



January 28, 2016

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Edward C. Starr, City Manager

SUBJECT: CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT: January 22-28, 2016

CITY MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENTS

- Elected officials and residents from throughout Southern California are being asked to provide input on the Draft 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), prior to adoption by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in April 2016.

Every four years, SCAG prepares an updated RTP/SCS for the six-county region it serves: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. The RTP/SCS details how the region will address its transportation and land use challenges while meeting federal air quality emissions standards and state greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Ultimately, the vision of the RTP/SCS is to improve the quality of life for the region's residents by making the best transportation and land use choices to meet the needs of a growing population and changing demographics over the next 25 years. The SCAG region will be home to 22.1 million people in 2040—up 3.8 million from 2012. Improving mobility is essential if we are to accommodate both the increase in people and the job growth needed to sustain our economic viability.

Economic disparity is a major challenge as well. One in six adults and one in four children in the SCAG region live in poverty. In order to fix that, we need to attract more businesses, create more jobs, and bridge the gap between where lower-income families live and where the employment opportunities are located.

The 2016 RTP/SCS identifies **\$556.5 billion in transportation investments** that will improve mobility and reduce congestion, improve air quality, and create economic opportunity.

To read the Draft Plan, see the schedule of public hearings, or for more information, visit <http://scagrtpscscs.net>.

How to Comment on the Draft Plan

The Draft 2016 RTP/SCS is available for a 60-day public review and comment period, which began December 4, 2015, and ends February 1, 2016. Comments will be accepted until the close of business or no later than 5 p.m. on February 1, 2016.

To comment, visit <http://scagrtpscscs.net/>

- For better or worse, an "unscientific" survey conducted by the website, Roadsnacks, lists Montclair as the 353rd least boring City in California out of a list of 454 cities with populations of greater than 2,000. Roadsnacks is a website devoted to making lists about various geographic regions.

The major (some would say faulty) assumptions made by Roadsnacks demographers is that cities with older citizens, married couples with families, rural settings, and little to do for entertainment within the city proper makes for boring living.

For example:

- ✓ Cities with a higher percentage of population over 35—boring
- ✓ Cities with a high percentage of married household—really boring
- ✓ Cities with a higher average age per resident—boring, boring, boring
- ✓ Cities where households with kids reign—unbelievably boring
- ✓ Cities with a higher percentage of senior adults—is it alive or is it Memorex
- ✓ Cities with a lower population density—where's the people
- ✓ Few restaurants and/or entertainment options—boring to the max

Based on this analysis by Roadsnacks, the top ten most boring cities in California are:

1. Ross
2. Hillsborough
3. Woodside
4. Los Altos Hills
5. La Habra Heights
6. Portola Valley
7. Atherton
8. Saratoga
9. Rolling Hills Estates
10. Indian Wells

The good news is that since we can assume California isn't necessarily the most boring state in the Union, the state's most boring cities can probably take comfort that there are even more boring cities in other parts of the country.

So what are California's most exciting cities? Apparently they are Davis, San Luis Obispo, Emeryville, Santa Cruz, and Berkley, in that order.

- During his State of the State address last Thursday, Governor Jerry Brown highlighted the need to better manage water and recharge aquifers while touting efforts at home to combat climate change.

"Our goal must be to preserve California's natural beauty and ensure a vibrant economy—on our farms, in our cities, and for all the people who live here," he said.

In November 2014, voters approved a \$7.5 billion bond to go towards water storage, recycling, and desalination projects, as well as the cleaning of groundwater pollution, and more.

Governor Brown called the water bond "one of the bright spots in our contentious politics" and said that initiative, combined with the California Water Action Plan—a planning framework for elected officials, agencies, tribe, and other stakeholders—"establishes a solid program to deal with the drought and the longer-term challenge of using our water wisely."

The Governor and his top advisers often talk about pursuing an "all-of-the-above" approach to water issues in order to help California cope with growing demand for water and climate change.

He touched again on that concept Thursday while promoting the state and federal plan to change how water is diverted from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. That project, which Governor Brown says is aimed at ensuring reliable water deliveries, would involve building two water tunnels beneath the delta and new water intakes to prevent problems with endangered fish that have disrupted the flows of water.

Farmers and other critics in the Central Valley have long bemoaned court rulings and the decisions of government officials that have curtailed water deliveries from the delta to protect the endangered delta smelt and other species.

Governor Brown also highlighted last year's passage of Senate Bill 350. It requires that the amount of electricity generated and sold to retail customers per year from eligible renewable energy resources be increased to 50 percent by 2031.

Governor Brown referenced the bill while denouncing global warming deniers in Washington, DC. He pointed then to the recent climate agreement in Paris, where 195 countries agreed to keep temperature increases to less than 2 degrees Celsius, or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit, through 2100.

- Home prices throughout Southern California continue to increase, according to a new report released by Standard & Poor's.

Home prices in Los Angeles and Orange counties jumped 6.2 percent, and in the Inland Empire 6.0 percent, this past November in comparison to the prior year. Nationally home prices rose 5.3 percent this past November in comparison to the prior year

The gains were helped by an improving labor market and low mortgage rates, as well as strong demand and a tight supply of homes for sale in many markets. However, the report noted that housing is not large enough to offset several weak spots in the economy, such as struggling business in the oil and energy sectors and a slowing market for exports because of a stronger U.S. dollar.

The median home price in the Inland Empire is \$295,000. In Los Angeles County, the median is \$523,000, and \$695,000 in Orange County.

- California's unemployment rate increased slightly in December, the first uptick in months, while non-farm payroll jobs increased by 60,400, according to state Employment Development Department figures released last Friday.

The December rate was 5.8 percent, up from 5.7 percent in November, but still well below the 7.1 percent rate a year earlier, the department said. The last uptick in what has been a downward trend in the unemployment rate was in May, when the rate edged up to 6.4 percent before returning to 6.3 the following month.

A federal survey of households estimated the number of Californians holding jobs in December was 17.9 million, a decrease of 10,000 from November, but up 334,000 from December 2014.

A survey of California businesses found there were more than 16.3 million non-farm jobs, an increase of 60,400 month-to-month and 459,400 year-over-year.

That increase brought to nearly 2.2 million the number of jobs gained in the recovery since February 2010, when the state's unemployment rate was at a recession-era high of 12.4 percent.

Jobs were added last month across 10 categories ranging from construction and manufacturing to professional and business services. The latter category posted the biggest increase, 15,800 jobs. Mining and logging reported a loss of 100 jobs.

The Employment Development Department also said there were 393,350 people receiving regular unemployment insurance benefits during December, compared to 355,913 in November and 436,034 in December 2014. New claims totaled 53,248 last month, down from 54,438 in November. New claims totaled 47,858 in December 2014.

The unemployment rate in the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metropolitan Statistical Area was 5.9 percent in December 2015, down from a revised 6.1 percent in November 2015, and below the year-ago estimate of 7.0 percent. This compares with an unadjusted unemployment rate of 5.8 percent for California and 4.8 percent for the nation during the same period.

The unemployment rate was 6.1 percent in Riverside County, and 5.8 percent in San Bernardino County. Between November 2015 and December 2015, total non-farm employment increased from 1,365,400 to 1,372,300, a gain of 6,900 jobs. Agricultural employment reported no growth.

Trade, transportation, and utilities recorded the greatest month-over gain, adding 3,800 jobs. Transportation and warehousing added 2,100 jobs. Retail trade and wholesale trade added 1,200 and 500 jobs respectively.

Three other sectors posted job growth over the month. The most significant came from leisure and hospitality (up 3,400), mainly from arts, entertainment, and recreation (up 2,700). Mining and logging information posted no change over the month. Five sectors posted losses over the month: financial activities (down 600), professional and business services (down 500), construction (down 400), manufacturing, educational, and health services each declined by 100 jobs.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

- Yesterday, the Montclair Senior Center held its monthly birthday party, themed "Fun in the Snow." More than 250 seniors enjoyed a delicious lunch, birthday cake, hot chocolate, and games.

Entertainment was provided by volunteer and pianist Brian Ross.

Congresswoman Norma Torres made a surprise visit to personally wish the seniors a happy birthday.

A photo collage of the event is shown on Page 9.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Baby Boom

- Our congratulations go to Lieutenant Jason Reed and his wife Kristina on the birth of their second daughter, Hannah Michelle. Hannah was born on January 25 and weighed in at 7 lbs 7 oz. Hannah rounds out the Reed family as she joins her 3-year-old sister, Elisse Noelle.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

- On Tuesday, a Notice to Proceed was issued to Rasmussen Brothers Construction, Inc., to begin Phase 2 of the Human Services/Recreation Building Improvement Project on February 16.

Phase 2 construction will be concentrated on the current weight room. Construction will expand the existing room from its current size of 420 square feet to roughly 1,150 square feet, making it a new fitness center that will eventually be equipped with state-of-the-art exercise equipment, overhead television monitors, and a sound system.

Phase 1 construction was completed in July 2015, and it included men's and women's locker room improvements of new flooring, showers, lockers, sinks, partitions, and lighting. Other improvements included a new employees' restroom, widening of one racquetball court door, a drinking fountain, and a new reception counter.

The \$250,000 project is fully funded with Community Development Block Grant funds and is expected to be completed by June 1, 2016.

SUCCESSOR REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY/ MONTCLAIR HOUSING CORPORATION

- The on-line publication, *Restaurant News*, reports that McDonald's regained customers lost from its competitors over the past two years. The burger chain can largely thank all day breakfasts for that.

The company said that same-store sales in the fourth quarter 2015 increased 5.7 percent—the best performance for the chain since its same-store sales rose 8.9 percent in the first quarter of 2012. By comparison, quick-service sandwich chains' same-store sales rose 2.8 percent during the fourth quarter.

McDonald's CEO Steve Easterbrook was not ready to declare the turnaround successful, noting that the company needs another 6 months before it can start shifting its planning toward more long-term growth.

- JCPenney is getting back into the appliance business, and that's not good news for Sears. The appliance business is its most successful venture, with a 26 percent share of US sales. Still, that has fallen from a 33 percent share in 2006.

CEO Marvin Ellison, who joined JCPenney from The Home Depot, is leading an effort for the retailer to start selling washers and stoves for the first time in 30 years. Ellison discovered that appliances are a top item customers search for on JCPenney's website. The retailer will sell about 150 kitchen and laundry items in a test run at 22 stores throughout the nation.

Macy's is doing a similar test through a partnership with Best Buy.

If JCPenney's appliance program test is successful, it could give customers who frequent both chains one fewer reason to go to Sears, a blow Sears might not be able to handle. Many experts believe Sears is past the point of being able to return to its post as a major US retailer. In fact, it's in danger of not existing at all.

Also, Walmart and Macy's are closing hundreds of stores, and experts think more closings will follow. Analysts believe this is part of a larger trend in retail as more customers shop online instead of in stores. As a result, retailers, such as JCPenney, are trying to better diversify goods sold in their stores while focusing on providing customers what they want.

ECS:spa

"I have learned that to be with those I like is
enough."

~ Walt Whitman

FEBRUARY 2016



01	City Council Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
03	Community Action Committee Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
08	Planning Commission Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
09	City Manager's Staff Meeting City Hall Conference Room	9:00 a.m.
14	Valentine's Day	
15	Presidents' Day – City Offices Closed	
16	Real Estate Committee City Hall Conference Room	5:30 p.m.
16	Code Enforcement/Public Safety Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	6:15 p.m.
16	City Council Meeting Council Chambers	7:00 p.m.
17	Safety Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	10:30 a.m.
18	Public Works Committee Meeting City Hall Conference Room	4:00 p.m.
18	Midyear Budget Review Council Chambers	6:00 p.m.
22	Planning Commission Meeting City Hall Conference Room	7:00 p.m.



January Senior Center Birthday Party

