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## SAND CITY NEWSLETTER

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WHAT'S NEW IN SAND CITY & BEYOND

ISSUE #1 2026

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## CITY PROJECTS & LOCAL UPDATES

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Fresh look, more content, more ways to connect: Explore our new website. We have launched a brand-new website with a fresh design and easier navigation, making it simpler than ever to explore everything happening in our small but vibrant coastal community. From upcoming events and city updates to information about parks, planning, and local programs, the site brings it all together in one place. Take a few minutes to click around at <https://sandcity.org>, discover what's new, and stay connected with everything Sand City has to offer.



Looking to be more prepared for emergencies and support your community when it matters most? The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program offers free, hands-on training in skills like fire safety, basic medical response, and light search and rescue. The program is available locally through the City of Seaside Community Emergency Response Program as well as through the City of Monterey Fire Department.

Upcoming training dates:

City of Seaside Community Emergency Response Program: March 10, May 3, and May 17 (full-day sessions, typically 8am–5pm). Learn more and sign up [here](#).

City of Monterey Community Emergency Response Program: April 25, May 2, and May 9, 2026 (three consecutive Saturdays, 8:30am–5:30pm). Learn more and sign up [here](#).

Emergencies can happen anytime - being prepared makes all the difference. The Red Cross recommends three simple steps: build an emergency kit, make a plan with your household, and stay informed about local alerts and safety procedures. Taking a little time now can help you respond quickly and confidently when it matters most.

Download Emergency Preparedness Guide



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**FUN FACTS! DID YOU KNOW THAT...**

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... Sand City covers **2.9 square miles of land**, is **home to 328 people**, is the **14,824th largest city in the United States**, and is entered by an average of **31,104 vehicles** each day?

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**COFFEE WITH THE CITY MANAGER**

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City Manager, Vibeke Norgaard, hosts a monthly "Meet Your City Manager" event. The next one will be on April 16th, 10:00-11:00 AM at Captain & Stoker Coffee's Sand City location. Grab a cup of coffee, a pastry, and talk about your vision for Sand City or anything else on your mind.



*As Sand City continues to evolve, thoughtful planning plays a key role in shaping how the community grows while staying true to its character. We sat down with Planning Manager Nick McIlroy to talk about his background, what planning really means for residents and businesses, and how current projects are helping define the city's future.*

Nick, can you tell us a little about your background and how you ended up working in planning and in Sand City specifically?

Sand City is truly unique place, not just because of its small size and stunning location on the Monterey Peninsula, but because of its resilience. What was once an area for resource extraction has evolved into a vibrant community with a scrappy, small, but deeply engaged population. In many ways, it reminds me of Berkeley, where I first worked as a planner. The transformation of West Berkeley shares that same "maker" spirit with Sand City's West End District. Both are shifting toward more housing, craft-oriented, and service-type uses that highlight a strong arts and creative culture.

I've been working in the public sector for 12 years and Sand City has one of the most dedicated teams I've ever been a part of. From the Mayor to the residents, there's a real sense of "we're in this together."

Before working in government, I spent years in the private sector with small businesses. That

experience helps me better navigate how to support our business community. I understand the hurdles business owners face and aim to be a partner through the process, and not just a regulator.



For people who may not know: what does the Planning Department actually do for Sand City?

Planning is the “big picture” department that touches almost every part of your daily life. In simple terms, if you want to change your property, whether opening a shop, building a home, or adding an Accessory Dwelling Unit, we are your first stop. We help you navigate the “rules of the road,” like how high a building can be or how much open space is needed.

Think of our work in two ways. First, we help individual projects fit into the current fabric of the community. Second, we handle the long-range planning, essentially sketching the blueprint for Sand City’s future. For example, we’re currently updating our General Plan. Since the last one was written in 2002, it’s time to reimagine what the next 20-plus years should look like for our residents.

What kinds of projects are you currently working on? And what are your favorites?

There's a lot going on in Sand City, which makes it an exciting time to be in planning. Much of this momentum comes from the leadership of the Mayor and the City Council as well as the City Manager and the visionaries before me. That foresight is why Sand City has its own desalination plant, which has helped enable to the City's first hotel. It's become a gathering place for the community, bringing together art, music at the Lido Stage, dining, and shared spaces.

I'm also incredibly excited about our trail projects. We are working on the multi-use trail to fill a gap where the Monterey Bay Coastal Recreation Trail currently ends, as well as a coastal trail that will better connect people to the ocean.

Let's talk fun facts: What's something about city planning that might be surprising for our readers to learn?

The most surprising (and rewarding) part of planning isn't the paperwork; it's the "full circle" moments. There is nothing like walking into a family-owned restaurant that you helped through the permitting process and seeing the tables full of happy neighbors. Or watching kids play in a park that was once just a sketch on your desk. At its core, planning isn't about the spaces or the buildings alone; it's about the people who live and work in them.

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**SAND CITY EVENT CALENDAR 2026**

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January 2026							February 2026							March 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31								29	30	31				

  

April 2026							May 2026							June 2026							
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					
							31														

  

July 2026							August 2026							September 2026							
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				
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October 2026							November 2026							December 2026						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

- City Council regular meetings - first and third Tuesdays (unless noted as canceled)
- Public Safety Committee - second Tuesday of March, June, September, and December
- City Barbecue - May 16, 2026
- West End Celebration - August 22-23, 2026
- Tree Lighting Ceremony - December 4, 2026
- Canceled City Council meetings

Follow us on Instagram for more stories, updates, and ways to engage!



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## ART & CULTURE IN SAND CITY

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Artist Spotlight: Meet Holly and Ashlee Temple - *Raised in an artistic household and shaped by decades of shared practice, the Temple Sisters bring a deeply collaborative approach to collage and mixed media. From their long-standing studio in Sand City, their work explores memory, time, and the layered experiences of women, rooted in both personal history and the creative energy of the West End.*

Holly, Ashlee - tell us a little about yourself. How did you become artists, and what brought you to or made you stay in Sand City?

Our father was an artist (artist Brook Temple 1934-2025) so we grew up in an artistic household. Art has always been a deep and integral part of our lives and we both have always had an area in our homes dedicated to creating small pieces of artwork but about twenty years ago we decided we really wanted to work on projects together.

Our first studio was in Philadelphia and it was huge. Holly's kids were little so one of us could be working while the other minded the kids. Later when Holly moved to Monterey we relocated our studio to Sand City which also

had a space for the kids to play and create. For a long time Ashlee travelled back and forth from Denver so we could collaborate intensely for three or four weeks at a time. Ashlee moved to the Peninsula in 2019 which made our collaboration much easier and more productive.

How would you describe your work, and where does your inspiration come from?

We consider ourselves collage artists and we work in mixed media, from very small to quite large pieces on canvas or board.

Some of our work is characterized by strong feminist themes but an equally strong subject matter is memory and the effects of time passing.

Sometimes these two concerns are combined into pieces that amplify questions of women's personal and collective persona throughout history as in our Sampler Series.



Some of our work is more abstract though and just deals with the effects of time on memory and objects such as books, reading, letters and even the walls of our environments as well as iconic cultural images.

We both studied color theory with our father so we are always approaching work through that lens as well. Holly studied graphic design and art history

and Ashlee spent a long time in the theatre so elements from those disciplines often find their way into the work as well.

If someone walked into your studio for the first time, what would they notice right away?

They would probably notice that there are quite a few projects happening at once! We have a gallery (Temple Garage) attached to our workspace so there is usually something either being set up or showing there. Our actual workspace is very fluid. We always have several pieces at different stages of progress. Some of the work may be an addition to an on- going series, like our *Memory Boxes* or our *Vote* series for Instagram. While others are just a glimmer of an idea that we are starting to lay out. We also are often experimenting with new mediums or papers and these are all at different levels of experimentation or progress.

There is also a lot of paper! We have been collecting ephemera for our work for twenty years so there's a lot of bins and drawers filled with all sorts of paper. magazines, books, photos, old billboard etc. It can very much feel like a cabinet of curiosities or in our case a garage of curiosities!

What is one piece you've made recently that you're excited about?

We always have a lot of pieces we are working on at once so that's hard to pin down but we would say that the most exciting thing about the work is the collaboration. Because there are two of us and we often work on a piece separately and there are usually many layers and steps to a particular piece, it's very

exciting to leave a piece for the other to work on and then come into the studio and see what has transpired. It's also really great to be able to share breakthroughs with another person at the same time if one of us gets stuck having another set of eyes always helps move it forward.



What does being part of the Sand City arts community mean to you?

We love our space in Sand City. We have been in it for more than a decade! We love our neighbors - that there are people living and working around us. We love being in an industrial area and knowing that it is also full of artists. It is an atmosphere that not only lends itself to our work but keeps us grounded and industrious ourselves. Also it's very quiet on the weekend which is nice and relaxing for creating but not so great for showing artwork! So that's a challenge.

Lastly: Do you have any upcoming projects, exhibitions, or studio events people should know about? Where can people see your work or learn more about it?

We will be featuring Jaqui Turner's *Holding On* in our studio as part of PhotoCarmel. It Opens March 27th and runs through the May 10. During that month our door will be open, Thursday, 11 AM - 2 PM. Friday 3 - 7 PM and Sat 10-2 and always by appointment.

We also like to be open on First Fridays of the month. With the Nightmarket 831 also open at the same time and across the street, it makes us we feel like a large part of the community. And that is our main goal: To build a Sand City community.

We are at [templesisters.com](http://templesisters.com) or on Instagram @temple\_sisters/



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The Sand City West End Celebration is back August 22–23, 2026 - and we can't wait to fill Sand City with local art, music, and community again.



The free, family-friendly festival runs **Saturday from 11am to 6pm** and **Sunday from 11am to 5pm**, transforming the district into a walkable celebration of local creativity with 170+ artists, makers, musicians, and food vendors.

This year's music lineup brings a strong mix of regional and local talent across different genres. More than 25 artists are expected to perform across multiple stages throughout the weekend: Headliners [Anthony Arya](#) and [Forrest Day](#), along with [The Rumba Madre](#) and [The Heeters](#), local favorites like The Money Band and SambaDa, as well as emerging local talent Katherine Lavine, The Dead Cassettes, Shannon & The Night Divers, Jive Machine, Eyes likes Lanterns, and more. For the full lineup and stage schedule please visit [westendcelebration.com/music-line-up](http://westendcelebration.com/music-line-up).

We're especially excited to see the Art Park come alive again, in collaboration with Elevate 831, the team behind Sand City's monthly Nightmarket 831.

Many of the collaborations that make this event work so well will continue this year too. Visitors can once again take advantage of the MST shuttle, the bike valet, and a great selection of local food and drink vendors that help make the weekend feel uniquely Sand City.

If you're a local artist creating original work, vendor applications are now open on the [festival website](#) - spots are limited!

This event truly happens because of the community around it. Local sponsors play a huge role in making the West End Celebration possible: Supporting the stages,

artists, logistics, and the many moving pieces behind the scenes. **If your business would like to be part of bringing this weekend to life, we'd love to hear from you.**

We're also welcoming volunteers who want to help make the celebration happen.

*For questions or to connect with the festival organizers please email [thewestendcelebration@gmail.com](mailto:thewestendcelebration@gmail.com).*

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## SAND CITY IN THE NEWS

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[Lineups shaping up for local music fests](#)

Monterey Herald [Mar 25, 2026]

[Kim Scudder appointed to Sand City City Council](#)

Monterey County Now [Feb 20, 2026]

[Mural festival to focus on Graniterock Building](#)

Monterey Herald [Jan 29, 2026]

[Public art powerhouse](#)

Marin Independent Journal [Jan 26, 2026]

[Sand City's first Hotel Launches](#)

Monterey Herald [Jan 16, 2026]





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