



FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK

A California nonprofit corporation of Sunset Park residents • Box 5823, Santa Monica, California 90409-5823 • (310) 358-7117

SEPTEMBER 2005 NEWSLETTER

Layout by Bill Josephs

Oh Boy, Do City Planners Have a Challenge for You! **“Shape the Future 2025”**

What’s new? The Planning and Community Development Department (PCD) staff and consultants have completed the *Opportunities and Challenges* report, which builds on the April 2005 *Emerging Themes* report. The new report examines existing conditions and trends, and it poses questions that challenge the community to consider the choices that will need to be made regarding the future of Santa Monica.

General plan? These reports are all part of the update of the Land Use and Circulation Elements of the city’s General Plan. The updated General Plan will provide direction for operating and managing the city for the next twenty years. Prior general plans have focused on themes such as the expansion of the tourist trade in Santa Monica (leading to more hotels being built) and the creation of the special office district (leading to large office buildings on Colorado around 26th and an increase in commuter traffic cutting through Sunset Park).

Small town vs. big city Much of the feedback that Friends of Sunset Park received from our January 2005 questionnaire indicated an interest by residents in slowing or stopping growth in the city, partly because it contributes to traffic congestion, crowding, and the loss of the “small town” feel some people like. Further, many expressed the view that the commercial expansion during the last couple of decades has resulted in a city bureaucracy that

seems to focus more on visitors and businesses than on residents. Recently, some have expressed concern that many questions in *Opportunities and Challenges* seem to be based on the assumption that future growth is inevitable. For example:

- How much new housing should Santa Monica plan for to maintain inclusiveness and opportunities for affordable housing yet retain an “appropriate town scale”?
- What types of new development could fulfill the City’s diversity and quality of life objectives?
- How can Santa Monica plan for the regional aspects of its economy, medical and educational institutions, and locational draw to create balanced growth and enhance the quality of life for residents?

Revenues from development can provide additional services to the citizens but continued development also brings with it more traffic. Santa Monica is our city. As its residents, we need to make clear to our city officials what our vision is for the future and insist that it be integrated in the city’s General Plan update.

What do residents want? According to Planning staff, in community feedback they’ve received, only a small minority of residents city-wide have advocated for “no growth.” It’s not clear to us whether only a small minority feels this way, or whether no

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Santa Monica College

Enrollment SMC “first-day” student enrollment was 29,522 this year. According to the August 20th edition of *Santa Monica Daily Press*, college officials hope to acquire 550 more full-time students this year. “**After the college reaches this enrollment mark, it will not be seeking any further expansion of its facilities in Santa Monica in order to increase the number of students it serves, [SMC Interim President Tom] Donner said.**”

This is welcome news to the Board of FOSP. We remember when the college enrolled 34,000 students in 2002, put two facilities bond measures on the ballot

totaling \$295 million (these will cost each resident of Santa Monica and Malibu an average of \$3,000), and began acquiring property in our neighborhood to expand its facilities (private homes on Pearl St. near the main campus, the SE corner of Pico and 14th, the Administration Building at Pico and 27th, and the Bundy Campus, south of Santa Monica Airport).

After the results of our January 2005 questionnaire indicated that traffic congestion was a major concern of Sunset Park residents, the FOSP Board took a position opposing all large developments unless the resulting increase in traffic

could be mitigated. That position applied to the Lantana expansion, to Playa Vista, and also to SMC.

Bundy Campus SMC has not yet completed a Master Plan or an EIR for its new Bundy Campus, and only one of the promised series of college-sponsored community meetings for nearby Mar Vista and Santa Monica residents has taken place (in March). Nevertheless, the new campus opened this summer on a 10-acre parcel of land which is landlocked on 3 sides. The college built a two-lane drive-

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Santa Monica Airport

BY CATHY LARSON

Aircraft Conformance Program/Safety Zone Implementation Status

The Aircraft Conformance Program, first proposed in May 2002 and approved by City Council in Dec. 2002, will prohibit safety inappropriate larger C and D aircraft from using SM Airport because they do not meet the airport's design standards. According to the airport staff, C and D aircraft make up approximately 50% of the jets currently using SM Airport.

In addition, the staff has requested the establishment of Runway Safety Areas. Currently, our local airport does not have any Runway Safety Areas in spite of having residences within 250 feet of both ends of the runway. Staff supports their proposals by using the FAA's own recommended safety standards. The City of Santa Monica submitted an official request to the FAA on September 8, 2004. *As of today, after over a year has passed, no official response has been received.*

The staff has requested that the City Council approve the hiring of a Washington, DC aviation consulting firm to assist them in attaining this much needed safety enhancement. This budget request is scheduled for the upcoming City Council meeting on September 27th.

The Latest on Airport Emissions

A Santa Monica Airport Emission Study, conducted by the Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), is scheduled to commence its first phase in January 2006.

Santa Monica Compromise on Landing Fees

In August 2003, the City established Weight Based Landing Fees correlated to the wear and tear on the airport runway. Heavier aircraft paid more than lighter ones. Before then, the City did not collect ANY landing fees. The FAA issued a ruling in January 2005 stating that the landing fees were too high. A compromise program implemented on August 1st will not generate as much income from the larger aircraft as the original program proposed. For example, in the original proposal, a 60,000 lb aircraft would pay \$348. Under the new program, only \$124.

City Wins Lawsuit Challenging Noise Limit

On August 24, 2005, the 9th Circuit Appellate Court ruled in favor of the City of Santa Monica regarding a lawsuit filed by the Santa Monica Airport Association (SMAA), an association of local pilots and aviation businesses, challenging the airport's Aircraft Noise Limit. *Background:* In July 2003, the Superior Court ruled in favor of the City. SMAA appealed. The Appellate Court agreed with the City's argument that SMAA was not a signatory of the 1984 Agreement between the FAA and the City which established the Noise Limit. Therefore, SMAA had no right to bring action, and the case was dismissed.

Want more Santa Monica Airport info?

Visit www.friendsofsunsetpark.org. To receive FOSP SM Airport info emails, issued about once a month, contact Cathy Larson at fospairport@labridge.com or (310) 392-1907.

Tour Wilshire Blvd. from LA to Santa Monica

On October 2nd, the Los Angeles Conservancy is presenting a tour of Wilshire Blvd. from downtown Los Angeles to Santa Monica. Six selected sites will be open for docent tours, including

the old Bullocks Wilshire building.

Wilshire Blvd. includes the most dense and ethnically diverse neighborhoods of Los Angeles, represents virtually every dominant building type of the 20th century, and exemplifies the role of the automobile in the growth of the region. A guide book and kid's activity book is included, so you can take the whole family.

Tickets, available at (213) 623-2486 or www.laconservancy.org, are \$25 for Santa Monica and LA Conservancy members or \$35 for non-members. You can either drive or take the MTA Wilshire Metro bus.

Local stops in the tour include Miles Playhouse and Palisades Park. Palisades Park, where Wilshire Blvd. meets the Pacific Ocean, was originally called Linda Vista Park (Spanish for "fair view") when

it was given to the city by founder John P. Jones in 1890. Its many historic and cultural features are pointed out in the new self-guided brochure.

A special 5:00 PM musical comedy performance at Miles Playhouse will round out the day and benefit the Santa Monica Conservancy. (Tickets must be purchased separately.) This landmark Spanish colonial revival theater is located at 1130 Lincoln Blvd. and was designed by local architect John Byers. The Ruskin Group Theatre will perform a revival of the Rodgers & Hart 1937 Broadway hit musical, *Babes in Arms*, which includes such unforgettable songs as *My Funny Valentine*, *The Lady Is a Tramp*, and *Johnny One Note*. Tickets are \$45 and are available online at www.ruskingrouptheatre.com or at (310) 397-3244.

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Emergency Preparedness in Santa Monica

Excerpts from the "Emergency Preparedness" link on the city web-site: <http://santa-monica.org>
CITY EMERGENCY SERVICES OFFICE: (310) 458-8686

The City's Role

As we have all seen from the recent events in the Gulf Coast states, effective emergency preparedness requires two things: 1) good planning, and 2) the ability to implement those plans.

The city is continuously reviewing and updating its Local Emergency Management System Plan in order to provide the most accurate information and standard operations procedures. This is an integral part of the State of California's statewide emergency management system.

The city's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team, which includes representatives from all city departments, local agencies and others involved in the disaster planning and response in the Santa Monica, meets regularly to train, practice and discuss the city's disaster preparedness.

The city recently completed a two-year effort to develop a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and is training and certifying all emergency workers in the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which is intended to clarify roles and responsibilities in disaster response.

The Santa Monica Fire Department periodically holds Disaster Assistance Response Training (DART) classes for the public. The next DART training will be held on December 3, 2005. This class is free and open to community members 18 and over who live, work, or attend school in Santa Monica. The Santa Monica Police, Fire and Emergency Management departments also meet regularly with surrounding jurisdictions.

The city works closely with the Santa Monica Chapter of the American Red Cross in preparing for and responding to emergencies. They have identified a number of potential shelter sites that could be used in case of emergencies (such as Santa Monica College, Samohi, and Roosevelt Elementary School). These locations will be broadly advertised in the event of an emergency via all available media, including web, telephone, CityTV, and by direct public safety personnel contact with affected persons.

The Santa Monica Fire Department has a list of critical facilities and locations that will be checked immediately following a major event. These sites include schools, hospitals, and facilities for people with special needs.

Your Role

It is important that individuals take steps to make themselves as "disaster-proof" as possible. The first 72 hours after a disaster are critical. Electricity, gas, water and telephones may not be working. Public safety services such as fire and police will be busy handling the most serious crises. The best way to make your family and your home safer is to prepare an emergency supplies kit with these basics and with other items which are appropriate to your household (medicines, baby diapers, walkers, etc).

The city provides emergency planning information to the public:

- > on-line at santamonicafire.org/disaster
- > at "City Hall on Call," at 458-8686, 458-8999 (X 500), or on-line at http://santa-monica.org/services/choc/emergency_prepare-disaster.htm
- > in its DART classes, at 458-8686
- > by mail to Santa Monica Fire Department, 333 Olympic Drive, Santa Monica, CA 90401

Below are additional resources that you will find helpful in preparing for an emergency.

General Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Links:

<http://santamonicafire.org/disaster/FireES-4.htm>

Community Preparedness:

<http://santamonicafire.org/disaster/FireES-3.htm>

Special Needs Residents:

Children, Elderly, People with Disabilities,
Non-English Speaking Residents, and Pets:
<http://santamonicafire.org/disaster/FireES-2.htm>

Hazard Specific Information:

<http://santamonicafire.org/disaster/FireES-13.htm>

Tsunami Information:

<http://santamonicafire.org/disaster/tsunamiprep.htm>

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan:

<http://santa-monica.org/news/citybusiness/HazMit.htm>

Suggested Contents of an Emergency Kit

- > Three days' supply of water (one gallon per person per day)
- > Non-perishable, packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener (don't forget pet food)
- > A change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes
- > Blankets or sleeping bags
- > A first aid kit and prescription medications
- > An extra pair of glasses
- > A battery-powered radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries
- > Credit cards, cash and an extra set of car keys
- > A list of family physicians
- > A list of important family information; the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers
- > Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members, and pets
- > Important telephone numbers, especially out-of-state contacts

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growth advocates have just not succeeded in communicating their views to Planning staff and city officials.

Where to get more information The *Opportunities and Challenges* report is available at city libraries, at the Planning Department in City Hall, and online at www.ShapeTheFuture2025. Additional information on traffic planning is online at www.santamonica.org/planning/transportation/circulationelement.

Let your voice be heard on September 27th If you want to see limited growth or no growth, or have other strong opinions on the general plan update, now is the time to speak. We believe the City Council meeting on September 27th will be critical in

deciding the direction the General Plan update will take. Express your position by:

- emailing to Council@smgov.net
- writing to City Council, 1685 Main St., Room 200, Santa Monica, CA 90401
- speaking at Council meetings

Council agendas and staff reports are available at www.santamonica.org, click on "City Council."

How Santa Monica looks in the next 20 years will depend on what the City Council hears from residents.

If you want to have an impact on decisions affecting your city's future, you need to speak up now.

Santa Monica College, continued from page 1

way from the 609-space parking lot onto Bundy/Centinela, the only adjacent street, but the L.A. Department of Transportation has limited usage of the driveway to 15 cars per day.

No access Blocked by LADOT officials from making full use of the access driveway on Bundy/Centinela, the college has been lobbying the City of Santa Monica to allow Bundy Campus students to drive across Airport property, past buildings that are leased to other businesses and organizations, onto Airport Ave., a 2-lane service road. Airport Ave. dead-ends at Bundy/Centinela on the east and at 23rd/Walgrove on the west. The 609 Bundy Campus parking spaces could generate as many as 3,600 additional car trips daily.

Too much traffic Unfortunately, 23rd St. at Airport already has 24,000 car trips daily, 9,000 more than recommended in city guidelines, and the 23rd/Walgrove/Dewey/Airport Ave. intersection is rated as an "F" intersection (on a scale of A-F) by both LA and Santa Monica. Four streets converge in an S-curve at the bottom of a steep hill, and visibility is poor due to the two sharp curves, the steep grade, and a guard rail barrier in the center divider. Having hundreds of additional cars using that intersection each day would be a nightmare for commuters who enter and exit Santa Monica each day via 23rd/Walgrove, as well as for nearby residents on Dewey, Navy, Marine, Pier, Ashland, Hill, and Oak.

SMC: Opposes limits SMC has downgraded some of its plans for the new campus (in November 2004, one plan included a 1,000 space parking structure that would have generated 6,000 car trips daily) but will not commit in writing to voluntary caps on construction, programs, students, faculty, or traffic counts.

FOSP: Supports limits The FOSP Board finds this unacceptable since SMC does not have to adhere to local zoning regulations and can expand at will, no matter what the impact on nearby residents.

Therefore, the FOSP Board has recommended to City Council:

1. that NO west side access be granted from the Bundy Campus to 23rd St. by way of Airport Ave.
2. that the Council follow a recommendation from the S.M. Airport Commission that SMC be required to sign a Binding Access Agreement limiting the scale of the campus, student/faculty populations, and traffic density (no more than the current 609 parking spaces). Should this agreement be breached, SMC would forfeit vehicular access rights to Airport property.
3. that the traffic circulation plan put forth by the city staff be adopted ("egress only" from the Bundy Campus onto Airport Ave., with a permanent turn restriction for right-turn only, sending campus traffic east on Airport Ave., not west to 23rd/Walgrove).

If access to Airport Ave. is granted without such a binding agreement, SMC

could theoretically create the same density on the 10-acre Bundy Campus that it has on the 39-acre Main Campus, and Sunset Park residents could be dealing with 6,000 students on the new campus rather than the 600 who were enrolled this summer.

Mar Vista concerns Mar Vista residents are also concerned about SMC traffic and parking impacts on their neighborhood and are asking for on-site Bundy Campus parking only for on-site students, a limit on the number of daily car trips, a permanent closure by deed restriction of the Stewart Ave. gate, left or right turn permitted upon exiting the Bundy Campus onto Airport Ave. (the FOSP Board disagrees with them on this point), SMC assistance in preventing student parking in the nearby neighborhood, preparation of a Master Plan that would limit the ultimate build-out and maximum potential use of the site, and ongoing monitoring of compliance with the access agreement.

Better not bigger College staff tell us that SMC has always been a regional rather than a city college, so we are not complaining about the fact that 75% of the current students do not live in Santa Monica or Malibu. But rather than promoting an ever-growing enrollment and over-development of an ever-increasing number of campuses which impact nearby residents, we hope that the college will focus instead on becoming "Better not Bigger."

While supporting the educational mission of SMC, the FOSP Board opposes any traffic circulation plan for the Bundy Campus that would increase traffic in nearby residential neighborhoods.