



# City of Montebello view

## COMMUNITY NEWS AND INFORMATION

2020 Year in Review

### Montebello Celebrates 100 Years

They say, "With age comes wisdom," and on October 16, 2020, Montebello stepped into its 100th year with grace, strength, and wisdom you only earn from overcoming obstacles large and small. While 2020 has been a challenging year that has affected all of us in unexpected ways, our City continues to demonstrate hope and resolve in the resilient spirit of its community and residents. Celebrating its 100th Anniversary, the City of Montebello is poised to grow even stronger. We have a new Taylor Ranch Park green space, our roads are being paved and renewed to last longer than ever, and we are updating the City's General and Parks Master Plans for 2040.



Historic Fire and Police vehicles participated in Montebello's 100th Caravan

A century ago, the City of Montebello was covered in acres of agricultural fields and home to a growing residential community of 2,500. The air smelled of sweet citrus and the City was considering a name change from Newmark to Montebello, meaning "beautiful hill" in Italian. The City was a small, country-town which was somewhat detached from its nearby urban neighbors. The current city geography was originally home to the indigenous Tongva Tribe. Then the Franciscan missionaries arrived to establish the first San Gabriel Mission on the edge of the Rio Hondo River in 1771. However, the discovery of oil in 1917 catapulted Montebello into the future where today there are nearly 64,000 residents living in a modern suburban environment.



Montebello kicked off its 100 year celebration with a Centennial Caravan on Saturday, October 17. This kick-off caravan allowed residents to view a procession of vehicles decorated to recall Montebello's eras in history.

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### City Manager's Message

It's not an understatement to note how challenging the year 2020 has been for the City and many of us in our personal lives. I'd like to reflect and share what I think is most significant and important about this past year.

Now that I have had time to get settled and fully involved in addressing the City's many operational needs and challenges, I am very pleased that the cooperation and collaboration with your City Council has produced forward looking developments, achievements, and progress that go straight to the heart of what any city and its residents want – an improved quality of life. It is fair to say I'm proud of what we've been able to do to date, none of it was possible without dedicated hard work and effort of many of my team and the City Council to get Montebello turned to a positive and progressive direction in addressing long neglected issues, and those of urgent need.

In summary, the milestones I'd like to share with you include tremendous progress in the following key areas of the City's growth, development and needs:

**Strategic Planning and Vision** – We are now well engaged in planning and vision forecasting for Montebello. Collaboration has started on community and business outreach to update the City's General Plan - something that hasn't been done in nearly 50 years. This transparent, public engagement process will put Montebello on track to create a great City for all to live, work and play in.



René Bobadilla  
City Manager

**Leadership and Team Building** – Many of our accomplishments weren't achieved working alone. We've been hard at work enhancing communications with City staff and the public, building up partnerships and repairing relationships with key external

stakeholders. Good people and teamwork is fueled by good leaders. I believe we have improved with the appointment of key members of my management team at all levels. We are well underway to building a better, more transparent and efficient City Hall.

**Improved Fiscal Management** – The measure of any City's success or failure is its ability to manage its money and resources effectively and efficiently. This area has always been a priority focus. After extensive analysis and collaboration among all City departments, we have arrived at a balanced budget and created a Reserve Fund Balance policy to stabilize, secure, and improve the City's fiscal

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## A Message from your Fire Chief



Fernando Pelaez  
Fire Chief

I want to thank the entire City Council, City Manager René Bobadilla, and his leadership team, without whose enthusiastic support and commitment these improvements would not have been possible. Your Montebello Fire Department has made significant investments to improve, upgrade,

and purchase new and innovative firefighting equipment, tools, and technology. These upgrades help us provide and enhance our ability to deliver effective and efficient emergency services to the community.

One of our most important tools is reliable communication. Our ability to effectively communicate with each other, and other departments, using modern digital communications is a critical element of our effectiveness and ability to respond to and manage emergencies. We have substantially enhanced multiple areas in our communications process that include, but are not limited to:

- Electronic Patient Care Reporting (ePCR) that provides tablet-style, digital medical form reporting.
- Mobile Communication Terminals (MCT) used for incident dispatching and real-time mapping.

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## Message from your Chief of Police



Brad Keller  
Chief of Police

This is an opportunity to remind all Montebello residents that we are committed to serving the community in partnership with our residents and businesses to keep Montebello a safe and enjoyable City in which to live, work, and visit. No matter what may be transpiring in our society or current

political environment, our officers' first priority is to ensure fair and equal treatment for ALL we serve, regardless of race, color or creed. As this turbulent year comes to an end, we recognize passions and opinions can be stirred and respect that everyone has right to express theirs appropriately, peacefully and legally. Rest assured your Police Department's commitment to serve equally does not, and will not change.

Generally, our City is doing well managing crime. While the overall crime rate in our City has decreased, conditions created by the COVID pandemic are contributing to a slight increase in property crimes, especially in surrounding areas and across Los Angeles County. I'm happy to report that our violent crime is stable, or in some cases lower, which is not the situation in some of our nearby cities.

We have been working in partnership with local Montebello neighborhoods to make sure

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**SPONSORSHIP BANNER PROGRAM**

**Help the City celebrate its 100 Year Anniversary by becoming a sponsor through various programs and opportunities. Sponsorship street banners are still available!**

**For more information, please call (323) 887-4540.**

## MONTEBELLO CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

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Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the caravan traveled throughout the City's streets to greet residents and the public in a safe and socially distanced manner. The caravan was attended by City Councilmembers, City staff, local media, community leaders, and County and State elected representatives. This event was the first in a series of celebrations planned throughout the next year.



City staff and Councilmembers prepare to head out with the Caravan.



Residents were invited to watch from their homes and step into the past as we celebrated the present and looked ahead to the future.

## Paving the Way Street Improvements

Over the last few weeks, the City of Montebello has paved several streets in the north-west corner of Montebello's residential area. These streets have seen a dramatic change in repair and are now set to be more durable and environmentally friendly thanks to the combined use of Asphalt-Rubber Aggregate Membrane Seal Coat (ARAM) and HyRAP® technology. ARAM recycles the equivalent of over 600 California scrap tires in every lane mile, an amount significantly more than any

other comparable product. The use of ARAM has the immediate benefit of reducing tire stockpiles and indirectly aids in conserving land, preventing fires, and preventing water pollution. Using this recycled material also allows the City to be more cost effective in preventing unnecessary repairs that would result from using less durable paving materials. While this strategy benefits our community economically, it is also preserving the future of our environment as well.



Photo above is the HyRAP® going down onto the paving interlayer ARAM. ARAM is a proven paving strategy that helps mitigate Alligator cracking.

Photo below is the new wearing surface. The asphalt is called HyRAP®. This sustainable material is cutting edge technology and mixed as they layer it over the ARAM.



**For more information** on what streets will be impacted, construction updates and general information about the project, please contact the Public Works Department at (323) 887-4640.

## A Message from Human Resources



Nicholas Razo  
Director of  
Human Resources and  
Information Technology

As a member of the City's new executive management team, it is a pleasure to update you about the tremendous amount of work that is underway to right size and improve our City's staffing to help us become more productive and efficient, beginning with the two-year service credit initiative that was started August 13, 2020.

The City is being very progressive and forward looking in addressing staffing and hiring needs from the past, present, and future. Cities of our size and demographics must evaluate the talent it needs both now and in the future in order to remain responsive, sustainable, and economically sound.

Montebello is no exception to the financial challenges the current COVID-19 pandemic has created. With health and well-being of our employees remaining our top priority, our ability to attract, find and retain new talent and new skills needed for a 21st century economy is the heart of the HR process that ensures we can operate effectively in all types of economic circumstances. Salaries and benefits are the single largest expense the City pays for so ensuring we can compete for top quality talent in the market is a vital need. In addition, we need to adjust to support employees to work effectively in remote and online settings in this new world. This requires research and investment into the tools and technology necessary for the virtual world that's been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We, like other businesses, must comply with California's stay-at-home orders. This means our people must have the tools and confidence to perform their duties remotely or from home and we have the responsibility to manage and facilitate this transition. In order to keep employees safe at City facilities, from home and remotely, we've had to secure new technology resources and develop and implement safety protocols around testing and screening, while maintaining a healthy workforce to ensure City operations and business continuity throughout this pandemic. In addition, we have created a Mobile Risk Management function in order to communicate early and often with employees in their work areas to emphasize work safety and reduce risk. Despite challenges, we carry-on recruiting and hiring for funded positions so residents and tax-payers continue to receive the essential support expected from their City government. Anyone interested and qualified for our job opportunities can review and apply for them on [www.cityofmontebello.com](http://www.cityofmontebello.com).

All these efforts combined result in making your City government and administration more efficient, better performing, and better able to meet business and hiring needs. By having the right people, with the right skills performing the right jobs, and constantly evaluating and updating our pay and benefits, we are bringing the City's operational needs in-line with the present-day market, something that has been long overdue. The efforts of your HR Department are a critical foundation block in designing Montebello's future and

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The screenshot shows the City of Montebello website. At the top is a green banner with the text "Sign Up for Breaking City News". Below this is the City of Montebello logo and a search bar. A navigation menu includes links for HOME, MONTEBELLO, COMMUNITY, GOVERNMENT, CALENDAR, DEPARTMENTS, RFP/BIDS, FAQ, and CONTACT. On the left side, there are several service buttons: City Council AGENDAS, Parks & Recreation ONLINE-REGISTRATION, Montebello Bus Line ONLINE TRACKING, Police ONLINE REPORTING, Business License ONLINE SERVICES, MBL CIVIL RIGHTS, CITIZEN ADVISORY, and Montebello News & Updates SIGN-UP HERE (highlighted with a yellow circle). The main content area features a large graphic celebrating 100 years of the City of Montebello, with the text "Celebrate History" and "1920 2020". A "CLICK HERE" link is visible at the bottom of the graphic. At the very bottom of the page is a green banner with the text "Visit [www.cityofmontebello.com](http://www.cityofmontebello.com)".

# IT ENHANCEMENTS

The City has taken two big steps into the future by not only establishing a 24/7 IT helpline for City employees, but also completely overhauling the audiovisual (AV) system in the City Hall Council Chambers to increase efficiency for City Councilmembers and improve accessibility to both residents watching the Council Meetings from home or, after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, participating in-person.



In the age of ever-increasing technological innovation, it is crucial for municipal governments like the City of Montebello to offer their employees

efficient information technology (IT) support in order to increase operational efficiency and better serve the public. Effective now, City IT staff is working in partnership with IBE Digital support services. All City departments and staff now have 24/7 access to certified technicians and engineers who can help resolve technological glitches and barriers. This contract also supports the City in its endeavor to make remote work seamless, which is especially critical during the pandemic.

It is important to ensure all residents are able to participate in our democratic process. We have invested in analyzing and obtaining recommendations to improve City Hall's outdated audio/visual equipment to make it easier for residents who watch, listen or want to participate in City Council

meetings to do so from wherever they are. Improvements will begin in 2021 to completely overhaul and upgrade the existing AV system. Upgrades will include the following:

- New HD cameras that follow the action.
- Multiple large screen displays will make it possible for both Councilmembers and members of the audience to view presentations from staff.
- A state-of-the-art audio system with multiple microphones strategically located throughout the dais will make it easy to listen to the proceedings.

By investing in improved technology, Montebello is proud to increase its communication abilities for our residents and improve the accessibility of City Council meetings for all.

## CITY MANAGER'S MESSAGE

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performance and future credit rating, which is a clear indication of our fiscal recovery and stability.



**Arlene Salazar**  
Assistant City Manager

### Ethics and Integrity –

A top priority is creating an environment that is ethical in all we do. We believe in the Four C's: class, character, community, and consistency. It is my intention to continue to provide transparency and clarity for all City decisions and budget

matters now and in the future.

**Future Goals –** Despite our strong progress, there is still much to do in the year ahead. I look forward to sharing updates with all of you about the following efforts in development:

- The ongoing celebration of our 100th Anniversary of the City's founding, activities and events to celebrate our Centennial Year.
- A new, improved, and responsive website. Receive news, access to information, and City services in a completely mobile-friendly and easy-to-use website which will have a whole new look and functionality.
- Outreach and engagement in the development of our City Master Planning process for Montebello and your Parks & Recreation Department.
- The redevelopment and improvement of under-utilized retail space throughout the City.
- Ongoing City Hall renovations.
- Upkeep and employee relations updates on staffing and salary negotiations.

I'll hope you stay engaged and partner with us as we work to build a better future. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your City departments with questions or concerns.

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR FIRE CHIEF

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- Personnel management and staffing software to improve shift scheduling.
- Digital radios with programming that enables more robust radio communications.
- Video conferencing capabilities at all fire department stations and facilities.
- Fiber-optic systems that provide consistent and department-wide connectivity.

Did you know that the Montebello Fire Department owns and operates its own state-of-the-art communication system? Through the Interagency Communications Interoperability (ICI) program, we have seven radio towers strategically located throughout the City in a system developed to solve communication problems experienced during the 9/11 attacks. First responders can now reliably communicate with one another in disasters and emergencies. This system has vastly improved communications during emergencies while reimbursing the City through additional user fees. Departments and first responders using our system can communicate through digital frequencies in real-time, which provides vast improvements in communications safety over our previous analog radio system. Because we own and manage this communications system, it opens the door to add new subscribers and other users to increase the revenue and safety this system can provide for the region.

Responding to 9-1-1 emergency and non-emergency calls for service occurs multiple times of the day. As an "all-risk" fire department, we respond to a wide range of calls for service. Having the proper tools and equipment with the most modern and cutting-edge technology is vital for the safety of our firefighters and the public. Our leaders understand this and have invested in improving public safety. A common example is car accidents. Modern vehicles contain technological advances and are made stronger to protect occupants and keep them safe. The flip side of these safety improvements

mean it becomes much more difficult to extract accident victims following a collision. One of our most common tools for this job is known as the "Jaws of Life." With the purchase of brand new hydraulic rescue tools, Montebello firefighters have better cutting abilities allowing us to extract trapped victims through faster, battery-equipped tools that can be used immediately, which is important when seconds matter. Last but not least is the addition of a brand new fire engine, which



**Conrad "Rocky" Lopez**  
Deputy Fire Chief

entered service on October 15, 2020.

Finally, I would like to welcome and introduce our new Deputy Fire Chief, Conrad "Rocky" Lopez, who joined the department last August. His invaluable support has already helped us hire and train new recruits and future

firefighters. He also serves as the Paramedic Coordinator working with our Medical Director, Nurse Educator, and Paramedics to ensure constant training of qualified and responsive personnel. In order to maintain a department that is always qualified and ready to serve, our outreach and recruiting efforts have never been more robust than they are today. By being correctly staffed, we reduce the costs resident taxpayers contribute to pay for overtime.

We look forward to improving our current service delivery while developing how we respond to emergencies with staff and personnel who are highly trained, highly motivated, and capable of providing the best possible service for Montebello residents.

I want to extend my appreciation for the opportunity to share the exciting changes taking place within your Fire Department. I am excited by the progress we have made and continue making every day.

# Parks and Recreation Updates



David Sosnowski  
Director of Recreation & Community Services

It's an honor to share your Recreation & Community Services Department has continued to offer support and services throughout the year, both for the public and our community partners as well. Despite facing many challenges involving the pandemic, we have been able to adapt, plan, and progress new ways of providing services.

The pandemic has taken its toll on everyone in one way or another, and we as a department reassessed our goals and purpose for the City. While we offer a wide variety of athletic and recreational programming, our primary purpose is providing quality community service. To ensure the community's well-being, we partnered with local community groups, state, and county officials to host several food drives around the city. These partnerships enabled us to bring a COVID-19 Mobile Testing Site to our Civic Center which we help staff every week. When the pandemic began, we developed a weekly food and essential item delivery service to take care of our seniors and community members in need. Additionally, we've expanded our digital services by developing a "Rec 'N' Go" program. This service offers a virtual recreation center and video programming for crafting, holiday celebrations, and exercise tips to keep our youth engaged and smiling through this

challenging period. Ultimately, our work is a testament to the amazing effort our recreation leaders have done and all the support we've received to provide essential services.

Another big part of our work this year has been our continued efforts in the Building Maintenance Division. We've carried out improvement projects for several City facilities including City Hall, police headquarters, the transportation building, park facilities, and fire stations. Staff have performed repair and maintenance projects as well as full remodels and restructures of existing office space. Additionally, an Energy Services Performance Project began with replacing aging infrastructure while conserving energy with more efficient HVAC, lighting and roofing components.

been enhanced with many improvements. Facilities were refurbished to improve aesthetic conditions of the park. This included the rehabilitation of the Taylor Ranch barn, the park gazebo, and the addition of a pond water feature. Safety and modernization improvements were also made and the park has new ADA compliant restrooms. Concrete enhancements were added to the parking lot and adjustments made to sidewalk ramps and curbs. We also enriched the park with new green space, landscaping, and irrigation systems.

A comprehensive Parks and Facilities Master Plan update will provide a clear set of goals, policies, and objectives for the Recreation and Community Services Department. The plan will address current needs while looking



Our Golf Division continues to provide quality customer experiences while ushering in a new era with a new Golf Professional and Landscape Maintenance Contractor at our public 18-hole golf course. Antares Golf has been retained to assist us in bringing a quality look and enhanced playability to the course.

We recently reopened historic Taylor Ranch Park to the community. After decades of the space being largely unusable, the park has

to the future for possible areas of expansion in our services and green space offerings. This Master Plan will be completed in early 2021 and will help guide the City in its future planning and care for our green and facility infrastructure. Results will be made public for all to see. There's more to come as we continue to celebrate our 100th Anniversary year with virtual community programming and events. We invite you to keep making history with us.

# City Addresses Homeless Concerns

In 2018, the City of Montebello unveiled its four year plan to prevent and combat homelessness. This plan was unanimously adopted by the City Council on June 27, 2018. In 2019 the City Manager gave instruction to the Montebello Fire Department to lead and oversee the plan's implementation and development. Their focus will be to ensure prioritization and assess the economic, social and health factors impacting the homeless and those at-risk of becoming homeless in this community. Individuals experiencing homelessness often rely heavily on the City's Fire-based Emergency Medical Services system as their primary care for non-emergency situations. The Fire Department has determined it was not equipped with the necessary tools to respond to crisis issues related to homelessness, therefore it began exploring long-term solutions. After careful planning and bolstered with renewed support from the new City Manager and his leadership team, Deputy Director for Housing and Sustainability Angelica Palmeros was hired. Under the leadership of the Fire Chief, the Montebello Community Assistance Program (MCAP) has been developed. This project is a collaborative effort between the City, community-based organizations, local healthcare providers, and surrounding cities. MCAP's goal will be to deploy a team in the field with the proper resources to address chronic homelessness and ease the number of homeless response calls typically handled by the Fire Department's Paramedic teams.

The City's "Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness" has three purposes: to reduce the extent and scope of homelessness within Montebello, align City resources with County investments, and improve quality of life for all residents. According to the most recent Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) homeless count conducted in 2020, 170 homeless persons were identified living in Montebello. This number can change up or down frequently.

**Over the past two years,** City staff conducted multiple stakeholder meetings and interviews to develop the following comprehensive, best-practices approach to address homeless issues with six specific goals in mind:

- Goal #1:** To better understand the City's homeless population.
- Goal #2:** Coordinate with regional partners on Homelessness Plan implementation.
- Goal #3:** Explore the feasibility of shelter options and services.
- Goal #4:** Promote the development of affordable housing.
- Goal #5:** Enhance current homelessness engagement activities.
- Goal #6:** Expand access to workforce development and employment programs.



MCAP patrol vehicle being outfitted to assist the homeless.

Significant funding for these efforts has been provided by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGCOG) and the Gateway City Council of Government (GCCOG). The Council of Government's are regional planning agencies that aim to maximize the quality of life in their respective regions. Their support goes directly to the hiring, public education and outreach efforts of the homeless task force being led by Deputy Director Palmeros. The team recently welcomed on board a full time social worker, Sandra Olivas, who will be a key member in the implementation and outreach of the task force's efforts. We look forward to sharing additional updates about the progress of this effort as outreach begins in the New Year.

# City Finance Updates



Michael Solorza  
Director of Finance

In these challenging times, it's always good to know where your money is and how it's being put to use. Just like balancing a personal checkbook, the City is no different in how we must manage and ensure our funding is being used - just on a much larger scale.

This past year saw several key financial achievements that are critical to the future success and stability of the City.

The most significant of these achievements is the approval of a balanced budget for all City departments. In the process of getting to this point, we've been able to identify and implement cost efficiencies that have enabled us to expand services in some areas. We have experienced no reductions or cutbacks in City services – a significant achievement especially considering the negative economic impact the pandemic has had on many other municipalities and industries.

Taking a close look at our expenses and budget has produced many positive and visible outcomes that have permitted us to get the following accomplished in 2020:

- City Hall infrastructure improvements and upgrades including repairs to the

building's heating and cooling system and replacement of the roof.

- ADA building upgrades and pandemic safety improvements.
- East Wing office remodeling and improvements.
- A \$6.5 million investment in environmental upgrades and improvements in all City buildings which we expect will return on investment cost savings due to improved energy efficiencies.
- Secured \$25 million in new bonds secured to conduct street improvements, which resulted in zero impact to the general fund, and allows to begin immediately paving our roads.
- Issued \$152 million in pension obligation bonds which eliminated our unfunded liabilities which will reduce our future expenditures to CalPERS for years to come, again, with no impact to the City's general fund.
- Moved our business license application and updating completely online, allowing business owners in the City to submit, complete or make changes all via a new digital tool.

However, as virtually everyone has been financially impacted by the pandemic,

Montebello is experiencing lower sales tax revenue as a result of stay-at-home orders and reduced consumer and economic activity in the City. The good news is our projections indicate the impact is not going to be as severe as we originally projected. Our projection is that we will see an additional \$400,000 in sales tax revenue in the new fiscal that we originally calculated when the COVID-19 restrictions first took effect. So while the impact is still real, it hasn't hit as hard as was initially anticipated during budget development.

And finally, we have made strong progress in making City business services available online, which results in not only greater public safety by reducing the need for personal interactions, but improves the efficiency of our processes through digital information submission, tracking and response. Improvements in these processes allow us to pay vendors quicker by using more secure and reliable electronic fund transfers and reducing or eliminating paperwork errors. Overall this creates a more efficient City Hall in terms of doing business across the board.

We want every resident to understand how and where their money is being put to use, so to promote transparency and understanding, anyone can find the City's budget and the many details about where and how money is spent and flowing on our website.

# Planning & Community Development



Joe Palombi  
Director of Community Development

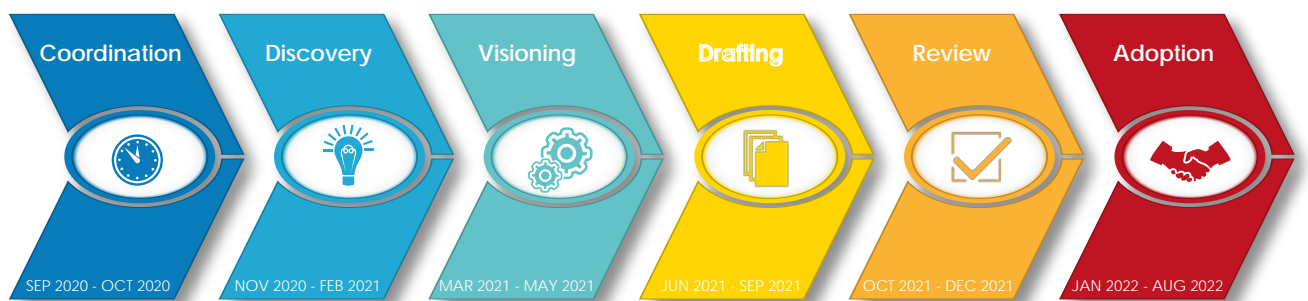
The last time the City's General Plan was updated was 1973. That year Richard Nixon was President, the Paris Peace Accords were executed ending the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, "The Exorcist" was the top film, Stevie Wonder and ABBA were topping music charts, and gas cost just 39 cents a gallon.

I am very happy to report that not only is the City engaged in updating and modernizing its General Plan, but this is also an exciting time and opportunity for residents and stakeholders to provide input and perspective. A City's General Plan provides a roadmap for everything from open space and parks, to future housing needs and development and improved mass transit and traffic management.

The General Plan update also provides an opportunity for the implementation of "specific plans" to establish zoning for a more concise vision and development standards for targeted areas such as the Montebello downtown area. This process will establish rules and regulations to formulate guiding principles on how an area will look and feel to residents and visitors alike. Specifically with regard to housing, we want this update

to create the policy, vision and plan for our City's future housing needs – the roadmap for where and how much to build. Over the last year it's been encouraging to see we are receiving a notable increase in permit requests for building permits for tenant and home improvements, which is a positive sign that people are investing in improving their residences and properties. Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs have also seen growth as permits for these types of residential additions have increased.

Lastly, it's important to note that in January 2020, Phase A of the previously approved Montebello Hills Specific Plan Project was approved, which means 349 new homes are anticipated to begin construction in the first or second quarter of 2021. We are very excited about seeing this development project come to fruition after more than a decade of planning and reviews, as these new homes will help ease the current housing crisis. And because the City now has an updated and certified "Housing Element" in place, something that



As we now begin, the entire update process is expected to take approximately 18 months to two years to complete. During this time, my department's goal is to get out to every neighborhood in the City and talk to residents to understand the future needs and wants of our community. Residents reading this have an important role to play here, because much of the new development that will be considered by the City will rely on the goals and policies that are established in this plan. Your input will shape the look and feel of the future Montebello.

hasn't been updated since 1997, we have received grant monies totaling over \$610,000 in to support the entire update of our general plan. This was a huge accomplishment that was orchestrated over a short window of time this year and reduces the financial burden local taxpayers like you have to pay for this type of general planning.

We look forward to the opportunities 2021 will bring to help shape and build a Montebello of the future that all residents and our community can enjoy and be proud of.

## A MESSAGE FROM HUMAN RESOURCES

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enables the City to be perceived as a place highly qualified people want to work for. This is a process of continuous improvement.

Next year, this process will continue by negotiating and updating our union bargaining agreements, (memorandums of understanding or MOUs), so that we can evaluate compensation for our unionized employees and their work requirements and expectations. These agreements are important to update as the process of consolidating complicated and highly detailed MOUs has been needed for many years. MOUs need to be addressed administratively in order to align, improve and streamline the many different policies and procedures that currently exist, and sometimes conflict, with each other. Updated and improved policies help reduce financial risks, eliminate or significantly reduce employee confusion and clarify vague language. Having these will improve the City's business efficiency and future labor negotiations.

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR POLICE CHIEF

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our officers are not only seen, but known by local residents where they live. Unfortunately the pandemic limited our ability to have neighborhood meetings but once the all clear is given we will reach out to our community partners to host meetings. A major milestone for this year has been steady and progressive work to keep this department staffed and positions filled. One element of this, along with all City departments, has been facilitating retirements of long-time service officers. It's important to note that our recruiting efforts and outreach has been successful in helping us remain near fully staffed, even as we experience departures due to retirement. Any positions funded are being filled and our openings are posted on the City's webpage for qualified applicants to consider.

Most importantly, as the effects of COVID-19's impact, social unrest, and political climate have reached many areas of day-to-day living, there are no plans or discussions to defund your Police Department. We will remain at full readiness. It's been very encouraging to see and hear the support our officers have experienced since the beginning of this pandemic and during the recent civil unrest. For this continued support I say "thank you" on behalf of all our officers and staff. Our offices are well aware of today's environment and they – and I appreciate your encouragement.

As for the future: I am focused on increasing our Police Volunteer Program, especially in the wake of this year's pandemic impact. Our citizen patrols, made up of people like you, have been very effective and welcomed, and I hope to increase this program by adding at least 30 new volunteers of all ages and backgrounds who will have an opportunity to work closely with us and the community. The same effort will help expand our Police Activities and Athletics League (PAAL) program. These opportunities will be communicated and offered to residents across all areas of the City so the community's representation will be as robust as possible.

On behalf of the entire Montebello Police Department, I thank you for your support.

## Public Works Updates



James Enriquez  
Director of Public Works

You may have noticed things are happening on the streets of Montebello recently. Something really great has been happening on streets all over the city - about 110 of them to be exact. As you can read in the "Paving the Way" story on page 3, Montebello is the first city in the region to make use of a the

advanced paving process called Asphalt-Rubber Aggregate Membrane (ARAM) seal coat. The paving process is also quick - with each step taking a day rather than weeks and traffic was allowed back on the street at the end of each work day. We are currently in a pause with this work as this entire process requires warmer temperatures in order to apply the road materials with the best adhesion and efficiency in order to achieve maximum lifespan and use. Residents along unfinished streets have been advised with notices dropped at their residences. But don't worry, while you wait for the final top surface to be applied after this winter season, the road surface is completely weather proof and safe to drive on until the paving process is completed. Please call the Public Works Department at (323) 887-4640 if you have or experience any concerns with paving conditions. We look forward to finishing the project during warmer weather in 2021.

The Paving the Way program is a \$24 million bond-funded program using existing sales-tax revenue the city receives from the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The program enabled the city to accelerate a significant amount of street paving work with no impact the city's General Fund.

The next phase of Paving the Way will be on arterial city streets, with construction

scheduled to begin in summer 2021. Arterial streets scheduled for resurfacing include Whittier Boulevard and portions of Montebello Boulevard and Beverly Boulevard.

And if you haven't seen or taken advantage of it, please consider using our new My Montebello mobile app – available to download for free from the Apple or Google Play stores. This gives you the power to report issues of concern about numerous items including: animal control issues, abandoned bulky items, litter, recycling and illegal dumping, graffiti, potholes, and other types of city maintenance issues. With a simple click or touch of your phone screen, you can send information directly to our Public Works office for response and evaluation. The power to keep your city clean, functional and proud is now in your hand – and your phone.

Here's the year-to-date number of reports we've responded to from app users since it was launched earlier this year:

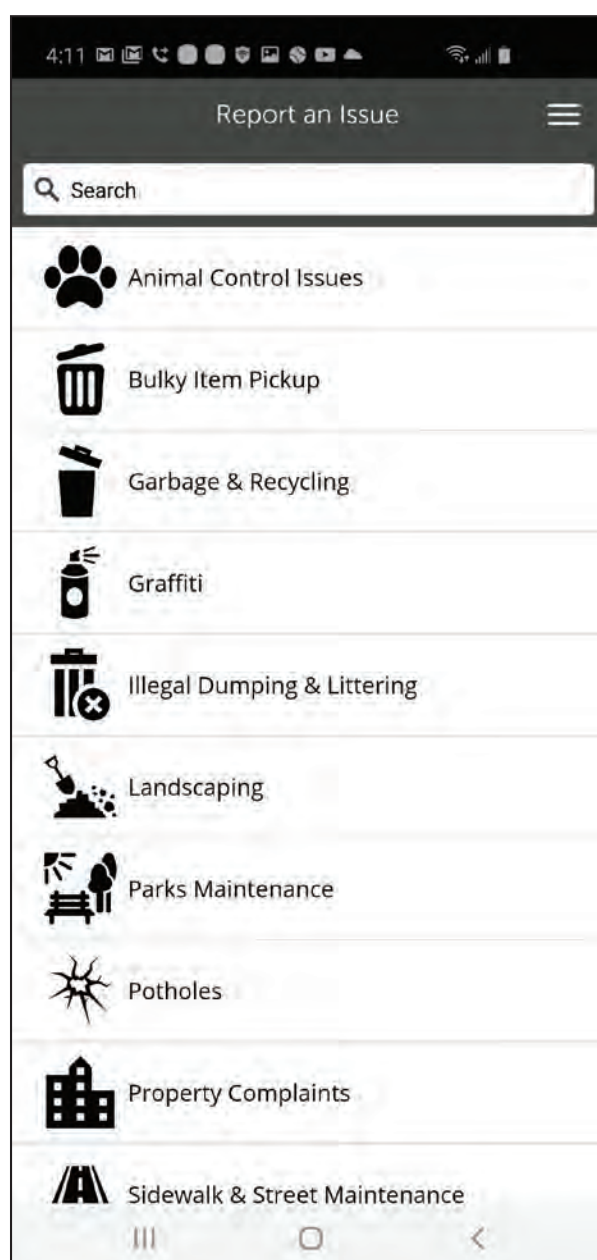
- Graffiti: 528
- Illegal Dumping & Litter: 1,506
- Potholes: 311
- Traffic Signal Malfunction: 14
- Sidewalk Maintenance: 415
- Trees: 342

Please look forward to seeing these additional Public Works projects in development in 2021:

- Beach Street Pavement and Storm Drain Project (Vail Ave to Bluff Rd)
- Concourse Avenue Street Improvement Project (Madison Ave to Beverly Blvd)

Citizen help and feedback contributes directly to help keep and maintain the City as place we are all proud to live, work and play. Your involvement and support in reporting issues is appreciated.

## Download the free My Montebello Mobile App



# Transportation Department Updates



Young-Gi Kim Harabedian  
Director of Transportation

Progress is possible even under the most trying of circumstances which is why I am proud that Montebello Bus Lines (MBL) continues to innovate and improve services for our riders, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have traveled on one of our buses recently, you know that MBL has made a series of changes in order to prevent the spread and improve safety conditions during the pandemic. Improvements include the installation of clear hard barriers, similar to those now seen at supermarkets and restaurants, to protect Bus Operators and passengers from airborne germs, the addition of complimentary face mask dispensers in the front of the buses, the implementation of a cap on the total number of passengers allowed on the bus at any time to promote social distancing, and the establishment of a robust and rigorously cleaning procedure that uses industry-grade anti-viral cleaning products to kill germs. Moving forward, we continue to stay in compliance with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health by following their safety guidelines and increasing service based on our ridership data.

Montebello Bus Lines is undergoing a comprehensive transit operations analysis for the first time in decades. By systematically reviewing our operations and gathering extensive community input throughout the New Year, we will greatly improve the service we provide to our customers by tailoring our bus routes to the current and future travel needs of the community. MBL is here to serve you and improve our service!

Meanwhile, we continue to make meaningful progress in our effort to improve service for our loyal customers while reducing air pollution and easing traffic in the community. Riders can

now pay for their fare on their smart phone, take advantage of the multiple bus lines to Downtown Los Angeles, and enjoy additional mid-day service.

This year, we will continue our quest to build a state-of-the-art zero-emission electric fleet by pursuing state and federal grant opportunities and investing in charging infrastructure. You can rest assured knowing that your local transit agency is doing its part to improve the quality of the air we breathe every single day.

During this difficult time, it's been humbling to have the opportunity to give back. Thanks to the incredible leadership of our Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and the Montebello Rotary Club, we were able to donate seven buses to a handful of cities abroad where they live out their second useful life. Each of those

buses will make a positive impact in other communities while representing the generous spirit of Montebello residents.

If you're a loyal rider, thank you for the trust you place in us to provide you with safe, affordable, and convenient public transportation. If you haven't given Montebello Bus Lines a try yet, I look forward to earning your business. In the meantime, let's keep our distance for now so we can come together soon.

Follow us on social media (@Montebello\_Bus\_Lines) or visit our website [www.RideMBL.com](http://www.RideMBL.com) to keep up with latest news and events, including a change in our schedule starting January 3. In the coming months, in honor of the City's Centennial Anniversary, keep an eye out for our Student Art Contest, Tap Card/Token give-away, and so much more.



- Rider Safety During COVID-19:**
- A) Socially distanced seating.**
  - B) Safety barriers for bus operators.**
  - C) Free masks.**
  - D) Rider updates through social media & in-bus advertising.**
  - E) All-staff daily temperature checks.**
  - F) Bus capacity reduced.**



## City Council

Kimberly Ann Cobos-Cawthorne  
Mayor

David N. Torres  
Mayor Pro Tem

Angie Jimenez  
Councilmember

Scarlet Peralta  
Councilmember

Salvador Melendez  
Councilmember

Christopher Jimenez  
City Clerk

Rafael Gutierrez  
City Treasurer

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