

The Riviera Reporter

NEWSLETTER OF THE RIVIERA HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

MAY 2004

The Prez Sez...



This is the last newsletter of our 2003-2004 business year. It is also the last newsletter of my first two-year term as President of the RHA. I am very proud of this organization and the work our board has done to improve our neighborhood. I hope to continue this role for two more years, should I be privileged enough to gain re-election. I encourage all residents to join us at our next general meeting to participate in our board elections.

It has been an honor to work with my fellow board members these last two years. Residents of the Riviera are truly fortunate to have a group of such dedicated, talented and caring individuals volunteering their time to enhance our neighborhood.

I hope to continue to focus the board on our core responsibilities; protecting the long-term value of our homes and unique character of our neighborhood. I continue to believe that RHA sponsored events like the annual concert in the park, scholarship programs, landscape awards and the candidate forums all support both of these responsibilities.

We will also be distributing our annual college scholarships to some lucky Riviera residents. This is one of the tasks I really relish each year. It is truly uplifting to meet these fine young adults and see all of the talent and creativity they have. They really give hope for a better future.

RHA GENERAL MEETING:

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, May 19, 2004 – 7:00 P.M.

WHERE: RICHARDSON MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA
23751 Nancy Lee Lane (off Newton Street)

AGENDA: RIVIERA ELEMENTARY'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY
Guest Speaker: Christie Forshey, School Principal

Speaking of a hopeful future, our next meeting will also feature a brief opportunity to meet Riviera Elementary's new Principal, Christie Forshey. She will introduce herself and tell us more about the upcoming 50th Anniversary celebration for Riviera Elementary. I had the good fortune to meet Mrs. Forshey recently to introduce myself and discuss the RHA with her and invite her to our meeting. I was curious to meet her because my wife and all of the other "flagpole moms" kept raving about her. I must say that their reviews were warranted. Christie is a gem; confident yet courteous, driven yet humble. She regularly takes the time to see the children off at the end of the school day. I am confident that she will competently guide Riviera Elementary through the difficult budget times ahead. Please make her feel welcome.

So the last *Prez Sez* of the year has come to a close. Summer is not too far off. Try to stay safe and healthy until we meet again in September. At that point we'll be in the midst of a National Presidential Election, the beginning of a new school year and surely loads of RHA business. I can't wait! Until then, enjoy life in the Riviera.....the jewel of the South Bay.

Michael Cotton, President



Riviera Elementary is extending an open invitation to the community to celebrate its 50th year of educational excellence. Come dressed in your poodle skirts & bowling shirts for a 50's themed celebration. A disc jockey, and the Riviera Elementary chorus and band will be on hand to entertain you as you reminisce about the good old days! Carl's Jr. will provide dinner for a nominal fee.

Anyone with old yearbooks, photos and/or any information on past teachers, principals or PTA Presidents please contact Dana at 373-0389 or at her email address: andyrache@msn.com.

Date: Friday, May 21, 2004

Time: 5-8 p.m.

Place: Riviera Elementary's Cafeteria
RSVP: Dana, 373-0389 by May 7th.

WHAT'S UP IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD:

BEACH BLUFFS RESTORATION PROJECT



The Beach Bluffs Restoration Project (BBRP) began as a grassroots effort having the goal to return a diverse community of native shrubs and wildflowers to the coastal bluffs along the Santa Monica Bay from Malaga Cove to Ballona Creek. This project now has the support of the cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance, Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and a number of state and federal elected officials. Once implemented, the project will beautify the landscape, reduce erosion, and provide habitat for native wildlife, potentially including the endangered El Segundo blue butterfly. The first major tasks of the BBRP, developing a Master Plan and implementing a pilot restoration project on a two-acre, County-owned site

in Redondo Beach, are currently underway. A generous donation from the City of Redondo Beach, an in-kind match from the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors, and a grant of state bond monies, administered through the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, have funded this first phase. A volunteer committee of residents, conservationists, and city and county representatives directs the BBRP, with two local non-profit organizations — The Urban Wildlands Group and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps' SEA Laboratory — providing scientific, technical, and logistical support.

For more information visit our website: www.urbanwildlands.org/bbrp.html

*Submitted by Dr. Travis Longcore
and Ann Dalkey*

FOCAL POINT ON AGING

Senior citizens and their families have greater access to information through the community Focal Point on Aging program. The Focal Point on Aging is an information and referral service where older adults, caregivers and their families can obtain ready access to a full range of available services including: transportation, housing, Meals-on-Wheels, health care, companion care, Medicare, social and legal services, HMO's and more. The all-volunteer staff is trained to receive telephone or in-person inquiries, make an accurate initial assessment of a persons needs and refer that person to appropriate services.

The Focal Point program is housed in the Russ Nolte Annex, located at 1330 Post Avenue, next to the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center in downtown Torrance. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. No appointment is necessary and walk-in's and telephone calls are welcome.

For more information, please telephone the Focal Point at (310) 320-1300. The Torrance Commission on Aging through the Torrance Parks and Recreation Department sponsors this program.

Submitted by Bea Virobik



SPRING CLEANING?

Think of El Retiro Library when going through your closets and cabinets. They accept donations for the following items: books, videos (children's), recorded books, office and craft supplies. For more information, call them at 375-0922.

Submitted by Erin Cotton

DRIVING SAFETY

When we were looking to buy a home 5 years ago I was telling my husband about the Hollywood Riviera. My dream was to live here and I was hoping it was about to come true. What struck us about the neighborhood were the people walking, some with their families, others with their four legged friends. We watched kids playing ball and skate boarding in the street. It occurred to me how safe I felt and how safe the neighborhood appeared.

As a proud homeowner now living in the Hollywood Riviera it is so disheartening to see my neighbors speeding in and around the neighborhood, not making full stops at stop signs and often talking on their cell phones, seemingly unaware of what's going on around them.

If any of this sounds familiar, I hope you will consider slowing down as you drive, make a full stop at the stop sign and pay more attention if you are talking on your cell phone. I believe it's our job to keep our families, our neighbors and our four legged friends safe. I hope each and every one of us will do our part.



Submitted by Margherite Vetrano

RHA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL GUIDELINE

The Riviera Homeowners Association has been working to improve the way we track and report our membership dues activities. Each newsletter has the most recent dues payment information right above your mailing address.

The RHA's business year begins in September and ends in August; it is meant to coincide with the school calendar year. The current 2003-2004 business year began on September 1, 2003 and will end on August 31, 2004. Annual dues received during this period will be counted toward this period. We hope this guideline helps you to better understand the dues payment message included in each newsletter.

ENROLLMENT FORM

Also, please review the membership enrollment form below. If you are renewing your membership and all of the information on the mailing label is accurate, mark the appropriate check box and submit your dues. Space is provided for modifications or new enrollment information should you need it.

The RHA does not share this or any other personal information with anyone for any purpose other than newsletter processing and delivery.

We will continue to try to improve these administrative functions in order to better serve you.

RHA MEMBERSHIP FORM 2003 - 2004

If the information on the mailing label is correct, please indicate by marking the appropriate box below.

Continuing Member - mailing label personal information is accurate.

(NO NEED TO FILL IN PERSONAL INFORMATION BELOW)

Continuing Member - See modifications and/or comments below.

New Member - see information below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

The following officers can be contacted through their email at the RHA:

president@hollywoodriviera.org

secretary@hollywoodriviera.org

historian@hollywoodriviera.org

landscape@hollywoodriviera.org

newsletter@hollywoodriviera.org

concert@hollywoodriviera.org

scholarships@hollywoodriviera.org

Amount paid:

\$20 (annual) + \$____ (Other) = Total \$____

Check # _____ Check Date _____

How did you learn of the Riviera Homeowners Association?

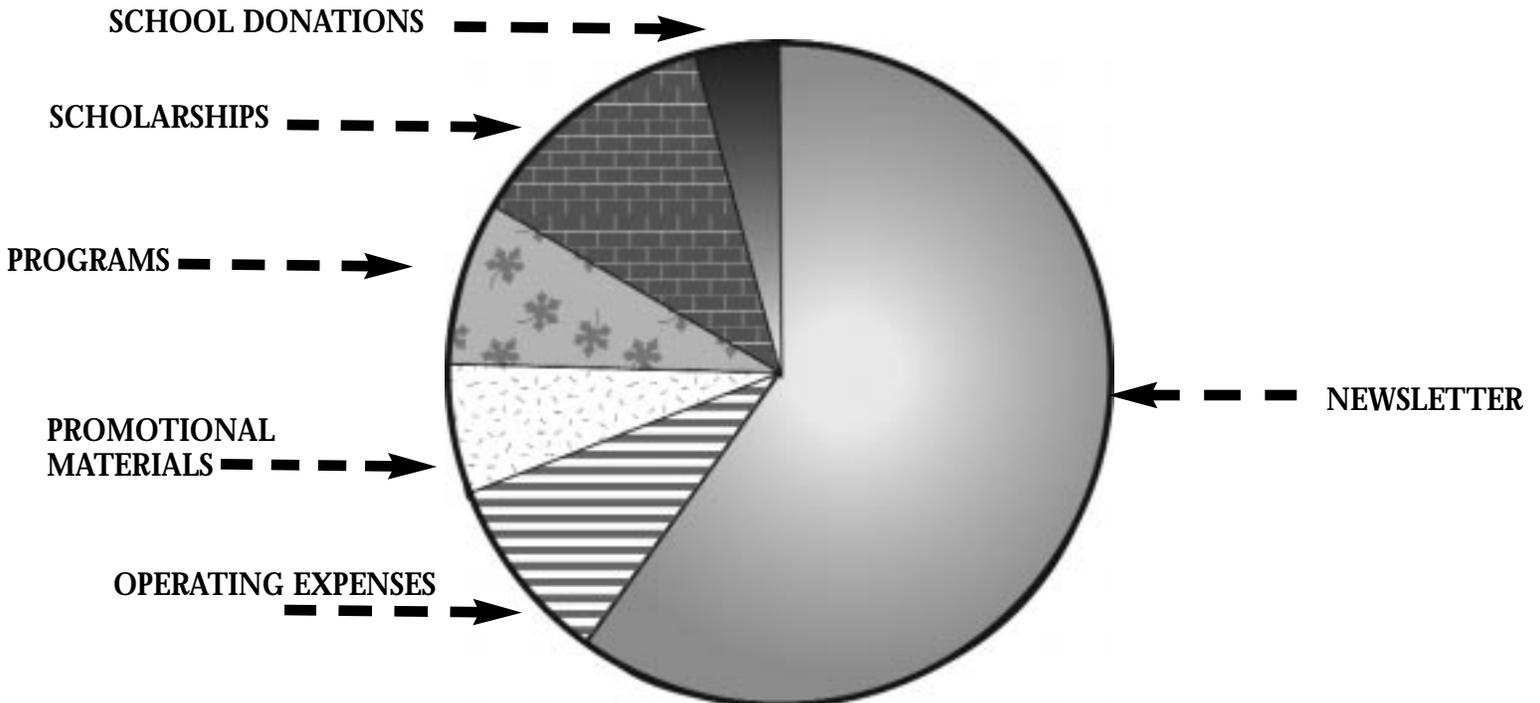
Comments: _____

PROPOSED BUDGET EXPENDITURES

The Riviera Homeowner's fiscal year runs from September 1 through August 31. The pie chart below is a graphic representation of the 2003-2004 proposed budget expenditures. As you can see, the majority of our budget goes toward publication and posting of the newsletter. Our projections were on track at the half-way point of the fiscal year (February 29).

For more detailed information, please contact me.

Submitted by Andrea Perez, RHA Treasurer



MORE WHAT'S UP IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD:

LOOKING BACK 50 YEARS

The RHA Board suggested that it would be appropriate, considering the upcoming General Meeting marking the 50th anniversary of Riviera Elementary School, to take a look back 50 years at other aspects of Riviera history as well. Looking through one of the Riviera Association's old scrapbooks unearthed recently by our Webmaster, Julian Chasin, I came upon the minutes of an association meeting held August 30, 1954!

The meeting was convened at the Riviera Beach Club with 115 in attendance. The first agenda item was: "Mr. Willard Key, Art Jury Chairman, stated that the plans for the second Don-Ja-Ran tract had been received." Later there was another report stating: "Commander Mason said the last (City of Torrance) Planning Commission meeting approved tract maps for the balance of Hollywood Riviera, namely, 145 lots in Tract 10305 and 41 lots in tract 20504, bringing the Don-Ja-Ran Tract total to 362 homes."

That was of particular interest to me because my home on Via Mesa Grande is one of the 362. My wife and I moved into the home when it was completed in 1955. We had selected it for the lovely ocean-coastline view when the only thing on the lot was an outline of the foundation – and were somewhat disappointed to discover when the house was built that the only window taking advantage of the view was one over the kitchen sink. (The legend was that the Don-Ja-Ran home layouts were done by a draftsman without any knowledge of the actual sites; it was said that he wept when he actually came to the tract and saw what he had done – or rather, had not done.) We subsequently rectified his oversight by adding new rooms with large windows.

Another footnote: I don't know the name of the actual developer, but someone explained that the "Don-Ja-Ran" name was derived from the first letters of the names of his three children.

Showing that some things haven't changed that much, the minutes of the meeting refer to a discussion of the speed limit on Palos Verdes Boulevard, and the decision to request a "blinker stop light" at Calle Miramar. There also was discussion of the installation of stop signs on Calle Mayor. Other topics included a flooding problem on Paseo de Gracia, the closed streets into Palos Verdes (the majority indicated they did not object to the barriers), progress toward incorporation of the association (being handled by Attorney Gene Voorhees), and passage of a resolution regarding payment of sewer assessments on a per unit basis.

And that, as Ed Murrow used to say, is the way it was.

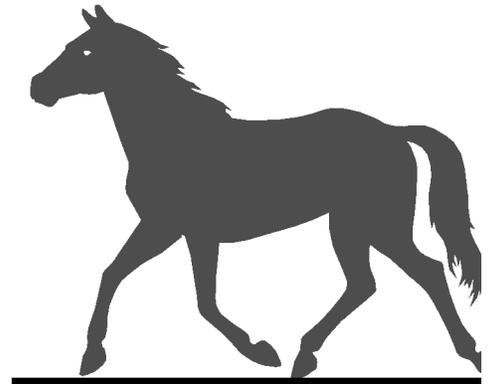
Submitted by Austin Woodward, Historian

Our neighborhood is full of interesting people who have led and are leading fulfilling and varied lives. We invite you to share your experiences with us.

RHA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The RHA sends its newsletter to over 3,700 homes in the Hollywood Riviera community. While dues payment is not required to be a member, returned membership forms help us track who is actively interested in our association. We also welcome your comments, on the membership forms, which are communicated to the RHA President and Board Members. The \$20 dues payment (or what ever you are comfortable contributing) is voluntary and goes toward the cost of printing this newsletter, RHA Scholarships, our annual Concert-in-the-Park event, and various community benefits or events. The RHA membership year runs from September through August. For the current 2003-04 fiscal year (as of March 31, 2004), we have received 586 membership forms from the community. At the end of the last membership year, we had received a total of 744 membership forms, representing approximately 20 % of the community that the RHA reaches out to. We hope to exceed last year's total as interest in the RHA is growing. So far this membership year, we have received 84 new membership forms from recent new arrivals to our community (welcome to the neighborhood). Your newsletter will note if you have paid your membership dues this year or not, with a message above your name and address. If you have not done so already, please send in your membership form, with your dues payment so we can keep track of your interest in our community.

Submitted by Bob Hoffman, Membership



MORE MEMORIES...

In the early years of the Hollywood Riviera (circa 1950's), it was a wonderland for children. There were so many different sights and sounds to be explored. We were never bothered by the thoughts and concerns of the world. We were busy filling our young innocent minds with the wonders of nature. The fields surrounding us were rolling on and on with colorful white and yellow daisies with patches of golden California poppies. We could run and run through the vastness of color while playing "Hide and Seek" or just laying on our backs and watching scenes of cloud formations, excited to point out the similarity of their clusters to animated objects. The puffy clouds slowly churned to show the face of Mickey Mouse, an old man with a crooked nose or a beautiful Hollywood starlet. It kept us busy for hours, stimulating our young minds.

Just a short distance from the fields of wild flowers, we could watch the horses roam and run free through the natural meadows as they enjoyed their freedom in a large fenced rancho. Horses were very abundant in the area and there were several riding stables around Hollywood Riviera, thus horses were very fascinating to us. We were too young to be able to ride them, so we observed them from a distance. Several times we would try our bravery by slipping under the fence to see how close we could get to them before they saw us. It was always our desire to get close enough to one, to pet it, but when they saw our approach they would let out a high nay that would send us scurrying back to the safety of the other side of the barbed wire as fast as our short stubby little legs could carry us.

Submitted by Mildred Garvey, written by her son, Robert John Garvey II

MORE WHAT'S UP IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD:

OUTSTANDING LANDSCAPE AWARDS

The March award was presented to Pati and Nils Johnson, 425 Via El Chico. This is a serene garden of grasses that complements the Mediterranean style of their home. Designed by Neal of Annie's Nursery in Manhattan Beach, with particular attention to texture and foliage color, this garden features the blue-grey of Festuca, bronzy Phormium "Maori Queen", purple Verbena, white Bacopa "Snowflake", the grey-green of Metrosideros Tomentosa, "New Zealand Xmas Tree", and the beautiful rose, "Joseph's Coat of Many Colors." Hardscape highlights include a stepping stone slate path welcoming you into the garden and a wood bench and fountain inviting you to stay awhile and enjoy the beauty.



The April award was presented to Susan and Briane Pitsenberger, 5502 Via Del Valle. This is a cottage garden created with loving care. A beautiful white Birch tree shades the front yard and a mix of perennials provide color for most of the year. Highlights are a wavy border of blue Hibiscus, purple Princess Flower and Mexican Sage, Agapanthas, Star Jasmine, yellow Coreopsis and red Canna that snakes through the lush front lawn. The cobble driveway is edged with a row of sprawling purple standards encircled by white gazanias.

The October and December Landscape Awards were presented by: Ruth Vogel & Mary Lenihan for the RHA, & Toni Sargent for the Riviera Garden Club. Photos by Julian Chasin.

HGTV COMES TO THE RIVIERA

Howard Korman and his in-laws, Harriet and Jay Apsel, arranged a very special surprise for the major birthday of his wife, Dale. On June 2, 2003, at 7:30 in the morning, there was a loud knock at the door and when Dale opened it she saw HGTV's Susie Coelho and her Outer Spaces crew of 15, complete with shovels in hand! Dale took off for a day of fun and shopping with her daughter, who HGTV had flown in from Denver for the surprise. When they returned, the Kormans typical backyard and patio area had been transformed into a French Garden, complete with a canvas topped patio pavilion and stylish new furniture. A two-tiered fountain became the garden focal point of a large planting bed of hibiscus, bougainvillea, hydrangea, clematis and canna. You can see the complete show on the web at HGTV.com. Do a search for Outer Spaces and click on show #104.



UPDATE ON GARDEN'S FUTURE

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO, PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO HELP PRESERVE THE SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN.

The South Coast Botanic Garden, an 87-acre "jewel" on the Palos Verdes Peninsula owned and operated by the County of Los Angeles, could experience budget curtailment due to the state deficit. The county's future budget is unknown at this time due to the current financial crisis.*

In 1961, this garden became the first botanic garden built on a landfill in the world. It is a "Living Laboratory" for plant study and introductions by botanists and horticulturists from all corners of the globe who come to see how the garden was developed and how it has continued to thrive over the past 40 years.

The garden is a diverse natural wildlife habitat that is used as an educational resource and meeting place for a variety of horticultural groups, wildlife societies, artists, school children, school boards, and civic events that are open to the public.

110,000 visitors tour the garden annually as public interest and involvement continues to grow. The nearest comparable public facility in the region is 40 miles away. 2,500 member-families of the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation, Inc. are dedicated to continuing to assist Los Angeles County in developing, improving and maintaining the garden with financial and volunteer support.

**The response from the community as been very positive and the Garden has received a verbal assurance that it would not be closed, however there has been no written communication to this effect. Until that happens, the Garden's future is still in jeopardy. Your help is still needed.*

WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP

- Let your state legislators know how important and vital this garden is to the South Bay region. Please write letters of support to the following: State Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal, 115 Pine Avenue, Suite #430, Long Beach, CA 90802; State Senator Betty Karnette, 3711 Long Beach Blvd., Suite #801, Long Beach, CA 90807; The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814.*
- In addition, please write letters to: the Los Angeles Times, the Daily Breeze, the P News, the Easy Reader, the Beach Reporter, and the Gardena Valley News.
- Donations of support will provide for the improvement, maintenance and preservation of the garden: South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation, Inc. (SCBGF), 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274.

**This list has changed. If you wrote before, please send additional letters to the above.*

RIVIERA HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION 2003-2004 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President	Michael Cotton	791-1985	Past President	Doug Holker	378-8984
1st Vice President (Programs)	Heather Hintzen	378-7388	Scholarship	Art Wong	375-1741
2nd Vice President (Membership)	Bob Hoffman	378-7108	Traffic Liaison	Johnny Tai	791-7465
Secretary	Amy Graham	375-8640	City Council Liaison	OPEN	
Treasurer	Andrea Perez	378-2744	Underground Utilities	Nancy Conger	373-9867
Newsletter Editor	Chela Cowden	375-8649	Planning Commission Liaison	OPEN	
Webmaster	Julian Chasin	373-6314	Historian	Austin Woodward	375-6390
Landscape	Ruth Vogel	375-4702	Mailing Coordinator	Diane Kuhn	375-6367
Hospitality	Pam Popovich	375-8729	Programs Coordinator	Margherite Vetrano	373-4777

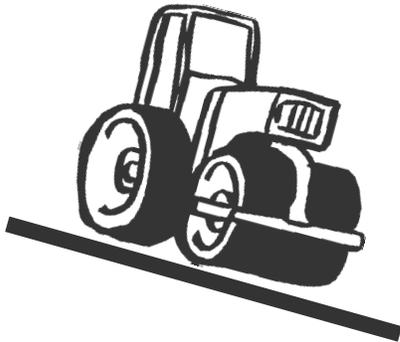
The Riviera Reporter

P O BOX 1074 • TORRANCE, CA 90505

Please look above your name & address for your dues payment status. Your dues help us to provide scholarships, put on community events such as the Concert in the Park, and promote the Riviera community in our newsletter.

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NEWTON STREET IMPROVEMENT

The two miles of new 39" concrete pipes near Lago Sego Park being installed by Los Angeles County to replace the 50 year old metal pipes and accommodate 200 acres of Palos Verdes drainage is on schedule for completion in June 2004. As a result of this current pipeline upgrade, the local residents on Newton Street, between Hawthorne Blvd. and Vista Montana, requested a reconstruction of their street at the City Council meeting on March 16th. The City Council had directed the City Planners to obtain input from the local residents as to their preference; this was performed on April 7th. The results of the balloting will be available to the public on April 21st on the city hotline at (310) 618-2711.

The ballot consisted of three options: the first option would overlay the existing roadway with three inches of new asphalt pavement (project cost and timeline to complete: \$175,000.00 and three months). Option Two would completely remove and reconstruct the existing roadway from 242nd Street to Neece Avenue, replacing water and sewer lines (project cost and timeline to complete: \$750,000.00 and five years and eight months). Option Three is an assessment district that would purchase the right-of-way, remove the existing roadway and construct a wider roadway with curbs, gutters and sidewalks between 242nd Street and Neece Avenue, matching adjacent Newton Street segments (project cost and timeline to complete: \$3 million to \$6.5 million and nine years). The current state budget crisis has severely impacted many of the city's plans and many street projects have been deferred. As a result, the earliest possible implementation of Options Two or Three, if approved, would be in the year 2007. If Option One is the choice, the city staff believes this option can be funded and implemented this year.

Submitted by Johnny Tai, Traffic Liaison

