



From the City Manager's Desk

a weekly report from Scott Ochoa, City of Monrovia



February 23, 2007

Old Town Renovation Project Nearing Final Stages

If you've driven through Old Town at night recently, you will have noticed that much of the electrical work has been done and most of the street lights are operating. I think the lighting makes a big difference and further contributes to the family-oriented, pedestrian atmosphere that Old Town features.

This coming week, crews will continue finalizing the electrical system to ensure that all street and twinkle lights are on in time for the March 2 grand re-opening of Myrtle Avenue. As far as concrete work, as I had previously reported there were a handful of areas where the contractor needed to go back and make corrections. For the most part, these are in the stamped concrete areas where they did not sawcut soon enough and thus cracks developed. Beginning on Monday, March 26, the contractor will break out sections of stamped concrete at the following locations:

- the southeast corner Palm and Myrtle
- the breezeway entrance on the east side 600 block
- the breezeway entrance on the west side of the 600 block
- the southwest corner of Myrtle and Colorado
- the northeast corner of Myrtle and Colorado

All of the limited demo work should be completed on Friday, without necessitating any significant traffic disruptions. The replacement stamped concrete will be poured on Tuesday and folks should be able to walk on it by Wednesday. I know it's a bit of an inconvenience, but I think it's better to simply get all the pain over with at once, especially right now while the contractor is still in place and has access to all the different subcontractors and crews.

If you have any questions about any of this work, please feel free to contact Deputy City Manager Tito Haes at (626) 303-6600.

City Council Meeting Recap

The recent February 20 City Council meeting was fairly brief, the two most interesting items being AR-1 and AR-2. AR-1 was the first amendment to our consulting contract with EDAW, Inc. the consultant working on the update of the Land Use and Circulation Elements and Program EIR for the Station Square Project. An amendment that increases the value of the contract by \$142,145 was authorized by the City Council in an effort to allow EDAW to take on an expanded scope of work related to additional and more exhaustive traffic modeling, as well as additional public outreach during the intensive EIR process. The reason staff has recommended increasing the scope of the traffic study is to facilitate a wider project scope for the Station Square development.

In other words, we want the developers to have the flexibility to meet the changing demands of the market, and this could mean locating an office building where an apartment building was anticipated

to go or vice versa. While the amount of open space and the investment in the public realm component of the project (the streetscape, the public plazas, etc.) will not be compromised, we need to be able to “push” development density around the project site. This amount of flexibility requires a very conservative approach in measuring potential traffic impacts and thus the additional work by the consultant.

If you have any questions about the EDAW contract, please feel free to contact Planning Division Manager Steve Sizemore at (626) 932-5537.

AR-2 was the consideration of a comprehensive lobbying strategy for the Station Square project. At the previous City Council meeting, Councilmember Joe Garcia reporting on the progress of his work with the League of California Cities (he is the Chair of the Housing & Community Development Committee for the League). Councilman Garcia has worked studiously to get the State Director of HCD Lynne Jacobs to come to Monrovia and tour the Station Square project. We all feel very strongly that Monrovia’s Station Square Project is a strong prototype for all of the transit-oriented, sustainable development policies that the State is trying to advance. Just as important, with the passage of the Governor’s infrastructure bond package including monies for affordable housing, transportation, and urban open space, we feel that Monrovia is superbly positioned to attract some of those funding dollars from Sacramento because our project is such a strong test case for all of these advance planning principles.

We are scheduling a meeting with Secretary Jacobs for Monday, March 5 and we will tour the City and make a presentation to her and her staff regarding the intricate details of the Station Square Project. Kudos to Councilman Garcia for taking the needs and issues of Monrovia to a regional and even Statewide level in an effort to improve our entire community.

As always, if you have any questions about anything that was on the agenda, please feel free to contact me direct.

Station Square EIR Kicks Off

This past week, staff has sent out the notices of preparation (NOP) for the Station Square Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This Notice of Preparation kicks off an intensive public process that will include Town Hall meetings and charettes, numerous public hearings, a review by the Planning Commission and, ultimately, a review by the City Council, hopefully by July. In any event, we hope and anticipate that the EIR will be completely certified by the early fall of this year so that work can begin on the first phase of the project. The Redevelopment Agency, as well as our development partners, continue to purchase properties in the project area in an effort to assemble a developable site for this first phase. These are very exciting times to be sure, but not without a number of steps to be taken and community members to be consulted.

If you have any questions about the Station Square Project, particularly the entitlement process, please feel free to contact Community Development Director Alice Griselle at (626) 932-5526.

Increase in Gang Activity

As you are already aware, there was a shooting that occurred in the 400 block of East Los Angeles on February 9. In this incident, an apparent gang member shot into a house striking a female victim. The wounds were not life threatening. The shooting appeared to be the result of an earlier confrontation between two carloads of youths on Huntington Drive.

Although this was the first shooting in several weeks in which someone was actually struck by a bullet, there has once again been an increase in gang activity observed in Monrovia and the unincorporated area to the south of our city.

We are continuing to work with the Duarte and Monrovia Anti-Gang Enforcement (DAMAGE) group and have conducted a number of probation and parole searches. This has resulted in a number of arrests and helps to disrupt gang activities. Additionally, we will be attempting to upgrade our gang intelligence and enforcement strategies among our patrol force. This will be accomplished by assigning officers to the Special Enforcement Team for two-week assignments to enable a hands-on update of information and techniques designed to demobilize and disrupt gang activity in our community.

Unfortunately, when and where gang members will strike next cannot be determined; however, we will continue to work diligently to keep them off balance, reduce their mobility, diminish their impact in our community and successfully prosecute and incarcerate them.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Historic Preservation Commission Special Study Session. On February 28 at 6 p.m. at the Community Center, a special study session on the historic home survey and the rating codes will be discussed.

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting. The regular meeting will be on February 28 at 7:30 pm at the Community Center and will include a Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear addition on a four square style house at 243 North Encinitas.

Development Review Committee Meeting. At the February 21 meeting, 10 items were heard, including:

- Requests for a couple of additions to homes and sign approvals,
- An advisory review for a 22,620 square foot food court proposed for 731 East Huntington Drive,
- Approval of a new floor plan for Miyako Japanese Restaurant at 414 South Myrtle Avenue
- Signs for the Carpet and Flooring Gallery at 215 East Foothill Blvd.

Filming

HSI Productions will be filming a FedEx commercial at FedEx/Kinko's at 935 W. Huntington Drive on Saturday, February 24, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. They will be filming interior and exterior directly in front of the store.

Attachments:

- ***Monrovia Program Brings City Resources Together***

COMMUNITY SERVICES HAPPENINGS

LIBRARY DIVISION

Best Books: The Youth Services "*Best Books Series*" begins its spring session on Tuesdays from March 6 – May 22 at 3:30 p.m. For students in 3rd – 6th grades, this read-aloud book session leads the listener through an exciting book and is an enjoyable way for students to strengthen their listening

and imagination skills. In a fun, creative way, it teaches children to visualize and retain information through intonation, expression, and character voices.

Become a Literacy Tutor: A Literacy Tutor Training Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, March 17, 8:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., at the Monrovia Community Center. With this training, you can teach an adult to read. If you think that reading is important but haven't known how to promote literacy, or if you are already an active tutor, you can benefit from this training. Please reserve your seat by contacting 626.256.8272 or literacy@ci.monrovia.ca.us.

FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Personnel responded to 78 emergency calls from 0800 hours February 14 to 0800 hours February 21. Significant incidents include:

Condominium Fire: On Thursday, February 15, at 3:30 p.m. Engine 101, Truck 101, and Squad 101 responded to Sierra Madre for a reported structure fire. Units on scene found a two story condominium with subterranean parking. Fire was found in the exterior wall surrounding a fireplace. Truck 101 provided vertical ventilation while Engine 101 and Squad 101 checked the exposures and provided salvage in the fire unit. The fire was contained to one unit and aggressive fire attack stopped the spread before it extended into the attic.

Major Flooded Condition: At 7:35 a.m. on Friday, February 16, Engine 101 responded to the Homestead Village Extended Stay for a fire alarm. While investigating Engine 101 found an active sprinkler head activation on the third floor. Truck 101 and Truck 105 were requested to assist with water removal and salvage. Nine rooms sustained flooding, with six of those having major damage to the drywall, insulation, and furnishings. Water also damaged the drywall and carpet in the hallways of the lower floors. Engine 101 worked with the occupants and the hotel to facilitate evacuation of the affected rooms. The preliminary damage estimate is \$150,000. A restoration company responded and began calling in numerous crews to start gutting rooms and salvaging what they could.

Structure Fire: On Saturday, February 17, at 3:40 a.m. Engine 102 responded with L.A. County fire units on a reported structure fire on South Mountain Avenue. Upon arrival, units found a single family home fully involved with fire. Personnel from Engine 102 assisted L.A. County Engine 44 with interior fire attack. Upon extinguishment of the fire, the Engine 102 crew remained inside the residence for overhaul, pulling ceiling and checking for extension of the fire. All occupants had made it out of the home safely prior to Fire Department arrival.

Balcony Fire: On Sunday, February 18, at 4:40 a.m. Monrovia fire units assisted by Arcadia fire units responded to a balcony fire attached to a residence. The fire was contained by the residents, but had extended into the void space between floors. Truck 101 worked on opening up the balcony deck while Engine 102 pulled ceiling and performed salvage in the garage. Arcadia units assisted with positive pressure ventilation and checked for extension in the house and attic. Engine 101 began the investigation and found the cause was a discarded cigarette in a wicker trash can that contained Kleenex. The trash can melted a plastic patio table and started the fire.

OPERATIONS

This week, radio equipment that was purchased with State Homeland Security Grant funds will be installed in all of the Department's apparatus. In December, Captain Ryan Phillips worked to secure a \$209,910.00 grant request that was approved and used to purchase this new radio equipment.

TRAINING AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The training division continues to move forward with a number of projects. This week, Arcadia Fire completes several days of company performance testing at Station 102. We've used this opportunity to observe their operational responses and build stronger working relationships.

Captain Ron Pelham and Firefighter Mike Bailey recently attended an area wide planning session for the implementation of the Area-C, Rapid Intervention Crew Policy. This training will be conducted at the Pasadena Rose Bowl for every fire department in the entire region. Captain Pelham and Firefighter Bailey have contributed an endless amount of time and effort and deserve a tremendous amount of credit.

FIRE PREVENTION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Deputy Fire Marshall Alice Robin participated in a brush/wildfire committee meeting with LACO Fire Department, Sierra Madre Fire, Insurance Services Office, and the California Fair Plan. There has historically been a disparity between what the insurance industry and the fire service regard as a wildfire/brush hazard. Our goal with this committee is a better understanding of definitions and methods so that, perhaps, a middle ground can be attained.

ADMINISTRATION

This week has been busy as the Department begins to streamline the budget process and develop enhanced accountability related to line item spending. Many thanks go out to Mark Alvarado and Buffy Bullis from Administrative Services for their insight and hard work towards improving Fire Department practices. This has also been a busy week because the Department has continued its implementation processes related to Telestaff, the automated staffing software program. All three members who attended the week-long training last week have been hard at work performing half-day implementation meetings over the phone with a Telestaff company representative. The Department will begin testing the system in the upcoming weeks and we should begin using Telestaff on a full-time basis within the next six weeks. Again many thanks to Mitch Cochran from Administrative Services for his help in configuring our computer server and to Battalion Chief Dave Dennis, Captain Mike Cate and Firefighter/Paramedic Shawn Morton for volunteering to implement Telestaff – an arduous and sometimes daunting task, but with great benefit to the organization!

ON THE POLICE BLOTTER

During the last seven day period, the Police Department handled 469 calls for service resulting in 127 investigations. Following are this week's highlighted issues and events:

Corporal Injury of a Child. On February 15 at 5 p.m., a fight occurred between two juveniles in front of a business in the 100 block of West Foothill. One of the juveniles called his father to the location after the fight. The father approached the other juvenile and hit him in the stomach. The suspect then left the location with his son. All parties have been identified. Investigation continuing.

Stolen Vehicle Recovered. On February 17 at 12:05 a.m., the clerk at a business in the 400 block of West Duarte Road started his vehicle and allowed it to warm up in front of his store while he finished closing. Three male subjects came into the store to make a purchase. As the suspects were leaving, one of the suspects got into the clerk's car and drove it away. The victim called police and the police dispatcher broadcast a description of the suspect's vehicle, which drove off following the stolen vehicle. An officer who responded to check the area for the vehicles found one matching the description of the suspect vehicle in the 400 block of Monrovia. Officers detained the possible

suspects. The store clerk was driven to the location and positively identified the three suspects. The stolen vehicle was located parked approximately 50 feet away. The suspects were arrested and taken into custody.

Child Annoying. On February 17 at approximately 3:30 p.m., an officer responded to the 100 block of North Lincoln in regards to a child annoying report. A 14-year-old female was approached by her friend's father and asked if she would assist him in fondling himself. The victim ran away and the police were called. The officer conducted an investigation with the victim and suspect. The suspect was arrested and transported to the police station for booking.

Assault / Battery on a Peace Officer, On February 19 at 12:15 a.m., officers were dispatched to the 600 block of Parker because a mother reported her son was extremely drunk and was tearing up the house. When Police arrived, the mother was on top of her son on the ground near the kitchen. She said her son tried to hit her and she placed him under citizen's arrest. The suspect refused to get into the backseat of the police car. As officers attempted to place him in the car, the suspect kicked one of the officers in the chest. The suspect was charged with assault and battery on a peace officer.

Stolen Vehicle Report. On February 19, an officer responded to the Monrovia Police Department lobby where he contacted a male subject who reported his 1993 Jeep Cherokee as stolen. The victim was visiting a resident in the 600 block of Almond, and the vehicle was taken from the street. Investigation continuing.

Burglary. On February 20, an officer was dispatched to a business in the 500 block of West Huntington regarding a subject in custody for theft. On arrival, the officer determined the subject had gone into the store to select gifts for his wife and daughter. The suspect selected jewelry worth over \$300 and exited the store without making any attempt to pay. He exited the doors and was detained by loss prevention personnel. He only had \$88 in his pocket and no credit cards. He was arrested and booked for burglary.

DAMAGE Task Force. The DAMAGE Task Force was activated during the week to continue applying pressure on gang members in an effort to minimize gang-related crime. The team arrested one adult male gang member who tried to flee from them during a traffic stop. Once the vehicle was stopped, they found that both occupants were gang members. The driver was cited for driving with a suspended license and the passenger was arrested on two outstanding warrants. The passenger was wanted for questioning by Los Angeles Sheriff's Department gang detectives concerning a street robbery and a drive-by shooting that occurred in Duarte.

The team responded to a call of a suspicious black truck parked near Alta and Encino. When they arrived, they located a black Chevrolet S-10 pickup in the parking lot of a business. One female adult and two male adults were detained. One male was arrested for possession of methamphetamine and a warrant. A consent search of the other male revealed a partially filled-out check in his wallet. Further investigation revealed he possessed stolen property, a methamphetamine pipe and evidence of identity theft crimes. The female had outstanding warrants and possessed stolen credit cards from her grandparents. The second male was arrested for possession of stolen property, unauthorized use of personal information, possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. The female was arrested for possession of stolen access cards with intent to use, possession and use of access cards, and two outstanding warrants.

THE PUBLIC WORKS SCOOP

ENGINEERING:

Myrtle Avenue Project Update: For the next few weeks, installation of streets lights, traffic signals, irrigation and landscaping, striping and signage will be done to complete the project. This week, landscaping was installed in the 400 block of Myrtle with the 300 block to follow next week. Minor concrete repairs will be completed as street lights are relocated and the openings are filled in.

Last week, the median island in the 800 block was removed and replaced with concrete pavement in preparation for the Family Festival operations.

Colorado Commons Update. The interior structural column supports and water proofing of the exterior block walls is being completed; the walls will be partially backfilled with the dirt on the property until the scheduling of the installation of the structural deck.

539 Cloverleaf – Update. Work has begun and the erosion control measures are 90% complete. The measures include the placement of sandbags along each trail and in the open areas. In addition, desilting basins have been installed on the site. Brush clearance will begin after all the erosion control measures are installed.

OPERATIONS – Environmental Services – Facilities – Parks:

Recycling Evening at Plymouth Elementary. On Thursday, February 22, Environmental Services Staff will be giving a presentation about pollution and recycling in conjunction with the Plymouth School's "Recycling Evening." The school expects about 400 students and parents to attend the event.

Kruse Street Broken Water Main. Environmental Services Staff responded to a discharge of mud and silt debris due to a broken waterline. Staff worked with CalAmerican Water and clean-up crews to assure the appropriate clean up and that preventative measure were taken.

Corporate Yard Project Update. Demolition is nearly complete and on schedule. Underground utilities are being installed, and the first concrete pour is scheduled for Wednesday, February 28.

Fire Station #1 Project Update. Demolition continues and is on schedule. The first concrete pour is scheduled for Monday, February 26.

Recreation Park. Recreation Park sports fields received a little extra attention this week. Park Staff aerated and seeded for the upcoming baseball season and the continued use from the year round soccer enthusiast.

Old Town & Mutt Mitt Dispensers. Mutt Mitt Dispensers (doggie litter bag dispensers) were placed in the Old Town area along Myrtle Avenue to help facilitate waste disposal for our four legged visitors.

Old Town Memorial Benches Reinstalled. Seven memorial benches were reinstalled this week to their original locations in Old Town. During the Myrtle Avenue improvements, staff removed benches prior to demolition to protect them from damage. Two new benches were also added.

STREETS:

Sidewalk Rehabilitation Program:

- 140 N. Mayflower

Graffiti Removal from Traffic Signs:

- Northeast and Southwest corners Palm and Magnolia
- Northeast and Southwest corners Palm and Primrose
- 100 block south Primrose
- Southwest Corner Linwood and Magnolia
- Northeast Corner Linwood and Mayflower
- Northeast Corner Hillcrest and Mayflower
- Southwest Corner Scenic and Heather Heights
- 328 S. Magnolia
- 1100 block S. Magnolia on west side of street
- 1401 S. Magnolia
- Southwest corner Peck Rd. and Live Oak
- Southwest corner Genoa and Magnolia
- Northeast corner Montana and Magnolia
- Northwest corner Primrose and Central
- Northeast corner Cypress and Magnolia
- Southwest corner Primrose and Huntington
- Southwest corner Palm and Canyon
- Northeast corner Palm and Canyon
- Southwest corner Palm and California

Traffic Sign Installation/Replacement:

- Southwest corner Peck Rd. / Live Oak replaced faded wording on truck route sign.
- Southeast corner Cypress / Primrose, Scenic / Mayflower replaced time schedule stickers on street sweeping signs.
- Peck Rd. / Live Oak replaced sign post and two traffic signs.

Miscellaneous:

- Cleaned debris from roadway along Peck Rd. from Duarte Rd. to south end of Longden.
- Installed crossbar on culvert at the northeast corner of Olive and Myrtle Ave.
- Responded to 13 Work request ranging from trip hazards to potholes.

UTILITIES:

Customer Service:

- Staff read and recorded 2,785 water meters
- Completed 47 work orders
- Reactivated 14 water services
- Sent out 14 backflow notices

Water Production: Water consumption is 37.5 millions gallons, a decrease of approximately 14% compared to last week's figure.

J. Colon Coatings, Inc. started the Water Reservoir No. 2 Interior Coating project. The work will take approximately 30 working days.

Utility Maintenance

- One residential water service was upgraded from galvanized to copper.
- 75 water main system valves were inspected and operated
- 18 underground service alert's utility location requests were completed.
- 11,200 feet of sewer mains were cleaned.

Have a great weekend!

FOR YOUR CALENDARS:

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| Thurs., March 1, 8 a.m. | Monrovia Reads "Read Across Monrovia",
Monrovia classrooms |
| Fri., March 2, 4:00 p.m. | Colorado Commons Sales Office Grand
Opening, 505-A Myrtle |
| Fri., March 2, 5:00 p.m. | Myrtle Avenue Grand Re-Opening Celebration |
| Tues., March 20, 7:30 p.m. | Regular Council Meeting |

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ATTACHMENTS:

Monrovia Program Brings City Resources Together

Monrovia Article on Tuesday, February 20, 2007 by Elizabeth Hsing-Hue Chou

Rosemary Calderon was the first person to move into her neighborhood 37 years ago, and she was not about to let the drug-dealers in front of her house ruin her neighborhood and “destroy the children, including my own.” She went straight to Joe Santoro, the police chief at the time, and told him about what was going on in her neighborhood. Through efforts by people like Calderon and the Police Department, her neighborhood could now be considered just another quiet neighborhood in Monrovia. The only problem was her house was falling apart.

On a visit last year, Housing Coordinator Dan McConnell discovered that the housing codes requirements were clearly not being met in this neighborhood. Furthermore, many homeowners often needed financial assistance in order to comply with requirements that include ones related to safety. According to the City, Calderon’s neighborhood, located at the southeast corner of the Monrovia, consists of 63 percent low-income homeowners. It was with this in mind that the City launched the Monrovia Area Partnership (MAP) program last year. The program would attempt to bring all the resources of the City together to improve neighborhoods. In the first five months of the program, three homeowners have received renovations, and 17 more applicants are being scheduled, said McConnell. Calderon heard about the grant through the MAP kickoff party and applied for the home improvement grant. A month later, warped window frames around were replaced and a side door was added to her garage.

Another resident, Rosie Dickson, 79, had been living with a broken wall heater for the past year because she could not afford the repair costs. She brought this to the attention of the MAP program coordinators in her application, and within a month, she was able to replace her heater. Reynaldo Lustrado’s house also benefited from the home improvement grant. His house was painted, it received a new rain gutter, the windows were replaced, and a perennial plumbing problem finally was fixed. In return for this, all he had to do was contribute eight hours of volunteer time to the community.

MAP has a \$1.2 million budget, to be used over three years. Each year, a portion of the money will be used for a different target area determined by the city. Each applicant of the home improvement grant would receive \$10,000 in renovations. A total of \$300,000 was set aside from the home improvement grants in the first year’s target area. This year’s target area stretches from Myrtle Avenue to Shamrock and from Cypress Avenues all the way down to the city limits at Hurstview Avenue. The MAP program is being run by the city’s Community Development Department, but the program itself brings together various city organizations and departments. After receiving feedback from the target neighborhood that there are no public parks in that area, the MAP program has tapped Community Services to provide a literacy van to run through the target neighborhood. The program will be called Monrovia Reads and Plays and is an offshoot of the Monrovia Reads program.