

South Bay Watch

Fall 2008

A quarterly bulletin to inform local leaders of subregional progress and alert them to emerging issues

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SBCCOG RECEIVES REPORT ON THE ECONOMICS OF TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE

This article prepared by Wally Siembab, SBCCOG Research Director

In July, the consulting firm Economic Research Associates (ERA) delivered its final report, entitled Compass Blueprint Market Feasibility Analysis in the South Bay, to the SBCCOG. This report is the culmination of a project, begun by the SBCCOG in 2004, that is part of the research into the transportation performance of selected compact, mixed-use South Bay neighborhoods, and is consistent with policies included in SCAG's (Southern California Association of Governments) Compass Blueprint (see www.scag.ca.gov).

ERA's first task included collecting data that would define the economic characteristics of four of the eight neighborhoods that were the focus of the original research program. Those data were then incorporated into the SBCCOG's regression analysis that is attempting to understand ways to reduce traffic that will be generated by new development.

An additional task involved completing a market study of the development potential within four neighborhoods, including the possible impacts on the market from increasingly expensive mobility caused, for example, by high gasoline prices. The demand profiles of each neighborhood were then used to create hypothetical projects that would provide a profitable return to developers. The fiscal impacts of those hypothetical development projects were also estimated.

Some of the findings include the following:

- In comparison to the county, the South Bay has a significantly greater share of shopping centers in configurations over 100,000 square feet. This is potentially important because other analyses are determining that many small retailers in an area apparently generate less driving and more walking than does large format retail.
- Retail is a key trip-generator and its current format depends on a high degree of consumer mobility. Traditional market analysis suggests the required market shed needed to support retail configurations over 100,000 square feet is typically 10 to 25 minutes driving time. ERA estimates that a 20% reduction in auto travel speed is equivalent to a 40% reduction in market size. If mobility declines in this way (because of increasing congestion or from escalating gasoline prices with comparable impact), adaptive changes in retail format will be required.
- Without building extremely dense residential components, it is impossible for the retail in any of the study areas to be supported by the residents within walking distance. In other words, the retail typically found in our compact mixed-use centers depends on customers that drive there (very little transit and cycle use was identified by the study). Regarding the policy implication of that finding,

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Steve Diels calls to order his first meeting as Chair of the SBCCOG at the new meeting location in the Redondo Beach Old Historic Library with a perfect view of the Pacific Ocean.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

10TH ANNUAL SBCCOG GENERAL ASSEMBLY

WHEN:

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009

TIME:

8:30 AM TO 3:00 PM

WHERE:

THE CARSON COMMUNITY CENTER

*Hear speakers on the topic:
Funding City Services in the Future—
Financial Pillar or House of Cards?*

The economy and where it's going, including the impact on city budgets, is a growing issue. Having a discussion of financing city services and how state mandates and 'revenue stealing' affects our budgeting and service delivery is a subject for all cities.

The program will focus on this most critical time in city service funding and what to do as the trends continue.

PLAN TO ATTEND!

*Add your name as a Benefactor or a Patron,
or join the 10th Anniversary Golden Circle!*

Contact Kim Fuentes

*(kim@southbaycities.org) to sign-up in one of
the following categories & start receiving*

recognition immediately:

Golden Circle: \$10,000

Patrons: \$7,500

Benefactors: \$5,000

Sponsor: \$2,500

**THANK YOU TO CHEVRON
PRODUCTS COMPANY—
A BENEFACTOR FOR
THE 2009 EVENT**



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM UNDERWAY




At the Del Amo Community Health and Safety Fair, three of the volunteers, Ian Shin, a student from Rancho Palos Verdes, Ingrid Nugent, a retiree from Carson, and Joe Galliani from Redondo Beach assisted with activities at the SBESC booth.

Since its inception, the South Bay Environmental Services Center, which began as the South Bay Energy Savings Center (SBESC), has been working to improve the quality of life of residents and businesses in the South Bay with the various programs funded by Southern California Edison, The Gas Company, West Basin Municipal Water District, and the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. A program of the SBCCOG, the SBESC is working out of the Center at 3868 Carson Street, Suite 110, in Torrance, the SBESC has a small staff that organizes all the activities and attends events throughout the 16 cities on an ongoing basis.


This summer, the South Bay Environmental Services Center began an initiative to bring the consumer into the program as a volunteer. The volunteer hours are logged and for every 100 hours a volunteer will be rewarded with a token of appreciation from the SBESC. The hours are flexible if that is more convenient for the volunteer, or regularly scheduled hours can be assigned as well.

Volunteering for the Center is a way to become educated about the programs, the partners, and the importance of energy efficiency and water conservation. The volunteers are now what make the SBESC programs work even more efficiently than they did with the limited staff hours made possible through the grant funds available for staff support.

Anyone interested in volunteering for the SBESC can contact the Volunteer Coordinator Martha Segovia at (310) 543-3022. Or volunteers can find an application on the website at www.sbesc.com, linking to the Volunteer Opportunities at SBESC. There are opportunities for adults as well as high school and college students. Activities range from office work to working at community events, meeting and greeting consumers of energy from across the South Bay and Los Angeles County. 

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- ERA says: "The notion of 'mixed-use' with retail on the ground floor, and residential above, may not be a solution to transportation problems if not applied prudently."
- In order to provide internal rates of return of 10%-12%, the hypothetical development scenarios had to include a significant residential element. Residential development is relatively more profitable than offices or most forms of retail under current market conditions. All financially feasible hypothetical scenarios required densities that exceed current restrictions in their respective cities.
 - Furthermore, in order for density to provide a positive fiscal impact on the cities analyzed, each project must contain high value housing. The high incomes required to purchase such housing are likely going to have more disposable income that will, in turn, provide fiscal benefit to the city via sales tax; and the high priced residential will have a higher property tax value, which will increase the city's general fund.
 - The fiscal, transportation and lifestyle objectives of a city can be in conflict with the mix and scale of retail projects favored by developers.

The complete report is available at www.southbaycities.org. 

City Showcase

GREEN IS THE COLOR OF MANHATTAN BEACH

In 2007, the City Council of Manhattan Beach asked that city staff investigate ways to improve and expand the city's environmental programs as one of the Council's Work Plan priorities. The City Council adopts a Work Plan annually that sets forth the goals and objectives for the coming year and it becomes a working guide for city staff. A beachfront community of 3.88 square miles, 2.1 miles of which border the Pacific Ocean, Manhattan Beach has historically been environmentally conscious. Concerned with the cleanliness of its beaches, the shoreline and the surrounding residential and business community, it seems only natural that the city of Manhattan Beach, California, be one of the first in the South Bay to initiate new "green" programs and enhance existing programs whenever and wherever possible.

With a population of 35,000 residents and 4,000 active businesses in such a small area of the nearly four square miles, environmental issues ranging from clean water to energy conservation are of paramount importance. Citizens' environmental groups, such as VOICE, the Tree Canopy Committee, Heal the Bay, and Surfriders, have long been active in Manhattan Beach. In fact, a group of environmentally motivated residents prompted the city to consider the United States Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. As a result, in January 2007, the City Council adopted a resolution supporting the Agreement. This resolution to reduce carbon emissions and the City Council's "green" focus in the 2007 Work Plan became the catalysts for a comprehensive evaluation and subsequent emphasis on the city's environmental programs, policies and goals.

The Green Team is Formed

In the summer of 2007 the Green Team was formed with the Chief of Police Rod Uyeda,

Directors of Community Development, Public Works and Finance --Richard Thompson, Jim Arndt, and Bruce Moe, respectively -- and Lindy Coe-Juell, the Assistant to the City Manager taking the charge to compile the data, research environmental programs and find the best practices developed in other communities. This research led to the development of "The Green Report."

The Green Report

The 88-page "The Green Report," Working Toward a Greener, Greater Manhattan Beach, was published in November 2007 and compiles all of the city's current environmentally friendly programs. It also provided more than 80 best practices ideas for the City Council to consider for future implementation. Building on the ideas developed in "The Green Report," the City Council adopted a 2008-09 Work Plan that included about 25 new environmental initiatives. Some examples are developing a local Climate Action Plan to reduce carbon emissions, improving water conservation programs, developing enhanced green building standards, and initiating a citizen's environmental task force.

"The Green Report" and the full 2008-09 Work Plan are available for review on the city's website at www.citymb.info. Some examples of the environmental initiatives and programs discussed in "The Green Report" include Transportation and Traffic, Beaches and Storm Water Management, Sustainable Development, and Solid Waste Recycling, among others.

Transportation and Traffic

With not only reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and fuel conservation as a

consideration, but also a cost-savings to the city for fuel usage, Chief Uyeda led the team and the city by recommending and ultimately having a hybrid car purchased for his use as the Police Chief. Now, alternative fuel vehicle options will be considered for all new and replacement city vehicles and as requirements for city contractors. Other future considerations include Smart Traffic Corridors, incentives for parking of "green" cars, restriction on drive-thru development, researching of reduction of Stop signs and better traffic signal synchronization within city limits, Rideshare programs, alternate



In 1991, a decision to restore the Manhattan Beach Pier to the way it looked in the 1920s was made by the Manhattan Beach Historical Society. The pier is a State Historic Landmark and is the oldest standing cement pier on the West Coast.

work schedules within the city staff, and pedestrian/bicycle friendly areas within Manhattan Beach.

Beaches and Storm Water Management

Manhattan Beach has taken a stand to maintain a clean and safe ocean and beach by installing catch basins, clarifiers, separators, and low-flow diversion systems; all commercial buildings must have trash enclosures with top closures; and restaurants are able to receive certification through a program that measures compliance with the

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A \$75,000 State grant made it possible for 70 Recycling Containers to be installed along The Strand in 2007.

storm water and waste management systems. Additionally, to keep streets, alleys, beaches, and parks clean of pet waste, “Mutt Mitt” stations have been installed around the city with disposable bags for use by pet owners.

Sustainable Development

Programs to encourage or mandate environmentally-friendly building practices include construction/demolition recycling; plumbing for solar water heating;

encouragement of onsite water retention, “green” roofs, “Smart Houses,” drought-tolerant planting, “Energy Star” devices, and trash enclosures at construction sites. Special permit incentives for proof of these practices will also be a future incentive.

A strict tree ordinance to protect existing trees was approved by the City Council last year. With a three-prong approach to encourage “green” development by educating, evaluating and adopting incentives, and legislating change in city ordinances, Manhattan Beach continues to mandate that the future will be energy and environmentally-friendly.

Solid Waste/Recycling

With free recycling and “green” waste containers throughout the city, Manhattan Beach advocates and mandates recycling. There are commercial tiered-rate incentives. Education programs for recycling and composting are continuously available.

The Manhattan Beach Unified School District also has programs in place at campuses for recycling, composting, reusable lunch bags and water bottles, as well as “Walk to School Wednesdays” and other energy-saving programs. And within the city limits along the beachfront, a grant made it possible to install Recycling-Only Trash Bins, which emphasizes to the 1 million visitors to Manhattan Beach beaches that the city is environmentally-conscious.

In July 2008, the Manhattan Beach City Council approved the ban on use of all


plastic bags by vendors in the city, and is considering other ways to promote the use of reusable bags as the most environmentally friendly way for residents and visitors to carry purchased goods home. Styrofoam has been banned from use at all city events. And research is being done to assess the feasibility of banning Styrofoam city-wide.

Approval of an Environmental Coordinator and Environmental Task Force

The Manhattan Beach staff recently added an Environmental Programs Manager as an employee dedicated to mandating, enforcing, and researching ways to continue to save the environment. The City Council has also approved the formation of an 18-member citizen’s Environmental Task Force who will also dedicate their volunteer hours to servicing the community on environmentally-friendly practices.

Think, Act, Care!

The city of Manhattan Beach is leading the charge to Think Globally, Act Locally, and Care for the Environment. The city of Manhattan Beach – City Council, city staff, residents, businesses, school children, and visitors -- are witnessing first-hand and mutually supporting the effort to keep the environment safe for present and future generations.

Contact *Lindy Coe-Juell* (lcoe-juell@citymb.info) in the Manhattan Beach City Manager’s Office for more information on the environmental-friendly programs in the city. 

HERMOSA BEACH EPAC IS PREPARED AND AT THE READY

This article prepared by Tracy Hopkins, City of Hermosa Beach EPAC Commissioner

The city of Hermosa Beach recently formed the Hermosa Beach Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission (EPAC). EPAC was in response to the recognition that residents and businesses need to have a strategy to learn and practice how to prepare, respond, and recover from any disaster. Previously, in March of 2006, two resident volunteers founded and successfully coordinated a citywide Neighborhood Watch (HBNW) program, which typically dealt primarily in crime prevention.

HBNW was proactive in this community-oriented endeavor providing a unique disaster preparedness approach. Realizing that local crime addressed residents on a daily level, the program introduced these same residents to the need to familiarize and individually prepare their families and neighborhoods to take care of their own needs. While reliance on local police, fire, and city infrastructure for the first days following any catastrophe is logical, those agencies should not and

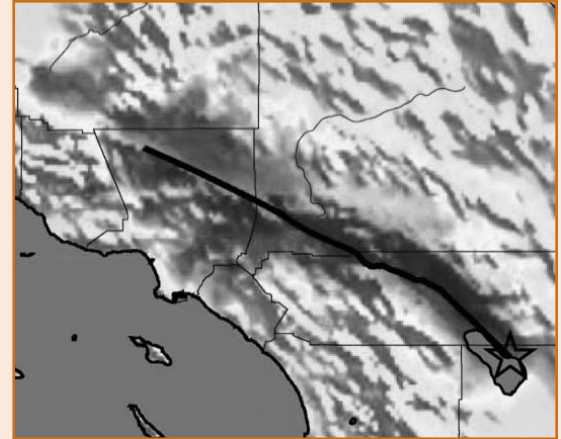
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GREAT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SHAKEOUT

With participation by public agencies, cities, counties, schools, businesses, and the opportunity for individuals and their families to be involved, at 10 a.m. on November 13, millions of southern Californians will “experience” a 7.8 earthquake along the San Andreas Fault, simulated by the United States Geological Survey; California Office of Emergency Services; California Seismic Safety Commission; Southern California Earthquake Center; City of Los Angeles; Art Center College of Design; and the California Institute of Technology.

Details of the scenario, the expectation, the preparedness for the drill, and the events being organized before, during, and after November 13 are available at <http://www.shakeout.org/>

Sign-up to participate and be ready when THE BIG ONE really strikes!



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cannot be the sole source of assistance.

In June 2007, because the need to prepare citizens for an act of nature or man-made threat is a huge commitment of time for city staff resources, a commission of seven selected Hermosa Beach residents was formed to serve staggered two and/or four-year terms. EPAC came out of a need to provide collaborative efforts between residents, businesses, city government and other organizations in preparation for the next disaster or catastrophe. The Commission meets regularly on the first Monday of each month in the City Council Chambers at 7 p.m.

From the inception, a “goals list” was placed on the agenda, and the commissioners worked together in sub-committees on various projects. The formation of the Hermosa Beach Amateur Radio Association (HBARA) was one of the first actions. The Ham Operators are recognized as a very important volunteer group who provide the communication necessary to report and receive important, and possibly, lifesaving information often completely unavailable through normal communication means during a disaster. (See related article, HAM Radio Operators Are Crucial for Emergency Communications.)

Another achievement is the citywide resident assessment, which was recently completed, and helped gauge preparedness levels. Research showed that the city’s Readiness Quotient score is 3.2 of 10 for Hermosa Beach residents overall, compared to the national score of 4.1. However, broken down, the non-neighborhood watch residents scored 2.6, while neighborhood watch residents scored 4.2.


In collaboration with HBNW, EPAC received a grant from the Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) to provide disaster supplies, in the form of stocked fanny packs. These are for seniors and those residents who are disabled, homebound, or have limited resources or access.

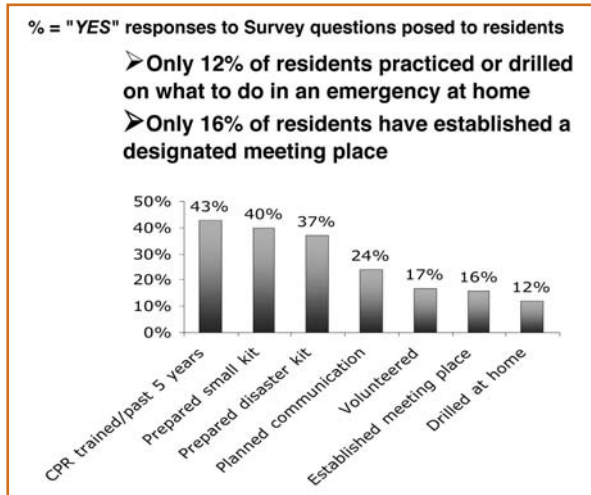
With awareness of previous disasters, one common theme seems to recur: in the first hours after a disaster, the residents are the ones who need to help one another. In addition to having communication needs, we recognize the importance of building relationships and collaborating with other groups to provide an organized response.

The city of Hermosa Beach, the Police and Fire Departments, Hermosa Beach School District, Chamber of Commerce, Department of Public Works, local community and faith-based organizations are collaborating to participate in the Great Southern California SHAKE OUT Earthquake Drill in November 2008. EPAC,

HBNW, HBARA, City Services, and organizations previously mentioned will all have a part to play.

With many goals to still achieve, EPAC’s hope is to do as much preparation and mitigation as is possible before the real need arises. The city of Hermosa Beach will be prepared so the city, as a whole, becomes stronger in the face of adversity, natural disaster, or catastrophic situation.

The Hermosa Beach Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission can stand as a prime example of a proactive approach for the residents and businesses of a city without burdening the services of a city with the full responsibility of disaster or emergency preparedness. 



From Hermosa Beach EPAC Research Report, July 2008

This article prepared by Melvin Hughes, K6SY, former Mayor Rancho Palos Verdes

On any typical day, anywhere in the world, an earthquake can cause a little shaking or enough shaking to cause thousands of deaths and tens of millions of dollars of damage and loss, as the recent events in China and Japan graphically showed us. Strong waves of the earth quaking and shaking can cause the shutting off of utilities; the destruction of the contents of homes is inevitable; the foundations of buildings may be compromised; and roadways could become impassable.

At any time, without warning, especially in California, in any city, if and when the BIG ONE does hit, it is the hope that people will be prepared. The South Bay communities will be no exception. Luckily, you and your family have a well-rehearsed emergency plan in place. Every person in the family knows exactly what to do. You do have a plan, don't you?

Following the shaking, if necessary depending on magnitude of any earthquake, Certified Emergency Response Team (CERT) members mobilize. City staff members move to the Emergency Command Center at City Hall. The lights and phones aren't working. The staff member assigned to the task starts the emergency generator; the lights come on, but still no phones.

In other parts of the city, HAM Radio operators assess the damage to their homes and families, then quickly gather up their equipment and head to their assigned tasks. On the Palos Verdes Peninsula, members of the Peninsula Volunteer Amateur Network, PVAN, for short, meet with their Neighborhood Watch Block Captains to assess the immediate needs of their neighbors. The PVAN members are all HAM Radio Operators who have been training weekly for just such an event. These operators will report the needs and conditions of their local areas to the city's Emergency Communications Center. There, the information will be forwarded to the city's Emergency Command Center for the appropriate response.

Still other HAM Radio operators are making

their way to the city's Emergency Communications Center (ECS) at City Hall. At the ECS, radio equipment is at the ready with emergency power and provisions for several days. The radios operate on the HAM Radio bands and are able to provide communications between HAM Radio operators all over the city, adjacent cities, most of the County, including communications with the Sheriff's Disaster Communications Center (DCS) at the local headquarters of the Sheriff's Department. Using lessons learned following Hurricane Katrina, the City ECS is also equipped to provide communications over a range of hundreds or even thousands of miles as may be necessary; all on internationally recognized Amateur Radio or HAM Radio frequencies.

Other HAM Radio operators have made their way to the Sheriff's Office and have activated the DCS. As reports come in to the DCS from the various cities, HAM Radio operators are dispatched to field command centers throughout the area, including fire stations, hospitals, parks, or wherever reliable emergency communications are needed.

At the local schools a slightly different scenario is playing out. Every school on the Peninsula has battery-operated HAM Radio equipment, including the private schools and most other schools in South Bay cities. Teachers and staff members are licensed and trained to use the equipment. They received their training and HAM Radio licenses with the help of the local HAM Radio clubs. The radio equipment and antennae were put in place, tested, made operational and are maintained by members of the same HAM Radio club. Every school is capable of communicating with the District Office or directly with the DCS at the Sheriff's Department.

The Ham Radio operators in the United States are responsible for providing reliable emergency communication wherever it is required by local, state, or federal Government officials. They do it without any compensation using their own

equipment, often working in conjunction with other organizations, such as the American Red Cross and The Salvation Army. They devote countless hours in weekly training sessions necessary to keep their skill levels high and their radio equipment in top working order.

For more information about PVAN HAM Radio or Amateur Radio, as it is also called, contact the Palos Verdes Amateur Radio Club at www.palosverdes.com/pvarc.

CALENDAR

All meetings are open to the public

September

- 8 Steering Committee
- 10 GIS Working Group
- 16 Legislative Committee
- 17 Livable Communities
- 18 Board of Directors**
- 18 Transportation Committee
- 23 SBESC Open House**
- 24 Infrastructure Working Group

October

- 2 Green Task Force
- 8 GIS Working Group
- 13 Steering Committee
- 15 Livable Communities
- 16 Media Training
- 21 Legislative Committee
- 22 Infrastructure Working Group
- 23 Transportation Committee
- 23 Board of Directors**

November

- 10 Steering Committee
- 12 GIS Working Group
- 18 Legislative Committee
- 19 Livable Communities
- 20 Board of Directors**
- 26 Infrastructure Working Group

Contact jacki@southbaycities.org for further information.