



**MNO Casa Blanca Neighborhood  
August 20, 2008  
Ysmael Villages Community Center**

**Legal:**

Q – What is the procedure for naming buildings in the City? We believe the Casa Blanca community should have input in the naming of buildings in our neighborhood.

A – The naming of City facilities is based on recommendations by City Boards and Commissions and ratified by the Riverside City Council. The community may provide input at any point up to and including the City Council meeting at which the action is taken by writing, calling or attending the meeting.

**Development:**

Q – Can the City help improve the front of Chavez Auto Parts to make it look more presentable?

A – The Redevelopment Agency recently approved funding for the Agency's Commercial Improvement Program (CIP) in the Casa Blanca Redevelopment Project Area. The CIP offers business owners and tenants up to \$25,000 in the form of a grant (with 10% matching funds from the owner) to upgrade the facades of their buildings and make other exterior improvements. Potential improvements include exterior treatments, wall finishes, exterior paint, glass/window replacement, landscaping, etc. The Agency is offering the program to all eligible businesses/tenants within the Casa Blanca area, including the owner of Chavez Auto Parts.

Q – Can the City get rid of abandoned buildings in the Casa Blanca area?

A – Abandoned houses should be reported to Code Enforcement at the following link [www.riversideca.gov/rc/](http://www.riversideca.gov/rc/) or by calling the City's Call Center, at 826-5311. Code Enforcement will send out an officer to address any nonconforming issues. Under Code Enforcement's General Demolition Abatement Program, a Code Officer will visit an identified vacant property to determine if it is salvageable or a threat to the welfare of the community. If the building is determined as an imminent threat to the community, a building official will sign off on the demolition and it will be demolished. Furthermore, under City Ordinance 6.11, Code Enforcement has the authority to fine owners \$500 a day if their vacant property is deemed to be unkempt. Examples of this would be graffiti, vagrants using property, trash, etc.

## **Parks, Recreation & Community Service**

Q – There was a summer camp program at Ysmael Villegas Park this year. Can more staff be added next year so more kids can participate in the program?

A – Since the program was very effective this past summer, the City will definitely look at the possibility of increasing funding next fiscal year to be able to increase enrollment in the Day Camp Program.

Q – The Ysmael Villegas Community Center is looking so nice. Can the Center keep the new chairs that were brought in for Mayor's Night Out which really made the place look nice?

A – The furniture will remain at the facility. This furniture was ordered approximately three months before Mayor's Night Out and was delivered the week prior to the meeting.

## **Police**

Q – What can be done with loud music disturbances on the weekends? It seems the police do not respond.

A – Residents are encouraged to call the police who have the option of citing someone for disturbing the peace or issuing a party pamphlet when there are disturbances to the neighborhood by loud music and parties.

Q – Can a tow truck be parked in front of the resident's home on the street at night when that person is "on call"?

A – A tow truck is not considered an emergency vehicle and can not be parked on a residential street.

Q – Can the City stop people from loitering in front of stores on Madison?

A – The City of Riverside can not stop people from simply loitering in an area. However, individuals can be cited and asked to move along if they are blocking the sidewalk or creating a traffic hazard.

## **Public Works:**

Q – The City provides street sweeping however, it is difficult to know when that might happen. Does the City have a street sweeping plan for Casa Blanca?

A – The Street Sweeping Improvement Program was implemented in September 2008. This program includes the posting of streets as "no parking" on sweeping days and the provision of parking enforcement services. The key to achieving clean streets is removing vehicles from the sweeper path.

Q – We need sidewalks on several streets in our neighborhood including Mayfair Lane, Duke Street, Tangerine Way, Blossom Way, and on parts of Mary Street and Coolidge Avenue. Can this be put into the City's plan?

A – The City has several funding programs for construction of new sidewalks, with the highest funding priority given to construction of missing sidewalks on arterial streets, adjacent to schools, and those specifically requested by disabled residents. The residential neighborhood bounded by Mary Street to the west, Maude Street to the east, Marguerita Avenue to the south and the BNSF Railroad tracks to the north, includes some 2.65 miles of residential streets with no sidewalks. The estimated cost for construction of sidewalks on just one side of each street in this neighborhood is approximately \$500,000 to \$750,000, for which there are no funds available in the 2008-09 budget. However, street improvements in this area are eligible for funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. As this neighborhood is within a defined CDBG area, staff will consider these sidewalks for CDBG funds available in the next fiscal year.

Q – There is a health concern regarding standing water on Marguerita Avenue from Maude Street to Mary Street.

A – The water is a result of run off from the surrounding neighborhood. There are several homes that have overgrown plants and grass that have grown into the gutter. Public Works has sprayed the weeds along the curb and gutter and patched the damaged asphalt near the curb. Once the weeds are removed we will send the sweeper by to do an extra clean-up. This should minimize the pooling of water in the curb and gutter.

Q – Can speed bumps and a stop sign be put on Dorlen Street?

A – The recommended traffic calming measure is an all-way stop at either Fiesta Avenue or at Lydia Avenue. The support of neighbors adjacent to the sign location is required. Residential stop petitions for your use have been mailed and signs will be installed upon receipt of a completed petition.

Q – Could there be a traffic light installed at the intersection of Marquerita Avenue and Washington Street? It is very dangerous for families to cross the street.

A – A survey of the intersection has been completed. The review of the intersection indicates visibility is excellent and controlled crossings exist within a quarter of a mile each way and therefore the intersection currently ranks #30 on the priority list of locations for traffic lights at the intersection.

Q – Can there be a wall built to block the train traffic noise?

A – Sound walls are not a viable or cost effective solution for Riverside due to the extent of the rail lines. However, the City is proposing to establish Quiet Zones along portions of the Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail corridors. Train horns would be silenced 24 hours a day within the

proposed Quiet Zones in accordance with Federal Railroad Administration requirements. The Quiet Zones will extend from Panorama Road to Cridge Street along the UP corridor, and from the southerly City limits to Jane Street along the BNSF corridor. The City is in the process of hiring a consultant to assist with implementation of the Quiet Zones. City Council approval of the consultant agreement is expected in October 2008. Preliminary and final design including preparation of bid documents, execution of railroad agreements, and filing of applications with California Public Utility Commission (for alterations to at-grade crossings) will take approximately two years. Construction of the Quiet Zone corridor improvements is expected to start in the second half of 2010 and will take approximately one year.

Q – In the newer Mendoza Housing Project on Mendoza Way, a water flow problem has been created on the street leaving a pool of stagnate water on the street where mosquitoes gather. Can the City repair the street to eliminate the standing water?

A - The pooling of water is the results of  
The pooling of water is a result of grass clippings and other debris in the curbs and on the street. To remedy the problem it is important to remove cars along the street on Street Sweeping days. Implementation of the Street Sweeping Improvement Program will occur in this neighborhood in 2009. Permanent signs will be posted along the street as to when the street will be swept. In the interim the Public Works Department will check the drains.

Q – Can the City add an additional turn lane on Washington at Indiana to help eliminate traffic built up on Washington? The traffic is backing up past the train tracks, which is complicated because of the frequency of the trains.

A – Now that paving is complete, the City is reviewing the intersection and will continue to do so until traffic patterns return to normal. After review a traffic improvement measure will be implemented as needed.

Q - Does the City receive grant funds of environmental education and could it be used in the Casa Blanca area?

A – The City receives two grants for which environmental education is a component.

The first grant is from the California Integrated Waste Management Board and its objective is to promote the recycling and proper disposal of used oil. This grant helps to fund Household Hazardous Waste drop off events, the curbside oil collection program and helps the City provide support and outreach to local certified oil recycling centers. Programs are advertised in the Press Enterprise, on the City's webpage, and in utility bill inserts. In addition, the grant helps to fund the purchase and distribution of used oil storage containers which are packaged with information on the recycling of used motor oil.

The second grant is with the Department of Conservation. The objective of this grant is to increase recycling, with a focus on bottles and cans. Funds from this program are used to support the CURE outreach program to promote

the benefits of recycling - which is a citywide effort. The grant helps the City purchase promotional items, and funds the publishing and promotion of recycling information such as utility bill inserts, purchase of recycling containers for schools (quantities are limited and are on a first come first served basis). In addition, the City will promote recycling in an upcoming recycling public service announcement for television which will also be available in a DVD/CD.

### **Public Utilities:**

Q – There is a need for more handicapped parking spots at the Riverside Public Utilities building where residents pay their bills.

A – The City is exploring the possibility of adding four additional handicapped accessible parking spaces in conjunction with the addition of solar panels to the Solar Carport Structure which is to be completed in the winter of 2009.

### **Other:**

Q – Does the Ysmael Villegas Community Center have a disaster program with water first aid kits, cots or blankets? Does the Center have a back up generator if the electricity goes off? Is the staff prepared to help Center visitors in the time of disaster?

A – First aid kits and supplies are available at each community center. All Recreation Services Coordinators and Supervisors receive periodic training in basic first aid and emergency procedures. In addition, the American Red Cross provides Emergency Shelter Operations training to all staff at the Coordinator and Supervisor level, with the next session tentatively scheduled for October, 2008. In the event of a major disaster, the City will partner with the American Red Cross to provide residents emergency shelter and assistance at our parks and community centers. Although there is not an emergency generator on site, community centers are being equipped with switch equipment to enable receipt of power from portable generators which can be used during emergency situations.

Q – When will the free internet service be available for the La Sierra Hills area of Riverside?

A – There are some engineering challenges in extending signal to his area. The focus for the next 2-6 months is to complete the Riverside Airport to Casa Blanca (about 1 month out) and then the focus will be on the Plaza to the Woods Street (3-6 months). Next year, AT&T and the City will look at other areas. The City is aware of the request and it is now on the list of areas to address.

Q – The Home of Neighborly Services is in need of an after-school program which was previously funded by CDBG funds. Can the City assist with funding again?

A – The City has a long history of providing funding support for the Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Service (CBHNS), including the after-school tutoring project, through CDBG and other funding sources. During the 2008/09 CDBG funding cycle, CBHNS submitted an application for funding for the after-school tutoring program. Because of the limited amount of CDBG funding available to support the wide range of requests received from community organizations, one of the criteria used for evaluating these requests is the identification of other sources of funding the applicant anticipates applying toward the total project budget. CBHNS did not identify any other anticipated sources of funding in their application to apply toward the total budget proposed for the after-school tutoring project. The City remains committed to utilizing CDBG funding to address youth service needs and would be pleased to consider future proposals for funding assistance for the CBHNS after-school tutoring program.

Q – VFW Post 184 has given to the Casa Blanca Community and Greater Riverside Area for more than six years. We need the City's help to find a building for the Post's headquarters. What can the City do for us?

A – Councilmember Frank Schiavone had a meeting with Eddie Solis and other VFW representatives and identified a potential site.

Q – There is a continuing problem with day laborers in our neighborhood and outside several businesses in the Casa Blanca Area. What is the City doing about the situation?

A – The City is considering various ways to deal with day laborer related issues. The City is working to lessen the impacts on the neighborhood and surrounding businesses.