



From the City Manager's Desk

a weekly report from Scott Ochoa, City of Monrovia



April 11, 2008

Monrovia Area Partnership a Finalist for NUSA Award!

Please scroll down to the Community Development Department section of this report to read more about a wonderful recognition for our MAP program. Neighborhoods USA (NUSA) has selected the Monrovia Area Partnership Program (MAP) as a finalist for its "Best Neighborhood Program" award. The final selection and award process will take place in May.

As you know, the MAP program is a collaborative effort that brings together all of the City's departments – along with grass roots organizations – to combat blighting influences that can cause or harbor criminal activity. Using grants, education and shared responsibility between the City and neighborhood residents as its foundation, the program has been very successful in stabilizing some streets and wholly revitalizing others. MAP was immensely helpful in ensuring calm, confidence and commitment in the MAP Area 1 neighborhoods (Myrtle to Shamrock, Huntington to the southerly City limits) during the string of gang shootings that rocked the community in January and February. Because the program was begun in the fall of 2006, well before that up tick in gang violence, residents knew that the City was committed to them, and that they could rely on this new and lasting partnership.

Kudos to the entire MAP team, and the Neighborhood Preservation Division in particular. Great work thus far and good luck in May!

April 15 City Council Meeting Preview

We have a fairly extensive agenda for the upcoming meeting, and it largely revolves around the Police Department and the new Public Library.

We'll begin with two presentations. The first is the introduction of newly promoted Fire Engineer Tino Buccola and newly hired Firefighter/Paramedic Greg Dellenbach. Tino – who last year's Public Safety Employee of the Year – and Greg both replace recently retired personnel. Congratulations to both!

The second presentation is the recognition of the recent Spring Egg Hunt's corporate sponsors. This year's event was hugely successful, with more than 2,000 kids participating. The generosity of our sponsors allows the City put these events on for low or no cost. Many thanks to all!

Under reports of Council members, Councilman Adams requested a discussion about services for which the City contracts-out. This question came up during the last Council Meeting. The list of these contracted services is as long as it is varied. Basically, the City very often contracts for services if the work can be done less expensively by an outside contractor and if the impact on the organization is not harmful. For example, the City was able to contract out the Corporate Garage a couple of years ago because of economics, but also because the Garage was generally a self-contained unit. A contractor could provide that straightforward menu of services fairly easily. On the other hand, contracting out Street Maintenance Workers (for example) is a little more complex because we often utilize these folks in a variety of capacities (from filling potholes, to pouring and finishing concrete

sidewalks, to trash clean-ups in Old Town, etc.). Very often it is difficult, and at times impossible, to have a contractor provide services beyond what is listed in their contract. In short, sometimes contracting out makes good business sense (as the City has already demonstrated) and sometimes it doesn't.

Under Administrative Reports, the first three relate directly to the Police Department.

AR-1 is the consideration of an agreement for services with Cornwall Associates to design the HVAC system for the Police Station. Staff is recommending approval of this \$60,000 contract.

AR-2 is the requested replacement of a police captain's vehicle with a 2008 Chrysler 300 Sedan from Glendora Chrysler Jeep Dodge. Many police agencies are increasingly migrating to Chrysler/Dodge models. Four bids were received, with a high bid of \$34,387 and a low of \$27,603. Staff is recommending this purchase using funds budgeted in the Police Department's vehicle replacement account.

AR-3 is the requested purchase of 20 X26E Tasers (and 25 holsters) from Proforce in the amount of \$17,806. The Police Department consistently analyzes the utility of non-lethal police officer equipment. Approximately 25 years ago, the Monrovia PD utilized Tasers but they proved too cumbersome and ineffective. Modern Tasers are now much more compact and also more effective. They can now fit on officers' duty belts and have significantly increased their stopping power. Funds for this purchase are located in the Police Department's ECB savings. Staff is recommending approval of this purchase.

Item AR-4 was requested by the City Council. Essentially, due to a clerical error in the current Personnel Rules & Regulations, a handful of individuals believed that the City Council received employment benefits far and above what had previously been published over the years. Obviously, this is not the case – the numeration of the listed benefits was simply incorrect. The City Council does not, and has not ever, received car allowances or medical insurance benefits beyond their respective terms of service. Thus, item AR-3 clarifies the specific set of City Council benefits. Staff recommends approval.

Items AR-5, AR-6 and AR-7 all have to do with the new Public Library.

AR-5 is the consideration of the Library Park Master Plan. This Plan focuses on the reconstitution of the Park, once the building is constructed. It features a new playground area, a "Grand Walkway" to connect the Library entrance to Myrtle Avenue, an Entrance Plaza, a quiet reflection area among the several war monuments proposed to be located in the Park, and an Outdoor Event Plaza. This proposed Plan reflects the input of both the Community Services Commission and the Library Construction Committee.

At this point, the Plan is still somewhat conceptual, as you can see from the massing illustrations contained in the staff report. If the Council were to adopt this Plan, the City would retain the Landscape Architecture firm of Lawrence Moss & Associates and proceed to the next phase – detailed design drawings. From that point, construction drawings would be produced and bid out. The consideration of the proposed agreement with Lawrence Moss & Associates is \$128,000. Staffing is recommending approval of the Library Park Master Plan and entering into an agreement with Lawrence Moss & Associates.

Item AR-6 is the review of the Library Interior Design Program. With building construction now underway, we must turn our attention to the interior finishes, furniture, fixtures and equipment to be housed in the new Public Library. Staff and the project architects (Gonzalez/Goodale) met with the Library Board regarding this matter. Color palettes, furniture finishes, and other items were selected;

however, the Board does wish to revisit the Teen Area furniture as well as the theme for the Children's Library. Staff is confident that a suitable theme and furniture can be identified, adapted and incorporated into the overall building design. Staff is recommending approval of the Library Interior Design Program.

AR-7 is the consideration of bids for the new Library's roofing and sheet metal. A specialty item, this bid specification was priced separately. The Engineer's Estimate was \$700,000. Four bids were received, with the high being \$876,857 and the low being \$652,707. After checking the apparent low bidder's references and reviewing the bid package, staff is recommending that the Council award the contract to the apparent low bidder, Alcal Arcade Construction, Inc.

Lastly, item AR-8 is the monthly Legislative Bulletin. This report is usually a consent item; however, Councilman Garcia asked that one of the report's elements be discussed among the Council. Proposed Resolution 2008-17 is a resolution of opposition by the Monrovia City Council against Proposition 98. As you know, this is the Jarvis Association's anti-rent control initiative that masquerades as eminent domain reform. All of this talk of eminent domain "reform" stems from the *Kelo v New Haven* case several years ago. In that case, the US Supreme Court merely upheld local governments' longstanding right to assemble property for public benefits, including economic development. This case had no practical impact on California, yet ever since then, *Kelo* has given fuel this special interest group. Passage of Prop 98 would effectively kill redevelopment activities in cities like Monrovia. Staff is recommending adoption of Resolution No. 2008-17.

As always, if you have any questions about any matter on the agenda, please feel free to contact me.

Gold Line Regional Meeting Makes an Impact

On Tuesday April 8, Mayor Hammond and I – along with a contingent of business people, educators and students, builders and developers, local legislative representatives, and many other San Gabriel Valley cities – attended METRO's regional public outreach meeting regarding its Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is a 20-year transit planning document that will guide METRO's expenditure of transportation dollars in our region. Not surprisingly, the LRTP did not focus much at all on funding projects in the San Gabriel Valley. Very much a creature of the City of LA and/or LA interests, METRO has long ignored the San Gabriel Valley. As evidenced by the creation of Foothill Transit and the Blue Line Construction Authority (now the Gold Line Construction Authority), METRO has focused on the SGV almost grudgingly.

This well attended community forum featured speaker after speaker imploring, advising and demanding that the Gold Line Foothill Extension be moved from the "unfunded" section of the LRTP to the "funded" section. Several speakers highlighted the notion that the federal government (through the good work Congress members Dreier, Schiff and Solis) has reserved \$320 million dollars for segment 2A (from East Pasadena through Arcadia, Monrovia, Duarte, Irwindale and Azusa, to the Azusa Pacific University/Citrus College Station) if only METRO will commit \$80 million in local matching money for this segment. That's it – \$320 million in exchange for \$80 million – and METRO is still waffling! Essentially, the Gold Line Foothill Extension needs eight of the METRO Board of Director's 15 votes.

My hunch is that METRO will ultimately agree to fund this match for segment 2A. This segment's projected ridership, the economic potential, the project's cost-effectiveness, and the project's readiness (they can begin construction within a year) – coupled with the federal dollars and positive impact the project will have on alleviating traffic congestion on the 210 Freeway – will make this portion of the Gold Line Foothill Extension undeniable. And once this leg is completed, I think even the folks from the Westside and the San Fernando Valley will come to see that connecting light rail to Ontario International Airport just makes too much sense to ignore.

The critical date for METRO's decision is a vote scheduled for April 24, at METRO's headquarters. Please visit the City's website (www.cityofmonrovia.org) to send an e-letter to METRO in support of the Gold Line!

Enough is Enough Event on the 12th

On Saturday April 12, Enough is Enough will be staging its second community event – a carwash and Unity Festival – in Recreation Park, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come out and show your support for this group that is continuing to promote a strong message of peace, hope and responsibility.

Old Town Parking Garage Open

Old Town Monrovia's first public parking garage is open! A "soft opening" took place last week, as all of the final touches were being applied to the interiors, elevators, etc. So far, about half of the public section of the structure is being used; but as the temperatures rise as we get closer to the summer, you will no doubt see more folks want to park in the shade!

Articles Attached

- **OPINION: Teaming Up Against Crime.** A nice endorsement of Chief Roger Johnson's innovative use of mutual aid in fighting gangs. The gang situation at the beginning of the year called for a dramatic and sweeping response from law enforcement – and that's what was delivered.
- **Give Peace a Chance.** This peace march was both uplifting and especially relevant – as things get back to normal, folks have a tendency to allow apathy to set in and their activist spirit atrophies. This event kept the discussion of peace, anti-gang strategies and the need to stay engaged at the forefront.
- **OPINION: There's a lot on the Line.** Everyone in the San Gabriel Valley pays taxes that fund METRO's operations and projects. The time has come for METRO to invest that money back in the Valley it came from.
- **MAP Program Seeking to Gain Residents' Trust.** The notification about the NUSA Award came just after this article was printed...sometimes lucky, sometimes good!
- **Alleged Assailant is Sex Offender.** Thanks to Sgt. Daniel Verna and the Monrovia PD for taking this mad dog off the streets.
- **Common Ground.** The Colorado Commons is indeed a beautiful project that will cement Old Town's charm and vitality for many years to come.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

MAP Block Party on Royal Oaks a Success. More than 90 people attended the Royal Oaks Neighborhood Block Party on Saturday, April 5. The event, held in the 400-500 Block of Royal Oaks, was a great success with residents taking advantage of the day to inquire about a number of services including: Home Improvement Grants; Neighborhood Watch; CERT Disaster Preparedness; Monrovia Read and Plays; Recycling and Environmental Protection; City Job opportunities and many other programs available through the School District and YMCA.

A variety of volunteer opportunities is available in support of MAP and the community. Four individuals signed up and were interested to join our volunteer programs. To find out more about

volunteering and how to get involved please send an email to: getinvolved@ci.monrovia.ca.us. If you want to get more information about MAP activities, please send an email to map@ci.monrovia.ca.us or feel free to contact Neighborhood & Business Services Division Manager Bill Skiles at (626) 932-5521.

MAP Finalist in Neighborhood USA Awards. Congratulations are in order for the Monrovia Area Partnership. MAP has been selected as a finalist for the **2008 Best Neighborhood Program Award** presented by Neighborhoods USA. Finalists are scheduled to present their program at a workshop offered to conference attendees on Friday, May 23. This year's conference is being held in Hampton, Virginia and is a city known for cutting-edge neighborhood issues, solutions and networking. Good Luck MAP!

MAP/NST Team nominated for the PSA. The Monrovia Area Partnership and Neighborhood Strategy Team have been nominated for a Public Service Award. MAP and the NST have been nominated for the **PSA Team Accomplishment Award**. The Award is presented to teams, groups or organizations that have made exceptional accomplishments within their organizations. Teams are evaluated based on performance and their overall dedication to public service. The awards ceremony will be held on May 7 at the Grand-Long Beach Event Center in Long Beach, California.

Development Review Committee Recap. At its regular meeting of April 9, 2008, the Development Review Committee heard the following applications:

- The Committee approved the establishment of new fence regulations for rear property lines in Tract Map No. 32946 located at 537-625 Shady Oaks Drive. The options could be green chain link, wrought iron or wood fencing. Pedestrian gates will be allowed. Vegetation with an automatic sprinkler system is required to screen any fencing from Canyon. Two property owners spoke in favor and handed in a petition in favor of new regulations from neighbors. A resident on Ridgeside spoke in opposition.
- A review of the CEQA Notice of Exemption for the Ben Overturf Restoration Project/Sawpit Canyon, Angeles National Forest was approved by the Committee.
- A minor exception to encroach into front yard setback with new construction located at 136 N. Sunset Place was approved by the Committee with the condition that it not encroach any closer to the street than the porch of the house to the south.
- The Committee reviewed and approved the application for a new two story single-family residence at 637 W. Olive Avenue with the condition that the demolition of the house be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. The house is pre-1940s and will go before the Historic Preservation Commission for a determination of historic significance. Staff research shows that the house is not historically significant.
- An advisory review of a conditional use permit for an auto towing dispatch service at 134 E. Pomona was approved with conditions. The application has been filed for the May Planning Commission meeting.
- An application to review the façade change from the original application located at 729 Crescent Drive was approved by the Committee.
- Another façade change was reviewed and approved for the project located at 536 Valmont Drive.
- The changes to an original application for the property located at 238 Canyon Crest Drive was pulled from the Agenda.

Planning Commission Review. On April 9, 2008, the Planning Commission conducted its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The following applications were taken into consideration:

- **Tentative Tract Map No. 070409/Conditional Use Permit CUP2008-04.** The Commission reviewed, approved and recommended to City Council the construction of a 16,349 square foot, 10-unit industrial condominium located at 239 West Chestnut Avenue in the Manufacturing Zone. Three neighbors to the north spoke with concerns regarding future noise, odors, hazardous materials, graffiti, and alley obstruction as a result of the construction of the industrial condos. The Commission took these concerns seriously and imposed conditions for 24-hour graffiti removal, hours for loading and unloading were restricted to between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., 7 days a week, delivery trucks were required to turn off their engines and a provision for keeping the alley open were imposed.
- **Conditional Use Permit CUP2008-05.** The Commission reviewed and approved a request to construct a two-story, 31,000-square-foot office building with a ground floor café in the PD-Area 7 Zone located at 935 East Huntington Drive. Approximately 15 residents of the Mobile Home Park to the north of the subject property attended the meeting. Several residents spoke in favor of the project but were concerned about the fate of Mobile Home Park. The subject application did not involve the Mobile Home Park site so the Commission directed the residents to contact the owner regarding this matter.

COMMUNITY SERVICES HAPPENINGS

Monrovia Reads and Plays Participants Visits Canyon Park. The Monrovia Reads and Plays visited Canyon Park on April 7. A group of 12 participants were rewarded with this special trip for earning the most incentive points for overall good behavior and attendance at Monrovia Reads & Plays program. The group enjoyed a hike to the waterfall which included a hands-on experience of nature. The participants used field guide books and binoculars to identify the flora and fauna found on the trail that leads to the waterfall while learning about the wildlife that exists in Canyon Park. The highlight of the day was that while the participants ate lunch, there were two deer also enjoying lunch just fifteen yards away. Many thanks to Canyon Park staff for providing such an exciting experience for Monrovia Reads & Plays participants.

Testimonial from Canyon Park Visitor. Community services staff received an email from an out-of-state visitor to Canyon Park. The following is an excerpt from the email:

*"Hello from my home in Oregon. I hiked in Canyon Park daily while I visited my sister in December. The park is a breath of fresh air and beauty, so close to the city that many people can exercise on the trails daily. The park is tidy and the trails were well maintained and enjoyable to walk. Thank you, Susan, for greeting me each morning and thanks to the City of Monrovia for setting aside such a wonderful area for all to enjoy."
Loretta Yearous on April 7, 2008.*

"CLASSIC MOVIE" Themed Senior High Tea. The Monrovia Providers Group will host the 4th Annual Senior High Tea at the Monrovia Community Center on Thursday, May 8 from 2 to 4 p.m. Seniors will be in awe as they walk down the red carpet entrance to the Kay Dalton Room. Tables will be extravagantly decorated in the theme of classic movies. You won't want to miss this free event! For reservations or questions, call The Monrovia Volunteer Center at (626) 256-8187.

2008 Food, Wine & Jazz Beneficiary Selected. The Community Services Commission had the difficult task of selecting the 2008 Food, Wine and Jazz Festival beneficiary from among 6 worthy non-profit organizations. Applications were received from the Santa Anita Family YMCA, the Unity Center, Habitat for Humanity, Monrovia Reads, Monrovia Providers Group and the Boys & Girls Club of the Foothills. After careful consideration and thorough review of all the applications the Commission

selected the Santa Anita Family YMCA as the recipient. Join Community Services and the YMCA for the 2008 Food, Wine & Jazz Festival scheduled for Sunday, September 7, 2008.

Tag Team Reading. Instead of wrestling, children's librarians will be tag team *reading* on Tuesday, April 15 at 3:45 p.m. Everyone is invited to hear Monrovia's children's librarians read aloud their most favorite stories. Snacks will be served as well. It will be a perfectly fun and relaxing way to break up a hectic day of tax preparation!

FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Personnel responded to 75 emergency calls from 0800 hours April 2, to 0800 hours April 9. Significant incidents include:

Explosive Device Found. On Monday afternoon, firefighters responded to a report on an explosive device found in the garage of a home in the 300 block of Melrose Avenue. The L.A. County Bomb Squad responded to the home and located three hand grenades in the garage. The grenades were taken to the rear yard of the home and safely detonated by bomb squad personnel.

Unusual Fire Alarm. Approximately 2 a.m. Thursday morning, firefighters responded to a fire alarm at 915 W. Huntington Drive. En route, firefighters were advised by Verdugo that Monrovia PD was on scene and the building was full of smoke. A full structure assignment arrived and found the business to be full of smoke, but not due to any fire found. Firefighters searched for a cause and finally found that the source was a fog machine used for security purposes. This new security device is being used to help make it a little more difficult for thieves to see when they break into these protected businesses.

FIRE PREVENTION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Brush inspections will be starting soon. Last year's devastating Buckweed Fire in Santa Clarita charred 38,356 acres at a cost of \$5.8 million dollars. It destroyed 32 structures and 40 vehicles. All of this was caused by the lighting of a single match by a 10-year old. With warmer weather comes dry vegetation that can result in brush fires that burn and spread quickly. It is important to take into consideration some landscaping and home maintenance tips to ensure safe surroundings.

Make sure that you:

- Remove weeds and keep grass cut.
- Dispose of any dead and piled up vegetation.
- Firewood should be stacked 30' from structures.
- Limit the use of flammable plants in your landscaping, contact your local home and garden center or the fire department if you have questions about safe plants.
- Plant trees and shrubs with room to grow in sparse and separate areas, and choose trees that don't have too many branches. Do not use plants that develop dead undergrowth. Trim dead wood off trees.
- Provide adequate water to keep plants healthy and green.
- Keep sprinkler systems in good working order.
- Trash and debris should be properly disposed of. Piles of trash, such as old home furnishings, boxes and even cars are potential fire hazards.
- Store flammable liquids properly.
- Always dispose of cigarettes carefully.
- Keep the roof clean and clear. If possible wash the roof on a regular basis.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

On April 7 Fire Cadet Matthew Julien became the first paramedic attrition plan participant. As you may remember from our article two weeks ago, we have begun an innovative program that looks to identify qualified candidates to attend paramedic school, classified as "Firefighter Trainee" with the City. The trainee position is an hourly salary without benefits, but the employee does have the cost of tuition paid by the City as well as an hourly salary while in school. This classification does save the city tens of thousands of dollars which would otherwise be spent on overtime pay to backfill a Monrovia Firefighter while in the six-month paramedic training program. It is anticipated that the success of the program will see many more qualified candidates attend paramedic school as "Firefighter Trainees" for the City of Monrovia. We will also create a new method of filling the pipeline of well qualified individuals that have paramedic certification to gain full-time status as "Firefighter Paramedics" with Monrovia Fire.

The Monrovia Fire Department is proud to announce the promotion of Tino Buccola from the rank of Firefighter Paramedic to the position of Fire Engineer. Tino is an 8-year veteran of the Department who will be filling the vacant Engineer position due to the retirement of Kirk Bates. Tino has a wealth of knowledge and technical abilities and scored number one on the recent promotional exam, showing he has makings of an outstanding Engineer.

ON THE POLICE BLOTTER

During the last seven day period, the Police Department handled 586 calls for service resulting in 131 investigations. Following are this week's highlighted issues and events:

Petty Theft with a Prior / 72 - Hour Detention. On April 3 at 3 p.m., a suspect was arrested for a petty theft with a prior conviction. She demanded to make a phone call. When she was told she would have to wait for the jailer, she said she would hurt herself and didn't care if she lived. Based on her statements, the officer placed the female under a 72-hour hold for evaluation at a hospital.

Property for Destruction. On April 7 at 12:49 p.m., officers responded to the 300 Block of Melrose regarding a resident who recently purchased a home and was remodeling a room. While removing drywall, he located three old military devices (grenades). Los Angeles County Bomb Squad responded and safely detonated the devices, which turned out to be real grenades. There were no injuries or property damage. The investigation is continuing.

Prostitution Sting Operation. On April 8, Detectives received a complaint in the 500 Block of East Maple of a possible prostitution ring at the listed location. A month long investigation was initiated. Detectives along with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Vice Unit obtained search warrants and ultimately arrested the Madam and her husband who ran the brothel. The criminal operation required appointments be made by Johns (customers). Following the service of the warrant and subsequent arrest, Detectives and undercover deputies posing as prostitutes ran the illicit operation for six hours resulting in seven additional arrests. There is no doubt that this operation sent a message to anyone wanting to participate in this type of criminal activity that if they do it in Monrovia, we will be there to greet them.

Weapons Offense. On April 9 at 3 p.m., officers went to Garfield and Foothill regarding two juveniles attempting to start a fire in a dumpster. On their arrival, they located the two juveniles a block away. The juveniles denied attempting to set a fire. They consented to a pat-down search. One of the juveniles was in possession of a collapsible baton concealed in the front waist area. The juvenile admitted to having bought the baton in Chinatown for \$10. He was arrested and later released to a parent. No evidence of them starting a fire was found.

THE PUBLIC WORKS SCOOP

ENGINEERING:

700 S. Myrtle - Urban Housing Group

Demolition has begun on the structure. The bus stop has been relocated west of Myrtle on Olive.

Colorado Commons - Decorative Features

Foundations for the alley archway are being constructed; the lighted kiosk has also arrived and is being fitted to the base. The archway and kiosk are being schedule to be installed by April 18.

Public Works Inspections:

- Colorado Commons Street Improvements; Project completed,
- Bus Shelter Construction
- 911 Royal Oaks,
- California/Monrovia/Duarte
- 202 E. Foothill, finalized
- 1419 S. Myrtle, Office building framing under way.
- 714 Norumbega, Driveway poured
- 335 Genoa, Final punch list created
- 705 Norumbega
- 214 N. Madison
- 1612 Alhambra, Final punch list created
- 1128 S. Myrtle
- 184 N. Ivy, Final punch list created
- 110 E. Colorado, Final punch list created
- 184 N. Canyon,
- 832 W. Foothill, finalized

OPERATIONS – Environmental – Facilities – Parks:

EAC. Staff attended an Executive Advisory Committee (EAC) at Los Angeles County Public Works regarding LA County's proposed Low Impact Development Ordinance. The ordinance would create new development and redevelopment standards for unincorporated County areas, with hopes of serving as a model ordinance for cities to adopt. The ordinance standards would set requirements to filter and infiltrate/retain water on-site to prevent storm water run-off.

Emergency Abatement Procedures. Staff met with Community Development to discuss a uniform policy for emergency abatement under the new Administrative Fine process.

Earth Day Educational Booth. On Friday April 18 our Environmental Services will be hosting an educational booth on how the City of Monrovia is becoming greener as well as conservation activities at the Family Festival. The first 50 people to stop by the booth will receive a reusable water bottle or reusable "Monrovia Recycles" shopping bag.

Street Light Pole. A commercial truck collided with and demolished a street light pole at California and Duarte. The pole was promptly replaced by Facilities Staff and is now fully operational.

City Hall Lobby Windows. Window tinting film was replaced on the lobby windows at City Hall, to help reduce the incoming heat and glare.

On-going Projects.

- Historical Museum Roof Replacement Project.
- Fire Station 102 Butler Building Project.
- Corporate Yard Project.
- Well Field Gate Project.
- Weed Abatement.

Huntington Drive. Irrigation repairs and water conservation measures were performed, as well as reprogramming irrigation controllers, adjustment and repairing spray head as needed.

Police Station. Public Works Staff worked together to excavate planters and flush piping to expose a water leak. The job will entail replacement of damaged drain gutters and the sealing of the planter wall.

Library Park. Recent concerns were received regarding the dormant trees in the park. Researched found that the trees condition are currently budding out from their dormant state. Staff also received a call about the turf in its dying condition in the Mark Twain area. As explained, currently there is no irrigation system during the construction project. A new landscape design will be implemented.

STREETS:

Traffic Signs:

- Graffiti was removed from 8 traffic signs
- Sign survey was performed from North Foothill Blvd. to Hillcrest and from West Myrtle to Highland.

Miscellaneous:

- Patched pothole at 100 W. Cypress Boulevard
- Debris pick up: South Shamrock between Evergreen and Duarte Rd.
- Repairs to damaged concrete roadway on Foothill Blvd at Ivy Ave.
- Cleaned hazardous materials spill on Alta Vista and Maple.
- Trip hazard removal throughout the City.
- Posted 25 MPH signs in three locations on N. Primrose from Foothill to Hillcrest.

UTILITIES:

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- 2,177 water meters were read and recorded
- 56 utilities work orders were completed
- 150 shut-off notices were distributed
- 27 backflow notices were sent out
- 4 water meters were replaced
- 8 water services were reactivated

Water Production

- Water consumption is 42.3 millions gallons, a decrease of approximately 12% compared to last week's reported water usage.

Department of Health Services Required Water Samples:

- 31 water system samplings
- 15 well samplings
- 8 water treatment facility samplings

Utility Maintenance

- 3 - 1" water service were upgraded to copper
- 2 water meter boxes were replaced
- 15 Fire hydrants were maintained and flushed
- 33 water system valves were inspected and operated
- 29 underground service alert's utility location requests were completed
- 12,552 feet of sewer mains were cleaned
- 650 feet of sewer mains were video inspected

Have a great weekend!

FOR YOUR CALENDARS:

Tues., April 15, 7:30 p.m.	Regular Council Meeting
Sat., April 19, 8 a.m. to Noon	Earth Day, Canyon Park
Sat., April 19, 4 to 8 p.m.	The Monrovia Station Classic Car Cruise, Park & Ride Lot (1 blk South of 210 FWY on Myrtle)
Thurs., May 1, 11:30 a.m.	Annual Volunteer Luncheon, Community Center
Mon., May 5, 5:00 p.m.	Monrovia Reads Cinco de Mayo Event, Krikorian Premier Theater
Tues., May 6, 7:30 p.m.	Regular Council Meeting
Sat., May 10, 7 to 11 a.m.	Fire Department Open House/Pancake Breakfast, Fire Station 101
Sat., May 10, 11 to 1 p.m.	MAP 2 Block Party, 400-600 Walnut
Sun., May 11, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.	MOPHG Mother's Day Tour
Sat., May 17, 9:00 a.m.	Monrovia Day Parade
Tues., May 20, 7:30 p.m.	Regular Council Meeting
MONDAY, MAY 26	MEMORIAL DAY, CITY HALL CLOSED

CMO ATTACHMENTS:

Teaming up against crime

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WHEN a wildfire breaks out in a city's neck of the woods, that city's fire department can call in other fire departments to help put out the blaze. It is a helpful arrangement known as "mutual aid."

Yet, you rarely hear about outside law enforcement agencies coming to the aid of a particular police department to put down a spate of burglaries or gang shootings.

But the latter scenario does indeed happen and in fact, is happening in the city and unincorporated areas of Monrovia, which was hit with a mini crime spree of drive-by shootings in December and January.

Right after the shootings - one which took the life of 16-year-old Sammantha Salas who was shot and killed in an unincorporated county area near Monrovia as she walked to a corner store, and 19-year-old Brandon Lee who was shot to death Jan. 29 in Monrovia - peace officers from as many as 18 different agencies were loaned to the area.

The mutual aid continues at a reduced level today. Also, the Monrovia Police Department has continued its DAMAGE program (Duarte And Monrovia Anti-Gang Effort) where an officer and a sheriff deputy patrols in the same squad car with a parole officer. Temple Sheriff's Station deputies normally patrol the unincorporated areas of Monrovia, Arcadia and city of Duarte but through mutual aid the District Attorney as well as the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement and state parole and county probation officers have joined the task force. Thanks to a \$490,000 grant to pay for overtime, the California Highway Patrol were added.

The MPD, county sheriffs and CHP form a troika of law enforcement agencies working 24/7 to root out and arrest anyone breaking the law. They are also there to protect innocent residents.

We are pointing this out because the arrangement seems to be working. Violence is down since the different agencies began banding together and hundreds of arrests have been made.

Most importantly, the community has affirmed the increased law enforcement effort.

At a peace rally Sunday aimed at bringing together Latino and black residents, Brandon Lee's father, Willie Lee, who is African American, said he has been pulled over by law enforcement five times since the patrols were beefed up. Yet, he said he didn't mind if that's what it takes to restore peace.

"They're not stopping me, harassing me, they're stopping me to check," he told our reporter.

Lee's affirmation of the extra street patrols is a testament to a system that can police an area for drug dealers, gang members and other law-breakers without taking away freedoms from law-abiding residents, even residents of color. Not an easy thing to do.

In fact, Lee had a message for the police/sheriff deputies/CHP/probation/parole officers and that was: "Keep up the good work."

We echo that sentiment. And hope that such "mutual aid" arrangements can be used to douse other crime hot spots when they flare up in other parts of our region.

Give peace a chance

Community decries gang violence

By Brian Day, Staff Writer

Article Launched: 04/06/2008 11:11:47 PM PDT

• **Photo Gallery:** [Unity Peace March](#)

A sense of community was the theme Sunday as more than 150 people gathered at an Arcadia church for a solemn march in support of peace and unity in an area that has been riddled by gang violence. Four people have been slain over the past four months.

Jeanette Chavez, mother of 16-year-old Sammantha Salas, who was shot and killed Jan. 26 in an unincorporated county area near Monrovia, and Willie Lee, father of 19-year-old Brandon Lee, who was shot to death Jan. 29 in Monrovia, marched with the group to show solidarity.

Lee said seeing so many people come out to take a stand against violence in favor of unity "brings peace to the mind." "That's what we need is for the community to come together. Without the community, it's nothing."

"I'm extremely pleased at how everyone came together," Chavez said.

"Indeed, we are stronger as one," said event organizer Laura Orozco of the nonprofit group Five Acres.

Politicians, religious leaders, and community activists also attended the event, which was held at 1:30 p.m. at the Annunciation Church on Longden Avenue in Arcadia.

After listening to speakers including Rep. Hilda Solis, D-El Monte, and Monrovia Mayor Rob Hammond, marchers hit the streets for a two-mile journey to promote unity between black and Latino residents.

"By marching today, you are sending a signal to so many people, not just throughout the San Gabriel Valley, but throughout the country," Solis said.

"Violence has struck our community and has scared our community," Hammond said. Nonetheless, he added, "What we've accomplished in the past couple of months is nothing short of a miracle. My hope as a mayor and a father is that our violent past will not be our future."

The march went directly in front of the apartment building in the 2500 block of Peck Road where Sammantha Salas was fatally shot by two gunmen as she walked to a corner store.

Chavez said she had not been to the scene since her daughter's senseless killing. "It was really hard to see," she said through tears.

Marcher Linda Sells, who lives in an unincorporated county area near Arcadia, said community actions like Sunday's march are vital to ensuring a safe community. "People can't expect law enforcement to do it alone," she said. "We have to step up and take back the streets."

Sunday's march was organized and sponsored by Five Acres, with support from other groups such as local anti-violence organizations including Enough is Enough and Stop the Violence.

Both Lee, who said he lost another son at age 9 in a 2001 house fire in Pasadena, and Chavez were grateful to organizers of the event.

Due to increases patrols in the area, Lee said he's been pulled over by police about five times lately, and he's glad. "I don't mind getting stopped if that's what it takes. They're not stopping me, harassing me, they're stopping me to check."

Lee had a message for the Monrovia Police Department, the sheriff's Temple City Station, and the California Highway Patrol, who have beefed up enforcement in recent months.

"Keep up the good work."

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MAP program seeking to gain residents' trust

By Melissa Pamer, Staff Writer

Article Launched: 04/05/2008 11:24:18 PM PDT

MONROVIA - When city officials held a "block party" last month to encourage residents to participate in a recently expanded neighborhood empowerment program, the response was hesitant at first.

Along the 500 block of Almond Avenue, where 19-year-old Brandon Lee was shot to death weeks earlier, residents stood close to their homes, looking at the booths that had been set up by city officials.

"They were standing in their front yards, but not coming out," recounted City Manager Scott Ochoa, adding that eventually residents began to join officials in the street - by the end of the event.

That reluctance is one of the obstacles facing the city as it promotes its Monrovia Area Partnership program, which seeks to engage residents of low-income neighborhoods in an effort to reduce blight and bring crime rates down. "You're overcoming a generation or two of distrust for government," Ochoa said.

The MAP program, first initiated in the southeast corner of the city in September 2006, has recently spread north. The program distributes grant money for home improvement, educates residents on code enforcement standards, and seeks to create "points of contact" between the neighborhoods and the city.

In its first year, the city saw a 27 percent reduction in blight in the program area, and distributed almost \$800,000 in redevelopment funds for improvement projects, staff reports show.

Though cautious, residents have come to be invested in the program, and officials are hoping the enthusiasm of residents in the initial program area - from Huntington Drive to the city's southern border, and from Myrtle Avenue east to Shamrock Avenue - will spread. In January, the program expanded north to Colorado Boulevard.

The new area already has about 75 "points of contact." In the initial MAP area, the city has about 150 contacts, Ochoa said, and residents there are telling their neighbors to the north about the program.

Today, the city hosted its second block party of the year, on Royal Oaks Avenue. "The idea is to get residents out of their homes to meet their neighbors, talk to local organizations, city staff ... to create a sense of togetherness so that when issues do arise, they know who to talk to," said Alexis Newell of the block parties. A Neighborhood Services Officer, Newell helps run the program.

One of those who has become involved is lifelong Monrovia Betty Thomas, 65, who has raised eight children in the city. Now, she said, "I can't talk to my neighbors. ... I'm not bilingual. I'll learn Spanish."

The MAP program, officials said, will help to break down those communication barriers.

For Mario Miranda, a 42-year-old former gang member, the MAP meetings offered a chance to reach out in a time of crisis. "I just couldn't stand idly by watching," Miranda said in reference to gang-related shootings in recent months.

It was gang shootings in the summer of 2006 that prompted officials to create the program.

Because it established relationships with residents, the program was helpful for officials during a more recent spate of gang violence that killed four and left several seriously injured since December, Ochoa said.

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There's a lot on the line

Article Launched: 04/08/2008 06:40:02 PM PDT

The eastern cities of Los Angeles County are not accustomed to receiving gifts from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. So, when we ran a front-page story Sunday ("MTA looks eastward") announcing a possible Phase 2 of the Eastside Extension of the Gold Line from East Los Angeles, either running north through Monterey Park, Rosemead and El Monte, or south through Montebello, Pico Rivera and Whittier, we were skeptical.

Still, with many transit-hungry residents, especially in the southern corridor, make no mistake; the train would attract a high number of commuters. Likewise, serving East L.A. College would add student boardings to the mix, a group more likely to ride light rail if only to avoid paying campus parking fees.

It seems likely that having a convenient, easily accessible light-rail line along Whittier or Washington boulevards, for instance, could attract shoppers, too.

There are so many pluses. So, what's the problem, you ask? Money. The MTA does not have the funding to build this Phase 2.

We are wondering if the MTA is not putting too many pots on the stove when one - the Foothill Extension from Pasadena to Montclair - is already boiling over. If we were a cynical lot, we would say the MTA is crowding projects onto its "maybe" list in order to placate Eastsiders who spend hours each week sitting in traffic. Or to show that they are doing something, even if that something is doing studies and holding meetings ... getting our hopes up.

But they wouldn't do that, would they?

To avoid any misconceptions, the MTA should do first things first. The MTA should approve the "local match" for the construction of the 24-mile Foothill Extension through Arcadia, Monrovia, Duarte, Irwindale, Azusa, Glendora, La Verne, San Dimas, Pomona, Montclair and, though not on the official list yet, to Ontario Airport. It is this project that is ready to go. It is this project in which the cities along the route have invested \$2 billion in transit-oriented public-private developments, stations and park-and-ride lots. These cities have contributed \$11 million to help build the light-rail line. It would directly serve four colleges (Mt. Sierra College, Citrus College, Azusa Pacific University and University of La Verne) whose students have begun pledging to ride if built.

Then, and only then, would we love to see funding for one of the 17 proposed light-rail routes east of East L.A. As to that project, some things are mandatory. Light rail should be convenient and a pleasant experience. Don't repeat the mistake of putting stations in the middle of the Pomona (60) Freeway, where riders would stand amid the whoosh of freeway traffic and the toxic cloud of carbon monoxide and particulates.

Put light-rail tracks along busy thoroughfares, where people can jump on the train without first driving to faraway parking garages or walking long distances to the trolley. This scenario exists today at the Gold Line's Sierra Madre Villa Station in east Pasadena, making it out of sight, out of mind.

We are a little puzzled over so many city officials quoted in our article saying the light-rail line would add to the traffic on Beverly or Garvey boulevards. Some Whittier council members said they would prefer if it traveled along the wider Washington Boulevard. That's still open for debate.

Residents can voice their preferences today, 6:30 p.m., at Uptown Senior Center, 13255 Walnut St., Whittier; on Saturday, 10 a.m., at South El Monte Senior Center dining room, 1556 Central Ave., South El Monte; on Monday, 6:30 p.m., Senior Center at City Park, 115 S. Taylor Ave., Montebello and April 17, 6:30p.m., at North Park Middle School cafeteria, 4450 Durfee Ave., Pico Rivera.

We hope they will embrace the concept of light-rail lines as a way to use their automobiles less. With high gas prices here to stay, it seems like a no-brainer

Alleged assailant is sex offender

Suspect could face attempted murder charges in incident

By Melissa Pamer, Staff Writer

Article Launched: 04/03/2008 11:36:38 PM PDT

PASADENA - The man who allegedly shot a veteran Monrovia police sergeant Sunday is a sex offender who has previously been convicted of obstructing a police officer, court records show.

John Anderson, 52, pleaded not guilty Thursday in Pasadena Superior Court to a probation violation in relation to a 2005 conviction for prowling, peeking and trespassing in Arcadia, authorities said.

"He's got a criminal history that's very extensive over the last three decades," said Detective Mark Lillienfeld of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Homicide Division, which is investigating the Monrovia shooting.

"That's all within the definition of a career criminal," Lillienfeld said.

Anderson was arrested early Sunday morning after allegedly shooting Monrovia police Sgt. Dan Verna, who is recovering after being wounded in the chin and taking a bullet in the shoulder.

Verna had tried to stop Anderson after the suspect had fled from another officer who saw him engaging in suspicious activity, authorities said earlier this week.

"We anticipate filing sometime next week - attempted murder charges," said sheriff's Sgt. Joe Purcell.

Anderson, who is being held in the Men's Central Jail in downtown Los Angeles, was shot several times during the incident and was treated at Huntington Hospital.

He has a hearing set for Tuesday in Pomona Superior Court on charges of failing to register as a sex offender.

He is being held on \$1 million bail in relation to those charges. Bail was set at \$50,000 for the probation violation.

On the state's Megan's Law Web site, Anderson is listed as being in violation for failing to register as a sex offender for a rape conviction. His last known address, as of April 2006, was in Pomona, the Web site stated.

Anderson was convicted of three counts of obstructing a police officer in 2002, according to court records. He also has a 1995 conviction for failing to register as a felony sex offender.

His earlier convictions were not available in court records.

It was previously reported that Anderson weighed 320 pounds. According the Sheriff's Department's inmate information Web site, he weighs 245 pounds.

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Common ground

Officials unveil Monrovia development

By Audrey Reed, Staff Writer

Article Launched: 04/03/2008 04:52:17 PM PDT

MONROVIA - After years of planning and 540 days of construction, the Colorado Commons housing development held its ribbon-cutting Thursday.

The Colorado Boulevard site includes 68 units, six of which are live/work setups. Prices begin in the high \$300,000 range and all of the units have unique floor plans of up to 2,133 square feet. There are also four commercial units on site.

"The project is a combination of bringing the area's historic architecture to a contemporary soft-loft design that people are looking for," said Greg Sadick, a project executive for SL Residential, Inc., the Commons' general contractor.

Many features were incorporated to help meet that goal, including the fact that each unit has its own entry off the street or courtyard.

City Manager Scott Ochoa said the city took its time in meeting with residents who wanted details on the project, which has been in the concept stage since the mid-90s. "The reason why it took so long was because of outreach to the neighbors," he said. "We met with any group that wanted facts."

But the city also wanted to pay attention to the details.

"Because this is the first new residential project in some time, it had to look and feel just right." Ochoa said. "The goal is for it to appear as though it has been here forever."

Ochoa told a story at the ribbon-cutting ceremony about tearing out bricks after it was determined they were slightly off in color.

Attached housing projects like the Commons have not all fared well in the real estate downturn, according to Steve Johnson, director of the Southern California region of Metrostudy, a housing market research firm. "In Southern California, there are major projects that have been shut down or turned into rentals," Johnson said.

He added that because of a large jump in the cost of construction, it's hard to discount units.

But the silver lining, according to Johnson, is that these types of developments will be increasingly popular. Moreover, attached housing is not an overbuilt sector, he said. "They will certainly get some buyers," Johnson said.

Despite the slumping market, Ochoa said he has high hopes. "We still feel bullish even with the market because this is a boutique concept," he said, adding that east of the city there are a few similar developments.

Colorado Commons is one of many development projects on the city's docket, Ochoa said. Another urban housing complex at Myrtle and Olive avenues, will have 160 units upon completion.

Pam Fitzpatrick, co-owner of The Dollmakers' Kattywompus, a shop in Old Town Monrovia, said she was pleased with the way the "cosmopolitan" project turned out. "It not only fits in with Old Town, it elevates it," she said.

Barker Pacific Group is the developer and Daniel Gehman, a principal at Thomas P. Cox Architects Inc., is project's architect.

Colorado Commons is at 139 W. Colorado Blvd. and can be reached at (626) 358-4090. For more information, visit www.livecoloradocommons.com.

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