

Bay Watch

CHARGING INTO THE FUTURE: THE SOUTH BAY GETS READY FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Electric vehicles are coming to market beginning this year and increasing in volume and type for the next several years. Hybrid vehicles like the Chevrolet Volt run on both batteries and gasoline and have an unlimited range. Others like the Nissan Leaf run purely on batteries and have a range of 70 to 100 miles between charges. If you own or are planning to purchase a hybrid or a battery electric vehicle (BEV), you need to know where you can charge your vehicle.

Some South Bay cities and retailers have already installed public access “level 2 charging stations” (220 Volt current that can fully charge a BEV in a few hours). The City of Hermosa Beach, for example, recently installed two level 2 stations on Pier Ave.

There are, however, a wide range of issues that need to be addressed when deploying public charging stations. The issues include the exact location that will best serve BEV drivers, amount to charge for the service, method of payment, whether to dedicate the parking spot only to BEVs, the number of charge stations that will be required, when they should be installed, cost of equipment and installation, and who will pay for it.

The California Energy Commission and the US Department of Energy have awarded grants to the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to address those issues and develop policies and programs that will generally encourage the adoption of electric vehicles. Those funds are supporting the regional PEV Readiness Plan (for plug-in electric vehicle) and the South Bay PEV Readiness Plan, one of only two sub-regional plans that will be developed in 2012.

Both planning processes are being led by UCLA’s Luskin Center under contract to SCAG. The regional planning effort began in April and should be completed by October, 2012. The South Bay planning process is expected to begin in June with completion sometime in early 2013.

Best practices for the municipal permitting process for houses and businesses needing electrical upgrades are also part of the plans. Other components include research into the special charging problems related to multi-family dwellings, whether rental apartments or condominiums; research into the current plans of “destinations” like retail malls and employment centers; and public education about the electrical market and the closely related market for electrical vehicle service equipment (EVSE).

The transition from vehicles powered by gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines to some form of electric mobility is an adopted policy of the SBCCOG. Gasoline prices moving toward \$5 per gallon reinforce the economic significance of this policy.

In addition to the PEV Readiness Planning, the SBCCOG is also completing the final 6 months of its local use vehicle (LUV) demonstration program, funded by the AQMD. The LUV program loans neighborhood electric vehicles that are small, limited to 25 MPH, with a range between charges of about 25 miles, to residents of the South Bay for a trial period of 2 to 3 months. Findings from the first 6 months of the demonstration found that household gasoline consumption, GHG emissions and criteria pollutants were all reduced by an approximate average of 25%. A preliminary report is available at www.southbaycities.org. The SBCCOG is about to begin an expansion of that program with a BEV Demonstration, also to be funded by the AQMD. A fleet of 5 full speed, 70-100 mile range purely electric vehicles will be loaned to South Bay residents for a brief trial period beginning in this fall.

The combination of these plans and demonstration programs are expected to help make the South Bay one of the first areas to become part of the electric future. 

For further information, contact jacki@southbaycities.org.



Summer 2012

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

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SBESC VOLUNTEERS SHARING THEIR TALENTS

“Pull up your socks, figure it out and you’ll feel better.” This advice comes from Joanne, one of our loyal volunteers at the South Bay Environmental Services Center, in response to hearing complaints from others about life’s challenges. We can all learn from Joanne’s “can do” attitude as she lives her advice to others through her volunteer efforts every day.

Joanne lends a hand five days a week at various organizations. Her whirlwind of activities is as follows: Mondays she enters data and tracks volunteer hours for the Senior Corps RSVP; Tuesdays she waters and weeds a community garden; Wednesdays she tutors second graders at Jefferson Elementary School; Thursdays she processes bills for the South Bay Senior Services Center and Joanne caps off the week on Fridays by entering data at the South Bay Environmental Services Center.

There is no doubt that Joanne’s spirit of volunteerism benefits communities in the South Bay. “Focus and sit with your feet on the floor,” Joanne instructs, delivered with a twinkle in her eye to cut down on the wiggling of five second grade readers as part of the America Reads program in Redondo Beach. One of her students reminds her of Tom Sawyer or maybe it’s Huckleberry Finn. “Most try so hard,” Joanne muses as she listens closely to every word. “If only they would sit still.”

During the Earth Day month of April 2012, volunteers for the SBESC definitely did not sit still. Fifteen individuals gave 227½ hours of their time and talent participating in events and working behind the scenes supporting projects at the Center. Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director, confirms that “We couldn’t do the programs we do without our volunteers. The talents and skills they bring to us are invaluable resources.” And, indeed, part of the SBCCOG strategic planning process that Jacki leads, includes the goals of enhancing our current volunteer support system and developing new strategies for taking full advantage of the skills and interests they offer for the benefit of the South Bay community.



Find SBESC at www.sbesc.com

In support of this strategic initiative is the fact that new volunteers are coming to us on a weekly basis, offering to help because of their interest and passion for doing something positive for the environment. Of course, the benefits go far beyond that foundation belief. Some volunteers are students completing related studies; some are seeking a new career path or interested in expanding their knowledge of sustainability related issues by getting involved on a practical level. Some are just caring adults who want to participate in community endeavors. And some, like Joanne, are gifted older adults giving of themselves and sharing their talents as ambassadors for a variety of worthwhile causes.

So how do we recognize and give thanks to these individuals? One of the ways is to grant them a wish. A field trip to tour the Port of Los Angeles to learn about the efforts of “greening” the port took place on May 18th as one small way to show appreciation and enhance the volunteer experience at SBESC. Approximately 25 volunteers took part in the tour with select staff and other interested parties. No doubt there were stories to tell as part of that day, while trying to focus keeping feet on the floor. 

For more information on the SBESC volunteer program, please go to www.sbesc.com or contact Martha Segovia at Martha@sbesc.com.



Joanne assisting at Earth Day festivities.



Rolling Hills Estates Mayor Susan Seamans is “walking the walk” with her recent purchase of an all electric car. Attending the SBCCOG Livable Communities Working Group meetings and hearing about the SBCCOG work in promoting adoption of EVs sparked her interest!

ALL ABOARD EXPO

On April 17 a group of South Bay elected officials and city staff enjoyed a tour on the new Metro Expo Line. Embarking at the downtown 7th Street Metro Center Station, the South Bay riders experienced the line's first phase segment, which, by early summer will have 12 stations along 8.6 miles. The second phase, which will extend the line another 6.6 miles to Santa Monica (4th Street) is expected to be operating by 2016, and will take riders to within walking distance of the beach.

The new rail line celebrated its public opening on April 28 with free fares over the first weekend. The current fare is \$1.50 one-way (cash), \$5 for a Metro Day Pass. Monthly passes are available for \$75 allowing unlimited travel on all Metro buses and trains.

When complete, Expo is estimated to cost a total of \$930 million. Phase 1 is estimated to have 27,000 daily riders by 2020 and Phase 2, 64,000 riders by 2030. The line connects to the existing Blue Line at the first two stations in downtown Los Angeles.



Expo platform at La Cienega



SBCCOG riding the Expo

The opening of the Expo line is especially noteworthy in that it provides the first rail transit service as far west as La Cienega since Santa Monica stopped its "Air Line" service 50 years ago. As a further sign of progress, the day before its opening, the Metro Board approved the environmental impact report for an extension of the subway line beneath Wilshire Boulevard that will run between Western Avenue and La Cienega and a new light rail tunnel that will directly connect the Expo Line and Blue Line with the Gold Line segments, to East LA and Pasadena. Overcrowding on all lines running through downtown LA will be reduced in the next few years, when the Downtown Connector opens, thereby eliminating the need for transfers from the light rail and subway lines.

The South Bay riders were enthusiastic and thoughtful about the new line not only due to the improvements in getting around the region, but in what can be learned.

Judy Mitchell, Rolling Hills Estates Council Member, commented on the importance of the Expo Line: "The new line is a welcome addition to the network of light rail lines and transit choices in our region. This is the first rail line that offers transit to the westside and will be a key transportation opportunity for travel to USC and downtown LA from the west side. The extension of the line to Culver City, opening this summer, will make Culver City, with its many restaurants and the Kirk Douglas Theater, an easy destination on the EXPO line."

Mawusi Watson, Executive Assistant to the City Manager, City of Inglewood, commented on how the tour helped her gain insight into land use: "As the City of Inglewood works with Metro to develop the station areas associated with the Crenshaw/LAX Transit corridor, we can leverage the knowledge gained from the Expo tour to inform our discussions with Metro."

For further information on the Expo line, go to: <http://www.metro.net/projects/exposition/expo-line> or call Metro at 323.GO.METRO (323.466.3876)

Photos courtesy of Boytrese Osias, Senior Engineer, City of Inglewood.

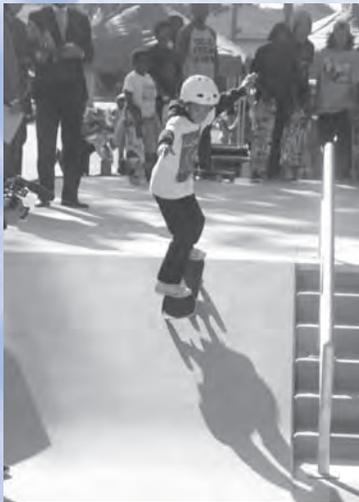
**Congratulations
to
SBESC Program Manager
Marilyn Lyon
on becoming
President of the
PVP Chamber of Commerce.**

CITY OF GARDENA OPENS NEW SKATE PLAZA “IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME.”

Novelist W.P. Kinsella’s famous line from *Shoeless Joe* is the mantra for all skateboarders in the City of Gardena; they finally have a place dedicated to skating. Unlike the baseball field in Kinsella’s book, this facility wasn’t built in the middle of an Iowa cornfield, but on a patch of dirt next to the Gardena Rowley Park’s tennis courts.

City leaders, staff, Mary Jones representing Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas and representatives from the offices of Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Senator Rod Wright and Assemblyman Steven Bradford were joined by dozens of enthusiasts and residents at the plaza’s grand opening on March 20. Gardena resident Dylan Broom, 10, performed the first skate and was quickly joined by the many skateboarders on hand, once the park was officially opened.

The 8,000 square foot facility features ramps, rails, stairs and concrete flower beds in a setting that is more reminiscent of Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles than suburban Gardena. The area is large with all the elements spread out so that multiple boarders can ride at the same time. Skaters of all skill levels can enjoy the experience as even beginners can be found riding the rails. The plaza is also being utilized by people on rollerblades, razor scooters or members of the community on a morning stroll.



For years the city and its leaders have wanted to build a place for the skateboarders to ride, but were always faced with questions on location and how to pay for it. City leaders met with the community in 2002 to hear their concerns about increased noise and bad elements being attracted to a facility. Assemblyman Steven Bradford (then a councilman) urged the community to embrace the idea and give kids a place to skate.

Later that year, former Los Angeles County Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke allocated \$250,000 from Prop A Excess Funds to build a skate park in Gardena. A second grant for \$150,000 was approved in 2004. The city and community continued to challenge one another over things like location and design.

In 2009 the city combined these grants designated for park improvement funds for the construction of two skate parks, but again opposition from the community delayed any progress. The city again met with the community to try and resolve their fears about increased noise, design and other elements that could give a black eye to the city and ultimately decided to go ahead with their plans.

After much research, the city was unable to find any piece of land that was cost effective and suitable for the plan. Finally the decision was made to utilize open areas at Rowley Park and

Arthur Johnson Park. Kelly Fujio, Director of the Recreation and Human Services Division said, “We finally decided we couldn’t afford a new property (to build it on).” After years of delays and struggle, ground was finally broken in late 2011.

The city formed a new and revitalized skate park committee and they searched for the best designer for the new parks. They held many meetings and visited many parks.

Spohn Ranch of Industry, California was chosen to build the city’s skate facilities. Spohn Ranch has built other skate plazas for the cities of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Their designs are unlike the skate parks that were born in the 70s. Gone is the backyard swimming pool look which has been replaced with a look that borders on modern contemporary art. Said Councilman Ron Ikejiri, “If you took away the skaters, you wouldn’t believe this was a skate park.” Spohn Ranch transformed a barren spot of grass into a modern piece of art that happens to be for skateboarders.

Construction is under way on the second skate facility at Arthur Johnson Park with grand opening details to come soon.

The Rowley Skate Plaza is just the latest enhancement that has taken place at the park. In October 2011, one of the outdoor basketball courts was refurbished by Milwaukee Bucks star Brandon Jennings and Under Armour, an apparel company.

For more information on the Rowley Skate Plaza, please contact the City of Gardena Recreation Department at (310) 217-9537.



Celebrating (from left) are: Stephen Dyson, Mary Jones, D. Christine Hach, Anthony Aaron, Dan Medina, Dylan Broom, Mitch Lansdell, Susie Santana, Alexis Moore, Rachel Johnson, Amir Johnson.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works is rehabilitating and improving the Marvin Braude Bike Trail. This popular bike trail winds its way along the coast from Will Rogers State Park in the City of Los Angeles, through the cities of Santa Monica, El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach, to Torrance County Beach in Torrance.

The project began in 2011 and is staggered into two phases to avoid closing the entire bike path all at once and to allow residents to enjoy the bike trail during the summer months.

The first phase of the reconstruction project, with a price tag of about \$410,000 was completed earlier this year. Phase I included reconstructing about two miles of asphalt and concrete sections of the trail. Phase I also included surface sealing other segments along a five-mile stretch from 45th Street to 1st Street in Manhattan Beach, and from Torrance Boulevard to Calle Miramar in Redondo Beach.

The Marvin Braude Bike Trail Project not only required a coordinated effort with the cities, it also required working with California Coastal Commission because the commission regulates the use of land in the coastal zone. The cities of Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach, which also regulate the land in their coastal zones, and the County worked closely together to ensure that both project phases would go smoothly and present the least disruption to the beach-going public.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, whose district the bike trail runs through, described the need for the project: “The Marvin Braude Bike Trail is one of the gems of Los Angeles County. Bike riders, runners and casual walkers can enjoy 22 miles of scenic coastline while getting fresh air and exercising. It was in need of repairs. Cracks were starting to form in the concrete and asphalt patchwork was no longer an option. The dilapidated bike path was becoming a public safety concern. The repairs were necessary to ensure the safety of the residents who use the bike path.”

Supervisor Knabe stated further: “This project has been a true collaborative effort between the South Bay cities and the County. We are working closely together to ensure that detours are set up for riders in areas that were under construction. The project has stayed on time and on budget. The California Coastal Commission and the cities have been very easy to work with. They all understand our goal is to improve the quality of life for our residents and to keep our bike path in tip-top shape.”

The second phase of the Marvin Braude Bike Trail Project is expected to get underway after the Labor Day weekend. Phase II calls for reconstructing an additional one and a half plus miles of asphalt and concrete sections of the trail. The second phase also calls for surface sealing other segments along a seven and a half mile stretch from Playa del Rey in the City of Los Angeles to 45th Street in Manhattan Beach. Some sections of the trail in the Dockweiler Beach area will also be realigned to make the trail easier to navigate. The County will again coordinate closures and detours with the cities to ensure that riders avoid the areas that are being renovated.

Supervisor Knabe summed it up: “The Marvin Braude Bike Trail is the most unique bike path in all of Los Angeles County. When the trail project is completed, residents from all across the county will be able to have safer rides and more enjoyable experiences riding along the beach.”

The construction cost for the project, upon completion is expected to cost \$2.2 million. Funding is by the Fourth Supervisorial District Capital Improvement Funds.

For further information contact Mr. Abu Yusuf, County Bikeway Coordinator at (626) 458-3940, or at ayusuf@dpw.lacounty.gov.



Approaching the Manhattan Beach pier.

RE-IMAGINING U.S. INFRASTRUCTURE

Continued from Page 6

These principles, if followed, hold the promise of turning the U.S. infrastructure crisis into an opportunity to re-imagine what the nation could – and should – look like a century from now. Innovation propelled our country during the past century. It allowed us to think big, to create our infrastructure systems including the Hoover Dam and the interstate highway system.

Today, we can't settle for repairing last century's systems. To create jobs, compete globally and ensure national security, we must draw from our great American innovation and re-imagine our infrastructure for a new generation.

Food for Thought

RE-IMAGINING U.S. INFRASTRUCTURE

Byron Dorgan and (Ret.) Gen. Jim Jones and Mark Gerencser

Excerpt from a February 16, 2012 article by Byron Dorgan and (Ret.) Gen. Jim Jones and Mark Gerencser. Byron Dorgan served as a senator from North Dakota. The retired Gen. Jim Jones served as the national security adviser for Barack Obama and 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps. Mark Gerencser is the co-author of “Megacommunities” and managing partner of Booz Allen Hamilton Global Commercial Business.

President Barack Obama took the first step toward re-imagining U.S. infrastructure when he promised an executive order to reduce the red tape that frequently delays or derails building projects.

But to address our nation’s infrastructure crisis and create more jobs, we need to go far beyond just repairing our aging legacy infrastructure. We must re-imagine it. National discussions about infrastructure often focus, understandably, on rebuilding or fixing. We spend enormous amounts of capital on legacy systems, such as roads and bridges that have outlived their usefulness.

These have been a priority because of the misguided notion that it’s cheaper and quicker to rebuild existing infrastructure than to re-imagine it. This perception persists despite compelling evidence to the contrary – and the real risks that obsolete infrastructure poses to our global economic competitiveness and national security.

At the same time, other nations, including China, are building new infrastructure systems to meet the needs of tomorrow. Our highways and gas stations were built for the gas guzzlers on “Mad Men,” while those in other nations are designed to provide the fuel-efficiency and mass-transit capabilities required in the modern world.

It is not sustainable for Washington to adopt temporary fixes to these problems. For real change, political leaders must trade short-term, partisan or parochial interests for long-term policies that serve U.S. national interests.

Here’s how:

- Create a shared and comprehensive national vision. This vision needs to inspire and guide planning and action at the regional and local levels. It should be a living framework that describes what could be achieved, expected timelines and how success will be measured. It must also define new mechanisms and public/private partnerships that engage stakeholders in innovative ways.
- Think innovation, not shovels. We won’t solve our problems with repairs or extensions... Building world-class infrastructure upgrades at home creates jobs while preparing U.S. industries to compete successfully...
- Take the long-term, integrated view. Short-term thinking is a recipe for failure...
- Rationalize the bureaucracy and its policies. Federal, state and local officials must ensure that regulations, laws and policies are coherent and consistent...
- We cannot afford to “buy” our way out. America must innovate financing, businesses and operating models to ensure sustainable, safe and effective infrastructure performance for the future. The federal government can play a catalytic role in unleashing private investment for this...
- Plan regionally, think holistically. We need regional plans. But there is no consistent form of regional governance to plan or implement actions...
- Make resilience a forethought – not an afterthought. Resilience will cost more if not designed in. It can ensure enough capacity, redundancy and reliability against failures or catastrophic events caused by natural or manmade disasters, including cyber or terrorist attacks.
- Build for the next century. Align incentives with objectives. Financiers, builders, owners, operators and users face perverse incentives. For example, users have the least say in infrastructure design, while those who pay for it often realize the least benefits. Adjust the incentives for the various stakeholders – and place users at the center of all designs. Our re-imagined infrastructure needs to account for changing U.S. demographics. We have 85 percent of the population living on 26 percent of the land, so cities face unprecedented challenges and new demand patterns.

Continued to Page 5

CALENDAR

All meetings are open to the public

July

- 9 Measure R Oversight Committee Steering Committee
- 18 Livable Communities Working Group
- 25 Infrastructure Working Group
- 26 **Board of Directors**

August

- 8 GIS Working Group
- 13 Measure R Oversight Committee Steering Committee
- 15 Livable Communities Working Group
- 22 Infrastructure Working Group
- 23 **Board of Directors**

September

- 10 Measure R Oversight Committee Steering Committee
- 12 GIS Working Group
- 19 Livable Communities Working Group
- 26 Infrastructure Working Group
- 27 **Board of Directors**

Contact jacki@southbaycities.org for further information.

The quarterly South Bay Watch is available electronically by email or at www.southbaycities.org. To receive by email, please send your email address to sbccog@southbaycities.org.