings. Some examples of these include:

- The residence at 448 Estero Avenue exhibits a wide selection of Mediterranean plants and flowers.
- At 708 Cabrillo Place, a mature low water-impact garden is in place,

- showing the brilliance of succulents and drought-tolerant grasses.
- 3030 Beachcomber Drive features another collection of various succulent species.
- The garden at 751 Cabrillo Place consists almost entirely of native plants with seasonal floral displays.
- The garden at 305 Bernardo Avenue features drought-tolerant and flowering native plants.

Community Involvement

- The site of a bronzed truck benchseat memorial of a beloved Morro Bay resident was renewed by Bloomies to create a welcoming public space at a must-see location.
- Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers, in partnership with the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, are rehabilitating the landscaping at the Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Center, including the addition of floral displays.
- A community effort to plant flowering plants along the Morro Bay section of the Amgen Tour of California bike race route, led by Morro Bay in Bloom, resulted in the planting 337 Osteospermum.

Enjoying Our New Bike and Pedestrian Bridge A picturesque four-mile bike route, completed in July 2015, connects northern Morro Bay to the waterfront (Embarcadero) and downtown. The new route features a bike/pedestrian bridge at the mouth of Morro Creek, greatly facilitating passage for bicyclists, pedestrians and emergency vehicles. The Harbor Walk, which lies within nine acres of Coleman Park, and the recently-completed boardwalk to the bike/pedestrian bridge are part of the California Coastal Trail and the Pacific Bicycle Trail networks.









Landscaped Areas

Landscaped Areas

Municipal

- The Public Works Department management discontinued irrigation of ornamental turf due to the ongoing five-year drought while maintaining electronically-controlled irrigation of approximately 2 acres of turf playing fields using six CalSense irrigation controllers with Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system controls and weather station feedback.
- The Public Works Department is an ongoing partner of Morro Bay in Bloom at Centennial Parkway, installing the rainwater-harvesting system there following Morro Bay in Bloom's grant award for the project and consequent preparation efforts. Public Works staff installed drip irrigation after Bloomies removed invasive species on the hillside beneath Centennial Stairway and stabilized the hillside with jute gridding.

The Public Works Department staff maintains 62 acres of parks within the city limits, including the following:

 The Harbor Walk lies within nine acres of Coleman Park, which is dedicated to the man who is credited with advocating for the groundwork of the post-World War II conversion from naval base to modern waterfront. The Harbor Walk and the

- recently-completed boardwalk to the bike/pedestrian bridge are part of the California Coastal Trail and the Pacific Bicycle Trail networks. The Harbor Walk that stretches from a small park adjacent to the power-plant outfall to Morro Rock provides stunning views of the harbor to the south and of the native dunes and Morro Strand State Beach to the north.
- Morro Rock Beach lies immediately adjacent to Morro Rock, a registered state historic landmark and a designated bird sanctuary for the Peregrine falcon and other bird species. The Harbor Department staffs two lifeguard stations from Memorial Day until Labor Day on this beach, which is known for the rough ocean environment and sandy dunes that are characteristic of Northern California beaches.
- Located in a densely-populated residential area, Monte Young Park features a children's play area, picnic areas, open space, a public restroom and a unique set of tennis courts facing east/west.
- Del Mar Park is a 9-acre park in northern Morro Bay that has a panoramic view of Estero Bay. Del Mar Park features dog parks for large and small dogs, outdoor courts for basketball, tennis and pickle ball, a small

- amphitheater, children's play area, barbecue pits, picnic tables, a large meadow and horseshoe pits.
- Lila Keiser Park is a 10-acre park named for the city councilmember who helped secure the land lease from Pacific Gas & Electric Company. Lila Keiser Park is home to many of the playing fields in Morro Bay, a covered picnic area and children's play area.
- Other waterfront parks include Anchor Memorial Park and Mariner Memorial Park, dedicated to those who lost their lives at sea.
- Centennial Parkway features one of two permanent, large-scale, outdoor chessboards in the USA. The original set of chess pieces and Centennial Stairway are made of redwood salvaged from two dismantled city water tanks. Thousands pass through this vital link between the dockside commercial/retail area (Embarcadero) and Market Street hotels.
- Tidelands Park, at the southern end of the waterfront, is a picturesque picnic location with a nautically-themed play area that is popular with families. The park's location, amenities and area (two acres) has made it the traditional community gathering place for Fourth of July activities.
- North Point Park consists of 1.3 acres

Adopt-A-Park: The Groups & Organizations Contributing

The City of Morro Bay Public Works Department has 11 groups or organizations involved in their Adopt-A-Park program, which helps get the community involved with the maintenance and upkeep of the parks throughout the city.

Volunteer Group Name	Adopted Park
Morro Bay in Bloom	Centennial Parkway, Harbor Walk Entrance
Morro Bay Guerrilla Gardening Club	Shasta Pocket Park
Rotary Club of Morro Bay	Morro Bay Boulevard Roundabout
Eco Rotary Club of Morro Bay	Bayshore Bluffs
Embarcadero Inn Staff	Mariner Park
Morro Bay Yacht Club	Tidelands Park
Teen Action Club	Lila Keiser Park
Morro Cove Homeowners Association	Morro Cove
Morro Bay Beautiful	Anchor Memorial Park
Morro Bay Pups	Jody Gianinni Family Dog Park

perched on a bluff that overlooks tide pools. A stairway connects the two areas, making North Point a popular destination at low tides. Wild flowers bloom each spring in the non-irrigated meadow.

- Cloisters Park, on the former site of a historic hotel, features a preserved wetland and nature reserve.
 A boardwalk runs adjacent to wild dune habitat.
- Bayshore Bluffs Park consists of 3.2 acres of natural meadow and maintained park space and features a pollinator garden planted by Girl Scouts.
- City Park hosts Art in the Park, a showcase for hand-crafted arts and jewelry that is sponsored by the Morro Bay Art Association on Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day weekends.

Commercial

Morro Bay's Library, operated by the San Luis Obispo County Library System, is partnering with **Morro Bay in Bloom** by paying for renovation of the dripirrigation system and for plants that **Morro Bay in Bloom** will install according to the design of a local professional. **Morro Bay in Bloom** volunteers have









Landscaped Areas

rehabilitated the landscaping on the eastern side of the building.

Examples of well-landscaped areas featuring drought-tolerant plantings and/or drip irrigation in commercial settings include:

- Lemos Pet Supply, 1320 Main Street, is a new building with limited but appropriate landscaping that is drought tolerant.
- The garden behind Top Dog Coffee, 857 Main Street, uses container plantings to define seating areas.
- La Serena Inn, 990 Morro Avenue
- Lolo's Mexican Restaurant, 2848
 Main Street

Residential

The Morro Bay Chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) presents an annual Garden Tour that showcases local residential gardens.

Examples of well-landscaped areas featuring drought-tolerant plantings and/or drip irrigation in residential settings include:

- The residence at 448 Estero Avenue exhibits a wide selection of Mediterranean plants and flowers.
- At 708 Cabrillo Place, a mature low water-impact garden is in place, showing the brilliance of succulents



- and drought-tolerant grasses.
- 3030 Beachcomber Drive features another collection of various succulent species.
- The garden at 751 Cabrillo Place consists almost entirely of native plants with seasonal floral displays.
- The garden at 305 Bernardo Avenue features drought-tolerant and flowering native plants.

Community Involvement

- "Flash" street-tree planting: 24 volunteers, including a large contingent of **Bloomies**, dug holes and properly planted 18 street trees in 2 hours throughout the downtown core in October 2015. The trees are being watered by two **Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers**.
- In 2015, **Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers** were assisted in their efforts by AmeriCorps cadets, Grizzly Youth

Academy cadets, members of the Morro Bay Teen Center and local families.

 Bonnie Johnson recognized the need for an active bicycle sports venue in Morro Bay and acted on her vision. Bonnie partnered with City of Morro Bay staff to locate an unused parcel of city-owned property upon which the ramps and banked curves of a dirt-track bicycle course could be constructed. Bonnie and her husband Brandon Kato then partnered with Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers and other Morro Bay bike enthusiasts in order to build an organization that could quickly fundraise, organize volunteers and publicize the project. An impressive grassroots, volunteer effort enabled the first sanctioned public bicycle park in San Luis Obispo County to be built in a very short time.



Morro Bay Opens SLO County's Only Official Bike Park

Kids and adults in Morro Bay can now "charge" dirt hills to their heart's content thanks to the recent opening of the new Morro Bay Bike Park. Morro Bay's BMX-style bike park opened Dec. 26, covering about a half-acre of city-owned property at Main Street and Radcliff Avenue. The park is visible from Highway 1 near the Main Street exit.

The free facility, the only official course of its kind in San Luis Obispo County, fills a void of activities for youngsters, project coordinator Bonnie Johnson said. Her group spent three years planning and implementing the project.

"There really wasn't enough to do for kids in this area, especially if they aren't involved in youth sports," Johnson said. "This adds a positive activity that they can do for hours. I personally believe that kids with hobbies are more confident and more successful."

On New Year's Day, about 30 kids and a few adults cruised around the park's pathways and jumps. Connor Perez, 8, wearing a yellow helmet and sporting a bright blue Dodgers shirt, said that the most fun is doing "huge jumps." "This park is so much fun,"

Perez said. "I can do huge jumps, but only if I go fast."

Seventeen-year-old Emily Gacad and 13-year-old Orion Solu shared their knowledge of bike-park lingo: "charging" means pedaling hard into a jump; "hucking" means navigating a large drop off from higher to flatter ground; and "boosting" means flying high in the air off a dirt hill.

The park is open from sunrise to sunset to riders of all ages. "Some of us stay here pretty much all day," Gacad said. Johnson formed her Morro Bay Bike Park group as a branch of the nonprofit Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers, through which funding is handled. They've raised about \$27,000 of the \$35,000 cost to complete the project. "We're still seeking donations," Johnson said.

The park was constructed by Santa Cruzbased Action Sports Construction, which builds bike parks around the country.

Johnson said she met with neighbors to work through concerns they had with how much space on the city property the park would take up (only a portion and not directly adjacent to housing) and to let them know it wouldn't be lit.

The city paid for a fence and waived permitting costs. Because it's a city park, Morro Bay isn't charging rent for the land. PG&E, which owns property nearby, is charging the bike park group \$500 per year for parking lot space.

Morro Bay Bike Park riders must wear helmets, and the city's insurance covers liability. A sign warns riders that they're engaging in a potentially hazardous sport and Morro Bay won't be held liable for any damages.

The facility replaces an old bike park, established in the early 2000s, in Morro Bay near the former Flippo's skating rink. But that park was taken out when the private property on which it was situated was sold.

The new park's grand opening was held December 26, 2015. Bikers have come from as far away as Santa Maria and Atascadero to enjoy the park, organizers said. "We pushed to have it open for the Christmas break," Johnson said. "It has been a big hit with kids."

The Tribune Story by Nick Wilson.









Urban Forestry

Municipal

- Morro Bay's urban forest consists of 1,500 trees, 675 of which are in public right-of-way. Each tree that is in the public right-of-way has its GPS coordinates recorded in an inventory, and trees in non-residential areas are marked with an identifying medallion.
- The Morro Bay Volunteer Tree Committee (MBVTC) worked with city staff to draft a "Landmark Tree" ordinance that was included in the City's first Urban Forest Management Program. The MBVTC then followed up with a separate proposal identifying trees that, in their professional opinion, qualified as Landmark Trees under the criteria set forth in the adopted ordinance. These nominations were supported by city staff and adopted by City Council as Landmark Trees. A Landmark Tree list is available at www. morrobay.ca.gov/797/Trees.
- Public Works Department staff published an update of the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) in mid-2014. The UFMP includes descriptions of environmental conditions in different locations within the City and identifies appropriate tree species for those locations. See www.morrobay.ca.gov/Document-Center/View/7702.



 The Fire Department is coordinating with State Park biologists to remove dead Monterey pines on a heavily-forested hill and replace them with a native species, Monterey cypress.

Commercial

Wood chips from commercial

tree-pruning operations are available to the public at no charge from piles situated at a highly-visible location across from the new bike park.

 Local businesses are encouraged to adopt street trees outside their businesses and to plant beneath them.

Residential

 Residents are encouraged to select trees from a list of recommended native trees that was developed by local arborists and members of the Morro Bay Volunteer Tree Committee (MBVTC) See. www. morrobay.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/ View/7702, pp. 15-16.

Community Involvement

- Morro Bay's landmark tree program consists of 20 historic trees. There is an ongoing community effort to compile a heritage-tree walking tour and to designate these trees with plaques.
- "Flash" street-tree planting: 24 volunteers, including a large contingent of **Bloomies** and Guerilla Gardeners, properly planted 18 street trees in 2 hours throughout the downtown core in October, 2015.
- **Bloomies** hand-irrigate 28 recently-planted street trees weekly from a 200-gallon tank that's mounted in the bed of a pick-up truck.



Volunteers Plant 50 Monterey Cypress Trees to Provide Windbreak for Monarch Grove

More than 50 volunteers showed up on November 1, 2014 to celebrate Morro Bay's 50th anniversary of incorporation as a city by planting 50 Monterey cypress trees at Morro Bay Golf Course. As the trees grow. they will provide windbreak for a grove of Eucalyptus trees where Monarch butterflies overwinter. Monarchs require still air in order to cluster for warmth. Planting holes were pre-dug by County parks staff under the watchful eye of an archaeologist and a Chumash tribe shaman. Volunteers were trained on proper tree-planting technique. The event concluded with a social mixer and Monarch butterfly education by a

retired California Polytechnic State University biology professor and Monarch expert, Kingston Leong.

Who More than 50 Volunteers
What Planted 50 Monterey cypress
trees
When November 1, 2014

Where Morro Bay Golf Course
Why To provide windbreak for a grove of Eucalyptus trees where Monarch butterflies overwinter
How Holes were pre-dug by County

parks staff and volunteers were trained on proper tree-planting technique

Points of Interest

Reaches

- Coleman Beach, Coleman Park, 101 Coleman Drive
- Morro Beach, 200 Coleman Drive (northwest of Morro Rock)
- Morro Strand State Beach, Highway 1 & Yerba Buena Street
- No Name Beach, 200 Coleman Drive (south of Morro Rock)
- North Point Beach (pet-friendly), Highway 1 (North Morro Bay)
- Sandspit Beach, South of Morro Rock, across the bay

Museums

- Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main Street
- Morro Bay Estuary Center, 601
 Embarcadero (2nd floor)
- Morro Bay Skateboard Museum, 601 Embarcadero
- Museum of Natural History (kids 16 & younger), 20 State Park Road

Trails

- Black Hill (3-mile trail), Morro Bay State Park, 201 State Park Road
- Cerro Cabrillo Peak (2.5-mile trail), Morro Bay State Park
- Cloister Walk (2-mile trail), Cloister Park, Highway 1 & San Jacinto
- Harbor Walk (0.5-mile trail), Morro Bay Harbor, 200 Coleman Drive
- Discover Morro Bay | MorroBay.org













Environmental Efforts

Environmental Efforts

Municipal

Water Conservation

- The City Council approved \$27,000 in 2015 for the Public Works Department to offer residents new water-conservation incentives for lawn removal, conversion of overhead sprinklers to drip irrigation, installation of rain barrels, and installation of smart irrigation controllers to existing rebate programs for water-efficient washing machines and toilets.
- Plans for construction of a new water reclamation facility will proceed following selection of a site that is safely removed from the coast. The new plant design will be at least capable of adaptation to tertiary treatment sometime in the future, which will make the treated water available for irrigation.
- The Fire Department has a pervious concrete pad for washing equipment and testing pumps that filters water and returns it to a 15,000-gallon cistern. Water from the cistern is used to irrigate site landscaping.
- The Public Works Department uses six CalSense irrigation controllers with Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system controls and weather station feedback to regulate irrigation of turf areas in city parks.
- Low-flow Sloan valves were installed

at every toilet and urinal, wherever possible, in city-owned buildings.

- All city-owned hand wash sinks were retrofitted with touchless, 0.5 GPM flow faucets.
- Commercial kitchen water heaters at the Morro Bay Community Center were replaced with tankless water heaters.
- Water heaters at all three public shower facilities were replaced with tankless water heaters.
- The first rainwater-catchment system at a city park (Centennial Parkway) was installed in 2015 by Public Works staff in partnership with Morro Bay in Bloom.

Transportation

- A picturesque four-mile bike route, completed in July 2015, connects northern Morro Bay to the waterfront (Embarcadero) and downtown. The new route features a bike/pedestrian bridge at the mouth of Morro Creek, greatly facilitating passage for bicyclists, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles.
- Morro Bay was named a Bicycle Friendly City by the League of American Bicyclists in November 2014.
- The City of Morro Bay is cooperating with San Luis Obispo County officials to designate and properly mark city streets in northern Morro Bay as bike

- routes to provide the critical segment of a continuous bicycle-friendly trail between Morro Bay and Cayucos, the next town north of Morro Bay.
- In order to provide safe bicycle crossing of Atascadero Road in front of the high school, a grant was obtained to provide an additional crosswalk, green painted bike lanes and user-activated flashing crosswalk lights. Completed in 2015.
- Local fixed route bus service is provided throughout the city and doorto-door senior and disabled person transportation coordinated and run by volunteers began in February 2016 (see "Community Involvement" section below).
- The Police Department has a Bicycle Patrol Unit.

Energy Conservation

- The Public Works Department has retrofitted 110 path fixtures, parking lot fixtures, building wall packs, flagpole lights, and restroom fixtures with 13W & 20W LED fixtures. The replaced fixtures were 70, 100, 150 and 400 watt metal halide and high pressure sodium fixtures. All of the old fixtures were sent to recycling for proper disposal.
- A 5.98 kW photovoltaic system was installed in 2014 at Rockies

Teen Center.

- Greater than 1,200 34-watt fluorescent tube lamps in city buildings were changed to 28-watt fluorescent tube lamps.
- All work-station surge protectors at city offices have been replaced with motion sensitive surge protectors that turn off electronics when not in use.
- Several fully programmable, internet-accessible thermostats have been installed in city offices.
- 35 incandescent and fluorescent exit signs in city-owned facilities have been replaced with LED fixtures.
- City Council approved the purchase of photovoltaic systems for our Community Center, the Veteran's Memorial Building, and the Police Station. Upgrades were made to the HVAC systems at the Harbor Patrol, Recreation Department, Police Department, City Hall, and other Morro Bay office buildings through a low interest California Energy Commission loan program.
- City energy conservation measures include solar-energy trash compactors in public places, solar panels, and LED lighting.

Solid Waste Disposal

 Every address receives weekly curbside pickup of recyclables, com-

- postable waste and garbage.
- Free hazardous waste and electronics disposal is available every Saturday at a recycling facility on the waste-water treatment plant property.
- The city chips pruning waste and makes the chips available free-ofcharge to the public.
- City staff cleaned debris from Morro Creek in 2015 before the winter rainstorms began.
- The City Council passed an ordinance to ban the use of food and drink containers made from expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam) and prohibits the retail sale of most styrofoam products.

Harbor

- The Harbor Department received Clean Marina certification in 2006 and was re-certified for five years in 2011.
- The Harbor Department's public showers and boat-rinse stations are metered with coin-operated systems. The free outdoor rinse showers at Morro Rock restroom were shut off.
- All Harbor Department personnel are trained hazardous-material first responders. The Harbor Department has the oil-containment capability to contain the largest expected spill

- from Morro Bay vessels.
- A new state-of-the-art Harbor
 Department oil collection center was
 built for the purpose of collection
 and recycling of used oil and filters,
 oil absorbent pads, used engine coolant, and batteries.

Commercial

- The rainwater catchment system at Estero Community Garden was installed at cost by local contractors.
- Local stores have not provided plastic shopping bags since 2012. Paper bags cost \$0.10.
- Shine Café sends its food waste to a local pig farm.
- Spencer's Market granted permission for the use of the lot adjacent to their store to be developed by a volunteer group as a pocket park. The pocket park is irrigated by a city-permitted greywater system that is fed by the store's produce-wash station.

Residential

- Already one of the lower water-use communities in the county, Morro Bay citizens reduced their water use below the State-mandated reduction of 12%.
- The city's first permitted residential greywater system at 570 Olive Street uses shower, laundry, and dish water to irrigate non-edible plants in









Environmental Efforts

Environmental Efforts

the garden.

 Rainwater catchment systems at 40 residences and businesses supplement potable water for irrigation.

Community Involvement

- According to 2015 water-conservation rebate program statistics maintained by Public Works staff, greater than 13,000 square feet of residential turf has been removed to date and greater than 4,000 gallons of storm water storage capacity has been installed by Morro Bay residents.
- The upcoming general plan and local coastal plan update processes will engage hundreds of residents on environmental, land use, housing, open space, conservation, noise, safety, and transportation issues.
- Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers
 managed the installation of an
 800-gallon rainwater harvesting
 system at Centennial Parkway.
 This project is a cooperative community involvement effort funded
 by a grant from the Morro Bay
 National Estuary Program (MBNEP),
 led by MBIB, in partnership with
 the City of Morro Bay. This project
 emphasizes education and includes
 an interpretive panel explaining how
 small-scale rainwater harvesting
 work with QR codes to link smart-

phone users to more complete information.

- Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers
 conducted a hands-on, water-wise
 gardening curriculum during Discovery
 ery Days at the elementary school.
 Students designed and planted
 individual succulent dish gardens
 and planted succulent gardens in
 half-barrels for the rest of the school
 community to enjoy.
- 23,000 Monarch butterflies overwintered in a Eucalyptus grove on the Morro Bay Golf Course in 2015 that, in previous years, hosted as many as 60,000 butterflies. The habitat suffers from a loss of wind-sheltering Monterey pines that died from pine pitch canker. Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers initiated a cooperative project with a retired California Polytechnic State University biologist, the golf course superintendent, and a local civil engineer to restore the habitat and also to provide monthly tours. This cooperative community project began with the planting of 50 Monterey Cypress trees in 2014 and will eventually include an interpretive area near the grove, a sheltered path across the golf course for visitors, and signage. A local civil engineer performed a complete soils and topographical analysis for the sheltered path on a

pro bono basis in 2015.

- Formed in 2015 by interested residents, Morro Bay Open Space Alliance (MBOSA) developed a mission statement, formed a board of directors, and applied for federal nonprofit status.
- The Citizens' Bicycle Committee annually submits a list of bicycle riders' and pedestrians' needs. The entire 2016 list was approved for funding in the 2016-17 fiscal year.
- The annual Winter Bird Festival, produced entirely by volunteers, raises awareness of Morro Bay's unique ecosystem. The Winter Bird Festival celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2016 and created 13 new events to educate participants about the natural environment. The festival had record attendance with over 580 participants and remains one of the most popular bird festivals on the west coast of North America.
- The Estero Bay Community Garden enables residents to grow their own produce. The community garden is proud of its rainwater-harvesting system that was completed with in-kind contributions from local contractors.
- The Public Works Department, Morro Bay National Estuary Program, and California State Parks partner

with volunteers to replenish the supply of mutt mitts at 14 city parks and 9 state-park locations. Greater than 200,000 mutt mitts were made available to the public at city parks alone during 2015.

- The Marine Mammal Center and Pacific Wildlife Care, staffed mostly by volunteers, have extensive wildlife rehabilitation facilities on the power-plant property.
- Dune restoration with native plants continues with community-volunteer assistance at Morro Strand State Beach, a state park that is located within the city limits.
- Door-to-door transportation by appointment for senior residents was established by a group of volunteers in partnership with the Morro Bay Senior Center. A van was purchased through Morro Bay Senior Citizens, Inc. and volunteer drivers began staffing the new service during February 2016.
- A group of concerned residents formed in 2016, and working with County of San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department and City of Morro Bay Public Works, developed a walking-safety audit evaluation form and will recruit volunteers to conduct a walking-safety audit of selected high-traffic areas of Morro Bay after a pilot test.

Dawn Beattie, Everyday Hero

Resident Dawn Beattie was troubled by the poor condition of the interpretive panels in the development in which she lives and took charge to get new panels designed, produced, and installed.

Q: How was the subject of each panel determined?

A: The purpose of the project was to take six existing Cloisters panels (5 designed by RRM 20+ years ago, the 6th donated by the Historical Society of Morro Bay) and create new versions that included text from the original panels (where it could be obtained - the original panels were in serious disrepair) and add updated content, images and graphics. This turned out to be a huge forensic task. Since the City owns the property these signs reside on and they oversee the maintenance of this Cloisters property with money provided by Cloisters homeowners, the City received the graphics file deliverables from me and took it from there.

Q: How was the content developed?

A: RRM developed the initial content for 5 panels, four of which were decipherable. They described the plants and animals of the area (which I was able to use part of, but could not read it all, so replaced the Snowy Plover info with info from a California State Parks pamphlet), the restoration of the ecosystem of the

land where the Cloisters is built (again, with added content about what one can see - the Rock - from where the panel would be located), the Cloister's wetland ecology and more about the Cloister's wetland. The fifth RRM panel was completely unreadable, so I created a new panel titled Birds of the Cloisters Pond that was similar to panels I had seen at a number of National Wildlife Refuges, as well as at Oso Flaco Lake. The sixth panel had been donated by the Historical Society of Morro Bay and was in good enough condition to just replicate the existing content. I worked with the Historical Society to ensure the content was still accurate and to add a OR code.

Q: How long did the project take from (beginning to completion)?

A: The first Project Plan was developed in July 2014. The final two panels were installed last month. So, a little over a year and a half.

Q: What was the cost?

A: The design work was all pro bono (getting folks who knew Adobe Illustrator who would donate their time was an incredibly difficult task). The photographs were also all donated (many from photographers who normally charge for their work). The only cost was in the manufacturing of the panels.









Heritage Preservation

Heritage Preservation

Municipal

- In 2015, the City of Morro Bay, as a partner with volunteers of the Central Coast Maritime Museum Association to develop a Morro Bay Maritime Museum and Interpretive Center, provided \$70,000 in improvements at the future site of the museum, including an engineered foundation pad for the museum building and paving improvements.
- The City of Morro Bay granted office space to the Historical Society of Morro Bay in 2015.
- In 2015, the City Council approved naming the unnamed park on Morro Avenue between Olive and South streets to honor Morro Bay's founder Franklin Riley.

Commercial

- The Siren, 900 Main Street. The Siren is Morro Bay's oldest business in continuous operation.
- Ramos Gallery, 407 Morro Bay Boulevard. This building was built by George and Lillie Anderson in 1927 or 1928 and the second story was added a year later.
- The building behind Ramos Gallery, with a Spanish colonial front and stained-glass windows, was the original Presbyterian Church built in 1902.
- Bayshore Realty, 560 Morro Bay

Boulevard. This building was originally built as a home for the parents of Edward Caccia, who purchased the entire block of Morro Bay Boulevard from Shasta to Napa Streets in 1917 for \$2,500.

- Ocean View Garage, 936 Main Street. This garage was restored by Ron McIntosh, founder of the Cruisin' Morro Bay Car Show.
- Central Coast Music, 365 Morro
 Bay Boulevard. This store was, at
 one time, a theater, dance hall and
 the first movie house in Morro Bay.
 Elements of the theater, including the
 stage and the projection booth, have
 been preserved.

Residential

- Criddle House, 2738 Main Street. A house built in the 1940s by a quarry worker, Art Criddle, from stones quarried from Morro Rock. (pictured below)
- Castle Adobe, 1600 Preston Lane. An adobe house that was built in 1930 by Miles Castle using a pressed-earth process. The home is still owned and occupied by the Castle family.
- Kilpatrick House, 340 Olive Street.
 Built in 1929 by plein air artist Aaron Kilpatrick.
- Stirling House, 370 Olive Street.
 Originally, it was a hunting lodge.
- 900 Ridgeway. Purchased in 1928 by

artist A. Harold Knott and his wife Rachel. The home is still owned by the Knott family.

Community Involvement

- Morro Bay Library Mural, 625 Harbor Street. Installed in 1985 by dozens of volunteers under the direction of mural designer and tile artist Peter Ladochy. Missing tiles have been replaced on several occasions by volunteer crews. See Page 20 for a first-hand account of the installation.
- Central Coast Women for Fisheries raised the necessary funds to commission a sculpture in tribute to the families of those who work at sea, entitled "Those Who Wait." The sculpture will be installed at Target Rock in 2016.
- The Morro Bay Hidden History Project is a volunteer effort to display episodes of Morro Bay's history in public places. Volunteers are working on the content for the first 8 topics (of 20 to 30 topics eventually) from which interpretive panels and web pages will be produced. The Project is a joint venture of the Historical Society of Morro Bay and Morro Bay in Bloom.
- Volunteers with the Central Coast Maritime Museum Association are restoring an historic local tugboat, the Alma, a vessel that is eligible for

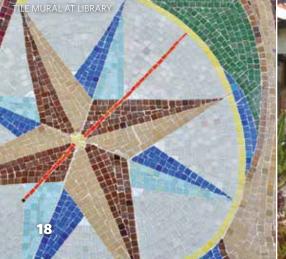
- listing on the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places.
- Morro Bay in Bloom and Morro Bay Historical Society volunteers donated time and effort in 2015 to provide location and physical condition information with photos to City of Morro Bay staff, who compiled a complete inventory with photos and descriptions of every public sign and piece of public art.
- A self-guided mural-walk tour map was developed in 2015 by a Morro Bay in Bloom volunteer and includes information about each mural. The mural-walk
- about each mural. The mural-walk tour map is downloadable at www.morrobay.org.

 Morro Bay's community leadership
- and multiple civic organizations are partnering with the Central Coast Maritime Museum Association (CCMMA) and the Maritime Museum of San Diego on the occasion of the maiden voyage of a replica of Juan Cabrillo's ship San Salvador. The reproduction of the 16th century Spanish galleon of the first European explorer of the California coastline will be available for public touring and a maritime celebration in Morro Bay October 19-24, 2016.
- Historical Society and Veterans Helping Veterans in Need volunteers

- produced a free Veterans' Day luncheon in 2015 at which oral histories were recorded.
- The Morro Bay Community
 Foundation produces the **Dixon Spaghetti Feed Dinner** with
 Senior Citizens, Inc. as a springtime fundraiser for scholarships for the city's recreational programs.

 The Morro Bay Community Foundation also produces a soup dinner and auction in the fall for the same purpose.
- The Cruisin' Morro Bay Car Show, produced by a volunteer steering group and the Rotary Club of Morro Bay, is a free classic and rare car show that spans several blocks of Morro Bay Boulevard every May.
- **The Lighted Boat Parade** is a winter-season fixture every December drawing thousands of residents and visitors. This event is produced by volunteers.
- The Kite Festival is a colorful, volunteer-produced spectacle featuring amateur and professional kite flyers on the beach in spring. Morro Bay's spring wind is ideal for kite-flying. The 2015 event featured carnival rides. www.morrobaykite festival.org
- Bands on the Run is a novel community fundraiser for Morro Bay High

- School music programs that features a half-marathon, 5K, and 10K runs with musical entertainment.
- The "Stranded in Morro Bay" vintage trailer rally is in its fourth year as an event of the Central Coast Natural History Association, a volunteer fundraising organization for programs and amenities for local state parks, including the only natural history museum in the state-park system. The event features wine and food tasting, a craft show, and concert.
- The Avocado and Margarita Festival is a popular event produced by the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce. The proceeds from food sold by Morro Bay non-profit organizations at this event provides operating funds for an entire year for some local non-profits.
- The Harbor Festival celebrates our city's fishing industry on the first Saturday in October.
- The Brian Waterbury Memorial Fun Run is a six-mile run on the beach from Morro Rock to Cayucos Pier and is open to participants of all ages and abilities. Proceeds from the run benefit Morro Bay Recreation Department Youth Sports programs.
- Two weekly farmers' markets, on Thursday and Saturday afternoons all year long, feature local produce, local-made food products, and crafts.









Overall Impression

Overall Impression



Morro Bay Library Mural Installation - A First Hand Account

We started in July 1985, meeting at the Veterans Hall and the Recreation Building, whichever we could get, three times a week. [Mural designer] Peter Ladochy had received a gift of glass tiles from a Los Angeles firm, which were enough to do the whole wall ... Setting tile became a way of life for many of us, all summer and fall.

There were 16 to 24 people helping with this project, and we could refer to an approximately two-foot long miniature of the design. The pattern in full size was drawn on brown paper laid out on the floor, and then cut into pieces like jigsaw puzzle pieces which Peter then distributed to the workers ...

As more joined the workshops, a large percentage of the people of Morro Bay

participated. Some helped to make paste, cooking it at home: Rabbitskin glue, a white glue made with water and wheat flour.

In the Community Room of the Library (the library was not open yet), the pieces were laid out on the floor as they were completed. Everyone was amazed as the pattern grew. It could be seen in its true colors in reverse, as the tile was glass.

In late fall, the scaffolding was in place and the mural started to go up on the west wall, while people were still working on the pieces for the other end. We were heading for the opening date of the library, December 21.

— By Margaret Foster.

Municipal

- The City of Morro Bay's (CMB) website was re-designed for greater ease-of-use in 2015.
- The re-designed CMB website includes a feature that enables residents to report concerns or to make requests to every city department from a button on the homepage.
 www.morrobayca.gov
- The re-designed CMB website introduced a feature for online bill payment, reducing car miles traveled within the city.
- The Fire Department enforces weed suppression measures enacted by city ordinance
- The Police Department actively implements Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies. For example, police officers encourage building owners to plant shrubs in front of blank walls to discourage graffiti.
- The Police Department implemented a mobile-phone application in April 2015, enabling citizens to notify police of crime tips, including photos. The Police Department receives location information with the photo and the sender's phone number.
- Police officers carry graffiti wipes that remove marks made by spray paint, permanent-marker ink, crayon, ballpoint-pen ink, etc.

- An active partnership exists among city departments, Morro Bay National Estuary Program staff, and volunteers to restock 27 mutt-mitt dispensers with greater than 200,000 mutt mitts each year for removal of dog waste by their owners.
- All new waterfront (Embarcadero) development must include coastal access for the public, including locations for viewing, public walkways and at least one public boat dock.
 Permitted developments frequently include public restrooms, recycling containers, interpretive signage, and public art.
- The Harbor Department installed a "pelican proof" dumpster at the fish-cleaning station with signage addressing why pelicans should not be fed, greatly reducing litter.
- A part-time Harbor Department employee tends to waterfront trash receptacles, keeping them neat, clean, and emptied between scheduled trash pick-ups.

Commercial

 Red-flowering Eucalyptus trees in the downtown business district have been lighted to enhance the streetscape and improve shoppers' experiences. In April 2015, **Bloomies** joined Morro Bay Rotary and EcoRotary volunteers to replace lights and repair electrical boxes as needed. **Bloomies** weeded and removed debris from the tree wells and planted succulents propagated from cuttings. The Morro Bay Merchants' Association paid for the lights.

- The Morro Bay Merchants' Association and Morro Bay in Bloom
 volunteers are discussing additional beautification of the tree wells along
 Morro Bay Boulevard and Main Street.
- The Guerrilla Gardening Club has a commercial business that provides zero-waste support to large events to reduce the amount of trash that goes to the landfill, to ensure recycling, and to reduce water and energy use.

Residential

- The local waste-management company offers Spring Cleanup special pickups of large items during the week following the city-wide yard sale.
- Every address receives weekly curbside pickup of recyclables, compostable waste and garbage.
- Neighborhood Watch groups meet monthly with the police chief.

Community Involvement

 A group of volunteers prepares and serves dinner on Monday nights to anyone who is hungry. The first dinner was January 6, 2014, and as of March 2016, almost 6,000 dinners have been prepared and served. Seven different volunteer groups and three restaurants have participated at least once.

- Resident Dawn Beattie was troubled by the poor condition of the interpretive panels in the conversation development in which she lives.
 Dawn took charge, organized and networked and led by example to get new panels designed, produced and installed. (See page 17.)
- Representatives of Morro Bay's civic beautification, historical preservation, and visual art organizations formed the Citizens' Beautification and Heritage Committee in 2015. The CBHC meets for the purpose of identifying unmet beautification needs for submission to the city's annual fundable objectives hearings. The CBHC also identifies projects that are within the scope of volunteers' direct action.
- At the 31st Annual Coastal Cleanup Day, 56 miles of county coastline and creeks were cleaned up on September 19, 2015, including approximately four miles of the city's coastline.
 Greater than 1,000 volunteers participated countywide and nearly 2 tons of trash was picked up. The event's organizers encouraged participants to bring their own reusable containers, so that the event will eventually become zero-waste.











Best Idea

The partnership between **Morro Bay** in **Bloom (MBIB)**, Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) and City of Morro Bay (CMB) which resulted in the first fully-functional irrigation system at a public park in San Luis Obispo County supplied by rainwater harvested on site is our best idea for 2015-16. Thousands of people annually will stop by the interpretive panel that's mounted in front of one of the rainwater-storage tanks affixed near the entrance to the restroom building at Centennial Parkway.

This project began as one **Bloomie's** idea. Validation of the idea by CMB and MBNEP staff was all the inspiration other Morro Bay in Bloom volun**teers** needed to research the feasibility and cost of the project. A civil engineer based in Morro Bay generously evaluated the proposed site and designed an elegant earthquake-restraint system that could be fabricated locally. The engineer and fabricator would be available to consult with CMB staff regarding preparation of the installation sites and the installation, too. MBNEP awarded a \$5,000 grant that would completely pay for the project.

Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers

sourced the tanks, pumps, and necessary fittings that would provide a func-



tional and attractive system for the location. A local vendor, Farm Supply, was selected and provided the tanks and pumps at a discounted price. The process of determining the content and graphics of the interpretive panel was a collaborative effort between **MBIB volunteers** and MBNEP staff. The design concept was articulated by a Morro Bay graphic designer.

The prospective educational and policy benefits of this project were realized quickly and will continue to pay dividends. Morro Bay is in its fifth year of drought. An incentive to encourage installation of rainwater-harvesting barrels at residences and businesses was added in mid-2015 to a new suite of water-conservation incentives. Forty residents have installed rainwater-harvesting barrels or tanks since the announcement of the incentive, adding 4,336 gallons of storm water storage capacity.

One-inch of rainwater collected from 1,000 square feet of roof will yield 600 gallons of stored water. Imagine if all 4,200 homes in Morro Bay could collect and store 600 gallons of water for irrigation during dry periods (that sometimes begin in April)!



Morro Bay Surfboard Art Festival: By the People, for the People

The call went out as it does when a good swell is up. Mayor Jamie Irons chatted up **Morro Bay in Bloom** the idea of an exhibition of surfboard art comprised of pieces from individual private collections.

The event morphed from that first swell, cascading into a celebration of original expressions by artists of all ages and influences, including students of Del Mar Elementary School and Los Osos Middle School. A Surfboard Art Festival by and for the people!

The Morro Bay Surfboard Art Festival has become our community's passion. Old, used surfboards are gathered and presented to artists who then create amazing works of art on them.

There is a vision. A free, public art

exhibit of pieces that are discovered where people move about in their daily lives. Instantaneous inspiration placed in everyday places.

Treasured moment by treasured moment, the Morro Bay Surfboard Art Festival provides beneficial interludes that are experienced much as Morro Bay is experienced as a place.

Morro Bay's Tourism Business Improvement District Board awards a grant for publicity. Local businesses sponsor boards to support Morro Bay in Bloom.

The unveiling event at Forever Stoked Gallery is magical. The exhibit is received enthusiastically by sponsors and viewers. It is a labor of love even while it is a lot of work to produce. We feel it's all worth doing again in 2016.









