



From the City Manager's Desk

a weekly report from Scott Ochoa, City of Monrovia



December 14, 2007

Preparing the Next Generation is Key

On Wednesday December, dozens of community and business leaders participated in the second "Monrovia Works" event, held at Monrovia High School. This event was a follow-up to the spring version of this program, wherein community and business leaders visited Monrovia middle schools. The purpose of Monrovia Works is to introduce our students, as early and as meaningfully as possible, to a wide variety of career paths – all of which require some kind of post-secondary education. From well-paying jobs that require master's degrees and PhDs to well-paying jobs that require technical and specialized vocational training, the goal is emphasize the role of education in an individual's ability to earn a comfortable living.

The class I spoke to was very engaging and interested in the unprecedented opportunities available to them. They were positive, upbeat and very respectful. Too often, we hear about low student achievement statewide and have low expectations for our students. Thus, it is truly uplifting to be able to meet and speak with these enthusiastic young people. The students who participated were mostly freshmen, and it was impressive to see just how many understand and acknowledge the need to attain some level of formal education beyond high school.

This program is a tremendous reflection of the City-School-Chamber partnership in Monrovia. Kudos to MHS Principal Frank Zepeda, who was instrumental in coordinating classroom schedules and student participation; and also to the MUSD Board and Superintendent Louise Taylor who ensured that the School District truly embraced the concept. Chamber Executive Director Karin Crehan worked very hard to ensure that the business community was represented in the event. Last, but not least, Mayor Rob Hammond must be acknowledged for his dogged support of this program. Between Mayor Hammond, Councilwoman Mary Ann Lutz, Councilman Tom Adams, Councilman Joe Garcia and Mayor Pro Tem Dan Kirby, the Monrovia Works program has the support and resources to ensure its success and, more importantly, the future success of our students.

Exceptional Employees Providing Exceptional Service

On Friday December 7, a number of City of Monrovia employees were honored for their outstanding performance and sense of commitment to the Monrovia community. They were:

Office Employee of the Year	Debbie Krantz (Administrative Services)
Field Employee of the Year	Niles Boyer (Public Works)
Safety Employee of the Year	Tino Buccola (Fire)
Leadership Awardees	Brad Dover (Fire)
	Michael Head (Police)
	Shawn Igoe (Public Works)
	Craig Jimenez (Community Development)
	Bob Manuel (Police)
	Ron Pelham (Fire)
	Becky Romine (Community Development)
Hourly Employee of the Year	Beverly Davila (Community Services)

Volunteer Employee of the Year	Fred Hiroygen (Police)
Community Impact Award	Melanie Goodyear (Community Services)
Achievement Award	Tim Blackburn (Public Works)
Rookie of the Year Award	Alexis Newell (Community Development)
“Old Pro” Award	Lisa Hansberger (Community Services)
Professional Development Award	Danielle Tellez (Human Resources)
Unsung Hero Award	Marguerite Wong (Administrative Services)
Customer Service Awards	Nick Manfredi (Police)
	John Ogden (Public Works)
	Kris Ryan (Administration)
Department of the Year	Community Development

Monrovia is fortunate to have top-notch employees throughout the organization. These individuals, however, stand out as the best of the best. Congratulations to all of the winners, and thank you to all of our employees who help make Monrovia the great community that it is!

December 18 City Council Preview

The December 18 Council meeting will be a fitting cap to the 2007 City Council legislative session.

Under Presentations, we have three great items. The first is the recognition of our own Alice Atkins, who earned her Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) status last month. To fully appreciate this achievement, you must understand that the large majority of California city clerks do not have this designation – yet here in Monrovia, we have two! Alice is a very dedicated employee and her commitment to Monrovia is showcased by the time and effort it took for her to receive the CMC title. Congratulations, Alice!

Under PR-2, we have the recognition of the winners of the 2007 Holiday Home Decorating Contest. The third item is a proclamation for National Volunteer Blood Donor Month (not to be confused with National Forcibly-Extracted Blood Donor Month).

We have three public hearings on the agenda. PH-1 is the adoption of the California Building Standards Code. You may recall that this item was presented and approved two meetings ago, and by law, must be brought back before the Council in a public hearing. Similar regulations apply to the California Fire Code, which was considered in a public hearing at the last meeting. Staff is recommending approval.

Item PH-2 is a bit of zoning regulation clean-up for the historic Old Town district. Earlier this fall, the Council approved new regulations redefining the classifications of businesses that are allowed on Myrtle Avenue. Councilman Adams, who was a Planning Commissioner prior to joining the City Council in 1994, recalled a specific set of tenant/use regulations for larger buildings at corner locations and asked that this issue be revisited. Thus, PH-2 is the proposed amendment of the Title 17 (Zoning) of the Monrovia Municipal Code consolidating the HCD/O (Historic Commercial Downtown/Office) zone with the newly redefined HCD (Historic Commercial Downtown) zone. The HCD/O zone designation is and has been superfluous, and it makes sense to strike it from the Code. Staff is recommending approval.

PH-3 is the consideration of a Tentative Tract Map and Conditional Use Permit to construct a nine-unit condominium complex at 706 West Duarte Road. The lot size is 21,780 square feet and allows for a maximum density of nine units. The site is located amid a mix of other residential uses: the Heritage Senior Apartment Complex to the east, single family houses to the west and south, and an 11-unit condominium project to the north across Duarte Road. Although no one spoke against the project at either DRC or the Planning Commission, a letter was received from residents living on the 1800 block

of 8th Avenue regarding the potential impact this project could have on parking. The proposed project, however, meets all parking and zoning requirements. Planning Commission approved the project on November 14. Staff is recommending approval.

Under the Monrovia Redevelopment Agency, we have a joint public hearing regarding a proposed Disposition & Development Agreement (DDA) for the Agency-owned property located at 601 South Myrtle Avenue. Item MRA PH-1 revolves around the long-time-coming reuse of the old "Social Security" building at the southwest corner of Myrtle Avenue and Colorado Boulevard. This building has sat vacant for the last 14 years. The Redevelopment Agency intervened last year by purchasing the property and cultivating a project that would activate this very visible corner. The project being considered is bar & grille, featuring quality, reasonably priced food in a historic downtown setting. The proposed operator is Mr. Jack Robinson, owner/operator of Crown City Brewery. The building façade would be completely redone with brick and other historic materials and accents, and high-quality interior tenant improvements. The business points revolve around a \$1.5 million purchase price, with the Agency investing \$350,000 vis-à-vis a five-year operating covenant, and \$300,000 towards the exterior building improvements. Staff is recommending approval.

Under Reports of Council members, Councilman Adams will introduce a proposed Resolution No. 2007-66, naming Monrovia as a Model City for the San Gabriel Valley Energy Wise Partnership. The Energy Wise Partnership is a collaborative endeavor of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, the Southern California Association of Governments, and Southern California Edison. Monrovia's participation will facilitate the creation of an Energy Action Plan that will call out specific strategies for Monrovia to seek out and possibly even generate power for municipal operations.

We have two Administrative Reports on the agenda. AR-1 is a follow-up to the Council's recent adoption of an administrative fine ordinance that would allow Neighborhood Preservation, Fire and Public Works staff to effectively and expeditiously address individuals who repeatedly and/or egregiously violate the Municipal Code. Contained in AR-1 is Resolution No. 2007-58, which establishes a fine schedule and classifications of violations – Minor infractions (i.e., leaving trash cans in the public right-of way), Public Welfare, Public Health & Safety, and Serious/Imminent Hazards (i.e., physical danger stemming from illegal hillside grading). The fine amounts are graduated, based on the severity of the violation. For example, a first offense for a Minor infraction is proposed to be \$100; a third violation within a year is set at \$500. A first offense for a Serious/Imminent Hazard is pegged at \$1,000; the third offense in a 12 month period is \$5,000. Also, please remember that this administrative fine program is "overlaid" on the existing noticing process – in other words, individuals will still be notified in writing and have the ability to correct violations before a fine is levied against them. Staff is recommending approval.

Lastly, AR-2 is the FY 2007-08 Mid-year budget review. In summary, while the City's expenditures are tracking at roughly 42%, our revenues – in particular sales tax revenue and transit occupancy (hotels) tax revenue – are not. Consumer spending is down, especially on big-ticket items such as new automobiles. Also, Monrovia is still feeling the pangs of the "closed for renovations" signs at the (new) Doubletree and Marriott hotels. While we expect both of these revenue streams to resume their normal trajectory – especially the hotels – fiscal conservatism dictates that we tighten our belts while we watch the State's budget debacle unfold. This shortfall in revenue is shored up by gains in property tax revenues (this will likely be the last year of substantial year-over-year gains until the next economic cycle), recommended franchise and in-lieu fee adjustments, cost shifts to non-General Fund departments, and M&O cuts. Additionally, staff has frozen non-essential (i.e., non-public safety) personnel hirings. With all of this, we fully expect to end the year with a positive fund balance. Staff recommends approval of the mid-year budget adjustments.

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

Articles Attached

- **Eating Out of Their Wallets.** Nice reference to Monrovia's success; interesting take on today's diners and consumer-culture.
- **Sharing Tales of War.** A follow-up to the wonderful presentation to the Pearl Harbor survivors made at the December 4 City Council meeting.
- **Former Officer Settles Lawsuit.** While it is unfortunate that these types of lawsuits arise, it is increasingly becoming a cost of doing business in today's workplace.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Planning Commission Recap. At its December 12 meeting, the Commission reviewed the following applications:

- Variance 2007-08 - 329 Maryknoll Circle, Brook & Kristin Reynolds, Applicant - Request for a variance to add 721 square feet to an existing two-car garage and add 145 square feet between the garage and single-family residence, creating a rear yard and side yard setback encroachments in the RL (Residential Low Density) Zone. The Planning Commission, after conducting a public hearing approved, the proposed variance.
- General Plan Amendment 2008-01, City of Monrovia, Applicant – The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing to review a General Plan Amendment consisting of a City initiated request to amend the General Plan by adopting revised Land Use and Circulation Elements and the accompanying zone changes and amendments to Title 17 (Zoning) of the Monrovia Municipal Code. The General Plan Update directs growth away from the existing residential neighborhoods toward the transportation corridors. These areas are the West Huntington Drive Corridor, the South Myrtle Avenue Corridor and the Transit Village Planning Area. The updated Elements represent more than five years of discussion and planning based on exhaustive public participation at both community and individual levels. At the conclusion of the Public Hearing, the Commission adopted Planning Commission Resolution 2008-16 recommending to the City Council approval of the General Plan Amendments and accompanying zone changes and code amendments. The resolution also recommends that the City Council certify the Environmental Impact Report with Alternative 3 (Station Square Transit Village Grid Pattern) chosen to be superior to the project in that it reduces overall impacts while achieving all of the objectives of the proposed project. The City Council will consider the matter at its January 15, 2008 meeting.
- General Plan Conformity – GPC2007-01, City of Monrovia, Applicant - Each year, the County of Los Angeles Treasurer and Tax Collector hold a public auction for the purpose of selling tax defaulted property. The current auction list includes several tax delinquent properties located in Monrovia. Among these properties, staff has identified a 16,550 square foot parcel in the hillside area that the City could acquire and preserve as open space. The subject property is an unimproved lot directly adjacent to the City's Hillside Wilderness Preserve, north of the 700 block of Norumbega Drive.

The acquisition cost is the "minimum bid", which is equal to the amount of unpaid taxes owed on the property which is \$9,673 plus incidental processing fees. The property will be purchased with state grant funds. The California Government Code requires the Planning Commission to consider the proposed acquisition of real property by a public agency to determine whether the acquisition conforms to the General Plan. The City's intent for this property is to incorporate it into the Monrovia Hillside Wilderness Preserve to be maintained as open space in perpetuity. Consequently, the acquisition of these parcels conforms to the General Plan. The Planning Commission determined that the proposed property acquisition is in conformity with the General Plan.

Development Review Committee Recap. At its December 12 meeting, the Committee reviewed the following applications:

- Approved signs for two new business locations, a restaurant “Moondogs” at 108 East Lime Avenue and a tanning salon “Indulge Tanning” at 218 West Lime Avenue.
- An oak tree located in the front yard setback of 138 Seymour Place was approved to be removed based on a certified arborist report that determined the tree was dangerous.
- Modifications to a 1919 Craftsman bungalow home at 218 South Myrtle Avenue were approved subject to using exterior materials that will match the existing structure.
- The property owner of the Shell Station at 705 West Huntington Drive is currently exploring the possibility of selling beer at the existing mini-mart location. In order to solicit early input from the residential property owners the neighborhood was noticed. The DRC received neighborhood input and ultimately recommended approval to Planning Commission.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG). The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) is comprised of the 31 cities and the unincorporated communities in the Valley. Over the past decade, the SGVCOG has provided a unifying voice for the Valley’s two million residents and addresses regional issues such as transportation, housing, and the environment.

On Saturday, December 8, Principal Planner Craig Jimenez attended the SGVCOG’s fourth semi-annual strategic planning session. The event was attended with representatives from most of the member agencies. During the meeting, the attendees identified the objectives completed over the past six months, but also reviewed long-term goals and developed objectives for the upcoming year.

COMMUNITY SERVICES HAPPENINGS

RECREATION DIVISION

Senior New Year’s Dinner and Dance. Sign-up today to ring in the New Year with song and dance at the Monrovia Community Center on Friday, January 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. Move to the Big Band sounds of the Danny “D” Swing Band and enjoy dinner, dessert, beverages and the not-to-be-forgotten toast to ring in the New Year! Doors open at 1 p.m. with the fun concluding at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$10 per person and must be purchased in advance. For additional information call Monrovia Community Services at (626) 256-8246.

LIBRARY DIVISION

Library Move and Reopening. All of the contents of the Myrtle Avenue Library have been moved to the Mary Wilcox Youth Center. The outside book drop has been installed in the parking lot of the Youth Center and all library materials should now be returned to this book drop.

The Monrovia Public Library opens to the public on Monday, December 17 with the following hours: Monday, 12 to 6 p.m., Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Literacy Services. Last Wednesday evening, 55 literacy tutors and students, and their families, attended Literacy’s Annual Holiday Dinner. All of the tutors received recognition certificates and special recognition awards went to tutors who have given a lot of volunteer hours and who submit regular progress reports to the Literacy Coordinator. Grace Juarez was the volunteer with the most hours donated to the program in 2007; she’s given 150 hours and has several students.

FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Personnel responded to 61 emergency calls from 0800 hours December 5, to 0800 hours December 12.

FIRE PREVENTION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Every home and car should have a portable fire extinguisher. For small fires, an extinguisher can save lives and property and/or containing it until the fire department arrives. Portable extinguishers do have limitations. Because fire grows and spreads so rapidly, the number one priority for residents is to get out safely. Here is a great list of safety tips:

- Use a portable fire extinguisher when the fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing; everyone has exited the building; the Fire Department has been called or is being called; and the room is not filled with smoke.
- To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS:
 - Pull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you, and release the locking mechanism
 - Aim low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire
 - Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly
 - Sweep the nozzle from side-to-side
- For the home, select a multi-purpose extinguisher (can be used on all types of home fires) that is large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy as to be difficult to handle.
- Choose a fire extinguisher that carries the label of an independent testing laboratory.
- Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out. Local fire departments or fire equipment distributors often offer hands-on fire extinguisher training.
- Install fire extinguishers close to an exit and keep your back to a clear exit when you use the device so you can make an easy escape if the fire cannot be controlled. If the room fills with smoke, leave immediately.
- Know when to go. Fire extinguishers are one element of a fire response plan, but the primary element is safe escape. Every household should have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.

TRAINING AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Monrovia City Staff was kind enough to allow fire crews to utilize the old library building for training last week. Fire crews were able to perform a wide range of fire ground operations and technical skills training. We thank all the departments involved with the facilitating of this training, and hope to have other building and/or structures available to us in the future.

The Monrovia Fire Training Division is pleased to announce that all three (3) probationary firefighters, FF/PM Ernesto Moreno, FF/PM Chris Huson and FF/PM Harvey Hewitt have successfully passed all components of their 12-Month Test. This rigorous two day testing was held December 10 and 11 at Fire Station 102. Special thanks to Training Officers Captain Ron Pelham, Captain Ryan Phillips and Captain John Rooks for their hard work, determination and dedication to these rookie firefighters and the department. Cadet Firefighter's Weidman and Cubak were present for both days of testing and made positive contributions.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

The Monrovia Fire Department would like to announce the retirement of three members, who combined, served the City for 77 years. Captain Brad Sandona (30 years of service), Engineer Kirk Bates (20 years of service) and Firefighter/Paramedic Steve Elmgren (27 years of service) have

decided to retire, all in the month of December, after a distinguished career providing fire and life safety services to the residents, business owners and visitors to our City. All three have served with pride and professionalism and have developed reputations that have helped shape the organization over the years.

They collectively leave a big hole to fill in the Department, but fortunately collectively they have been preparing for this transition and have been actively mentoring junior members to carry on the various assignments that were under their responsibility. We would like to wish Captain Sandona, Engineer Bates and Firefighter/Paramedic Elmgren happy, healthy and fulfilling retirements as they transition into the next chapter of their lives. Congratulations gentleman on your distinguished and valued career and good luck with all future endeavors!

ON THE POLICE BLOTTER

During the last seven day period, the Police Department handled 518 calls for service resulting in 108 investigations. Following are this week's highlighted issues and events:

Man with a Gun. On December 8 at 5:20 p.m., officers responded to the 700 block of South Shamrock on a 9-1-1 call regarding a man with a gun. The caller had reported that the man with the gun had pointed it at her. This call was involving a family fight, and the caller provided a phone number to the house. The dispatcher called the number, and an officer eventually convinced the man to come out without delay, and the man complied. The officers received written permission to search the house. A team of officers went inside to clear the house and look for the gun. They did not find a weapon. It appeared that the family had been feuding all day. One brother had actually tackled a sister, and another male subject was accused of threatening a brother with an aluminum bat. All parties refused to press charges and a refusal to prosecute was taken.

Child Abuse Investigation. On December 9 at 9:59 a.m., Glendora Police Department called to report that a female subject came into their lobby claiming the father of her three children molested the kids approximately two years ago while they were living on May Street in Monrovia. The mother is separated from the father, who currently resides in Northridge. Further investigation revealed the mother was battling with the father over visitation rights. Further investigation is continuing.

Outside Assist for Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. On December 11 at 6:33 p.m., Monrovia Police Department units assisted Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol units on the eastbound 210 Freeway regarding an attempted suicide jumper on the pedestrian bridge at Buena Vista in Duarte. Monrovia units blocked onramps to the 210 Freeway in Monrovia. Traffic congestion on the freeway was in place for several hours. Monrovia units were relieved by sheriff units prior to the successful detainment of the jumper.

Domestic Violence. On December 13 at 2:59 a.m., a male subject was arguing with his live-in girlfriend at a residence in the 700 block of West Colorado. The suspect punched his girlfriend several times in the head and broke a window out of her vehicle. The girlfriend immediately fled and came to the Monrovia Police Department lobby. Officers responded and detained the suspect for an investigation. The suspect was arrested and booked without incident.

THE PUBLIC WORKS SCOOP

ENGINEERING:

Colorado Commons Street Improvements: A preconstruction conference was held and a construction plan has been submitted, reviewed and approved. The work is scheduled to begin the week of December 17 and be completed by February 11, 2008. The affected residents and businesses will be notified 48 hours before work starts. Any work impacting Myrtle Avenue will be scheduled after the Holiday season is complete.

Public Works Inspections:

- 337 Highland, Retaining wall construction continuing, standards due to pool construction
- Bus Shelter Construction, Framing is complete; surfaces are being prepared for stucco, tile and roofing materials.
- 911 Royal Oaks, Curb, Handicap Access ramp construction at Mountain and Royal Oaks pending
- 1825 10th Avenue, Final project punch list, street resurfacing of utility trenches is pending.
- 1402 S. California, Erosion control measures for site demolition activities.
- California/Monrovia/Duarte, Building pads are being formed. Edison pole removal is 3-4 weeks away. On-site sewer improvements are being scheduled
- 202 E. Foothill, Sidewalks inspected and poured. Repair and relocation of underpavement/sidewalk drain inspected and poured
- 1419/1425 S. Myrtle, Building pad being compacted and graded
- 202 Terrace View, Retaining wall construction, footing inspected, ready for concrete
- 1419 S. Myrtle, building slab complete, concrete walls are being formed on the pad. Sewer lateral televised for potential re-use upon review of video tape inspection.

Construction Documents:

- Trash Enclosure, behind 601 S. Myrtle. Construction plans are being finalized
- 5th and Huntington Wash Cover - design work commencing with subsequent preparation of construction documents
- Handicap Access Ramp Construction - Preparation of plans and specifications for the construction of 20-30 handicap access ramps, sidewalk repairs and audible pedestrian signals
- City Yard Site Improvements – Construction is progressing as planned with City personnel continuing to finalize the construction around the City Yard building.

OPERATIONS – Environmental – Facilities – Parks:

“A Day Without a Bag”, December 20. Los Angeles County residents use *6 billion* plastic bags each year and recycle only 5% of that total. To help reduce plastic bag usage this holiday season and year-round, try the following:

- Participate in Heal the Bay's *A Day Without a Bag* events on Thursday, December 20, at 5 participating retail locations in Los Angeles County. For additional informational, log on to http://www.healthebay.org/actionalerts/2007_11_30_nobagday/.
- Buy a Reusable Bag- You can purchase reusable shopping bags for a nominal cost at local retailers such as Trader Joe's, CVS Pharmacy, Target, Wal-Mart, or visit Heal the Bay online at <http://www.healthebay.org>
- BYOB- Bring Your Own Bag

GreenXchange 2007. To help the Green Team as they develop action strategies within the Monrovia Environmental Accords, Operations Division Staff attended the Global Marketplace Conference that included international businesses, financial and policy experts who discussed clean and green technology, and topics focusing on environmental accords. Speakers were represented from the UK, Japan and the U.S.

Library Park. The demolition of the Library Park building will start next week. The fencing surrounding the Park has been installed, and staff has removed all the Memorial Benches for safe storage during construction. The benches will be returned once the project is complete.

Graffiti Cleanup. Parks Staff worked 15 hours this week removing graffiti; Recreation Park is once again the most popular site for graffiti. Metro Goldline has approved our Graffiti Removal Contractor and given him a notice to proceed to remove graffiti along the back side of Diamond at Mayflower adjacent to the railroad tracks.

STREETS:

Traffic Signs:

Graffiti removal from 23 traffic signs

Miscellaneous:

- Patched pothole at Grand and Kirkwood, Magnolia and Cypress
- 1408 Alamitas exposed, filled and compacted sink hole in parkway.
- Installed parking bumpers at city yard
- Library Park covered Vietnam KIA Memorial to protect it from damage during library construction project.
- 315 E. Lime Ave. removed lifted section of sidewalk and patched with asphalt.
- 415 E. Lime removed four tires dumped in the roadway.
- May Ave., cleaned spilled drywall compound from roadway.
- Cut and removed asphalt pavement at city yard to provide planter space long new rot iron fencing.
- Installed electrical conduit and irrigation lines at the new entrance area to the city yard

UTILITIES:

Customer Service

- 2,177 water meters were read and recorded
- 31 work orders were completed
- 2 water meters were replaced
- 7 water services were reactivated

Water Production

Water consumption is 36.6 millions gallons, which is a voluntary decrease of approximately 18% compared to last week's water usage.

Department of Health Services Required Water Samples:

- 17 water system samplings
- 6 water treatment facility samplings

Last week's storm brought 1.28" of rain bringing the annual total to 5.23" this year.

Utility Maintenance

- 7-1" water services were installed
- 2 water service leaks were repaired.
- 22 underground service alert's utility location requests were completed
- 10,000 feet of sewer mains were cleaned
- 300 feet of sewer mains were video inspected.

Have a great weekend!

FOR YOUR CALENDARS:

Tues., Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m.

Regular Council Meeting

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS DAY, CITY HALL CLOSED

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

NEW YEARS DAY, CITY HALL CLOSED

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

CITY COUNCIL MEETING CANCELLED

Tues., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m.

Regular Council Meeting

Tues., Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m.

Regular Council Meeting

CMO ATTACHMENTS:

Eating out of their wallets

Article Launched: 12/06/2007 08:12:13 PM PST

OUR local cities these days are locked in redevelopment mode. Usually, that means coaxing businesses into town with sweet deals.

However, sometimes waving wads of cash at a developer does not guarantee a city will get what it wants, which these days is chain restaurants.

For many, it has been like herding cats.

Duarte, bent on bringing more eateries to town (especially after The Trails served its last steak dinner in 2002) hesitated on signing a development deal with Fountainhead Shrugged, LLC of Newport Beach. The city wants the development company with the Ayn Rand-sounding name to guarantee it will bring in three restaurants to the site of the old Texaco station at the northwest corner of Huntington Drive and Buena Vista Street.

Duarte so wants restaurants they've even named which ones the developer can choose from: Pick Up Stix, Quiznos, The Counter, Baja Fresh and San Sai. And if they don't get restaurants, Councilman John Fasana wants to write into the contract that the city redevelopment agency will get back \$100,000 for each site. (The city sold the property for \$400,000 less than its worth to attract the restaurants they want.)

That's going to the mat for the residents.

Smaller cities are hearing the call: residents want to eat out locally, without fighting cross-Valley traffic. Monrovia has succeeded (it is even scheduled to add to its success with a Pinkberry frozen yogurt on Myrtle Avenue) and so has Alhambra, West Covina, and of course, Pasadena. Yet, Temple City is still hoping that a new "piazza" mixed-use development (for which it held ground-breakings not once, but twice) at Rosemead Boulevard and Las Tunas Drive will bring restaurants - including one with a banquet hall for clubs and sports teams.

So upset were patrons of "The Boat" restaurant in unincorporated San Gabriel, nearly sunk by a new Kohl's department store, that developers promised it would be rebuilt a few hundred yards down the street.

La Puente, Monterey Park and El Monte are working on redevelopment deals that include restaurants as key features.

This is a sea change from the days when redevelopment agencies used to lure big box stores or fight over car dealers, both of which make more in sales tax and property tax increment than do eateries. Yet, it is a positive sign because it says cities are listening to their residents.

"There are a lot of people eating out a lot more," said Margaret Finlay, Duarte councilwoman. "It is not only a place to eat (they want), it is a place to socialize. It is a sign of times."

Restaurants are the new movie theaters. Both don't earn a lot in sales tax but instead, act as magnets for other retail spending. Duarte is putting in a Best Buy on Mountain Avenue and adding an adjoining strip center; residents are asking for more restaurants there, too.

But smaller cities have to open their wallets wider in order to entice chains. Why? Because they are in the shadow of the "Pasadena market," which means chains don't like to add stores too close to existing ones. Also, average income demographics in these cities are generally lower than in Pasadena/South Pasadena, whose numerous restaurants also draw patrons from restaurant-light cities such as San Marino, La Cañada Flintridge and county areas of Montrose, Altadena and east Pasadena.

So we're all for cities saying to residents "let them eat" as long as the cities don't end up eating crow.

Sharing tales of war

Neighbors discuss Pearl Harbor, WWII

By Emanuel Parker, Staff Writer

Article Launched: 12/06/2007 08:58:02 PM PST

Video: [Survivors talk about the war](#)

MONROVIA - As 21-year-old Ensign Paul Perrault stood on the deck of the cruiser USS Phoenix on Dec. 7, 1941, and watched Japanese planes bomb Pearl Harbor, he kept waiting for John Wayne to show up. "But I never saw an American plane," he said.

Seaman 2nd Class Anthony George Mark was on watch on Ford Island that morning. When two nearby ships in drydock were attacked and blew up, the concussion blew the then-19-year-old 15 feet through the air. "I saw the big red circles on the planes' wings and I thought, 'We're not at war, this can't be,'" he recalled.

Perrault, 87, and Mark, 84, never met when both were stationed at Pearl Harbor. Today, they live next door to each other in Monrovia.

Sixty-six years after the attack that brought the United States into World War II, their memories of that day were revived this week as both men were honored by the Monrovia City Council at its meeting Tuesday night.

Perrault recalled the loud explosion that prompted him to look out a porthole, where he saw a huge fireball rising above the USS Arizona. "I thought it was an accident, that the ammo magazine had blown up," he said. "Then someone on the loudspeaker started yelling, 'Battle stations! Battle stations! This is not a drill!'"

Perrault's station was a mast high above the cruiser, directing the fire of a 5-inch gun. He had a panoramic view of the entire three-hour attack. "As I watched, I got the feeling I was seeing a news reel," he recalled. "It was a shock. I didn't realize what was happening."

It took an hour to get the Phoenix underway, he said, and the ship reached open water without being attacked. "The Japanese could have done more damage," he said, "but they kept attacking the battleships. There was a lot of confusion. A rumor was going around that Japanese weren't attacking us, that it was Germans flying off of Japanese carriers."

Mark was a bomb-sight mechanic on Ford Island. When he heard the first explosion he thought it was a plane crash. Then he stepped outside the bomb shack and a Japanese Zero fighter strafed the ground in front of him, he recalled. "Then the torpedo planes came and started dropping torpedoes in the harbor, and I realized we were at war," he said.

He was in a nearby aircraft hangar when a bomb crashed through the roof and landed about 40 feet from him. "It was a dud," he said, "otherwise I wouldn't be here today."

He spent the rest of the day salvaging gas masks and taking apart, cleaning and reassembling machine guns that were immediately used.

The attack destroyed the Ford Island's water supply, he said, and the only available water was in a urine-contaminated swimming pool. "They posted guards around that pool," he said. "They put a lot of chlorine in the water and we drank it."

Mark has attended several Pearl Harbor reunions, but Perrault has never gone back. Perrault took part in the invasion of Okinawa and was in the Philippines when the war ended. He worked 43 years at Home Laundry in Pasadena, and he and his wife have two children and one grandchild.

Mark attended officer training school and was on the mainland training to become a naval pilot when the war ended. He became an electrician, then an electrical contractor and retired in 1993. He and his wife have two children, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

"I'm not gung ho about the military. Now, it seems like a dream, like it never happened," Mark said. "I still remember the shock of it," Perrault said, "of being in something that was a historical event for the 20th century. I'm glad I was there. It was a good experience."

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Former Monrovia police officer settles harassment suit

City News Service

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MONROVIA - A black Monrovia police officer who alleged that one of his sergeants said "Africans are lazy" and simulated the movements of a monkey settled a lawsuit he filed against the city, his attorney said on Tuesday.

The city agreed to pay Glenn Cobb \$125,000, Monrovia City Manager Scott Ochoa said.

Cobb filed suit in Los Angeles Superior Court in August 2006, alleging race discrimination, harassment, retaliation and failure by the department to investigate his claim.

When the 10-year department veteran complained to supervisors about his treatment, he was given less favorable patrol beats and did not receive prompt help when he called for assistance in the field, according to his court papers.

Trial of Cobb's lawsuit had been scheduled to begin Tuesday.

Ochoa said Tuesday that the city's decision to settle was made on financial grounds.

"We believe that the cost to ultimately defend and win would've been three times more than (the settlement)," Ochoa said. "While we deny anything ever happened that would warrant this claim of harassment, we also take our stewardship of the public treasury very seriously and thus made a decision accordingly."

Last month, Judge Ann I. Jones issued a 10-page ruling denying the city of Monrovia's motion to throw out Cobb's lawsuit. The city maintained there were no triable issues of fact.

Cobb's lawyer, Leo J. Terrell, said his client is pleased with the settlement.

"My client feels vindicated because in my opinion ... he was facing racism and discrimination in the workplace," Terrell said.

Cobb, 41, has been on leave from the department, his lawyer said.

The settlement approved by the Monrovia City Council gave Cobb the choice of staying with the department if he wanted to, according to Terrell. He said his client chose to resign and is thinking about resuming his law enforcement career with another agency.

Terrell said that as part of the settlement, he could not say anything further about the its terms.

Cobb claims the harassment and discrimination began in October 2005.

According to court papers filed by Terrell, a Monrovia police sergeant said during a briefing with officers that "Africans are lazy. We went over to Africa, picked them up from the South, dropped them off in the South and they are still lazy."

The sergeant gestured with his head and mouth simulating a monkey, Terrell's court papers stated.

During a briefing on the Martin Luther King holiday, the same sergeant said, "It should be James Earl Ray's holiday," referring to the civil rights leader's killer, according to Terrell.

The sergeant also once said that blacks with college degrees did not earn them, offending Cobb, who has a bachelor's degree in speech communications, according to his suit.

In another incident, Cobb said he arrived for work and found a photograph of the Buckwheat character from the "Our Gang" series on his computer. Cobb removed the photo, but it later showed up as a screensaver on the computer, according to his court papers.

Staff Writer Molly R. Okeon contributed to this story