

January 7, 2014

Dear Neighbor,

As part of the Village mixed-use development along Ocean Avenue, the developer will be installing new landscaped medians in front of the project along the center of Ocean Avenue. This is a required safety improvement of the project to reduce conflicting vehicle movements and enhance pedestrian safety. The medians will extend from the intersection of the new Olympic Drive to Vicente Terrace (Note: temporary closures for construction will extend further north and south). The medians are a key part of the implementation of the 2005 Civic Center Specific Plan vision to improve the walkability of the street and increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

This document will provide a brief history of the public process, the purpose and need for the median, and an explanation of alternative access routes.

### WHY IS A MEDIAN BEING CONSTRUCTED?

This safety enhancement was envisioned in the original Civic Center Specific Plan, adopted in 1993 and updated in 2005. Prompted by the purchase of 11.3 acres of former RAND property across from City Hall, the City of Santa Monica adopted the comprehensive update to the Santa Monica Civic Center Specific Plan on June 28, 2005<sup>1</sup>. Page 44 describes the "introduction of a landscaped median of approximately 10 feet in width, south of Olympic Drive, to reduce the scale of the street, and to allow for distinctive planting that reinforces the identity of the Civic Center."

Both prior to and after the original adoption in 1993, all phases of the plan have included numerous workshops and periods of public input. A Civic Center Working Group was established in 2001 to continue the public process, and Final Environmental Impact Statement was published in October 2004<sup>2</sup>.

1 <http://www.smgov.net/civicplan>  
2 <http://www.smgov.net/civicplanEIR>

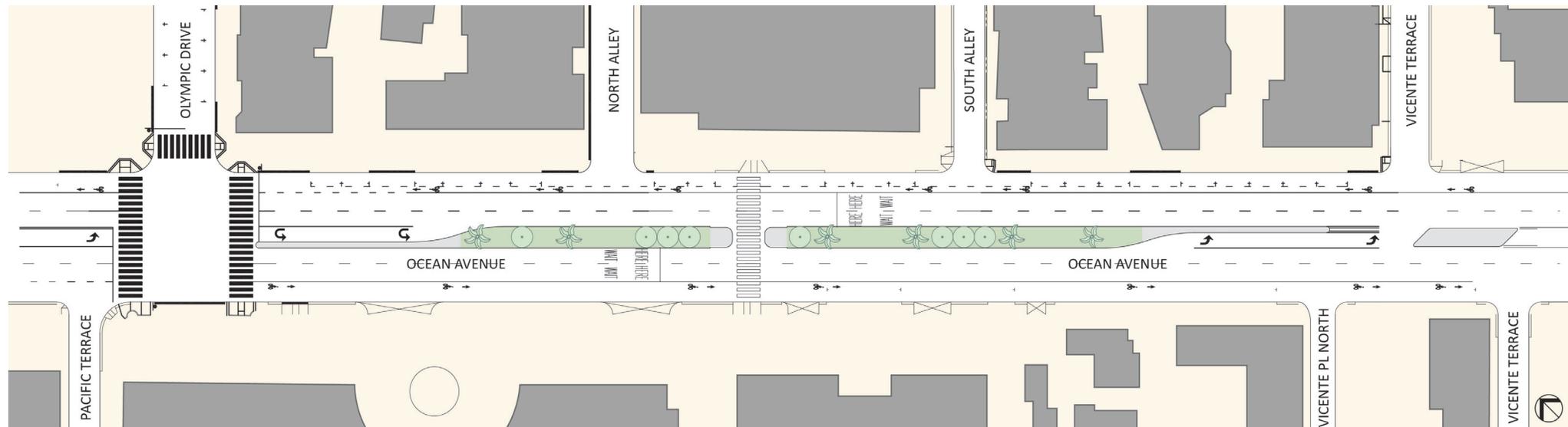
On May 13, 2008, the Civic Center Village Residential Project Development Agreement was approved. The agreement included a requirement that the developer would construct the raised median as part of the adopted Civic Center Specific Plan.

The City regularly installs raised medians in order to improve pedestrian safety, particularly along major streets and boulevards. The construction of raised medians is also identified as a key safety enhancement in the forthcoming Pedestrian Action Plan.

### HOW WILL I BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE STREETS AND DRIVEWAYS ALONG OCEAN AVENUE?

While left turns into and out of the streets and driveways along both sides of Ocean Avenue will no longer be possible due to the median, access to the streets and driveways from northbound Ocean Avenue will be maintained via the new signal at Ocean Avenue and Olympic Drive.

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This new signal will provide a protected U-turn in the northbound direction, so that northbound traffic may turn southbound on Ocean Avenue to access streets and driveways on the west side of Ocean Avenue. Southbound traffic will be able to make a left turn or U-turn at the southern end of the median at Vicente Terrace in order to travel northbound on Ocean Avenue and access streets and driveways on the east side of Ocean Avenue.

**HOW WILL I BE ABLE TO CROSS OCEAN AVENUE?**

With the anticipated increase in pedestrian activity, two traffic signals will provide safe locations to cross Ocean Avenue. At 1740 Ocean Avenue, a break in the median will be construction at the existing traffic signal located in front of the Le Merigot Hotel. This traffic signal serves solely as a pedestrian crossing. The new traffic signal at Ocean Avenue and Olympic Drive will have two pedestrian crossings at the northern end of the median, on both sides of the new Olympic Drive extension, and this signal will replace the existing signalized pedestrian crosswalk.

**QUESTIONS?**

A public meeting is scheduled for Monday **January 13, 2014** at the Civic Center, East Wing, located at 1855 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. The meeting will be held from 7:00 pm. to 8:00 pm. City staff will make a short presentation and answer questions on the project.

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