



City of La Verne

NEWS RELEASE

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La Verne Reflects on Accomplishments and Upcoming Goals at State of the City

LA VERNE, CA – On Monday, February 13, the City of La Verne partnered with the [La Verne Chamber of Commerce](#) to host the State of the City address, which was held in-person for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Tim Hepburn addressed a full room at the University of La Verne Sara and Michael Abraham Campus Center, where he reflected on the City's accomplishments in 2022 and discussed its goals for 2023.

"This marks the first time we have been able to present a State of the City in three years. Despite the challenges that COVID presented, our City has not only been able to survive, but it has been able to thrive," said Mayor Hepburn, who was joined by the full La Verne City Council. "The State of the City is an opportunity to reflect on our ability to work together, celebrate the beauty of La Verne's story of continual perseverance and preview what the chapters of our continuing story hold for the next year. This is an exciting time for La Verne and I am proud and delighted to share these wins with you."

In addition to the City Council and La Verne's executive team in attendance, Congresswoman Grace Napolitano, University of La Verne President Devorah Lieberman, LA County Assessor Jeffrey Prang and representatives with Senator Portantino, Senator Rubio and Supervisor Barger were also present for the address.

The launch of a new, user-friendly website and beginning construction on [affordable housing projects](#) were among the 2022 areas highlighted by Mayor Hepburn. He also celebrated Council's hiring of experienced and capable City leadership, including City Manager Ken Domer, Finance Director Christy Lopez and City Attorney Kimberly Hall-Barlow.

Mayor Hepburn also shared noteworthy milestones from each department. As part of the City's commitment to the La Verne Fire Department (LVFD), the City and the [La Verne Firefighters' Association \(LVFA\)](#) collaborated on a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The new four-year agreement is a reflection of a strong partnership and includes salary and compensation adjustments, classification changes and education incentives.

In 2022, the La Verne Police Department (LVPD) successfully implemented the [Homeless Outreach Support Team \(HOST\)](#), a program that connects homeless individuals with the appropriate resources including housing, food, job training and medical services. The department also added new resources such as a new police K-9 and a new armored rescue vehicle to better serve the community. Mayor Hepburn also introduced Captain Sam Gonzalez as the Acting Chief of Police while Police Chief Coleen Flores is on



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medical leave. The City along with those who attended the event sent their well wishes to Chief Flores during her recovery.

In addition to maintaining La Verne's parks, streets and infrastructure, the Public Works Department was also [granted \\$170,000 from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery \(CalRecycle\)](#) to promote recycling and educational outreach. The City installed recycle and trash bin receptacles and water refill stations at various City parks and public spaces.

With the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, the Community Development Department spearheaded a \$700,000 grant program to assist with COVID-19 recovery efforts. La Verne was able to help 72 businesses with grants of up to \$10,000. In addition, 93 businesses opened last year, demonstrating La Verne's ability to support and attract new businesses following the pandemic.

Following the theme of resilience, the Community Services Department revived key services and programs for residents, including the Senior Lunch Program. For the first time since the pandemic, the City was able to reestablish a robust list of in-person programs and classes for residents of all ages to enjoy.

The City's strong financial stance is expected to continue on an upward trend in 2023. In addition to the annual financial audit, the City is undergoing three additional audits, including a Federal Department of Treasury audit reviewing three years of activity. These audits provide the opportunity to review current and past practices as the City prepares for the 2023-24 budget season.

In 2023, La Verne anticipates more businesses opening, including new businesses in Old Town La Verne. The City plans to continue making progress on its General Plan Update, which has not been updated since 1998. The updated plan intends to address land use, construction guidelines, roads, parks and other infrastructure.

The City also plans to begin the Arrow Highway Greening Project to upgrade street medians with drought tolerant plants, trees and a modern irrigation control system. Other improvement projects, such as pavement rehabilitations, are expected to begin in spring 2023. The six miles of work will be along Hayes Drive to the north, Bonita Avenue to the south, White Avenue to the west and City limits to the east.

Following Mayor Hepburn's preview into what to expect for 2023, he expressed gratitude to the La Verne Chamber and University of La Verne for their partnership.

"I want to express my gratitude to the La Verne Chamber of Commerce for helping present this event. It is always a pleasure to celebrate our accomplishments and share what the future holds for our great City," Mayor Hepburn concluded. "I encourage everyone to continue to support La Verne and make our story one that deserves to be told."

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