



Outreach Committee Report

Prepared for: The Mar Vista Community Council, Board of Directors

Prepared by: Kathryn Wheeler, Chair

March 25, 2021

Note: On March 13, 2020, the MVCC received official notice to stop operations. Through the leadership of the MVCC Chair, Elliot Hanna, the MVCC was the first Neighborhood Council to hold remote meetings, it was the [April 14, 2020, Board of Directors' meeting](#).

MISSION STATEMENT

To create and disseminate content through traditional, social, and electronic media that educates and informs Mar Vista stakeholders of the Mar Vista Community Council; including, but not limited to, increasing awareness of and participation in its functions, duties, and decisions.

OVERVIEW

There has been no major change since the last report (i.e., December 1, 2020). The *Safer L.A.* order is still in effect with no timeline as to its end. On June 8, 2021, the MVCC will hold its election and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) has approved a Vote-By-Mail only election. It should also be noted that DONE has down-sized to a skeleton staff with more cuts on the horizon.

The challenges ahead involve situations (e.g., COVID, ~25% budget cuts, Vote-By-Mail only election) which have never existed. Out-of-the-box thinking will be needed as well as relying on tried and true outreach (e.g., print media) to ensure that the community remains engaged with the MVCC. Of course, this will entail experimenting, which always comes with some failure. However, with the support of Stakeholders and the Board, we will learn from our mistakes. All of us can consider this a time of great enterprise—each of us can look forward to the upcoming year.

AVAILABLE ASSETS

Informing Mar Vista stakeholders of the MVCC message is the fundamental purpose of the MVCC. And the Outreach Committee, as with any good marketing company, needs its available assets coordinated and functioning as one with the minor tailoring (e.g., size, timing, material) necessary to achieve the highest benefit from each asset.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Due to the confines of being a City organization, many of the assets must continue to function on a sub par marketing level. Yet, Outreach continues to make strides in compensating for such City restrictions.

DONE is in the process of creating a Media Policy that will affect all Neighborhood Councils. The final version should be released by the next Outreach Report.

Facebook

Facebook has updated with a new look and five new features for Pages. They are: a) dedicated News Feed; b) easier account switching from personal to Page; c) task-based admin controls; d) Safety & Integrity Features that detect inappropriate activity with easier flagging. Unfortunately, they removed the public Like counts with this update.

Farmers' Market Blue Tent

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

Gmail

Google is changing its policies including Google Account storage. The policy will take affect after June 1, 2021. The impact to the MVCC could be significant IF we go over our storage limit. In the coming months, zip files will need to be used for archival and videos should be replaced with audio only to ensure no freezing of the gmail account.

Instagram

Instagram continually updates and adds new features about every month. Nothing that would have a major impact on the MVCC and how it is allowed to use Instagram.

MailChimp

The application has updated its software to include a few new features that might be of use to the MVCC in the future when committees are more active, in-person, and we update our website. But, for now, its function remains the same.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

– *Weekly Roundup*

The number of subscribers took a large leap after the distribution of the 2021 Winter Newsletter and it is steadily growing at a faster than normal pace since. Unsubscribes remains at 0 or 1 a month.

Next Door

The news is reporting that NextDoor will be going through some changes as it has plans to take its stock to the public market in 2021. As of this report, have not seen any changes.

SurveyMonkey

SurveyMonkey has been an instrumental in providing a new form of communication with the community. After its initial use for the *Outreach Community Plan Survey, September 8, 2020*, it has been utilized as a feedback form for the *Downtown Mar Vista Beautification Project*, a *Volunteer Sign Up* form, and to assist with locating stakeholders who did not receive a newsletter.

Twitter

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

Website

The Web Corner has confirmed they are finalizing the updates for the website and expect to be notified by the end of March to take a look, provide final approval, and go online.

Zoom

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

PROJECTS

A brief outline of what the Outreach Committee has been doing and/or is in the process of completing. This list is not exhaustive and is from the time period between reports.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Advertising

– BOILERPLATE ADS

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

– BUS BENCHES

During 2020, the MVCC approved an expenditure for a Bus Bench Campaign of six benches; seven buses were provided in mid-January 2021.

Our web analytics only provide information on a monthly calendar cycle. However, averaging January and February 2021 and comparing the numbers to December 2020, Users jumped 51%, Sessions increased by 45%, the Bounce Rate improved 6%, and the Direct User Acquisition increased 12% which indicates new users who are directly accessing MarVista.org and exploring the website.

Since the numbers stabilized in February; yet, remained high, the improvement would be due to advertising. And, the only new advertising for the MVCC has been the Bus Bench Campaign. While the Election Newsletter (released in early February) would help with the analytics of Sessions, the Direct User Acquisition and other markers would have been negatively affected due to its promotion of MarVista.org/election instead of the Home Page in the Bus Bench Campaign.

All in all, the Bus Bench Campaign is a resounding success, and should be a permanent part of the MVCC Outreach. The City also provides for PSA using bus shelters. The exact cost for a bus shelter is not provided until AFTER both the funding and the design have been approved by the Board and submitted to the City for final approval. The Outreach Committee will explore the idea of adding a Bus Shelter Campaign.

– DOOR HANGERS

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

- MVCC SEAL/LOGO

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report.*

- NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS - NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report.*

Outreach Community Plan Survey

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report.*

Event Mobility Cart

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report.*

MVCC Newsletter

A Winter 2021 “Election” Newsletter was printed and distributed the first weekend of February. Volunteers distributed to businesses that were open during the lockdown with many allowing a stack to remain for customers. There was uptick for the webpage MarVista.org/election and some phone inquires.

In the ongoing effort to reach as many stakeholders as possible, SurveyMonkey was used to provide a means by which stakeholders could state that they had not received the newsletter. Their addresses (and addresses only) were supplied to our distributor to ensure delivery of future newsletters.

The *Weekly Roundup*, MarVista.org's home page, and announcements at committee meetings were used to make stakeholders aware of the newsletter and a way to get one, if not received. At the time of writing this report, out of the twenty-four thousand newsletters distributed, thirty stakeholders responded as not having received the newsletter. Twenty-three were from single family units and seven were from multi-family units.

Each stakeholder was contacted to ensure each received one. In contacting stakeholders, many were looking for something in their mailbox or otherwise, “probably threw it away

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

assuming it was advertising”. Two reported that they had, in fact, received that newsletter but thought they were supposed to have received a regular (not election) newsletter. Also, when newsletters were re-delivered to stakeholders by an Outreach volunteer, it was reported that no less than four had the newsletter on the stairs, porch, or doorstep. The assumption should be made that without the COVID lockdown, these newsletters would have been found. Two contacted preferred to have a PDF sent to them instead of the printed version. Only two of the thirty did not receive re-delivery of the newsletter because there was no available access and no one returned any of the multiple attempts via phone and/or email. Additionally, there was only one multi-family unit resident who was willing to provide access for future newsletter distributions and this was a current chair of a MVCC committee.

As stakeholders get used to regular newsletters (and where to find them), as well as the removal of COVID lockdown, the number of people not receiving the newsletter should be decreased, and hopefully, more residents of multi-family units will volunteer to provide access; whereby, increasing MVCC’s outreach.

During the February 9, 2021 Board of Directors’ meeting, the board approved an expenditure to have the boundaries of Mar Vista geo-coded for a potential mailer. The cost of ~\$240 was to obtain the information necessary before a quote for a mailer to all Mar Vista addresses could be provided. This type of mailer is different than the Every Door Direct (EDD) by the post office.

During the March 9, 2021 Board of Directors’ meeting, estimates were provided for either a newsletter or mailer. The board approved the expenditure and a mailer was preferred by stakeholders and board members alike.

Outreach eMail

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

Outreach Table at the Board of Directors’ Meetings

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Remote Meetings

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

Storage Unit

Status unchanged since *December 1, 2020 Report*.

MOVING FORWARD

In the December report, it was noted that:

Considering the major change in the 2021 MVCC Election next June, it is hoped that the Board will approve funding for an *Election Informational Outreach* newsletter slated for distribution in January 2021. A Fall 2020 newsletter would have provided four additional months to prepare and inform the community of the Vote-By-Mail only election; however, Outreach will do its best to reach as many Stakeholders as possible in the remaining months.

As previously mentioned, the board did approve an election newsletter. It was very successful as well as the Bus Bench Ads. Hopefully, future board will decide to continue with them as reaching stakeholders is the number one job of every Neighborhood Council.

CONCLUSION

The remaining months of this term will provide an interesting period for the MVCC and the Outreach Committee. The election, of course, will consume the majority of its time and attention while current projects are completed. It is hoped that all stakeholders are reached and the June election is a success.

Please, feel free to contact the current Outreach Chair (Kathryn.Wheeler@MarVista.org) with ideas and suggestions. All are welcome and every idea is great for, at least, 15 minutes! If longer than that—we have a call to action! Come join us every third Thursday at 6:30pm. For

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

more information and meeting links, visit MarVista.org/remote. If you would like to volunteer, please visit: MarVista.org/volunteer.

Thank you! Stay safe and well!