



Outreach Committee Report

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

Prepared by: Kathryn Wheeler, Chair

March 19, 2020

Due to the [Safer at Home Order for Control of COVID-19](#) issued on May 13, 2020, this Report was not submitted for review to the Outreach Committee nor the Board of Directors until May and June, respectively.

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

The Committee has become more cohesive and unified in its vision and mission among the Mar Vista Community and Directors. The MVCC Newsletter was approved and distributed—a first in almost two years. Additionally, MVCC assets continue to be added to the main MVCC hub for ease of use, access, and transfer to future Directors.

Outreach continues to be grateful to those within the Mar Vista Community and the MVCC for its patience, understanding, and assistance during this formative period. The Outreach Committee is closer than ever to reaching its goals.

AVAILABLE ASSETS

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

Due to the confines of being a City organization, many of the assets must function on a sub par marketing field. Yet, Outreach will continue to make strides in compensating for such City restrictions that hamper marketing and messaging of the MVCC.

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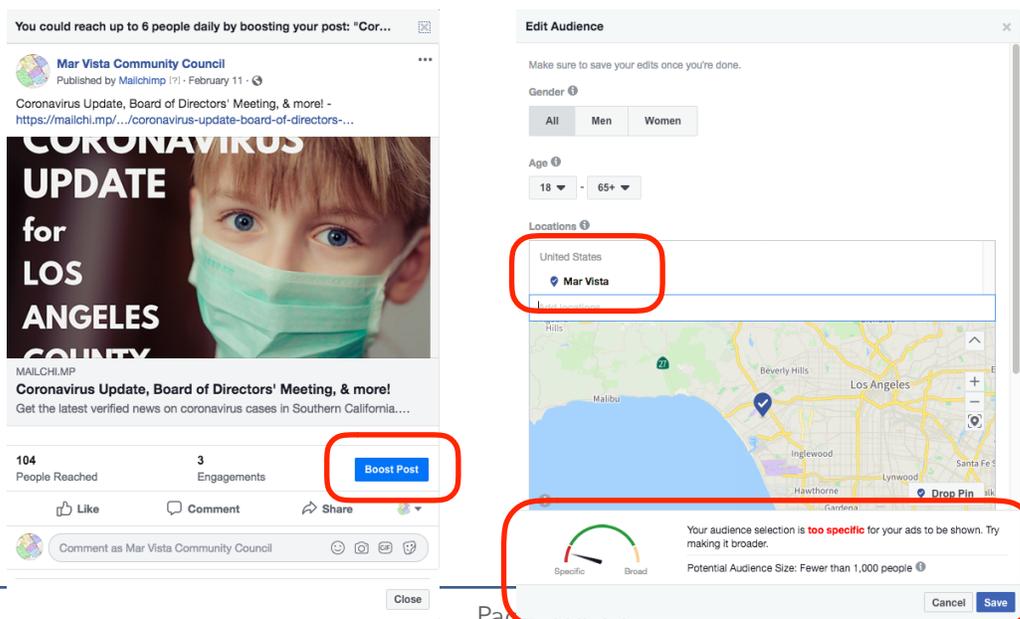
A representative from DONE, Semee Park, attended an Outreach meeting in October and clearly articulated that if the MVCC posts about or promotes another entity (e.g., Historic Fire Station 62), then the MVCC *must* post about or promote every other request. As the MVCC is run by volunteers; posting or promoting all outside requests is an impossibility. Therefore, future postings and promotions will be limited to just *MVCC and MVCC-sponsored events*.

Facebook

During the March Board of Directors' meeting, the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (T&I) submitted a motion for \$500 to advertise in Facebook with Boosts. While both the Outreach Committee and its Chair are in favor (and encourages) promoting the MVCC and all of its committees—it is its Mission Statement—it cannot be in favor of spending taxpayer money in a “shotgun” approach; which is what the T&I motion does. Even so, it passed (8 Yea/1 Nay/2 Abstentions/2 Absent).

The Outreach Chair was unable to convince the Board that there were issues with Facebook advertising and that the Outreach Committee would be the committee to work with T&I to promote its survey for the best possible outcome.

The following are screenshots to help illustrate the issues of a Facebook Boost/Advertising.



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Boost Post

OBJECTIVE

What results would you like from this post?

- Send people to your website**
Link clicks · From \$1 a day
- Get more people to react, comment and share**
Post engagements · From \$1 a day

All Options ▾

POST BUTTON (Optional)

Add a button to your post ⓘ

Learn More ▾

This button will lead to the link in your post.

AUDIENCE

- People you choose through targeting Edit

The audience you selected is too narrow. Select a broader audience or edit your audience to reach more people.

Location - Living In United States: Mar Vista California
Age 18 - 65+

People who like your Page

By clicking Boost, you agree to Facebook's [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Help Center](#)

Unable to Boost Cancel Boost

Preview: Desktop News Feed

Mar Vista Community Council
Sponsored · 🌐

Coronavirus Update, Board of Directors' Meeting, & more! -
<https://mailchi.mp/.../coronavirus-update-board-of-directors-...>

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE for LOS ANGELES COUNTY

MAILCHI.MP
Coronavirus Update, Board of Directors' Meeti... Learn More
Get the latest verified news on coronavirus cases in Sout...

As illustrated above, Facebook does not allow for advertising within the borders of Mar Vista. In fact, if it did allow for advertising, its reach would only be 1,000; whereas, the MVCC has 1,640 Facebook followers—more than advertising would provide (if allowed).

Again, the Mission of the Outreach Committee is to reach stakeholders for the MVCC. It has strategies that can help any committee reach their targeted audience, and would be happy to work with any committee—it is our job!

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Farmer's Market Blue Tent¹

The Farmer's Market is a successful venue. Every week continues to be booked with the MVCC using the tent on the fourth Sunday when there are five Sundays in a month. More promotional items will be needed very soon as some have been depleted.

Gmail

MarVistaCommunityCouncil@gmail.com has been setup to be a useful tool for the MVCC. As committees become aware of this asset, its use should grow. The hope is to use this convenient resource as a way to upload documents for Directors and Chairs, and to make those documents available for easy download for the Public. Only time will tell.

Instagram

The Outreach Chair received instructions to utilize all of the assets available to promote the MVCC. Changing the Instagram account to a business account from a personal account has several advantages. First is the analytics that will be provided. Second, it allows for Mailchimp's new features of Auto Social Media Posting to be utilized. Third, there is no cost. Fourth, it can be changed back to a personal account at any time.² Therefore, the Instagram account was changed from a Personal Account to a Business Account.

The Instagram Account has been successfully transferred to an account attached to a MVCC email versus the history of using an account attached to the personal email of the Outreach Chair. This allows for an easy transition to the next Outreach Chair.

Followers continue to grow on Instagram. It is hoped that as Outreach rents a booth at different events (e.g., block parties), Instagram will become more popular as there will be more material to post.

¹ NOTE: The Farmer's Market has always considered the "Green" and "White" tents to be under their purview and authority as they have been "free." Currently, MVCC has outstanding paperwork to be signed. Starting Sunday, September 15, 2019, the Mar Vista Container stored with the Farmer's Market will only have blue tent items stored in it. The "Green" tent will have its own 'green' container for storage.

² Instagram. <https://help.instagram.com/1717693135113805>. Accessed 06 January 2020.

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MailChimp

Mailchimp continues to contain the largest audience available to the MVCC besides a printed newsletter distributed throughout the entire Mar Vista community. Mailchimp recently added a few new and useful tools that benefit the MVCC. Included additions are “Add a Social Post” and “Auto Social Post.” They have been utilized since January 2020. It is too early, yet, to see if there has been any increase in subscribers. However, these features, combined with all social media accounts utilizing the same MVCC email, have created a uniformity in message which did not previously exist. Also, creates a more manageable workload for a volunteer organization. Additionally, it raises the level of use to a more professional standard allowing for the use of more advanced features in the future.

Access to and use of Mailchimp continues as it has since August 2018. This is when the Board took action to mitigate an uptick in unsubscribes by combining all segments into one main audience that would be emailed on a weekly basis. Individual committee meeting notification would no longer be sent via Mailchimp. Instead, committees began using sign-in sheets to collect attendance as well as an email address for any attendee who desired email notification of the next meeting.

The numbers confirm the wisdom of their strategy. In the 5 months leading up to the conversion, there was an average of 14 unsubscribes per month. For the 5 months following the conversion, the unsubscribes fell to just 5 per month.³ This is phenomenal –an astounding 64% reduction in unsubscribes by reducing emails to 1 per week.

The history of an eblast, once per week, is what lead to the *Weekly Roundup*.

WEEKLY ROUNDUP

Outreach continues to send the *Weekly Roundup* to everyone who subscribes. Responses continue to be favorable. **It is hoped that input for the *Weekly Roundup* will grow. It is a**

³ March 2018 thru July 2018 unsubscribes were 70; October 2018 thru February 2019, 25 unsubscribes. August/September not counted due to conversion date and wash out period needed to ensure new email schedule was in effect.

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valuable resource that all committees and subcommittees should take advantage. Copy can be submitted for any meeting, at least three times: A. the week prior (similar to “save the date”); B. the week of (provide excitement for people to attend); and C. the week after (a review of the meeting to encourage attendance next month). Of course, any special event or information (regarding the MVCC) that stakeholders should be aware, may be submitted at any time.

In the December Report, it was noted that,

In 2020, the *Weekly Roundup* will be sent out on Tuesdays between 10:30am and 11:30am, the day and time experts consider to be a prime time for emailing and posting. This will be tried over the next quarter. At the end of that time period, a comparison will be made of the last two quarters to determine if there is any difference, and take appropriate action.

This time frame was changed to Tuesdays from 8am to 10am due to the suggestion by Mailchimp. Mailchimp based its suggestion on the actual opening of the *Weekly Roundup* by stakeholders/subscribers. Mailchimp suggestions will continue to be utilized to achieve the best time to reach stakeholders.

Next Door

[NextDoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com/) is part of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) and not to MVCC exclusively. Neighborhood Councils are given guidelines to follow. It is be used “infrequently” (i.e., “try to stay at once a month”), and for the “unusual” (e.g., special events exclusive to MVCC) and not items that are “regular,” (e.g., committee meetings).

Outreach will continue to follow DONE’s guidelines, and has been working with them regarding posting the *Weekly Roundup* (which is more than once a month). And, while it is not posted every week, we are happy to report that the MVCC receives a “thumbs up” on NextDoor postings from EmpowerLA.

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SurveyMonkey

This asset was approved at the March Board of Directors (Item 12.3) for a limited window of three months because the Treasurer informed the Board that the MVCC cannot enter into an annual contract without approval from the City. Therefore, the motion was amended from an annual contract to a monthly contract for the remainder of the fiscal year. It is hoped that this asset will become a permanent part of the MVCC since so many committees have requested the need/want for surveys. SurveyMonkey integrates very easily with Mailchimp, at no extra cost, making the process much simpler than using other survey companies.

Twitter

This Asset is still waiting to be “adopted” by someone in Outreach to create a “best practices” for posting, and be responsible for altering the web content for posting on Twitter. Twitter is a very limited social media account when it comes to organizations such as MVCC because Twitter is an up-to-the-minute social media account and MVCC is much slower in its “news.”

Like Instagram and Facebook, it has been linked with the *Weekly Roundup* for posting.

Website

The process of “refreshing” MarVista.org began this quarter with input from stakeholders, directors, and committee chairs.

The history of MarVista.org was explored with the confirmation that the original domain name for the MVCC was MarVistaCC.org. This was changed to the current MarVista.org and The Web Corner became its hosting company. This was in 2016/2017.

In researching for a new web host, it was determined that The Web Corner is still the best choice. Other companies do not provide services as a part of its fee, providing the false sense of saving money. However, the cost becomes much greater when trouble arises as well as no guarantee as who will or can fix the problem. The MVCC would have to hire outside the web hosting company.

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The Web Corner provides a reasonable cost for services that the MVCC requires since MarVista.org is the main outreach to the community. Among The Web Corner's many services are: up-to-date security, SEO, dashboard, responsive team, and a phone number with personal service.

At the February Board of Directors' meeting, a motion (Item 12.3) was approved to secure web supplies up to \$150. These supplies will allow for storyboards to be created to display changes desired. These are needed because The Web Corner (nor any hosting company) could provide a working model for changes and potential "change backs" without charging for every change and change back. The hourly charge is \$150 (about average for the industry) and there would be no way to estimate a cost for funding. Therefore, taking \$150 (equal to 1 hour of work) to purchase supplies for storyboards was a good option.

YouTube

No change since last report. But, is on the list of assets to "finalize."

MOTIONS

Outreach is currently working on a format that will provide this information online for convenience and ease of use.

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.

MVCC Newsletter

The MVCC Newsletter and the needed funding was finally approved during the February Board of Directors' meeting (Item 14.1); much later than warranted or needed. Due to this avoidable delay, the Outreach Committee can no longer begin the process of creating a newsletter without it first being funded. It is not fair to those who spent their valuable time and worked to

provide input only to be placed in a position where, after initially wanted and after the work completed, the newsletter might not be wanted, after all, and therefore, not be funded. Everyone recognizes that the MVCC is a volunteer organization, therefore, camaraderie and common courtesy should be the order of the day. However, good business practices seem to be deemed necessary and warranted: get paid first, then do the work.

A motion to fund a summer newsletter was not approved by the Board. Some Board members felt that the Winter Newsletter could/should be continually used as it was a good introduction to the MVCC. Money will need to be allocated for additional printing as there are not enough copies left. Even so, using the newsletter as an introduction to the MVCC does not negate the need to inform stakeholders as to what the Board has been doing and what is before them.

The Outreach Chair visited the owner of the distributing company (i.e., CBS Distributing) and witnessed first hand the seventeen years of records that have been kept regarding any input of distributing materials for the MVCC. If a stakeholder states that they didn't receive the materials, the company only needs an address and they will—without charge—redo the entire street.

Apartment buildings are entered, when allowed or have access, and they are always happy to work with anyone that will accommodate material distribution. They have, on record, 1 Mar Vista resident that does not wish to receive any materials from any company at any time, and they accommodate this individual.

Out of the 25k that were distributed, Outreach only heard of two complaints; both through third parties at a public forum. Neither of the third party, who relayed the information, contacted the Outreach Committee privately, nor (after announcing the slight) would provide an address so the distributor could reach the individuals with the newsletter. The company (and Outreach) can only do better if information is provided for a correction. However, Outreach was contacted by

at least one stakeholder in every Zone that the MVCC Newsletter had been received, and they thoroughly enjoyed it.

Community Plan Survey

The Board approved a joint project with the Community Plan Sub-committee at the February meeting (Item 14.2). The *Community Plan Survey*, a one-page survey, began in the fall of 2019 and was completed within the same season. It was ready for presentation at the Board of Directors when another committee requested to have their survey added onto the one-page survey. The survey added was to be an additional page; thus making a two-page survey. The cost increase was insignificant as purchasing the paper is the real cost.

However, when the committee completed their portion of the survey, it was six pages. The cost to add six pages to the one-page survey for printing was prohibitive. Additionally, volunteers, going door-to-door, with a one or two-page survey could realistically achieve the 660 sampling size needed for a 99% confidence level survey with less than 5% margin of error.⁴ Whereas, (statistically, and as a practical matter) a seven-page survey would have little chance of receiving the necessary respondents. Even so, the committee was not amenable to any type of reduction or compromise, and the Board approved the one-page *Community Plan Survey*.

Outreach Table at the Board of Directors' Meetings

A budget for snacks and water for each Board of Directors' meeting was approved. This has been a success with stakeholders, City Officials, and Board members alike; all utilizing this service. It is generally referred to as a "hospitality table." Martin Rubin, the 1st Vice-Chair of Outreach, also provides donuts from *Primo's Donuts (since 1956)* for everyone to enjoy.

Event Mobility Cart

The Board approved an "Event Mobility Cart" which allows for Outreach to take materials and SWAG to stakeholder events and gatherings instead of waiting for them to come to the MVCC.

⁴ <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/sample-size/>; <https://www.checkmarket.com/sample-size-calculator/>; <https://www.surveysystem.com/sscalce.htm>

It is also used to supply the “hospitality table” and store items between meetings.

Its next venue will be the Mar Vista Recreation Center’s Spring Celebration on April 4, 2020. Everyone is invited to attend this great family event. The Mar Vista Recreation Center has a new Recreation Director, Elisa White. With the approval of the NPG for this event during the March Board of Directors’ meeting (Item 12.8), we look forward to participating that day. The MVCC will be provided a booth and be available to stakeholders for answering questions and supplying materials for citizen participation.

Storage Unit

The storage unit has been cleaned and organized. Shelves and containers were purchased to facilitate the process. Extra SWAG was found, as well as the realization that some SWAG was depleted and would need to be purchased.

Additionally, it was clear that the MVCC is paying to store items which have no value—either in selling or to the MVCC. The Treasurer is working with the Outreach Chair to determine the process of clearing out unneeded/unwanted items per City directives. This purging will allow the MVCC to use/rent a smaller facility to store the items of value that are used.

In regard to a smaller storage unit, the Mar Vista Recreation Center has been open to the idea of our storing some items within their facility. Late last year, they were in the midst of their own clean-up and requested that we wait until the new year. After the first of the year, new directors came aboard and were contacted. It was discovered that the new directors were also open to the idea and an area was agreed upon. The Outreach Committee submitted a motion for a storage locker and the Board of Directors’ approved Item 12.4 during the February meeting.

Currently, the Treasurer is working with the City regarding the contracts and insurance. Once completed, the locker will be purchased and items will be moved to the Mar Vista Recreation Center.

Neighborhood Associations - Newsletter Advertising

No change since last report.

Outreach eMail

The Outreach email continues to be a true asset in providing a history, a unifying feature, and a list of contacts for future Outreach Chairs as well as the MVCC Chair.

Boilerplate Ads

No change since last report.

MOVING FORWARD

In the December Report, it was noted that,

In the future, it is hoped that, “committee campaigns,” social media “best practices”... will be implemented for the current and future committee to work efficiently and effectively within the guidelines it must follow. This is still in its infancy; however, the future is looking bright for these and other ideas. It is important that MVCC is able to respond to the community needs in a timely fashion.

Since the last report, the Outreach Committee has been able to apply many “best practices” for social media and other MVCC assets. Additionally, the committee has worked with several MVCC committees, including: Community Plan, Emergency Preparedness, Homeless Issues, and PLUM in an effort to unify the MVCC and work as a cohesive body allowing us to “respond to the community needs in a timely fashion.”

CONCLUSION

It is our hope that this report provides the needed insight to this relatively “new” committee. Please, feel free to contact the Outreach Chair (Kathryn.Wheeler@MarVista.org) with ideas, suggestion, and to volunteer.