

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

## **Livable Communities Working Group**

**Wednesday, November 16, 2011**

**2:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

### Agenda

#### **I. Welcome & Introductions**

Eric Haaland (MB), Yalini Sivapathasurd, Carol Nishi, and Yvonne Mallory (Gardena); Pam Townsend (Hermosa Beach), Pat Hachiya (LACO), Maria Majcherek (Hawthorne) , Alicia Heideman (Lomita); Otis Ginoza (Lawndale); John Signo (Carson); Niki Cutler (RHE); Leza Mikhail (RPV), Christopher Palmer (Hawthorne), Jacki Bacharach, Jeremy Hyde, Rosemary Lackow, David Magarian, Dan Rodman, Wally Siembab (SBCCOG/SBESC), Steve Lantz (SBCCOG Transportation Consultant),

#### **II. Minutes for October 19, 2011 – Received**

#### **III. NOD & Redevelopment of the Rosecrans Corridor: Crenshaw to Vermont**

Yvonne Mallory  
Economic Development Director  
City of Gardena

Wally welcomed representatives from the City of Gardena and explained that the context of this presentation is that it fits into the Compass grant project program - the Rosecrans corridor in Gardena being one of the COG's proposed grant study areas. This presentation will focus on economic development. Wally also provided slides that showed data regarding land value (to improvement) ratios for property in a ¼ mile radius from the intersection of Rosecrans and Normandie.

Yvonne proceeded to give a PPT presentation (available on the COG website [www.southbaycities.org](http://www.southbaycities.org) as attachment to this Livable Communities Working Group meeting date). She pointed out that Gardena doesn't have a redevelopment agency; therefore the City looks for creative ways to bring new business to the city. She emphasized that passion to bring about positive economic change is a must, making the following main points:

#### **Gardena's Economic Development Program**

- Critical elements: 1) attraction (of businesses) 2) retention of existing businesses, 3) expansion of businesses 4) local business support and 5) improving quality of life overall.
- New businesses potentially in next year. Fresh & Easy market, In-N-Out Burger, Flame Broiler restaurant, DD's Discount, CC Design (manufacturing company) and Ace Hardware .
- Retention efforts aimed at 3000 existing businesses in Gardena. The City has a website with resources for businesses: [www.gardenaecondev.com](http://www.gardenaecondev.com) , and business assistance to manufacturers through a Department of Commerce grant. City does a lot of site visits working with the businesses.
- Hiring assistance through the "Gardena One Stop Employment & Training Center"- huge area network to find qualified employees.
- Support of Local Businesses: Gardena First! program
- Business incentives include: commercial industrial rebates, money for outside façade improvements, outstanding business award competition, one stop permit processing, and "Gardena Direct" (24-hour automated service, check on permit status, call in complaints).
- Economic Development housing programs include owner occupied rehabilitation (state grant), multi-family rehabilitation and code correction (CDBG funds)

## Rosecrans Corridor in Gardena (2 miles long)

- Wide right-of-way (84 feet): seven lanes across total, including six through lanes, one left turn lane, supports heavy thru traffic east/west.
- Sidewalks narrow, minimal landscaping, no urban design theme or character to buildings and public space
- Utilities on both sides, and high pressure line in north side of right of way. A section will be “undergrounded” as a “Rule-20” project so poles will be removed. 2012 or 2013 construction will begin.
- Land uses include auto services, light Industry, solid waste transfer station, adult entertainment and housing.
- Zoning designations vary and include: Neighborhood Retail (C-2), General Commercial (C-3), General Industrial (M-2), Residential, including single and two-family uses (R-4), Office and Professional uses (C-P), and Mixed-use (MU overlay district with a max density 20 dwelling units/acre)
- Key corner properties: at Normandie (1336 W. Rosecrans - former Alpha-Beta market) and at Van Ness (2301 W. Rosecrans – Payless Food). Alpha-Beta site has one building that has been vacant for 12 years, multiple owners which is a problem.
- Issues: foreclosure and unemployment rates are relatively high. While there is federal money available, many residents who not have the skill set for available jobs: education (lack of). This is a big problem and also this is a County wide issue.
- Population (2010 census) is strong on the very young and older side – missing 25-30 year olds population, large Asian population. 47k – median income

## Discussion

Q. What is overall condition of housing stock?

A. Pretty good right now – newly built homes often 500k valuation, median home value: 375 – 400k. While much of the stock was built before the 1950’s, and there are some mobile home parks, these are being renovated. Much of housing built for aerospace employees. City is behind on production per Housing Element goals. Also need more affordable housing. In commercial sector, need more development to serve residential. They have a wide industry base.

Q. Does the city have an Economic Development Element in the General Plan?

A. Yes, often on grant applications, this is the first question asked.

Q. There is an eclectic area on Broadway with lots of warehouses and activity, great eating establishments – is that part of Gardena?

A. No, that’s in the County.

Q. How about brownfields?

A. Gardena has a good brownfield program. 72 known brownfield sites; 85% are in this area. The toxics in this area are generally left over from past aerospace, manufacturing uses. In Gardena, they encourage and are successful with cleaning up through forming public and private partnerships (new Fresh N Easy, Flame Broiler, are good examples). The UHaul site is a brownfield and that owner is not very cooperative.

Q. Is the Community very organized, active in speaking up?

A. Yes, very, but because they are an aging population – don’t have a lot of energy – they need a spokesman to spearhead and encourage. At the Payless site at Van Ness, and in general the citizens want national credit tenants that provide services – Walgreens, Borders, CVS, Trader Joes. The goal is to shop in their own community. They are fighting an impression that the area is a “slum” even though that is not the case.

Q: What about talking to national chains?

A: The City actively pursues – The new In and Out Burger project is an example where staff activity attracted interest. One of the biggest challenges: to assemble parcels as one site.

Q. (Wally) - How about Target? Wally noted in talking to Randall Lewis – he knows of a Target that is looking for a “smaller footprint” store on a site in the South Bay.

A. Yvonne - yes they would be interested in that. Otis noted Target typically needs a lot of land (min 7 acres?) Wally suggested the Randall Lewis Target store might be something for a future presentation.

At this point Wally brought up a slide from his corridor presentation showing an analysis of sites around the Rosecrans corridor at intersections, and their ratios of land value to improvement value. A site with over 9 rating (as is the most sites in vicinity Rosecrans/Normandie) suggests land value and improvement value is about the same, and perhaps that is more due to lower land value (unlike in Hermosa Beach, e.g. where land value is consistently very high). This hurts Gardena.

#### IV. Measure R Projects in the South Bay

Steve Lantz  
SBCCOG Transportation Consultant

Wally introduced Steve Lantz, COG transportation consultant, to talk about managing the Measure R program in the South Bay.

Steve gave a quick background and description of the Measure R program, explaining when Measure R passed, it was written in the law that the 906 million dollars was to be available over 30 years for the goal of improving operation of South Bay freeways (streets that take demand off the freeways, or other minor freeway changes). So, eligible projects include improvements for streets that feed the freeways, including ramps, auxiliary lanes etc and the projects tend to grow and bubble and become complex and very expensive. Metro decided to have the COG manage Measure R program over the whole period in 5-year increments – idea being that Metro didn't want to be involved in all of the 300 projects – best handled by the local directors of public works and city councils and staff could set priorities, while paying attention to Caltrans and Metro and its programs, with cooperative agreements. So first, got a list of project from cities, then went to old studies and made up a list of projects, then back to Metro to determine which are eligible for Measure R funding. Once approved by Metro and deemed eligible, the cities will get money in one-year increments for their projects. The projects are part of an Early Action Program which is for the first 5 years. We got a list of such projects approved by Metro and now cities are entering into agreements with Metro to get these constructed. Metro is the lead agency, and we will oversee the budget and scope. An Implementation Plan has also been drawn up and approved by Metro – it is to be updated every other year and will cover compliance and evolving priorities.

What types of projects will be funded? Other than traditional public works projects – not sure how to address the "Rebuild the City" type of projects (e.g. undergrounding for aesthetics, Vitality City, bikeway planning, complete streets, walkable streets - all place demands on the streets). Local planners and city councils have to think about what's the best use of property that you own. As planning people need to work with the public works director to both get the nexus, and make the community more livable. The projects come in as discreet improvements and we need to see how we can put these together. Steve will need to work with PW directors to find that Measure R nexus to freeway improvement. Torrance was able to get 85% Measure R funding for a transit center by showing that those using public transit at the center would result in fewer cars on the freeway.

Steve noted in controlling costs hard decisions need to be made on projects. Costs can accelerate when you want to add design elements to a project. The Steering Committee of the COG created an Oversight Committee for Measure R and decisions of the Oversight Committee go to the COG Board. Jacki noted that the committee is currently comprised of board members who for most part do not have Measure R projects in their cities. It would be great if some council members in cities that have Measure R projects would participate in the Oversight Committee, although the committee is doing a great job, being very objective.

#### Discussion

Q. Do you work with bus operators?

A. Yes

Q. How long do you have to spend your money?

A. Five years from date given to you (into a funding agreement).

Q. Can you bring a project at any time?

A. Yes, but Metro will look at them quarterly.

Steve brought up the Congestion Mitigation Fee Program (assigning a regional developer fee). Robert Calix is developing numbers for all the SB cities. He wants to hold a workshop with planners and Public Works Directors,

go through the numbers and get an ok to release numbers to other parts of the County. Steve asked cities if they could meet on Dec 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> for a workshop? Cities suggested holding after Jan 1; so noted.

## **V. Updates**

### **Strategic Growth Council Grant Applications – Cities and COG (Wally)**

February 15<sup>th</sup> is a deadline for these applications. Wally explained cities can apply in one category and the COG in a separate category. Discussion ensued among the cities present about ideas. Pam (Hermosa) before wanted to do GP update, with a portion of it being a Sustainability Element - trying to partner with someone – either other cities or the COG, do a template or prototype as it was noted the more the application shows collaboration, the more points it might have. Steve Lantz mentioned a presentation in Santa Monica - - they have individual modes (walk, bike, drive, plans) perhaps that would be a model? Pam: they've done a lot of different things and want to pull together. She'll write something up.

Leza (RPV) now doing GP Update, and they have hired a consultant to bring GHG emissions into the document. RPV is trying to apply for the grant also, to help with their in-house on-going efforts.

Rebecca (Torrance) is submitting for grant funding – to do Zoning Ordinance to implement new GP and implement sustainability measures, programs.

Wally: there is a geography element related to this. Banding together may be good strategy to avoid submitting fragmented applications from the south Bay.

Wally explained the COG could help the cities as a clearinghouse of ideas, and help them collaborate. The COG could possibly endorse an application, but first need to know what the cities want to do. This meeting is a start.

Niki (RHE) – they need a new General Plan, and would like to include sustainability. Pat (LA County) mentioned LA County could also partner. Otis (Lawndale) made the point that cities need to have council support in applying.

It was decided that the cities should think about what they want to do through the end of the year, then attend workshops in January if needed. Cities should tell Wally what they are considering. Wally will agendize this at the January Livable Communities meeting at which time cities can share what they want to do, and they can see if they can band together in an application.

Also COG will be proposing – on its own an application. Currently Wally is working with the Lewis Center to determine “walking distances”. UCLA very interested in this – as a tool for sustainability in making walkable places. Also Wally noted the Rand Corp called – they are interested in our electric vehicle project. We are now starting to attract potential collaborators.

### **ESC's Climate Action Planning (Jeremy Hyde)**

Jeremy got electricity data updates, next he will be getting natural gas. He also will be meeting with cities (still trying to set up meetings) to discuss target setting.

Wally asked – are we yet at the point where we will be discussing transportation and land use issues? Jeremy responded not yet – he doesn't see that those kind of things will make a direct reduction in carbon emissions, but they are an investment that is worthwhile because in the future the state targets will change and get more stringent. Some cities have General Plans that might be redone or amended to coincide with targeting – out to 2035. He noted that the state targets are at 2020, 2035, and 2050. Land use should relate to the 2035 target. There are three rounds of the Strategic Growth Council and by applying now, could position for round 3. Wally noted the Board adopted a land use strategy plan specifically for the RTP – but it is also available to cities as a legitimate sustainable land use transportation strategy.

Pam noted that cities can include that strategy in their plans, Wally noted that's good, as long as cities are actually implementing strategies. He can help cities figure out policies for sustainability.

Jeremy's point: it will take some work for individual cities to work out measures and strategies. Wally can work with cities on understanding how the strategy works.

## **SCAG RTP and South Bay SCS (Wally)**

Wally has been bringing to SCAG's attention since Dec 2009 that the South Bay has SCS concepts that are not in SCAG's plans. While we did not want to take delegation of the SCS, we went with a sort of a hybrid. Recently SCAG said it can't put in the RTP but they can put it in the Strategic Plan component of the RTP. Wally will provide more info after the first of the year. Wally has been sharing NEV project data results that show that if all households had an electric vehicle without any other measures taken GHG emissions would decline by 25%. This would occur if every household would replace one gas with one NEV.

## **SCAG Compass Projects (Wally)**

Wally - bad news yesterday - funding from SCAG is only half of what we thought was available. What to do? Jacki emailed SCAG (Hassan), waiting for a response. We asked for 260k, but will be getting 125K- we will need to make big changes (deleting some aspects).

Wally: the Marine Avenue corridor segment has serious problems – it's at the end of the transit station – between Inglewood Avenue and Aviation. Steve noted there is Measure R project in that location that can improve the situation. Concern remains: if they really don't have any money, what can we do? Wally will report further on this.

## **BEV AQMD Proposal (Wally)**

SBCCOG is trying to meet with Barry Wallerstein. We continue to search for partners Have been talking with Wheego, Mitsubishi. In case of Mitsubishi, their goal is to bring down the cost of their vehicle through federal tax incentives. Steve mentioned a zip car program in the Bay area that appears to be very successful.

## **RHNA (Wally)**

Numbers coming in April, an allocation methodology has been adopted. Alicia (Lomita) said so far they like it. It corrects an over-allocation in the last cycle (in Lomita it cuts by half). Important for City Housing Elements.

Due to lack of time, the following were not covered:

LUV Extension  
Charge Port Infrastructure Planning & UC Davis  
Metro defining "sustainability" and Caltrans Smart Mobility Framework  
Neighborhood Oriented Development presentations

## **VI. Other Business**

Wally announced that the draft regional transportation plan will be released next Friday (Dec 1<sup>st</sup>), Wally will be critiquing it and will report back.

Jacki mentioned Ride Amigos program being done for Century City employers – they have a very comprehensive and robust website – they have a consultant who is looking for a city to go after a grant – this is an active endeavor.

Pam reported on an end of year get-together. Unfortunately the venue they chose turned out to be too loud.

Jacki announced the "Day at the County" for elected on Dec 7<sup>th</sup> - did anyone know if any city elected will be coming? No one could report.

On Dec 8<sup>th</sup> 2- 4 pm. David Magarian noted he is holding a workshop on financing green projects – will use an actual project in South Bay and will cover what questions to ask.

Jacki noted that the Jenkins Brown Bag seminars which had been suspended for a few months, will start up again in January.

## **VII. Meeting adjourned @ 4:30 pm**