



Express Lanes, Metro Rail & LAX Northside on Next Council Agenda

Be sure to attend the next board meeting of the Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa to hear some informative updates about projects critical to our community.

The next board meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 6, in the Community Room of the Westchester Municipal Building, 7166 W. Manchester Avenue (at Lincoln) in Westchester.

On the agenda will be the following presentations:

LAX Northside: Project Manager Lisa Trifiletti will discuss the nearly 358 acres at LAX Northside and the chance for LAWA and the community to collaborate on an updated plan to re-imagine the Northside parcels as a vibrant and sustainable center of employment, education, recreation, shopping, dining, and airport support.

Metro ExpressLanes: Deputy Program Manager Kathy McCune will discuss the one-year pilot program to improve traffic flow and provide enhanced travel options on the I-10 and I-110 freeways that includes the introduction of congestion pricing by converting High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, the improvement of transit service and other alternatives to driving, the updating of transit facilities, and the implementation of a more effective parking management system in downtown Los Angeles.

Metro Green Line to LAX: Project Manager Roderick Diaz will discuss the ways Metro is examining to connect the growing Metro Rail system to Los Angeles International Airport.

L.A. Mayoral candidates will speak to the NCWP board at upcoming meetings – Kevin James (kevinjamesformayor.com) in January and Councilwoman Jan Perry (www.janperry.com) in February.

Neighborhood Council: A Year in Review

By Joan Trimble, NCWP Board Member

Another year is coming to a close, which means that it is an appropriate time to reflect upon the challenges and accomplishments that we faced in 2011. Members of the Neighborhood Council are community volunteers dedicated to improving the quality of living in Westchester, Playa del Rey, Playa Vista and beyond. The ever-tightening belt around the city's budget makes the role of community members increasingly important in order to ensure the interests of our community are voiced to the decision makers tasked with managing city funds. This year was a busy one for members of the Neighborhood Council, whose diverse work ranged from providing a forum for notification to the public regarding public safety issues to vigorous debate regarding planning and land use matters affecting our community.

One of the tasks of the Neighborhood Council is to determine the distribution of funds for Community Improvement and Neighborhood Purposes Grants. Several community interest groups applied for and received grants from the Neighborhood Council to help accomplish their respective goals of bettering our community. The Westchester Recreation Center received funds that helped it perform facility upgrades and purchase youth sports equipment, and they later hosted a meeting of the Neighborhood Council to show their appreciation and to show off their upgrades. Orville Wright Middle School received funds to help support the continuation of the Peters Procedures program, which helps students learn behavioral patterns that contribute to the academic success and overall improved environment of learning institutions. Funds were also awarded provided to Loyola Village Elementary School a Fine and Performing Arts Magnet Center. Your layover time at LAX can be filled with a visit to the Flight Path Learning Center, a museum showcasing aviation memorabilia and another recipient of grant funds. One of the most heartwarming grants was awarded to PATH, or People Assisting The Homeless, whose important work involves surveying the homeless in our community and assisting them in obtaining services that can help them on their path to obtain housing or just plain help them survive. Grant funds were also provided to Westchester Playa Village, a program that works to help residents of our community remain in their homes as they age; and beautification efforts on 87th Street in the Westchester Triangle.

In addition to supporting community groups, the past year also presented an opportunity for members of the Neighborhood Council to be involved in planning and land use for our community. Many small businesses came before the council to request support for developments and projects, and residents also came forward to voice their concern regarding the same. While some may believe that urban planning does not sound exciting, attendance at Neighborhood Council meetings where land use matters are addressed will demonstrate to you that these issues involve some of the more progressive and hotly contested items before the Neighborhood Council. For instance, this year the Council has addressed many interesting planning issues, including the location of a Medical Marijuana Collective shop and its proximity to schools and churches, the location of fast food restaurants, and the propriety and regulation of alcohol sales in local businesses such as gas stations, restaurants, and nightclubs.

Overall it was an exciting and productive year for the Neighborhood Council. As always, we invite all residents of our community to join us in improving our community by active participation in government. Please attend our meetings, debate the issues, and help us make Westchester/Playa a better place to live. In the meantime, the Neighborhood Council wishes you a Happy Holiday Season and best wishes for an equally productive 2012.

