



January 30, 2014

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Edward C. Starr, City Manager

SUBJECT: WEEKLY REPORT: January 24-30, 2014

➤ ***CITY MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENTS***

- Earlier this month, Montclair officials were disappointed upon learning of the SANBAG Commuter Rail and Transit Committee's vote delegating the Gold Line Phase 2B Foothill extension to Montclair to a third-level priority; thus substantially defunding what Montclair officials considered a conceptual, if not firm commitment, to participate in the environmental clearance and preliminary design portion of the project. It is the City's position that failure to participate in the clearance and design study would effectively eliminate the likelihood of the Gold Line coming to Montclair. Failure to participate would also adversely impact plans already developed by the Construction Authority, requiring additional expenditure of funds for plan amendments.

Yesterday, in an effort to address a number of concerns related to the Commuter Rail and Transit Committee's decision, Montclair hosted a meeting with members of the Gold Line Construction Authority (Chairman Douglas Tessitor, Council Member, Glendora; First Vice Chair Sam Pedroza, Mayor, Claremont; and Executive Director Habib Balian); San Bernardino Associated Governments (Commuter Rail and Transit Committee Chairman Patrick Morris, Mayor, San Bernardino; Executive Director Raymond Wolfe; and Director of Transit & Rail Programs Mitch Alderman), and the cities of Montclair (Mayor Paul Eaton, Mayor Pro Tem Bill Ruh, Deputy City Manager Marilyn Staats, Public Works Director Mike Hudson, and City Manager Edward Starr) and Ontario (Mayor Paul Leon, Council Member Alan Wapner, and City Manager Al Boling).

The two-hour meeting evolved around SANBAG's funding issues and commitment to the Gold Line extension project. Dr. Wolfe expressed his ongoing support of the Gold Line extension to Montclair; however, he noted two concerns:

1. The Construction Authority's ability to generate the necessary funding to construct the Gold Line from Azusa to the San Bernardino County Line.

Dr. Wolfe reiterated his past position that SANBAG would not spend limited resources for studies related to a project that has not yet demonstrated the required funding capacity to complete construction.

The Construction Authority continues to address the funding issue and expects to ask voters in 2016 to approve a tax measure for construction. In 2012, Los Angeles County voters narrowly defeated Measure J, a ballot measure that would have produced the required funding capacity. Measure J received 64.72 percent of the vote, but required 66 percent for passage.

2. SANBAG's fiscal capacity to provide for operations and maintenance (O&M) of the Gold Line extension from the County Line into Montclair over the 30-year life of Measure I.

According to SANBAG, it would cost approximately \$3 million annually (\$90 million over the 30-year life of Measure I) to operate and maintain the 3,050 feet of track from County Line to Montclair. A previous SANBAG estimate for O&M was \$1 million annually. Completion of the Gold Line extension to Montclair is not expected to be completed prior to 2022, reducing the actual O&M time frame to approximately 18 years under Measure I.

The meeting concluded with no definitive resolution, although a potential solution will be carried to the City Council for consideration at a future meeting.

A Gold Line presence in Montclair is considered important to the City's economic interests and central to the development, imagination, and implementation of the North Montclair Downtown Specific Plan and its focus on public transit as a dynamic core concept.

We look forward to working with our partners at the Gold Line Construction Authority and SANBAG to realize a Gold Line presence in Montclair and San Bernardino County.

➤ **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

- Staff has been working with a firm commissioned by El Pollo Loco to remodel the chain's restaurant at 9185 Central Avenue, across from Montclair Plaza.

After initially rejecting a submittal for what was referred to as a "Tier 2" remodel, staff has been reviewing an upgraded "Tier 1" version, scheduled to be considered by the Planning Commission at its February 10 meeting. The building's floor plan will remain the same, but the following exterior changes are proposed to be implemented:

- ✓ Remove the gable-shaped tower and square off the front and side building parapets to create a contemporary look
- ✓ Remove the barrel-shaped canopies from the building (except at the drive-through) and replace with new flat metal awnings with tie-back rods
- ✓ Install new, full-height storefront windows and doors at the west and south side of the dining room
- ✓ Add a new metal grille design element at front elevation. The grille will be backlit in red LEDs during evening hours
- ✓ Install ledge stone veneer and sill at the base of the building
- ✓ Add new wall-mounted, decorative light fixtures and remove the existing roof-mounted lights
- ✓ Paint new color scheme in tones of brown-gold, brick, and dark brown.

The interior changes include making the kitchen grills more visible and reorganizing the dining area with new paint and finishes, more comfortable booths, and larger windows to allow more light into the restaurant. The salsa bar will be moved from the dining room to the front counter area and other design touches, such as metalwork, lights and murals, will make reference to the brand's Mexican heritage.

➤ ***FIRE DEPARTMENT***

- No new information to report.

➤ ***HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT***

- Yesterday, the Montclair Senior Center held its monthly birthday party called "Fun in the Snow," at the Community Center. More than 230 seniors enjoyed a delicious meal, birthday cake, hot chocolate, and games.

A photo collage of the event is included on Page 8.

➤ **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- Reserve Sergeant Scott Stephenson and Reserve Officer Joe Kuskie participated in Wells Fargo's annual community event, "Stagecoach Kids Day," on Saturday, January 25.

Scott and Joe set up a booth and offered information to the public on Kid Print, child safety seats, and distracted drivers. Kids received paper badges and pencils.



Pictured, from left, are: Reserve Officer Joe Kuskie, Virgel Mabini of Wells Fargo Bank, and Reserve Sergeant Scott Stephenson

➤ **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

- This past week, Civic Center buildings received minor improvements with the addition of new identification signage. Previous signage was installed in the mid-1990s and had become a bit outdated and misleading with the relocation of the Police Department and construction of the new Youth and Senior Centers.

The new lettering was orchestrated by the Planning Division during the design phase of the two new buildings with the intent of eventually making all buildings uniform. Now sporting a refreshed look, the Medical Clinic, Recreation Center, Community Center, Library, and City Hall offer clearer direction for our residents and visitors.



➤ **SUCCESSOR REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY/MONTCLAIR HOUSING CORPORATION**

- The 18-unit multifamily housing project being developed on the southwest corner of Kingsley Street and Pradera Avenue is approximately 80 percent complete. The development is anticipated to be completed by mid-March. The project is being developed by nonprofit National Community Renaissance for developmentally disabled individuals.

After a protracted debate with the Department of Finance, the former City of Montclair Redevelopment Agency was able to complete the transaction to provide the Agency-owned land to the developer for the project. The developer will be purchasing the land through a residual receipts loan and is currently screening applications from potential tenants.

- Retailers enjoyed a respectable holiday shopping season, but not quite as good as forecasted, according to a January 21 report published by the National Retail Federation (NRF). Retail sales, excluding automobiles, gas stations, and restaurants, rose 3.8 percent in the November and December holiday shopping period according to the report. That fell just under the NRF's forecast of 3.9 percent, but ahead of 2012's sales growth of 3.5 percent.

The NRF results were far better than Tuesday's report from the Commerce Department, which showed a 0.2 percent increase in December over November. Excluding vehicles, retail sales rose 0.7 percent from November. But there is disagreement over how positive the news is for retailers. Ken Perkins, president of stock analysis company Retail Metrics, says the season delivered "holiday coal in most retailers' stockings." Of 29 retailers that recently issued earnings guidance for the current quarter, which includes the holiday period, Perkins said 25 of them were negative. He attributes retailers' problems to a shorter holiday shopping season, deeper discounts, and a lack of must-have items.

The government's results for December included the increasingly busy Monday after Thanksgiving, known as Cyber Monday. Most retailers feature deep online discounts on that day. The Commerce Department also lowered its estimated sales increase for November to 0.4 percent from 0.7 percent. October's increase was cut to 0.5 percent, down a tenth of a percentage point. Retail sales in December, excluding automobiles, gas stations, and restaurants, rose 0.4 percent from last month and 4.6 percent from the same period a year ago, according to the NRF's analysis of the federal data.

NRF President/CEO Matthew Shay has a far more optimistic take on the state of retail than some analysts. "Despite facing a truncated holiday season, severe weather, and shaky consumer confidence, retailers rose to the challenge and executed their strategies with proven success," Shay said in a statement. "Considering that retail sales are an important barometer

when measuring the overall health of our national economy, this report provides a level of true optimism that the recovery is picking up steam, and once again, retail leads the way."

NRF Chief Economist Jack Kleinhenz acknowledged, however, that "retail sales have been volatile all year and the holiday shopping season was no exception." He predicted "steady growth in the New Year" and growth in consumer confidence will reduce the need for retailers to discount so heavily, which hurts their bottom lines.

Others shared Perkins' concerns. IHS Global Insight economist Chris Christopher said that while the sales data looks good at first glance, "when you dig into the details, the numbers are not very positive." Also, retailers will learn their lessons before the next holiday season and consumers may see the effects soon. "They are going to be a little nervous about discounting too heavily and they'll have to reevaluate what they stock up on," he said.

ECS:spa

"I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong."

~ Abraham Lincoln

FEBRUARY 2014



03	City Council Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
05	Community Action Committee Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
10	Planning Commission Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
11	City Manager's Staff Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.
12	Midyear Budget Review Council Chambers	6:00 p.m.
17	Presidents Day – City Hall Closed	
18	Code Enforcement Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	6:00 p.m.
18	City Council Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
20	Safety Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.
20	Public Works Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	2:00 p.m.
24	Planning Commission Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
25	City Manager's Staff Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.
25	Strategic Planning Session Senior Center Dining Room	4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Senior Center January Birthday Party

