



# Information Item

**Date: March 2, 2016**

To: Mayor and City Council

From: David Martin, Director, Planning and Community Development  
Karen Ginsberg, Director, Community and Cultural Services

Subject: Expo Light Rail Celebration and 2016 Santa Monica Festival Update

## **Introduction**

This information item will update Council on the major festivities to mark the official opening of Expo Line Phase Two. In addition to supporting Metro's ribbon cutting ceremony by hosting activities at each of the new Santa Monica stations on opening day, the City of Santa Monica is also planning a series of community-oriented events to help welcome Expo to the City. The City will also introduce a collection of commemorative Transit Access Pass (TAP) cards featuring local artists. On June 4, 2016 the City will host its own open streets celebration to mark Expo's arrival. This year, staff resources and funding traditionally allocated for the Santa Monica Festival, will be combined to support these seminal events.

## **Discussion**

An interdepartmental staff committee has been identifying ways to celebrate the commencement of the Expo Light Rail Line that will connect Santa Monica with the Los Angeles passenger rail network. Plans include the development of a series of three commemorative TAP cards featuring artwork by Santa Monica artists and banners near the train stations and around Santa Monica that will preview the arrival of Expo with artwork inspired by the energy of the City. TAP cards allow riders to load fares for Metro and several other transit agencies including the Big Blue Bus. The City will distribute 6,000

of the commemorative TAP cards to incentivize ridership and highlight Santa Monica's most distinctive icons, now accessible by rail.

### Commemorative Tap Card Art and Artists

#### **Cindy Bendat**

Cindy Bendat is a cultural, documentary and fine art photographer based in Santa Monica. She has photographed all over the world, and she has a diverse portfolio of work of people, places and festivals. She has traveled to Ethiopia for Meskel, to Mexico for Day of the Dead, to Sri Lanka for the elephant Perahera Festival, to India for the Pushkar Camel Fair, to China for the Sisters Eating Rice Festival, to Bhutan for the Paro Festival, and to New Orleans for the Jazz Fest.



Santa Monica Beach © Cindy Bendat 2008

#### **Thomas Eatherton**

Thomas Eatherton was born in Los Angeles, CA and studied at UCLA. His work derives from a painting tradition but it expanded to include the use of real light and space. In some of his pieces the viewer walks around in totally enclosed spaces. He employs computers in his work and has done projects in which he composed light panels in storefront windows, illuminating public spaces. He has lived and worked in Santa Monica since 1953.



Pier Promenade Party © Thomas Eatherton 2015

#### **Mimi Haddon**

Mimi Haddon cultivated her passion for photography while earning her BFA in Visual Communication Design from California State University, Long Beach. Upon graduating, she spent a year in Paris, France where she visually devoured the work of photographers past and present in the City's wealth of museums and galleries. She now makes her home in Santa Monica where she is inspired daily by the clash of nostalgic influences on modern realities.



Saint Monica © Mimi Haddon 2012

### Metro Ribbon Cutting

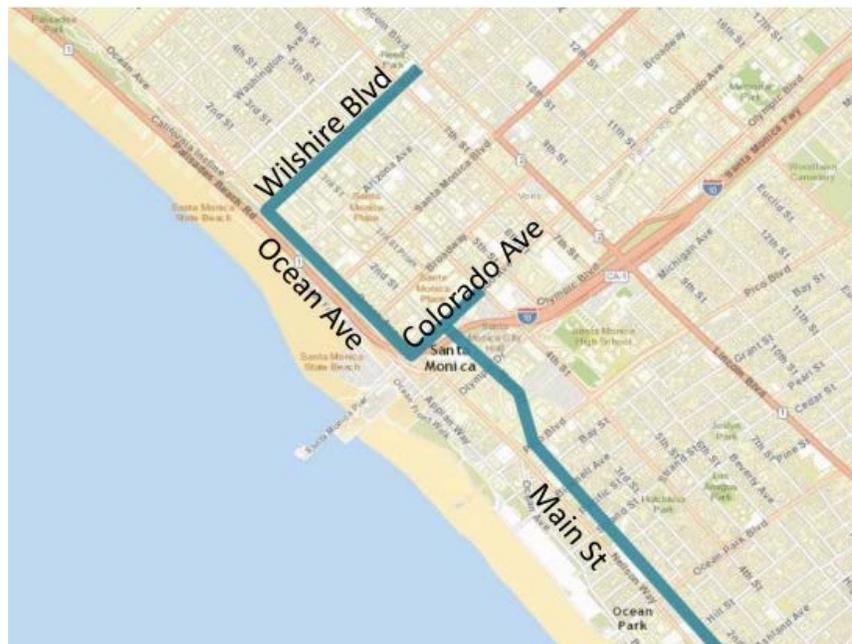
Two major events will celebrate the arrival of the train. The first event, produced by Metro will take place Friday, May 20, 2016, marking the opening of the Expo Line Phase Two. In partnership with Metro and City of Los Angeles, staff are coordinating a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Downtown Santa Monica Station, as well as complementary station festivities at 26<sup>th</sup> Street/Bergamot Station and 17<sup>th</sup> Street/SMC Station. Metro will provide free rides to the public for the entire day, so enthusiastic participation is expected.

### Santa Monica Open Streets Event

Santa Monica's major celebration will be an open streets event taking place on Saturday, June 4, 2016. Metro's Open Streets Grant Program awarded the City a \$200,000 grant for the one-day open streets event that will allow pedestrian and bicycle access to streets free of automobiles with activity hubs along the route.

The open streets event route will be approximately 2.5 miles as detailed in the map below. The following streets will be open for walking and cycling, with sensible accommodations for vehicular traffic:

- Main Street from Colorado Avenue to Marine Street,
- Colorado Avenue from Ocean Avenue to the Expo Station at 4th Street,
- Ocean Avenue from Wilshire Boulevard to Colorado Avenue (west side only adjacent to Palisades Park, northbound traffic lanes to remain open), and
- Wilshire Boulevard from Ocean Avenue to Lincoln Boulevard



*Open Streets Event Area – Portions of Main Street, Colorado Avenue, Ocean Avenue and Wilshire are proposed for the Open Streets event, with controlled vehicle crossings allowed at major intersections (Pico, Ocean Park, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, Lincoln, etc.)*

The event will focus on sustainable mobility, celebrate the arrival of Expo, capitalize on the completion of the Colorado Esplanade, while weaving art, culture and environmental learning opportunities throughout, similar to the Santa Monica Festival.

Staff are planning automobile crossings along the route: Main Street at Marine Street, Ocean Park Boulevard, Pico Boulevard, and Olympic Drive; Colorado Avenue at 4<sup>th</sup> Street; Ocean Avenue at Colorado (northbound); and Wilshire Boulevard at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets, and Lincoln Boulevard. Street closures are projected from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. to account for event setup and cleanup.

The City is working closely with local businesses, and neighborhood and community partners including Ocean Park Association, Downtown Neighborhood Association, Downtown Santa Monica Inc., the Main Street Merchants Association, Santa Monica Travel and Tourism, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, the Santa Monica Pier, and Santa Monica Place to ensure favorable and mutually beneficial outcomes from the open streets event. Metro and the Big Blue Bus will provide appropriate bus rerouting and access to the event. Public safety personnel have participated in the initial planning sessions and will continue their involvement through the event's completion.

This approach entails a one-time cancellation of the Santa Monica Festival (which normally takes place in May or June) due to the timeline of the various opening celebration activities. Resources normally allocated to the Santa Monica Festival will be directed to the production of these opening events. Staff from Office of Sustainability and the Environment and Community and Cultural Services that collaborate on the festival production annually recommend this approach given limited staff resources and the confluence of the timelines. The open streets event will serve as the City's signature event this year with an even larger footprint than the traditional Santa Monica Festival. The event will provide members of the entire community with opportunities to experience the streets in a different and exciting way. Staff from nearly all City departments will participate in its development.

The open streets event is funded in part with an Open Streets Program grant from Metro, in the amount of \$200,000, which necessitates a \$50,000 in-lieu local match. Council accepted the grant at their [July 28, 2015](#) meeting to fund the original route of Colorado Avenue from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Ocean Avenue, and Main Street from Colorado Avenue to Marine Street. Funds totaling \$100,000 normally allocated for the production of the Santa Monica Festival, will be repurposed to support both the Expo opening day festivities and the open streets event.

Staff plans to provide more detailed information on the outreach surrounding the opening celebrations, as well as a production contract for the open streets event, at the March 22, 2016 Council meeting.

**Prepared By:** Beth Rolandson, AICP, Principal Transportation Planner