

El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument Reopens Engineering's Project Team Delivers Project On Time and Under Original Budget

Mayor Richard Riordan rededicated and officially reopened El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument at a ceremony held August 11, 2000 at Olvera Street.

"El Pueblo, our City's birthplace, is more than a monument, it is Los Angeles history," said Mayor Riordan. "From its humble beginnings in 1781, El Pueblo has served as a symbol of our City's rich history, culture and diversity. On behalf of all Angelenos, I thank all of the hard working men and women of our City family who have brought new life to our Pueblo for all to enjoy today and in the new century."

The El Pueblo de Los Angeles Monument, also known as Olvera Street, commemorates the birthplace of the City, which was founded on September 4, 1781. The Monument has undergone seismic stabilization and rehabilitation of the Pico Garnier Block buildings, along with reconstruction and restoration of surrounding streets and sidewalks. Work began on the seven-building, two block area in August 1999 by the City's Department of General Services, Bureau of Street Services, Bureau of Street Lighting and Department of Transportation under the management of Bureau of Engineering Project Manager **Mike Shull**, with the assistance of **Harry Surmenian**, **Paul Munz**, **Dave Takata** of Special Projects Group and **Mel Butler**, of Vanir Construction Management. Besides the seismic



Standing in front of the newly refurbished Pico House are l to r: Mel Butler, Harry Surmenian, Paul Munz, Mike Shull, Dave Takata.

work, the site and buildings were upgraded and improved for disabled access/ADA requirements and fire/life safety systems were brought up to current code. Much of the work was sensitive due to the historic nature of the buildings.

Engineering was asked to take on the management of the project in order to ensure that all deadlines were met and everything would be ready before Los Angeles hosted the Democratic National Convention. On August 14, 2000, Governor Davis held a governors breakfast at the Pico House.

The Pico House is the largest building in El Pueblo and was completed in 1870 by Pio Pico, who was the last governor under Mexican rule. It had the distinction of being the first three-story building constructed in Los Angeles. Other historic buildings that were part of the project include:

Pico Block: Masonic Hall and Merced Theater.

Garnier Block: Hellman-Quon Building, Turner Building, 425 N. Los Angeles St., Garnier Building.

The \$19.5 million first phase of the project was funded in part by Proposition G (Seismic Bond) funds. Plans are underway to improve Olvera Street itself as part of Phase 2 of the project.



The project team pictured in the courtyard of the Pico House.



City Policy on Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Employment

All employees should be aware of the City's policy on Sexual Orientation Discrimination. The Personnel Section will be sending out posters to all group managers. If there are questions, please contact **Harry Wilson**, Bureau of Engineering EEO Counselor, at 6+847-8660 (x78660).

Policy

The policy of the City of Los Angeles has been, and will continue to be, to promote and maintain an environment free from sexual orientation discrimination. In 1979, the City adopted Municipal Code Section 49.70 that protects gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and heterosexuals against discrimination in employment, housing, business establishments, city facilities and services, and education.

As an employer, the City of Los Angeles reaffirms its position that it is an unlawful employment practice for the City to fail or refuse to hire, to segregate, to fail to provide training, to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment on the basis (in whole or part) of such individual's known or presumed sexual orientation.

Consistent with this policy, it is unlawful discrimination for an appointing authority to consider an applicant's or employee's known or presumed sexual orientation in any pre-employment, employment, or post-employment action or decision, including but not limited to background checking, testing, hiring, assigning, training, transferring, upgrading, promoting, compensating, disciplining and discharging. In addition, the City's policy prohibits, as a form of discrimination, the creation of or contribution to a hostile, intimidating, threatening, offensive, or abusive work environment on the basis of an individual's known or presumed sexual orientation. This includes written, spoken, graphic or demonstrative derogatory terms, slurs, comments, gestures, ridicule, threats, rumors, or jokes with respect to an individual's known or presumed sexual orientation.

The policy of the City requires that prompt and appropriate action be taken to deter and punish sexual orientation discrimination. Department managers have the duty and responsibility to take all necessary steps, including appropriate disciplinary action, to ensure and maintain a working environment free from sexual orientation discrimination.

The policy of the City is to investigate

all reported allegations of sexual orientation discrimination fully and completely. Further, City policy prohibits retaliation by the City or any department or employee based on reporting a claim of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This means that no City employee may intimidate, penalize, or take action against an individual for filing a legitimate complaint of discrimination based on sexual orientation. To the extent possible, the City will provide confidentiality with respect to the filing and investigation of complaints of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Sexual Orientation Discrimination Complaint Procedure

An employee making a sexual orientation discrimination complaint can choose to file the complaint with the employee's department EEO Counselor or the City's Sexual Orientation Counselor in the Personnel Department's Equal Employment Opportunities Section. Complaints filed about pre-employment or employment actions or actions directly related to Personnel Department functions should be directed to the City's Sexual Orientation Counselor. Violations of the City's policy against sexual orientation discrimination will be treated appropriately according to existing City procedures for administrative discipline.

The following Sexual Orientation Discrimination Complaint Procedure has been developed specifically for use by employees who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation.

Employee Rights and Responsibilities
Every employee is entitled to work in an environment free from sexual orientation discrimination. An employee who perceives comments, gestures or actions which offend against an individual's sexual orientation made by another employee or supervisor should immediately and clearly communicate to that person that such behavior is offensive.

Any employee who believes he or she has been discriminated against due to his/her sexual orientation should take the following steps:

1. The employee should immediately report the sexual orientation discrimination complaint to her or his supervisor, or to the department's EEO Counselor, or to the City's Sexual Orientation Counselor in the Personnel Department's Equal Employment Opportunities Section. ALL EMPLOYEES

ARE ASSURED THAT THEY MAY MAKE SUCH REPORTS WITHOUT FEAR OF RETALIATION BY THE CITY, DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT OR THEIR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR.

2. The employee has the right to a confidential conference with the person to whom the sexual orientation complaint is made.
3. If an employee chooses to initiate a complaint of sexual orientation discrimination, the employee's department EEO Counselor or the City's Sexual Orientation Counselor should make preliminary efforts to resolve the complaint, and if necessary, should fully and completely conduct a formal investigation.
4. All investigations will be handled with discretion, sensitivity and due concern for the dignity of those involved. As in any discrimination complaint investigation, information will be kept confidential to the extent possible.
5. All investigations will be as thorough as necessary. All persons named as potential witnesses by the employee will be contacted as required during the course of the investigation. Anyone who is alleged to have committed acts of sexual orientation discrimination will be contacted during the investigation and allowed to make a statement.
6. Any employee who witnesses an incident of sexual orientation discrimination shall cooperate in any investigation. All employees are assured that they may cooperate in such an investigation without fear of retaliation or reprisal by the City, department management, their immediate supervisor, or any other City employee.
7. Employees may expect a timely resolution of all complaints.

Responsibilities of the Department EEO Counselor

Each City department manager must designate an EEO Counselor and ensure that all department employees are made aware of the name and phone number of the designated Counselor. An employee who believes he or she has been discriminated against based on sexual orientation may choose to file a complaint with the department EEO Counselor. Each department EEO Counselor has the following responsibilities in regard to a sexual orientation complaint:

1. Upon receipt of a sexual orientation discrimination complaint, the counse-

lor shall meet with the complaining employee at the employee's earliest convenience. The Counselor shall fully inform the employee about the City's sexual orientation policies and discrimination procedures and shall answer any questions that the employee may have regarding the City's policy.

2. The Counselor shall listen to the employee's complaint and discuss the complaint with discretion, sensitivity and due concern for the dignity of those involved.
3. The Counselor shall fully record and document the complaint.
4. The Counselor shall conduct a complete and timely investigation into the complaint, including conducting interview as appropriate with witnesses and others who may be involved.
5. Upon completion of the investigation, the Counselor shall draft a report on the investigation. Copies of the report shall be provided to the department manager and the employee.
6. If the employee is not satisfied with the way the sexual orientation discrimination complaint has been resolved, the Counselor shall fully inform the employee of his or her additional rights under the law. These rights include using the City's Discrimination Complaint Procedure, and filing a complaint with the State regulatory agency and/

or court.

Responsibilities of the City's Sexual Orientation Counselor

An employee who has been discriminated against based on sexual orientation may choose to file a complaint with the City's Sexual Orientation Counselor. The City's Sexual Orientation Counselor has the following responsibilities:

1. The Counselor will be available at (213) 847-9800 to discuss sexual orientation discrimination complaints with employees and fully inform employees about the City's sexual orientation policies and discrimination complaint procedures and shall answer any questions that the employee may have regarding the City's policy.
2. The Counselor shall listen to the employee's complaint and discuss the complaint with discretion, sensitivity and due concern for the dignity of the people involved.
3. The Counselor shall fully record and document the complaint.
4. The Counselor shall make preliminary efforts to resolve the complaint.
5. If the employee is not satisfied with the results of the preliminary efforts, he or she may file a formal complaint using the City's Discrimination Complaint Procedure.

The City's Discrimination Complaint Procedure

The City's Discrimination Complaint Pro-

cedure gives City employees and candidates for City employment the right to file a written complaint with the City's Civil Service Commission. The complaint must deal with a City action, procedure or practice in hiring or employment which the employee or prospective employee believes to be discriminatory. Complaints alleging sexual orientation discrimination are covered by the City's Discrimination Complaint Procedure. Complaints made under the City's Discrimination Complaint Procedure must be filed within one year of the alleged act of discrimination.

Other Discrimination Complaint Options

Employees who believe that they have been discriminated against based on the individual's sexual orientation may also have the right to file a discrimination complaint with the California Labor Commissioner under Labor Code Section 1102.1. Complaints alleging sexual orientation discrimination must be filed with the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement within thirty (30) days of the alleged discrimination. Under limited circumstances, complaints may be filed beyond the thirty-day limit, but an employee should check directly with the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement regarding time limit extensions. Complaints filed with the California Labor Commissioner can be processed in any of the District Offices of the Division of Labor Standards and Enforcement.

Ellison, Lee and Shioji Receive Awards From APWA

On Thursday, August 24, 2000, at the APWA Southern California Chapter's 4th Annual BBQ the Greenbook Committee Members were recognized for their outstanding work they perform in regularly updating the Standard Specifications for Public Work Construction known as the "Greenbook." The 2000 Edition is the 12th edition of the Greenbook which was originally published in 1967 and an updated book is published every three years. Although originally intended for use in Southern California, the Greenbook is used throughout the United States, Canada, and many countries overseas.

The City and County of Los Angeles were major contributors to the original edition and were the first agencies to adopt the Greenbook. The first 10 editions were the product of the Joint Cooperative Committee of the Southern California Chapter of the American Public Works Association, and the Southern California Districts of the Associated General Contractors of California. In December 1995, the Joint Committee formally ceased operations. In January 1996, Public Works Standards, Inc., a mutual benefit corporation commenced producing the Greenbook. **Vitaly Troyan** is on both the Board of Directors of the Southern California Chapter of the APWA and on the Board of Directors of Public Works Standards, Inc.



Pictured l to r: **Walt Shioji** (Chairperson of Pipe Rehab Task Force), **Jerry Ellison** (Chairperson of Surface Subcommittee), and **Hugh Lee** (member).

Bureau of Engineering FY 99-00 Management Initiatives Year End Report

In FY 99-00, the Bureau undertook an ambitious program of systems optimization and organizational development. Teams of BOE employees, working in cooperation with other agencies and the public sector, began work on 26 Management Initiatives. Here is a brief summary of the progress as of June 30, 2000:

1. Improve Project Delivery

a. Review the design process (opening of a work order to approval to advertise by the Board of Public Works) and reduce its duration.

The team charted 183 existing design process steps, reviewed recent data, and estimated the time it takes an average project to complete all steps. They identified obstacles in the processes, brainstormed to improve processes, and are working to finalize process improvements. The team seeks to cut in half the time from beginning to completion of projects.

b. Establish QA/QC for project design.

This team recommended changes in plan preparation and approval procedures. They suggested streamlining of plan processing procedures to reduce the number of signatures on plans, limit plan review, and provide for a post construction comment system to improve future designs. Their proposal should soon be finalized.

c. Update design manuals.

A poll of stakeholders demonstrated the need for new and updated manuals. However, funding was denied.

d. Explore different methods of design and contract document development.

Expanded application of standard plans, Internet bidding, increased use of photographs for clarity in bid documents, and other alternatives are under continuing study.

e. Strengthen the design-build capability between BOE and GSD.

Teaming up with General Services to provide other City departments with "design-build" services has, historically, not always worked smoothly. Thus, on April 28th BOE issued a Special Order containing a generic MOU that defines a working relationship. Prototyped for the build out of the old City Hall, it establishes ground rules by which BOE and GSD will work together, protocols to deal with conflict,

and a defined division of work. The "design-build" process was tested successfully on various projects.

f. Implement claims reduction procedures.

This team reviewed past problems with construction claims and initiatives already implemented, and recommended additional actions. They identified key elements of claims mitigation and avoidance, including: (1) emphasis on design quality; (2) a proactive approach toward partnering and issues resolution during construction; and (3) a business approach that pays the contractor for undisputed work while negotiating remaining issues.

g. Establish a method to prioritize the Bureau's capital projects.

BOE completed this Initiative by a Special Order dated June 13, 2000, titled "Bureau of Engineering Project Priority Numbers." It outlines how to assign priority numbers, depending on the urgency, to all projects and record them in the Uniform Project Reporting System (UPRS). The system will focus the Bureau on which projects should be worked on first.

h. Review and improve project cost estimating.

A team reviewed current and historic Bureau estimating, interviewed private engineers and public agencies, and networked with the County and Caltrans to share databases of local construction costs. This resulted in a Special Order that changes how the Bureau produces project cost estimates. Designers will produce their own cost estimates with the database of current prices, and design projects to the approved budget and for timely delivery.

i. Verify the acceptability of budgets generated by budget template.

Budget templates used for labor estimating in our budget were reviewed and updated with an eye toward reducing costs. Careful review in the Programs produced templates that showed we could do some additional work without added staff, and that helped our credibility with the Mayor's Office in those cases where the increased workload required added positions. The revised templates were partly responsible for BOE's "best" budget cycle in recent years.

j. Strengthen the role of the Project Manager.

Formation of the new civil service class was the main emphasis in strengthening the role of Project Managers (PMs). The team now focuses on specifying the process for selecting and training new PMs. A well-trained and effective cadre of PMs is an essential element in making the Bureau the "service provider of choice" for the City.

k. Develop a project management manual.

The Project Manager Training Manual is now in its third draft. Training sessions are being developed to teach what is in the manual. PM training will begin early in the new fiscal year.

l. Implement one project management control system.

In the past, different Bureau Programs developed different reporting tools. Recently, leaders from each Program gathered to review and debate reporting formats and software. The team adopted a two-page format presenting the project's scope, status, benchmark and actual schedule, and budget versus actual expenditures. Called the Uniform Project Reporting System (UPRS), once implemented fully, it will be the basis for routine project and program reporting, development of capital improvement programs, and development of staff resource requirements.

m. Track Program/Division performance compared to WPRR and CIP.

This Initiative hinges on full implementation of Initiative 11 and, as such, will continue into FY 00-01.

n. Improve management of the Bureau of Engineering.

A "flatter" organizational structure shapes management. We filled several essential positions and will soon fill others, such as the Deputy positions. Improving management is an ongoing effort, as evidenced by these Initiatives and those considered for FY 00-01.

o. Work with the Bureau of Street Services to include streetscape elements in BOE projects.

Bureau of Street Services assumed responsibility for streetscape design.

p. Develop and implement a customer service feedback process including timeliness and quality of service.

Special Order Number 005-1099, dated November 17, 1999, provides a standardized customer service questionnaire and details when BOE must meet with clients to review performance on projects.

2. Improve the Development/Permitting Process

a. Standardize organization and processes of the "One Stop" Center and District Offices.

Most counter operations are standardized citywide and will be uniform after completion of computerized permits. A and U Permits are computerized with some online applications. Team members are working on assignments to complete this Initiative as it goes into FY 00-01.

b. Computerize permitting processes. Automate all worthwhile processes in the Private Development Program.

U-Permit issuance over the Internet is now implemented, benefiting utility companies by allowing them to electronically submit applications and check status. Time to issue permits dropped from about two weeks to 2-3 days. BOE estimates annual cost savings at about \$180,000. This process improvement won a citywide Productivity Improvement Award. Other permit application processes are in various stages of implementation and BOE continues work on other, related processes.

c. Establish a One-Stop Telecommunications Counter at the Construction Services Center.

BOE set up the One Stop Telecommunication Counter at the Construction Services Center. Telecommunications companies can submit plans at any counter in the Bureau, but this counter receives and issues permits citywide. As part of the U-Permit process, plans can be submitted and checked electronically once the proper web server is obtained. This results in savings estimated at hundred of thousands of dollars annually. We are committed to issuing permits to the industry within 30 days.

d. Work with the Information Technology Agency to deliver flood zone determinations over the Internet.

BOE tested a pilot application on the Internet and returned comments to our consultant. The final application should be available via the Information Technology Agency's Internet server by the time this article is published.

e. Develop and implement a cus-

tomers service feedback process including timeliness and quality of service.

A Customer Satisfaction Survey was implemented during October 1999. Since then, over 330 surveys were received with 91% favorable responses. The comments provide customers with an avenue to comment on the service provided and to suggest how we can improve our service.

f. Recover costs of service; minimize dependence on the General Fund.

Administrative Services Division completed analysis of fees and charges. Fee changes will be deferred until systems optimization is complete.

3. Improve Organizational Development

a. Improve the recruiting/hiring process. Hire the best engineering graduates from the class of 2000.

The Bureau achieved great success with this Initiative. After receiving authorization from the Personnel Department to do campus recruiting, we visited 14 campuses, interviewed 77, and made 19 job offers. Eleven offers were accepted as of June 30, 2000. This completes this round, but we will start over for the 2001 graduates, with earlier interviews to get the best candidates available. Getting good people onboard is key to the success of our organization.

b. Increase diversity of the Bureau's work force and management team.

Nine of the 21 Engineering Associates hired in FY 99-00 are women and 14 of the 21 are ethnic or racial minorities. Over half of the twelve new engineers hired were women and minorities. Two Deputy City Engineer and one Principal Architect positions were made exempt to increase the candidate pool. The first female engineer was appointed to the position of District Engineer.

c. Develop and implement a Training Plan for BOE.

BOE completed a Master Training Plan and distributed it to all employees. Orientation training has begun. Delivery of training on technical subjects, supervision, and project management will begin soon.

d. Market the Bureau's services.

A marketing brochure describing services available from the Bureau was finalized and is in production by an outside graphic designer. Additionally, BOE made formal presentations to other City agencies, including the Port, Airports, and Recreation and Parks.

PW Participates in Black Business Expo for ASRP

This is a recent press release from the Public Works Public Affairs Office:

LOS ANGELES (September 6, 2000)—The Department of Public Works will staff a booth at the Black Business Expo and Trade Show September 15-17, 2000. The focus of the Department is to increase minority participation in the Accelerated Sewer Repair Project (ASRP).

As a result of the 1994 Northridge earthquake, many sewers in the greater Los Angeles area were damaged. Approximately 376 individual repair projects have been identified, with the cost of each project ranging from \$300,000 to \$900,000. These projects will utilize funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Office of Emergency Services (OES). The current schedule indicates repairs to continue through 2006.

To learn how to qualify for these projects, all interested parties should stop by the Department of Public Works Bureau of Engineering booth at the Black Business Expo. The expo will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center Tom Bradley (South) Hall; 1201 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles.

Hours of the expo are as follows:

Friday, Sept 15, 2000	10 am to 8 pm
Saturday, Sept 16, 2000	noon to 8 pm
Sunday, Sept 17, 2000	noon to 6 pm

For further information, contact Vincent L. Shavers, ASRP Information Project Manager Bureau of Engineering at (213) 847-9687, or call the Public Affairs Office at (213) 473-3623.

Drucker Thanked

A copy of this letter was sent to the city Engineer from Councilmember Goldberg commending Neil Drucker, Prop K Manager, PMD:

August 24, 2000

Dear Mr. Drucker:

We would like to take you to lunch!

On Thursday, September 14, 2000, my office is honoring a small group of City employees who have distinguished themselves by providing a level of service to my staff and constituents that is above and beyond the call of duty.

Mirta Ocana and Suzi Hoffman-Kipp have nominated you to be their "Department Hero." We invite you to lunch as our way of saying thank you, and to let you know that your dedication and caring has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated.

Thank you again for your hard work. I look forward to seeing you on September 14th.

Sincerely yours,

JACKIE GOLDBERG

Councilmember, 13th District

Technical Writing Class Coming

Members of the Oversight Training Committee had a special treat during their meeting on July 11, 2000. Joseph Gennaro, president of Kinetic Communications, and a member of the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD), was invited to give an overview of his company's Technical Writing Seminars.

Mr. Gennaro (call him Joe) gave a preview of selected program topics covered at their two-day Technical Writing Seminars; e.g. "Eliminate unnecessary words, Correct grammatical errors, Rewrite passively voiced sentences, making them active, and correct punctuation errors." Besides courses in business writing, Kinetic also conducts seminars on listening skills, presentation skills and related communication areas.

A communication trainer with over 20 years of experience, Joe is a corporate writer, author, university writing instructor and speaker. He is an International Association of Business Communicators "Gold Quill Merit Award" winner. In 1995, Joe received the first Volunteer-of-the-Month Award from ASTD's L.A. Chapter; in 1997, he received this award from the Orange County ASTD. He earned his M.A. and B.A. degrees at a City University of New York, completing part of the Masters Degree Honors Program at the University's Ph.D. Center.

Joe shares with us an article he wrote for ASTD's InterChange newsletter. Enjoy!

Training Rotation at Contract Administration

The Bureau of Engineering is seeking engineering and architectural associate volunteers to participate in a four-month training program with the Bureau of Contract Administration.

This is an excellent opportunity to learn hands-on construction methodology. Some of the components taught have been: earthwork and subgrade work, sewer and storm drain construction, asphalt concrete paving, installation of street lighting and traffic signals, fabrication inspection, construction of buildings, and preliminary and final inspection techniques. Former BOE participants expressed very positive feedback about their experiences.

To participate in the program, candidates must be willing to work the 5/8 schedule and provide their own vehicle for transportation (mileage will be provided.)

To apply, submit a resume to **Mike Michalski by Friday, September 15, 2000**. If you have questions, you may call him at 6+847-8764 (x78764).

Don't Let a Comma Put You in a Coma

by Joseph Gennaro

Yes, they're tough. Some of you may have experienced a comatose state while sweating over where they belong. I won't fool you. It's the hardest punctuation mark. The good news: Master it, and other punctuation marks seem easy. The others won't even put you in a snit, never mind a coma. So relax, sip your martini and prepare to slay the comma dragon.

What commas do: They indicate you want readers to pause.

What they don't do: Dance. Just kidding. If you remember to place them wherever you find a spot in your sentence at which you'd like readers to *logically pause*, you'll have much of the dilemma whipped. I say "logically pause" because you can't sprinkle them anywhere. This leads us to the question, "Where would these logical, good-to-sprinkle-commas places be?" Mostly (but not exclusively) they'd be here:

After a long introductory phrase or clause: *Although I thought I had enough money for the cab, I found mainly lint in my pockets.*

To keep items in a series apart: *I actually found a pound of lint, chewed Adams Black Jack gum, martini olives and a score of Lotto ticket stubs.*

Inquiring minds want to know why there's no comma after "olives." Not to worry: It's okay to use one there, too. But you don't have to, except in one situation: when readers could confuse the last two items in the series as being one thing. This is not the case in my example, but you may find yourself writing sentences where the serial comma (the last comma separating a series of items) adds clarity. By the way, if you always use the serial comma, that's fine.

When you want to link independent clauses (those that can stand alone as sentences) with conjunctions such as *and, but, for, or, nor, because, so:* *I'll chat nonchalantly with the cab driver, but I'll bolt when he pulls over.*

If you'd like to set off an incidental word grouping, a.k.a. a non-restrictive clause: *New York cab drivers, who must now have advanced degrees in Medieval English literature, are a unique breed.*

In direct address: *Mr. Smith, how long will you be hurtling down Broadway at 85 m.p.h.?*

Between proper names and titles: *Smith, the Devil-Speedster-of-the-Year Award recipient, has plunged his cab into the Hudson.*

To keep elements of geographical address apart: *Smith was brought up in Bel Air, California, but moved to the Bronx, New York, to realize his childhood dream of becoming a kamikaze cabby.*

To separate two adjectives when each can modify the noun: *Cabbies often wear weird, demented grins.*

To set off the month, day and year: *On November 30, 2000, Mr. Smith's license explodes ... I mean expires.*

Also use commas to logically set off a phrase in any part of a sentence - start, middle, end: *The taxicab, originally built by Ford, had been owned by Evil Knieval before it hit the mean New York City streets.*

Remember, commas don't end thoughts. To do that, you need a period, exclamation point or question mark. You're probably familiar with that ubiquitous bugaboo, the run-on sentence. You get one when you try to make commas do a period's job. **Run-on sentence:** *Upon realizing I had no money, mostly lint, I bleated foolishly to the cabby until he began hurtling at 85 mph down Broadway toward the Hudson, at which point he grinned dementedly while bragging ceaselessly about his Devil-Speedster-of-the-Year Award, which made me fall into my second coma of the day, and it was barely high noon on my Evil Knieval wrist watch.*

You need periods in there, people! Or at least a semicolon or two.

Whatever you do, avoid brawling with your boss over where commas belong. Consult a punctuation guide, dictionary, or this article first. Then, only if necessary, go to the mattresses. (Consult Mario Puzo's first book if you're not familiar with the concept of going to the mattresses.)

Kudos are in order, right? Because you should now be the first on your block to more fully understand commas. By the way, they go **inside** the closed quotation marks, not outside. Example: "I think I'll quit cab driving for a far safer life as a Himalayan glacier climber," Smith sighed.

And no. Of the thousands of New York cabbies who shuffled and jostled me hither and yon, none ever drove 85 m.p.h. into either of the rivers flanking Manhattan. However, one wacky driver did splash down at 80 mph. His speedometer was the last thing I saw before all those doctors asked me if I could name the President.

Focus on Quality

by Paul Teensma
BOE Quality Facilitator

He does not believe that does not live according to his belief.

Thomas Fuller

We can apply Fuller's quote, above, in a much broader sense than he probably originally intended. Specifically, I ask you, if you claim to believe in Deming's teachings, are you really living that belief? If you are a "worker," are you embodying the notion that you can make a difference in how the system functions? If you're a "manager," are you truly facilitating process improvements? Or have you backslid into dictating what change will occur (or not occur)? Are you a proselyte of process improvement or a foe?

Perhaps the greatest governmental acceptance and implementation of business process improvement with a particular focus on quality occurred in the US Department of Defense (DOD). Budget cutbacks demanded a fundamental change in how our armed forces operated, without sacrificing national security. DOD claims to have achieved this goal and credits the teachings of Deming, Juran, and others for its success.

In December 1994, DOD published Framework for Managing Process Improvement, an exhaustive manual for managing business process improvement. It is available on the Internet at www.c3i.osd.mil/bpr/bprcd/3003.htm. In Framework, DOD identified three barriers to process improvement, including cultural, organizational, and regulatory barriers. Study the "cultural barriers" section, below, and ask yourself how your actions benefit or impede process improvement at BOE:

"These barriers are related to work practices developed over time that militate against decentralized decision making and worker empowerment-both requisites for high performance in an information age economy.

"Becoming customer-centered: Managers and employees must shift from a rule-based to a customer-based mode of operation and establish performance measures that focus on process outcomes rather than process inputs such as budget.

"Aversion to job elimination, risk, and change: The very essence of process improvement is the elimination of non-value added activities, radical change, and adoption of high-technology solutions-all of which challenge the organizational status quo."

What are you doing to "accomplish the transformation" at BOE? Please contact me with your ideas for effecting and/or documenting positive change, at 6+473-0904 (x30904) or email me at p teensma@eng.ci.la.ca.us.

Strategic Transformation - Achieving Our Vision

Training Opportunities

New Employee Orientation

The next scheduled "New Employee Orientation Training" session will be held on **September 28, 2000** from 8:00 am to 12 Noon, in the Personnel Training Room, 650 S. Spring St., 3rd Floor, Room 356.

New employees to the Bureau hired since January 1999, including transfers from other departments or Bureaus, are expected to attend the "New Employee Orientation Training."

If employees cannot attend the orientation, please notify **Lydia Lota**, Training Section, Administrative Services Division, as soon as possible so that employees on the waiting list can be scheduled in their place.

The "New Employee Orientation Training" is for all new employees, and should not to be confused with the "New Employee Orientation Checklists Training," attended by supervisors, which was designed to prepare and assist supervisors in the orientation process of their new employees.



APWA Wastewater Technology Conference 2000

The American Public Works Association Southern California Chapter, along with the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works are co-sponsoring a single-day program featuring the latest procedures, products, policy issues and trends with concurrent sessions in the management and rehabilitation of solid/liquid/storm waste system. The following topics will be presented:

- Smart Sewers
- Solid Waste Issues
- Tunneling/Trenchless Technologies
- In-Place Repair of Sewers
- NPDES Permit Requirements
- Flood Plain Management
- Use of Biosolids
- Advance Treatment of Wastewater
- Route Selection for Major Sewer Lines
- Public Relations

The session will be held on **Thursday, October 12, 2000**, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm (lunch will be provided) at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Registration is \$100. For more information, contact **Katina Burl**, Major Sewers Engineering Division, at 6+847-8425 (x78425).

Workforce Diversity

On May 2 and 3, 2000, Hank Clemons of HLC & Associates, conducted a Managing Workforce Diversity training which was attended by several group managers and supervisors.

Due to positive feedback from this workshop and a commitment to this important subject matter, the Bureau is offering two more classes on Managing Workforce Diversity scheduled for **Tuesday, September 19, 2000** and **Tuesday October 10, 2000**. Both sessions will be from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

It is **mandatory** that all program and group managers attend one of these classes. Each Program can also send 6 supervisors to the training. The maximum for each class is 24 employees. Those who attended the May 2 or 3 sessions do not need to be scheduled.

Program managers, group managers and designated supervisors should sign up for either session by contacting **Dan Lowitz** at 6+473-0902 (x30902) by **Friday, September 8, 2000**.

Computer Training Rm News

Our 650 S. Spring Street, third floor computer training rooms schedule for the next two weeks is as follows: David Moss in the Zoo Facilities Group will teach Beginning EXCEL 97, Part B; Kevin Thomas in the Emergency and Rehab Sewer Improvement Group will teach Beginning WORD 97, Part B; Edward Arrington in the Structural Engineering Division will teach Intermediate EXCEL 97 - Formatting; Julie Gravel of Vanir will teach Beginning PowerPoint 97; and Ed Villanueva in the Administrative Services Division has reserved one room for special training sessions. Remember that you must submit a completed BOE training request form to your training coordinator, Senior or Group Manager in order to be scheduled for a training class.

100 Years of Architecture

The largest international exhibition of twentieth-century architecture ever mounted comes to Los Angeles after traveling the globe. The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) is showing *At the End of the Century: 100 Years of Architecture* through September 24, 2000. The exhibit is at MOCA at the Geffen Contemporary, 152 North Central Ave. in Little Tokyo. For more information call (213) 626-6222.

Transfer Opportunities

The following transfer opportunities are available. If you are interested, contact the office below by **Tuesday, September 12, 2000**:

Civil Engineering Associate II

Const (LAX) Cel Chavez 6+847-6316
EED - Barbara Frederick 6+524-8336
WLA - Susan Rowghani (310) 575-8638

Civil Engineering Associate III

WLA - Susan Rowghani (310) 575-8638

CE Drafting Technician

MSED - Beverly Brownell
6+847-8724

Control Systems Engineering Assoc III

EED - Barbara Frederick 6+524-8336

Engineering Designer I

Valley - Randall Tsurutani 6+756-8771

Management Analyst II

Street - Christine Furusawa 6+847-5131

Management Analyst I

Street - Christine Furusawa 6+847-5131

Sanitary Engineering Associate II

EED - Barbara Frederick 6+524-8336

Secretary

WLA - Susan Rowghani (310) 575-8638

Senior Clerk Typist

ASD - Teresa Abraham 6+847-8341
Envir - Ara Kasparian 6+847-8815
Lnd Dev - Fatima Robinson 6+485-4401

Arrivals

Sandy Lai, Sr Clerk Typist, ASD; **Sharon Flowers**, Sr Clerk Typist, MSED; **Shelley Wong**, Clerk Typist, ASD; **Omar Anderson**, Management Assistant, EED; **Juan Izaguirre**, Civil Engineering Associate I, SPD; **Stuart Erwin**, Management Analyst II, ASD.

Departures

Ed Howell, Principal Civil Engineer, retired, WLA; **Michael Sarullo**, Civil Engineering Associate III, transferred to Airports, MSED; **Kandace Baptiste**, Secretary, promoted to Housing, ASD; **Raquel Jarel**, Sr. Clerk Typist, transferred to the Board of Public Works, ASD; **Ramnik Mungra** and **Maria Sarullo**, Civil Engineering Associate II, transferred to Airports, EED; **Lance Oishi**, Landscape Architect, transferred to St. Services, Arch.; **Miranda Ow**, Management Analyst II, transferred to St. Services, Stormwater.

Promotion

Vicki Estelle, Sr. Management Analyst I, Arch.

Internal Transfers

Correction from last newsletter. **Ben Deogracias**, Construction Estimator, from Const. Mgmt. to Arch.

In Memoriam

Our deepest condolences go to Allan Kawaguchi, Streets & Stormwater, whose mother Toshiko Kawaguchi passed away suddenly. Services were held last week.

Budget Requests Due

Program Managers are to turn in their budget Requests to the Budget Section, Finance & Administration, by **Friday, September 22, 2000**. The schedule for hands-on computer training sessions will be announced shortly.

Public Works Director

Wayne Moore has been confirmed by Council as the first Director of Public Works, and he starts work on September 18, 2000. He was previously Deputy Executive Officer, Office of Management & Budget with the MTA. Prior to that he directed the development of MTA's \$1.2 billion capital improvement program. His office will be located at 433 S. Spring St., 6th floor. As reported previously, the Bureaus of Management-Employee Services and Accounting will report to the Director.

BOE Commended for DNC

This letter was sent to the City Engineer from Public Works Commissioner Woody Fleming. Thanks go to everyone who worked on preparing for the Democratic National Convention:

August 25, 2000

Dear Vit:

Congratulations on a job well done. As a Commissioner and a delegate to the Democratic Convention, I was very proud of the employees in the Bureau of Engineering who worked long and hard for many months to ensure that the City of Los Angeles puts its best foot forward during the Convention.

Your Bureau's extraordinary efforts helped to make the convention a resounding success!

Sincerely,

WOODY FLEMING

Commissioner

W-4 Forms Information

The Controller's Office has asked that all employees be notified of the following:

This Office complies with U.S. Code: Title 26, Section 3402 to process W-4 Forms.

These regulations require that changes are to become effective on the first pay period on or after 30 days from the date the forms are received.

Please read the certification and perjury statement on the W-4 Form before completing and signing the form.

The IRS requires the Controller to file a special report on all forms with more than ten exemptions, or a claim to be exempt from Federal Taxes.

There will be no exceptions to the rules stated above. Please do not ask the Controller Payroll Section staff for special processing or advice as to how many exemptions to claim. They are not legal advisors nor tax advisors and they urge you to get such advice before possibly filing a false W-4 certification.

Library Groundbreakings

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Baldwin Hills Branch Library, 2906 S. La Brea Blvd. will be **September 9, 2000**. This projects is managed by the Library Facility Program Group headed by **Sam Tanaka**.

2001 Productivity Awards

The Quality and Productivity Commission has announced initiation of the Productivity Improvement Awards process for 2001. This program recognizes City employee teams for their initiative, creativity, teamwork, cost containment efforts, and entrepreneurial spirit in providing a high level of customer service. The teams selected will be recognized at a luncheon to be held in March 2001.

Application materials are available for download via the City Intranet "InsideLA" site (listed under "Productivity Improvement Awards") at <http://insidela.ci.la.ca.us>. Projects should meet one or more of the following criteria: 1) Improved customer service; 2) Efficient resource utilization; 3) Cost savings and/or revenue generation; 4) Employee team involvement; 5) Innovation and creativity; and 6) Transferability to other organizations. **Note new deadline:** Turn in completed applications to **Paul Teensma, 650 S. Spring St., 2nd floor**, by **3:00 pm, Friday, September 22, 2000**.

Engineering Vision

We envision the Bureau of Engineering as a competitive, world class, public service organization dedicated to delivering projects, programs, and services for Los Angeles in a timely and cost effective manner which establishes us as the provider of choice to our customers.

We'd Like to Hear from You

If you have any articles for the Newsletter, please e-mail them to **Winifred Harano** (wharano@eng.lacity.org), and **Terry Aguilar** (taguilar@eng.lacity.org) Admin Services Division, Stop 311 or Fax to 6+847-8357 (x78357). Deadline for the next issue is **Thursday, September 14, 2000**.

Los Angeles City Department of Public Works

Bureau of Engineering

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Los Angeles, CA 90014-1911

<http://www.cityofla.org/BOE/index.htm>

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