



## **UWIA DISI Committee Meeting Announcement SPECIAL MEETING**

On September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed AB361, which allows board members / committee members to vote to continue to attend publicly announced meetings telephonically while California is in a declared state of emergency. Effective January 3, 2022, the Executive Committee voted to extend the provisions of AB361 for Board and committee meetings for another 30 days (extended through February 2, 2022). Please be advised that some, or all, DISI Committee members may attend this meeting telephonically.

Consistent with provisions of AB361, a physical location from which members of the public may observe the meeting or offer public comment will not be made available. GM Properties will not be open to the public for this meeting; however public comment on the attached agenda can be provided via email at [info@uwia.org](mailto:info@uwia.org).

Please submit public comments and questions at least one hour before the start of the meeting to ensure the DISI Committee members receive them in time to view them at the meeting.

**Uptown Whittier Improvement Association  
District Identity and Streetscape Improvements (DISI) Committee  
GM Properties  
13305 Penn Street, Suite 200, Whittier, CA 90602  
Teleconference  
Thursday, January 20, 2022, 8:30 a.m.**

**Current List of UWIA District Identity Committee Members:** Ana Lilia Barraza, Shane Cadman (Vice Chair), Andrew Pina (Committee Chair), Melinda Pina and Ben Pongetti

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order: Andrew Pina, District Identity chair**
- 2. Roll call: Brent or Stephanie**

UPTOWN WHITTIER IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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c/o GM Properties ■ 13305 Penn Street, Suite 200 ■ Whittier, CA 90602  
P (562) 697-5000 ■ F (562) 693-2126  
info@uwia.org ■ www.uwia.org



3. **Public Comment** - The public is invited to address the DISI Committee regarding any item of business. Speakers must limit their comments to two minutes. Pursuant to State law, the Committee cannot take action or express a consensus of approval or disapproval on any oral communications which do not appear on the printed agenda.
4. **Review, discuss and approve draft of owner newsletter to be produced and mailed out by Acro in January** *Action Item*
5. **Discuss website update for QR Code landing page, QR Code placement throughout the District, review pricing and if a decision is reached vote to approve** *Action Item*
6. **Next DISI Meeting date: February 4, 2022, 9:00 a.m., at GM Properties, 13305 Penn St, Suite 200, Whittier, CA 90602 or possibly via teleconference.**
7. **Adjournment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**BROWN ACT:**

*Government Code 54950 (The Brown Act) requires that a brief description of each item to be transacted or discussed be posted at least 72 hours prior to a regular meeting. The Corporation posts all Board and Committee agendas at the Whittier Train Depot, at the meeting location designated for the Board or Committee meeting and on their website [www.uwia.org](http://www.uwia.org). Action may not be taken on items not identified as such and posted on the agenda. Meeting facilities may be accessible to persons with disabilities. If you require special assistance to participate in the meeting, notify Brent Haskell [brent@gmpropertiesinc.com](mailto:brent@gmpropertiesinc.com) or Stephanie Shamp [stephanie@gmpropertiesinc.com](mailto:stephanie@gmpropertiesinc.com) of GM Properties at (562) 697-5000.*

# MEMBER UPDATE



**#1**  
**JANUARY 2022**



### Board of Directors

#### President

Frank Rinaldi  
Property Owner

#### Vice President

Melinda Piña  
Property Owner

#### Treasurer

Jim Dunkelmann  
Whittier College

### Members

Virginia "Ginny" Ball  
Whittier Historical  
Society

David Gonzalez  
Community Member  
At Large

Stephen Ortiz or  
Irene McCallister  
Property Owner

Milt Pate  
Property Owner

Roland Fargo  
PIH

Steven Rodriguez  
Whittier Union High  
School District

**The Board of  
Directors meets  
monthly  
at 8:30 a.m.**

### Upcoming Meetings

February 10, March 10,  
April 14, May 12

Under current public  
health guidelines,  
the Board meets via  
conference call.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

## Dear Uptown District Property Owners:

As president of the Uptown Whittier Improvement Association (UWIA), I am happy to introduce our newsletter. This quarterly publication is designed to keep you informed and to encourage your participation.

UWIA is OUR Association. It is governed entirely by volunteers. Together, we make important decisions about where to focus our work and how to allocate the assessment funds collected from property owners. More suggestions from our members are needed, welcomed, and appreciated. Your ideas are essential to our future. Please tell us what you want to see take place in Uptown.

I strongly believe that all of us working together can create and realize a joint vision that encourages the prosperity of our businesses, enhances property values, and warmly welcomes visitors to Uptown Whittier.

Last year, we collaborated with the City, the Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses to navigate the shifting restrictions and prospects created by the pandemic. In particular, we have seen the Greenleaf Promenade bring diners and shoppers back to Uptown. To maximize and expand economic and community development, we are also building an open and transparent partnership with the Whittier Uptown Association, which is composed of business owners.

In this publication, you will find more information about the actions being taken by the UWIA Board and the various committees on your behalf. Currently, all of our meetings are taking place telephonically, and all members of the community - property owners, business owners, and others - are welcome to participate.

Remember the quote by Mahatma Gandhi: "You have to be the change you wish to see."

**Sincerely,**

**Frank Rinaldi  
President**

# UWIA COMMITTEES

In addition to the Board of Directors, the work of the UWIA is carried out by volunteer members of the Association's five committees: Executive, District Identity and Sidewalk Improvement (DISI), Land Use, and Sidewalk. The committees meet monthly, with agendas posted publicly on the Association's website ([uwia.org](http://uwia.org)) 36 hours prior to the meeting. Members of the public are invited to attend the meetings, currently held telephonically via conference call. Property owners, business owners, and community members with an interest in the development of Uptown Whittier as a thriving retail, dining, and entertainment destination are encouraged to become voting members of the UWIA committees that meet their interest and areas of expertise. Individuals interested in joining a committee should email [info@uwia.org](mailto:info@uwia.org) or call 562-697-5000.

# SEPTEMBER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

## Board of Directors

The Board met on September 9, 2021 and discussed, at length, the goals of the Ambassador Program and the role Ambassadors play in the District and whether a new RFP should be published given the current contractor's insurance rating. The Board opted to continue the conversation at the next meeting.

Treasurer Jim Dunkelman reviewed the report on Assessments and Cash Flow and pointed out that legal fees stemming from contract reviews and RFP work will most likely exceed the budget but foresees no problems with it.

A motion to change the Community At Large service term from 6 months to at least 18 months, in order to establish consistency and improve contributions and attendance, was passed.

Elections were held and Trese Childs and Grace Hu were nominated for a two-year term as Property Owner Directors. Frank Rinaldi was reelected President. Melinda Piña was elected Vice President. Jim Dunkelman was reelected Treasurer. Katie Galvin-Surbatovic was elected Secretary.

## Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on September 28 and reviewed its goals and accomplishments for the year. The committee stayed within budget, transitioned to new leadership, renewed contracts and approved agreements through legal counsel, re-assessed the role of vendors, and was successful in maintaining open meetings via teleconferences.

Among its goals for the following year, the committee included a commitment to recruit new board members, hold a long-postponed social mixer, reassess the roles of the Ambassador Program, continue to assess the needs of the Greenleaf Promenade, review and evaluate designated and undesignated net assets, and reassess the distribution of funds allocated to committees.

The committee discussed the effectiveness of and desired priorities for the Ambassador Program in an effort to inform a new RFP and possible assessment study. A decision was tabled until the Association meets with the City of Whittier.

## District Identity and Streetscape Improvement (DISI) Committee

The committee met on September 10, 2021, where it was announced that Ricardo Diaz stepped down as Chair and Andrew Yañez was elected to the position by the Board of Directors.

Various items were discussed as possible expenditures including sustained monthly investment in social media advertisements, production of a video commercial, billboards, a District magazine and permanent signage banning skateboarding and loud vehicle exhausts.

The committee presented a series of accomplishments for the year including the installation of seasonal banners along Philadelphia Street, brand visibility along the Greenleaf Promenade, continued social media exposure and engagement, and branded apparel for committee members. In the next year, the committee intends to launch a newsletter, continue the Philadelphia Street banner program, and amplify visibility of beautification and safety efforts via social media.

## Sidewalk Operations Committee

The Sidewalk Operations Committee met on September 24 and discussed its accomplishments and goals. The committee budget was exceeded by \$13,607, an overage attributed to the Ambassador Program. Budget reallocations were suggested but not decided.

The committee outlined goals to include continued operation amid the pandemic, proceed with the Ambassador Program as advised, and continue to support the Greenleaf Promenade. Among its accomplishments, the committee listed the maintenance RFP and supervision of the Ambassador Program.

## Land Use Committee

The Land Use Committee met on September 14, 2021 and discussed its goals and accomplishments. Among goals discussed were a valet parking proposal, continued work on the proposed permanence of the Greenleaf Promenade, and advocacy for the implementation of minor parking upgrades and improvements.

## OCTOBER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### Board of Directors

A special meeting was called on October 5, 2021 to extend the ability to hold all Board and committee meetings via teleconference or video conference under the provisions of AB-361 for the next 30 days. The motion passed.

At its regular scheduled October 14, 2021 meeting, the Board of Directors reviewed and approved progress reports and budgets for the various UWIA Committees. The Board also approved the 2021-2022 Contingency Allocation.

### Executive Committee

Members of the committee reported

on their meeting with Whittier City Manager Brian Saeki and Chief of Police Aviv Bar. On the topic of Uptown Whittier's Ambassador program, Chief Bar expressed his support for the program and its role as hired security for the District, leaving enforcement to Whittier Police. Committee members presented lack of lighting, aging trees, and security within the District as ongoing concerns that require attention from the City.

### District Identity and Sidewalk Improvement

Banner designs for the winter season were presented, reviewed, and approved.

The committee continued

discussion on the production of an Uptown Whittier commercial to air on social media and YouTube. One proposal has been received so far.

The publication of a District magazine was also discussed but tabled. Other digital strategies to increase visitor engagement were discussed.

### Land Use Committee

The committee shared updates on the progress of City projects including the former Alpha Beta site and a proposed People Mover.

### Sidewalk Operations

The increased and persistent presence of skateboarders in Uptown

Whittier has become problematic and the issue is being addressed with response by the Uptown Ambassadors and Whittier Police Department. Signage, video enforcement, and deflectors to mitigate the problem were discussed.

Katie Galvin-Surbatovic reported the City Council's unanimous decision to permanently keep the Greenleaf Promenade on a hybrid basis. This decision impacts the City's existing Streetscape Plan, which will now be amended with input and feedback from a yet-to-be identified architectural firm, UWIA, and WUA.

## NOVEMBER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### Board of Directors

The Board discussed its members' responses to a questionnaire about the Ambassador Program. While the Board overwhelmingly believes the program should continue, members pointed out a number of improvement areas including a well-defined scope of work, training, collaboration, and identification. These responses were to be shared with the Sidewalk Committee.

A District Manager Taskforce was previously

formed to collect RFPs from interested parties, conduct interviews, and select a vendor for the next contract period. The taskforce has completed the interview process and a presentation to the Executive Committee was planned for November 30 during a closed session

### DISI Committee

Further discussion was held regarding the production of a video commercial for the District. Budget, possible segments, and a possible production company were discussed.

The use of QR codes across the District - on storefronts and signage - to promote the District's offerings and provide some level of customer service continues to be a priority for the committee. Various elements, including a mobile-friendly internet landing page and the selection and creation of various resources behind it, are in progress. The rollout of branded signage with the QR code itself will be the final step.

# IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The UWIA contributed immensely to the beautification of Uptown Whittier throughout the 2021 calendar year. Thanks to strategically allocated funds, the Association was able to sustain a seasonally-themed lamppost banner program that adorns Philadelphia Street from Painter Avenue to Whittier Boulevard.

Similarly, the UWIA worked closely with Uptown Whittier business owners, the City of Whittier, the Whittier Uptown Association, and the Whittier Chamber of Commerce to bring a cohesive look to the Greenleaf Promenade. The UWIA purchased patio umbrellas featuring the UWIA logo and distributed one to each business owner within the District. And, as the Greenleaf Promenade evolved into more than a temporary solution, the UWIA teamed up with fellow stakeholders to brand bland and imposing traffic barriers with organization logos and optimistic messages about unity.





## PROMENADE RECOGNIZED

The City of Whittier was recognized by the League of California Cities with the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence for its efforts to support small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Uptown Whittier Improvement Association is proud to have collaborated with the City and fellow business associations to bring relief and innovative solutions to small business owners. Together, they changed the face of Uptown Whittier with the creation of the Greenleaf Promenade, a revitalization effort that closed three blocks of Greenleaf Street to vehicular traffic and enabled District businesses to adhere to COVID-19 health restrictions by moving dining and retail outdoors. The partnership also worked together to create grants, reduce license fees, and encourage patrons to support small businesses.

The Helen Putnam Award for Excellence was established in 1982 and recognizes “outstanding cities that deliver the highest quality and level of service in the most effective manner possible.” Other California cities recognized in 2021 were Buena Park, Burbank, Cupertino, Escondido, Irvine, Modesto, Pismo Beach, Rolling Hills, South San Francisco, and the Town of Windsor.



# HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS RETURN

Fall 2021 saw the return of beloved Uptown Whittier holiday traditions, albeit on a smaller scale than the community has been accustomed to.

In October, community members of all ages donned their costumes and came out to Uptown Whittier’s Halloween Capers event. Local businesses and organizations lined the grassy knoll on Greenleaf Avenue with sponsored booths, inviting attendees to participate in a themed activity in exchange for a treat.

With event restrictions lifted, the Uptown Whittier Christmas parade made its triumphant return on December 9, 2021. More than 100 entries, including marching bands, dance groups, floats, and Santa Claus himself, walked the shortened parade route.





**UPTOWN WHITTIER  
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION**  
13305 Penn Street  
Whittier, CA 90602