

**CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA
FISCAL YEAR 23-24 RECOMMENDED BUDGET
QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AS OF MAY 19, 2023**

1. **Question/Comment:** Why does the Estimated Actual FY 22-23 Sales Tax go up while Measure C goes down compared to FY 21-22 Actual? It seems Sales Tax and Measure C should move the same direction. Is this estimate correct?

Response: Administration met with HdL on May 10, 2023 to review sales tax data through 4Q22 and have updated the estimated FY 22-23 with figures provided by HdL. Measure C FY22-23 is now estimated at \$5,865,000. As Sales Tax captures point-of-sale transactions and Measure C tracks point-of-use transactions, it is not uncommon for these two taxes to trend differently.

2. **Question/Comment:** How does our City's Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) compare to other peninsula cities?

Response:

County	City	TOT Tax Rate %
Monterey	Carmel-by-the-Sea	10%
Monterey	Del Rey Oaks	10%
Monterey	Gonzales	8%
Monterey	Greenfield	8%
Monterey	King City	10%
Monterey	Marina	14%
Monterey	Monterey	12%
Monterey	Pacific Grove	12%
Monterey	Salinas	10%
Monterey	Seaside	12%
Monterey	Soledad	12%
Monterey	Monterey County	10.5%

3. **Question/Comment:** Is there a better way to handle the payments to the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB)? Why not estimate, then true up? How would a 'true up' with the MCCVB work?

Response:

The City remits four equal payments to Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) quarterly based upon 3% of the fiscal year adopted budget for Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue. There are no true-up payments currently to reflect 3% of actual TOT receipts collected over the fiscal year

Presently, there is a discrepancy between what MCCVB estimates (\$8.1M) for the City's TOT revenues and what the City estimates (\$6.8M) for FY 23-24. The City's TOT FY 23-24 estimates are calculated as a 2% increase over

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prior fiscal year's adopted budget. This variance results in a difference of approximately \$40K for the City's annual Jurisdiction Investment Partnership amount. In order to address situations like this, MCCVB is requesting an "invest-as-we-go" payment model for Council consideration that would result in the City's investment being based upon actual TOT revenues collected.

Based upon the current procedures and processes for the City's TOT collections and remittance, the MCCVB Jurisdiction Investment Partnership could be calculated every two months to match the timing of Monterey County Tourism Improvement District remittance, which is based on actual TOT collections. No end-of-the-year true up is needed with this approach and is based on actual TOT collections. Year-end or quarterly true-up calculations would require additional staff time while a bimonthly pay-as-you-go option could easily be incorporated into the TID processes already in place. Regardless, the City does need to add a placeholder amount as part of the budget and will continue with the amount in the recommended budget. Based on Councilmember Baron's direction, City Administrator Rerig will work with Rob O'Keefe of MCCVB to pay this upcoming fiscal year on actuals and should the actual amounts come over the budget amount, the City will submit a midyear adjustment accordingly.

4. **Question/Comment:** How would we propose cutting the budget by 10 percent if asked by Council?

Response: If a majority of City Council provides direction to cut \$4 million (10%) from the budget, the City Administrator will assess and come back with recommendations that may come from one or more sources such as salaries/benefits, operating expenses, and/or capital improvement projects (CIP).

5. **Question/Comment:** Please clarify the use of the parking in lieu fees?

Response: City Municipal Code § 17.38.040 states: "Funds collected by the City from such payments shall be deposited in a specific fund and used by the City to acquire and/or develop off-street parking." The CMC does not authorize the funds to be used for any other purpose (e.g., inter-city loan or other City program). Administration has requested from the City Attorney a memo specifically to clarify use of funds and whether funds can be utilized for parking improvements on currently owned off-street parking lots and spaces.

6. **Question/Comment:** Can you add the position control list back into the budget? How about adding the salary schedules for positions into the budget book?

Response: The FY 23-24 Recommended Budget Book has been updated since the May 2, 2023 City Council meeting with the City's Recommended Fund Positions table for FY 23-24.

7. **Questions/Comment:** Will the sand ramp at Eighth Avenue be repaired for use during an emergency?

Response:

Staff was anticipating that the ocean tides would bring back enough beach sand such that we could push up the sand and restore the ramp before the summer season. While some sand has returned to the beach, a considerable amount of additional sand is still needed back onto the beach to be able to restore the ramp.

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Police, Fire, and Public Works are well aware of this situation, and the lack of the beach ramp could potentially hinder emergency access.

However, it would be extremely challenging and costly to reconstruct the sand beach access ramp using imported sand for the following reasons. First, there is no known supply of pristine white sand that would match the natural Carmel Beach sand. Even if a source of sand was found, numerous truckloads would be required to cross the Village and deposit the sand. Not only would such a project be very costly, these operations would trigger an environmental analysis, environmental documentation, and a CEQA determination. A Coastal Development Permit would also be required. Furthermore, the ocean tides could return the sand for us during our summer beach profile.

8. **Question/Comment:** Can we add a photograph of the entire City Council in the budget book?

Response: The City paid for a recruitment video that included video footage and photos which were incorporated into the FY 23-24 budget. However, a photo of the full City Council can be integrated into the budget book once a photo of the full City Council has been taken. As of today (5/30), staff has been unable to get a picture of the full City Council together.

9. **Question/Comment:** Regarding the Community Fire Risk assessment - will the document clearly elucidate whether we are at risk of wildfire in the Village?

Response: The City believes the Community Fire Risk Assessment will touch on the risk of wildfire in the Village. Administration has taken this question to Chief Panholzer and will update as more information becomes available. The City recommends that you participate in the community workshops and take the community survey that can be found at this link:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1676ab5b4a2d4993883393f1cb5f3d87>

10. **Question/Comment:** Now that we have prohibited wood burning fires at Carmel Beach will we change the signs?

Response: Yes. We are in the process of ordering and installing the new signs.

11. **Question/Comment:** Since there have not been any transactions on the Parking in Lieu fund balance for the last two years, can we invest the \$734k (or a portion) in an interest-bearing account?

Response: The Parking in Lieu fund balance is part of the overall City's investment financial portfolio. City's investment gain/losses are totaled and allocated among all funds holding a cash balance at the end of the fiscal year. As of June 30, 2022, the City's cash and investment portfolio was divided among checking accounts (73%), savings accounts (16%) and brokerage accounts (11%).

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12. **Question/Comment:** The staffing positions and comparison to FY 22-23 are missing from the FY 23-24 recommended budget document. Chip called out in the FY 23-24 budget report that there are no increases in staffing. Even so, when will the public be able to see this information?

Response: The FY 23-24 Recommended Budget Book has been updated since the May 2, 2023 City Council meeting and includes the authorized positions.

13. **Question/Comment:** IT has over 50% increase in budget recommendations. What are the specific publications and subscriptions driving this and how are they used?

Response: The City's long term plan to move from on-premise systems which are capital expense heavy to Cloud based technologies which are operating expenses have increased expenditures in IT subscriptions. Additionally, Administration has consolidated all cross-departmental software subscriptions into IT's Publication and Subscriptions budget for FY 23-24.

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Vendor</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
12,000.00	AWS Cloud Services	Cloud Infrastructure
15,000.00	Azure Cloud Services	Cloud Infrastructure
4,000.00	Certificate Management	Cybersecurity
5,000.00	Computer Management Software	Cybersecurity
3,500.00	DMARC Services	Cybersecurity
5,000.00	Docusign	Digital Signatures
12,605.00	Laserfische	Cloud document management
14,600.00	Freshdesk Software	Support system for Forestry, Facilities, Planning and IT
2,500.00	GIS	Geographic Information System Maintenance
18,000.00	Gsuite Business	Cloud communication and collaboration tools
4,000.00	Hycu	Backup system
20,500.00	iWorq Software	Planning and Public Works permits and licensing software
3,500.00	Knowbe4 Computer Security Awareness Training	Security awareness training
25,000.00	Microsoft Licensing	Licenses for the Office and Windows software
18,000.00	Darktrace Network Security Monitoring	Cybersecurity
7,200.00	Adobe	Document management
42,000.00	Security Services (CrowdStrike, Artic Wolf)	Cybersecurity
3,840.00	Zoom	Public meeting broadcast, remote participation

14. **Question/Comment:** Community Activities has a noticeable increase in community promotions. What specifically are these?

Response: Community Activities has budgeted more in FY 23-24 due to inflationary increases in contractor costs. Additionally, more funds are budgeted towards the Farmers' Market for 3rd Thursdays (\$20,100), Programs/Events (\$13,200), Community Promotions (\$5,100), music (\$4,500) and other market improvements, signage, display, and equipment (\$13,667).

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15. **Question/Comment:** What is the anticipated amount of reimbursements from storm damage that occurred during the 1st quarter of 2023 and when do we expect to receive this?

Response: At this time, the City is still identifying and inventorying disaster-related damages as required by FEMA. The City has until June 14, 2023 to complete emergency work and June 14, 2024 to complete permanent work. The City met with the new FEMA representative on May 10, 2023 and is actively working through the process. So far, the storm debris costs approved by FEMA is \$36K. Repairs have yet to be approved and will require a FEMA sight adjuster to come to the City and assess the damages, such as the stairs and ramp at the beach, street damages from tree uprooting etc. FEMA has not said when specifically, we would receive the funding.

16. **Question/Comment:** Contract services for tree care and landscape maintenance increased 50% in last year's budget and now again by 49% in this year's budget. Given this trend, is this enough? How do we better prepare for these services given that winter storms will continue to challenge our Village?

Response: For Fiscal Years 20-21 and 21-22, during the Pandemic, contracted landscape maintenance services were unfunded. While volunteer groups stepped up to help reduced Public Works/forestry crews with landscape care, the overall quality of the landscaping was diminished.

In the current Fiscal Year 22-23, \$149,000 was allocated for landscape maintenance. In late 2022, a contract was awarded to Town & Country Gardening & Landscaping for \$140,000. Approximately \$24,000 will also be expended to reimburse Carmel Cares for their contracted gardening services along the Scenic Pathway. Staff believes that the quality of the landscaping across the Village is now better than even before the Pandemic.

The proposed landscape maintenance budget for FY 23-24 is \$203,000 and covers both Town & Country (\$175,000) and Carmel Cares (\$28,000) landscaping services. The budgeted increase from \$149,000 to \$203,000 is 36%.

Staff believes this increase is significant and prudent, but cautions against increasing the budget for landscaping maintenance beyond this amount so as to be in balance with the many other City needs.

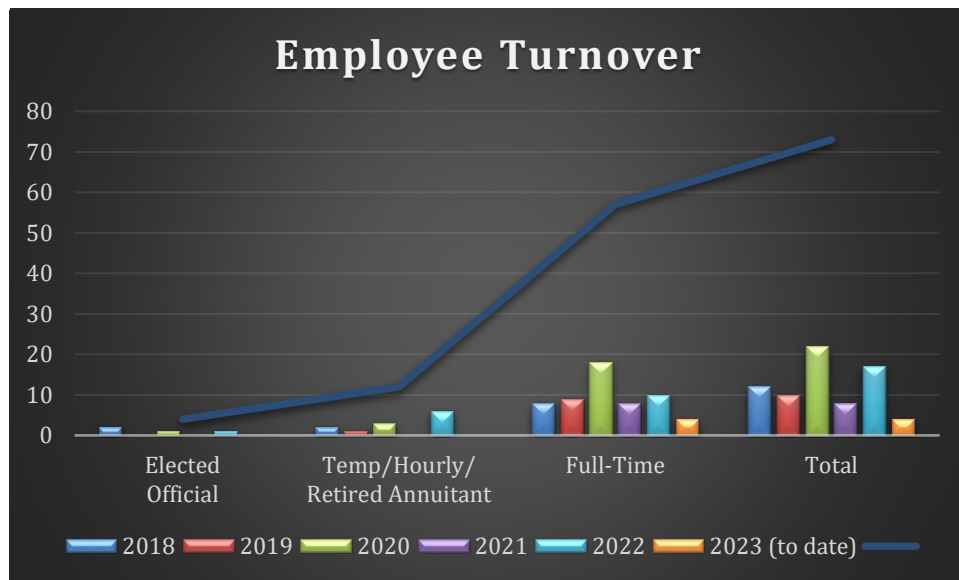
17. **Question/Comment:** The pie chart on page 41 doesn't seem to represent the PW Forest & Beach FY 2023-2024 budget amount of \$1,017,500.

Response: The FY 23-24 Recommended Budget Book has been updated since the May 2, 2023 City Council meeting to reflect the proper allocation of PW's Forest & Beach services and supplies.

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18. **Question/Comment:** Staff turnover adds to increased recruiting time, costs, and understaffing that can delay project progress. What has been our staff turnover trend/rate for the last 5 years, adjusting for Covid impacts?

Response: In summary, 57 full-time employees have separated since 2018 which is close to 60% of personnel. Although COVID and the corresponding layoffs impacted 2020, the City has been proactively taking measures to address issues that may causing employees to leave such as improving employee engagement and satisfaction, and offering competitive compensation and benefit packages. The employee (full-time or temp/hourly/retired annuitant) and elected officials turnover trend/rate for the last 5 calendar years is as follows:



Calendar Year	Elected Official	Temp/Hourly/Retired Annuitant	Full-Time	Total
2018	2	2	8	12
2019	0	1	9	10
2020	1	3	18	22
2021	0	0	8	8
2022	1	6	10	17
2023 (to date)	0	0	4	4
	4	12	57	73

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19. **Question/Comment:** It mentions that Pink Mutt Mitts will increase the budget by \$34,800. This isn't true. The cost for the "black" mitts will be \$71/case going forward for pallet quantities and the cost for pink mitts will be \$71/case for any order quantity. Rob <Culver> has the information on how to get this pricing with Dog Waste Depot. There is no need to distinguish between the two types. You just need to order the correct quantities of each based on usage.

Response: FY 23-24 budget reflects \$24,000 for mutt mitts.

20. **Question/Comment:** The Scenic Pathway Hardscape Renovation is discussed but there is no amount listed for this budget. Why isn't the \$100,000 included in that discussion? If it is still in the budget where is it shown?

Response: The amounts for the Scenic Pathway Hardscape Renovation are included in Table 2: FY 23-24 Recommended Capital Projects and Funding Source on page 53 of the Proposed Budget Book. Currently budgeted is \$100,000 from the General Fund with a \$100,000 matching donation from Carmel Cares.

21. **Question/Comment:** There is no direct discussion of the \$24,000 allocated to landscaping for Scenic Pathway. Is this part of the \$175,000 landscaping budget? And, should this be broken out separately or at least discussed?

Response: The Public Works/Forestry Operating Budget for Contractual Services is budgeted for \$941,500 (page 43 of budget). Of that amount, \$175,000 is earmarked for our landscape maintenance contractor and \$28,000 is allocated to reimburse Carmel Cares for contracted gardening services performed along the Scenic Pathway.

22. **Question/Comment:** There is no discussion that I could find related to all the volunteer hours donated to the city by Carmel Cares and other volunteer groups. I thought this was in last year's budget but I could be wrong.

Response: Volunteer hours are not presented in the Budget Book. These hours are recognized during the fiscal year in the Resolution presented to City Council, when the donation from Carmel Cares is accepted. The Council last recognized donations from Carmel Cares on December 6, 2022, for \$150,316 plus 7,808 volunteer hours.

23. **Question/Comment:** Is the council really satisfied with 1 person in Public Works directly allocated to tree work? Not only is this insufficient but, if that person were to quit we would have zero people until they are replaced. You'd think after this past winter this would be front and center. Seems to me that it would be the money allocated for Natural Resource Manager would be better spent on 1 or two additional Forestry staff.

Response: The Public Works/Forestry Operating Budget for Contractual Services is budgeted for \$941,500 (page 43 of budget). Of that amount, nearly \$600,000 is earmarked for contracted tree care services -

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a significant increase from the \$330,000 in the current year budget. All Public Works field crews have been trained in storm-related tree incidents, as evidenced by the quick restoration following the significant March storm. The Public Works Director would not support reallocating funds from a Natural Resources Manager position for more field crews.

24. **Question/Comment:** If any of you have gone for a walk on the beach lately you would have been shocked to see the state of the bluff around 10th Ave. Study or not, it is perfectly clear that this area is at risk of collapse without further reinforcement. By the time the study is complete, discussion takes place, funds allocated, and a project takes place, there might not be anything to protect. It is clear by the precariously leaning posts on the top that something is happening. The area North of 12th we are going to replace soon is also leaning, demonstrating that the ground is moving due to inadequate support on the beach and erosion. If we aren't careful, what happened in 1983 will be repeated and the cost of repairs will be beyond our ability to finance.

Response: Noted. The entire shoreline infrastructure is currently being evaluated by our environmental, climate change/adaptation, and geotechnical engineering consultants as part of the Coastal Engineering Study. The results of the Shoreline Condition Assessment (Task 1 in the Study) revealed that Seawall #7, in the vicinity of 10th Avenue, does need repairs and these were rated as medium priority. Seawall #6, between 11th and 12th Avenue did not warrant repairs.

The CIP proposes to continue the Study into Phase 2 next fiscal year. This will include further evaluations. In addition, design by a structural engineering firm of the most heavily-damaged seawall(s) are planned to be funded under the Shoreline Infrastructure Repairs Project, as shown in the CIP pages 53 and 58.

25. **Question/Comment:** I didn't see any funding for repair/replacement of the beach access wooden stairways and repairs to the stone/concrete stairways. Would this be included in the \$100,000?

Response: No. The design and initial repairs of the most heavily-damaged beach access stairs are planned to be funded under the Shoreline Infrastructure Repairs Project, as shown in the CIP pages 53 and 58. We are also seeking funding from FEMA and the Coastal Conservancy.

26. **Question/Comment:** Can you run the crime statistics from July to July for the years shown?

Response: The City can provide the crime statistics in August since we are still with the requested reporting period (Jan -July 2023)

27. **Question/Comment:** Please clarify why volunteers cannot be used to perform some work when it is part of a union-represented position.

Response: Volunteers cannot be used to perform work when it is part of a union-represented position without meeting and conferring with the appropriate bargaining units. If the City did allow volunteers to perform work currently performed by represented employees without meeting and conferring, then the

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represented employees could file an Unfair Labor Practice claim with the California Public Employment Relations Board.

28. Question/Comment: Please clarify the process we are in for the Parking and Congested Traffic analysis.

Response: The City has concluded phase 1 of the program - Public Outreach. The public outreach included a booth at Farmer's Market on April 27th and May 4th plus four (4) separate public meetings held on May 1, May 3, May 9, and May 11 within our village. We had excellent dialogue with the various audiences and gave them good information in the process. We are currently working on phase 2 - Refinement, which includes gathering the various public inputs and developing a more robust plan to address important things like permit areas, fleshed-out plans for employees, deliveries, and other longer-range issues. We will also continue to refine our maps and other details. In September, Council will receive a presentation on the proposed parking program and give direction to staff. If approved, the introduction of a Parking Management Ordinance will occur in October.

29. Question/Comment: Please confirm that we have design and build funding for the Acacia Way headwall.

Response: At the April 5, 2023 CIP Workshop, the project description for the City-wide drainage projects was listed as follows:

Drainage System Repair Design (FY 2021/22, \$100,000), and Drainage System Repair Design Phase II (FY 2022/23, \$500,000): should now be considered one combined project. The City-wide Drainage Master Plan identified numerous spot repairs needed for our existing underground storm drain pipes, as well as significant "bottlenecks" in the drainage system. In October 2022, Council awarded a \$50,000 Professional Services Agreement to Schaaf & Wheeler Consulting Engineers to update their 2020 Drainage Master Plan to reflect recommendations from the Climate Committee to evaluate 20-year storm event impacts to the drainage system, versus 10-year storm events as previously evaluated, and as much of the drainage infrastructure of the City was built. The Updated Master Plan is complete, and highlights will be presented to Council at an upcoming meeting. On a parallel track, Neill Engineers was issued a \$24,999 Professional Services Agreement to design eight to ten specific drainage repairs and bottleneck elimination projects. The design of those improvements is in progress. Remaining funds should be carried-forward into Fiscal Year 2023/24 to complete the design. At least \$4M will be needed to fix the most critical repairs and bottlenecks, and allocations for specific repairs will be recommended in future year CIP plans.

At the April Workshop, Council requested that part of the remaining funds be used for physical construction of drainage improvements, rather than using all budget on engineering design services. As noted during the May 2, 2023 CIP Review presentation, the Public Works Director noted that this carry-over project scope was changed accordingly. Specifically, of the remaining budget of approximately \$500k, approximately \$150k will be earmarked for design of the first three (3), high priority projects, and \$350k will be available for construction. The first three projects are: 1) Acacia Way headwall upgrade, 2) Santa Rita box culvert repair, between Third and Fourth Avenues, and 3) Santa Fe new pipeline between Mountain View and the MTNP outfall. Project #3 will be bid as a bid additive in case the final costs exceed the remaining budget.

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30. **Question/Comment:** Please clarify the City's current transit occupancy tax (TOT). How much more revenue is possible if we increase the TOT by one (1) percent, and two (2) percent. Can you run the crime statistics from July to July for the years shown?

Response: Currently, \$6.8 million is budgeted for FY 23-24 TOT revenue, at a 10% tax rate. If the tax rate was increased, TOT revenue would increase \$680,000 for each 1% increase.

31. **Question/Comment:** Please request financial data/reports for Visit Carmel, MCCVB, Carmel Chamber, Sunset Center, and Carmel Youth Center (CYC).

Response: The City Administrator has received financial data/reports from Visit Carmel, MCCVB, Carmel Chamber of Commerce and Sunset Center. The CYC has not yet responded, however, the City has financial data that was submitted as part of the discretionary grant application process. The City is working with the City Attorney to confirm that we can release the financial data received.

32. **Question/Comment:** Please clarify the obligation under the long-term lease with Sunset Cultural Center, Inc. to establish an endowment, and use said endowment earnings for capital work on the property.

Response: Sunset Cultural Center is the sole beneficiary of the Sunset Theater Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation for Monterey County (market value \$188,801). It was established after the renovation in 2003 and restricted to deferred maintenance and protection of new assets in the Sunset Theater. The Sunset Theater Endowment Fund provides interest earned on the principle. It also acts as a "quasi-endowment" that enables Sunset Cultural Center to receive pass-through donations where the full gift is spendable as designated. We received some of our recent Theater Upgrade donations through the quasi-endowment.

33. **Question/Comment:** What assets does Carmel Youth Center have at this time?

Response: No response has been received yet.

34. **Question/Comment:** What are the dues for Chamber of Commerce? I also heard that they have a lot of members that do not pay their dues.

Response: Councilmember Felito had heard that there was a lot of members that don't pay their dues at the Chamber. I don't think what she heard was quite true. Below I have documented, where members are past due, offered courtesy memberships, and trade agreements.

As of today, we have 522 members, 11 are past due 12 months. (2% of our members). This can be for lots of reasons: hardship for example, a business being sold like SUR where we are working on the new owners. Often members are dropped well before reaching this point.

If I could expand on her question, there are 2 other types of membership that we trade:

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Courtesy Members - 8

We call them Courtesy Members where they are offered membership at no cost, because the chamber deems them important, and wants to sustain a close relationship with the entity. For example, Carmel Cares, Monterey Chamber of Commerce.

Trade Members – 16

These are members that are paid up members, but we move them up to the next level of membership as a trade. For example, The Pine Cone is a trade partner and we get to advertise for free. KION TV CBS that we are hoping to cover taste live this year. Carmel Magazine for which we get a full page add ever edition. Aaron Chang Art Gallery, he gave us access to his digital photography to use in things like the Guide to Carmel at no charge. The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea is a paid Business Level member, and the Chamber upgrades the city to Executive level for its ongoing support. Carmel-by-the-Sea is the only city the Chamber has a trade agreement with.

Both are standard practices within Commerce Chambers.

35. **Question/Comment:** It seems that City Budget add on requests (e.g., the Carmel Youth Center, Chamber of Commerce, and MCCVB) happening in the final steps of the budget process would benefit by going through a more formal and timely process. These organizations provide important services to our community. Most, if not all, nonprofits in our City derive their funds from membership dues, donations, grants, fundraisers, etc. for support. The Council (and public) would benefit by being able to see these requests earlier in the City budget cycle with submissions that include a comprehensive plan, financial statements, and value proposition similar to what's required in the Discretionary Grant Funds Program.

Response: The City is always looking to improve on its processes and have noted the suggestion. Administration has reached to each vendor accordingly for FY 23-24 and will look to incorporate budget requests from the City's marketing and economic development servicers sooner in the budgeting process.