



CITY OF AMADOR CITY

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California

Amador City's State of the City
Prepared by Mayor Anne Kel-Artinian
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Tonight's State-of-the-City address, has three components: Finances, 2023 accomplishments, and 2024 aspirations.

Finances

City finances remain mostly on track with our budget. The biggest area of concern is the same as it was last year: our sewer fund. As of the end of 2023, we were about \$40,000 in the red when compared with expenses. About half of this is related to additional engineering costs and costs related to the pump replacement. But the remainder is of concern because it shows that our rate increase last year was not sufficient to cover ordinary operating costs. You will see this reflected in the discussion of focus areas below.

Other areas of note: In spite of some challenges collecting TOT (transient occupancy tax), we are tracking well against our budget. We also expect re-imburement from the state to cover park expenses and re-imburement from our insurance company to cover the cost of rehabilitating the apartments.

2023 Accomplishments

In January of 2022, I described 10 focus areas for the year. We've definitely had some high points this year, but we have struggled to make progress in several areas. The following chart summarizes our progress in these areas:

2023 Focus Area	Minimal Progress	Good Progress	Excellent Progress	Complete
1: Sewer study				
2: Housing Element				
3: City Hall Park				
4: Short-Term Rental Ordinance Updates				
5: Fire Resiliency				
6: Safety on Main Street				
7: Road Maintenance & Repairs				
8: BPAC Participation				
9: Update Municipal Code to Improve Enforcement				
10: Update Municode & Website				

2023 focus area 1: sewer study. In March, we passed a sewer rate increase for a single year rather than the five-year plan recommended by our consultants. As a result, our sewer fund is still not breaking even.

2023 focus area 2: Housing Element. Tonight, I hope the City Council will approve the Housing Element. As for code updates related to the Housing Element, we are still awaiting the award letter for the LEAP grant that will fund the code updates.

2023 focus area 3: City Hall Park. Good news on this front! We completed the playground and poured the slab for the basketball/pickleball court. We have some work to go to complete this phase of the park, however.

2023 focus area 4: understand how Amador City is served or harmed by short-term rentals. We held not additional meetings on this topic in 2023.

2023 focus area 5: fire resiliency. While we made no progress on becoming a Firewise community, we did pass a Fuels Management ordinance as recommended by Sutter Creek Fire.

2023 focus area 6: safety on Main Street. We have struggled to keep our radar speed signs operational. Also, the County did not complete the promised speed study, although I have assurance from Frank Axe that it will be completed this winter.

2023 focus area 7: road maintenance and repair. We were able to put a measure on the ballot that would increase sales tax for the purpose of road maintenance. This in turn allows us to apply for \$200,000 a year for road maintenance projects. We also continue to work with ACTC on funding for specific projects, although we were disappointed when our Main Street project was first approved by them and then disapproved.

2023 focus area 8: BPAC. We participated in a successful grant application for a planning grant with the BPAC team.

2023 focus area 9: Update Municipal Code to improve enforcement. We made not progress on this.

2023 focus area 10: Update MuniCode and website. We have made minor updates to our website but have not updated MuniCode.

In addition to working on these focus areas, we achieved some additional successes and faced some setbacks, including the following:

Last year at this time, we noted the passing of Mary-Louise Nixon, our long-time accountant. I wanted to thank our Treasurer, Holly Groth, for continuing to provide us with financial statements while we are in the process of contracting with a new accountant. Although it has taken a year, we should have a new accountant in place by next month.

Our Building Department remained busy. While there are no new houses being built, many property owners are making updates and improvements to their properties that require permits and inspections.

We contract with the Sherriff's Department for protective services. I have been in touch with Sherriff Redman a number of times over the past year to make sure that we don't get overlooked. His office provided us with an end-of-the-year summary that shows that the Sherriff's Department responded to 301 calls in Amador City during 2023. More information about this is attached.

There is one project that has not gotten a lot of attention that looks like it is going to be completed very soon. Under the shepherding of Council Member Sherrill (and Vice Mayor Bragstad before him), it looks like we will finally get our electric car charger!

I always want to give a shout out to ACBCA. They are responsible for a lot of the energy in town. I want to congratulate them in particular on the October edition of Dancin' in the Streets. It sure felt good to be outside dancing when the temperatures were more moderate. I would be remiss if I did not mention that we did say goodbye to some beloved businesses: Made in Amador, Serra, Alley and Main, and Small Town Food & Wine. Goodbyes like these are usually followed by hellos, and we are excited for a new batch of businesses to thrive here.

2023 Aspirations

Looking forward, in 2024, the city will have a lot on its plate. Note that several of these focus areas are carryovers from 2022 and 2023. Also, as leadership in the city evolves, this list may expand or contract.

Focus area 1: Proposition 218 process for sewer rates.

Focus area 2: Complete needed updates to City Code as described in the Housing Element. We hope to receive the Award Letter for our LEAP grant, which will fund these updates.

Focus area 3: Complete the park at City Hall.

Focus area 3a: Investigate and possibly apply for grant funding for additional park improvements including bathrooms, equipment shed, additional picnic areas, and parking.

Focus area 3b: Fund regular park maintenance.

Focus area 3c: Submit application for re-imbursement to the State.

Focus area 4: Update short-term rental ordinance as necessary.

Focus area 5: Fire resiliency.

Focus area 5a: Complete Firewise application.

Focus area 5b: Collaborate with Sutter Creek Fire to implement our new Fuels Management Ordinance.

Focus area 6: Road maintenance and repairs and transportation.

Focus area 6a: Pass Measure K.

Focus area 6b: Investigate and possibly apply for grant funding for additional road repair and maintenance.

Focus area 6c: Improve safety on Main Street. This involves doing more to discourage drivers from speeding down Main Street.

Focus area 6d: Complete electric car charger project.

Focus area 6e: Make sure the County completes speed study on Old Highway 49 between Sutter Creek and Amador City so we can lower the speed limit there.

Focus area 7: BPAC (Bicycle Pedestrian Access Committee) participation. We should continue our participation and examine the extent to which Measure K funds would be useful in achieving bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Focus area 8: Make sure City website is up to date and MuniCode is up to date.

Focus area 9: Collaborate with WGA and our insurance company to rehabilitate City Hall apartments.

Focus area 10: Investigate and possibly implement updates to City Hall and the Community Room.

Focus area 10a: Update electrical wiring in conjunction with apartment rehabilitation.

Focus area 10b: Investigate and possibly implement energy efficient updates in conjunction with the SNEW program.

Focus area 10c: Investigate and possibly apply for grant funding for City Hall and Community Room updates.

Focus area 13: Understand Amador City's risks in association with ARSA.

Finally, I know I am fortunate to be a resident of Amador City. I feel proud that we are an inclusive, supportive, creative, and fun-loving community. My wish is that we work even harder to embody those qualities in the face of turmoil that may come to meet us in 2024.

Happy New Year.