



# FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK

A California nonprofit corporation of Sunset Park residents • Box 5823, Santa Monica, California 90409-5823 • [www.friendsofsunsetpark.org](http://www.friendsofsunsetpark.org)

## DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Layout by Bill Josephs

**As 2020 draws to a close, we wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season and all the best for 2021.**

### **Miramar Hotel Expansion Approved**

According to ABC 7 News, “It’s one of the most coveted pieces of land not just in Santa Monica, but all of L.A. County: The Fairmont Miramar Hotel at Ocean Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard overlooking Santa Monica Bay. A half-billion dollar re-development of the property, 10 years in the making, was approved by the Santa Monica City Council Tuesday night [September 29].”

The agreement will allow the developer to double the size of the Miramar. The new building will create a 130-foot tall “wall” along Second Street, blocking sunlight and ocean breezes, and it will include more than 60 luxury condos selling for \$7 to \$10 million dollars apiece.

According to Mary Marlow of the Transparency Project, the Miramar Hotel owners managed to use a loophole in 2006, when they purchased the Miramar property for \$200 million, to save an average of \$1.4 million every year in property taxes. That means the County of Los Angeles, the City of Santa Monica, and the local school district lost around \$20 million in revenue over the past 14 years.

### **City Council Meetings**

Agendas are posted at [www.smgov.net/council](http://www.smgov.net/council). The meetings can be viewed on CityTV – Cable Channel 16 streaming at <https://tinyurl.com/y2j8urf3> and live stream (Chrome Browser Recommended) at <https://tinyurl.com/yd5qjbvk>

### **FOSP Board of Directors**

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### **Housing Element Update: 8,874 New Apartments?**

Every eight years, California cities are required to update the Housing Element of their General Plans. The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is mandated by State Housing Law and quantifies the need for housing within each jurisdiction during each 8-year cycle. The state assigns the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to divvy up allocations to individual cities and counties in Southern California. <https://scag.ca.gov/housing>

In the previous cycle, Santa Monica was required to zone for approximately 1,600 new housing units. For 2021–2029, SCAG has assigned Santa Monica 8,874 new housing units, of which 70% are required to be affordable. This would be a 9% increase in housing units in our city. Meanwhile, Long Beach was allocated 5%, and Malibu was allocated 0.5%. There is no way the city can afford to construct 6,000 new affordable apartments by 2029, and yet our City Council ignored the October 2020 deadline to appeal the SCAG allocation.

At the Santa Monica Planning Commission study session November 18, Commissioner Mario Fonda-Bonardi voiced serious doubts about the RHNA allocation for Santa Monica.

Meanwhile, Santa Monica Housing Commissioner Leonora Camner (appointed by the City Council), who is also Executive Director of Abundant Housing LA, wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* in October 2019 that Santa Monica, with its “massive job base and access to rail,” should be allocated a target of 14,155 housing units. <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2019-10-25/housing-crisis-los-angeles-scag-homeless-development>

**City Council Study Session** On December 15, City Council will have a “study session” to discuss the Housing Element Update. The agenda will be posted at [www.smgov.net/council](http://www.smgov.net/council) at least three days before the meeting and, whether you support or oppose the 8,874 housing unit target, you can contact Council members at [Council@smgov.net](mailto:Council@smgov.net)

For additional information, visit the following:

- **“Housing Element – Get Involved”** – City of Santa Monica – <https://www.santamonica.gov/housing-element-update-get-involved>
- **“Double Counting in the Latest Housing Needs Assessment”** – September 2020 – Embarcadero Institute – <https://embarcaderoinstitute.com/>
- **Do the Math** – The state has ordered more than 350 cities to prepare the way for more than 2 million homes by 2030. But what if the math is wrong? Senate Bill 828, co-sponsored by the

### **Buy Local**

A number of local businesses, including Artful and Zabie’s Neighborhood Café on Ocean Park Blvd., have closed due to the pandemic. As county public health restrictions allow, you are urged to support local family-owned businesses. Shopping local:

- Helps grow Santa Monica’s economy
- Boosts job growth in Santa Monica
- Gives Santa Monica artists and vendors exposure
- Means healthier and more tasty food options
- Means you get personalized service and products
- Shows appreciation for local businesses, area farmers and the environment
- Means giving back to charities and raising revenue for our schools
- Delivers the best customer service
- Keeps Santa Monica unique
- Helps ensure your favorite local businesses can survive.

### **Santa Monica Police Department**

**SMPD website** [www.SantaMonicaPD.org](http://www.SantaMonicaPD.org)

**Emergency** 9-1-1 – Report an in-progress, life-threatening emergency

**Dispatch (non-emergency)** 310-458-8491 – Request non-emergency police service

**Phone and email directory** <https://tinyurl.com/y4ujes63>

**Neighborhood Resource Officer** Edgar. Navarro@smgov.net – 310-458-2201 ext 4137

**Crime Prevention Coordinator** Halima. Barreto@smgov.net – 310-458-8618

**Crime Mapping** <https://www.crime-mapping.com/map/ca/santamonica>

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## Police Dept., continued from page 1

Before retiring, former Police Chief Cynthia Renaud participated in a recent FOSP meeting, giving a brief update and answering questions. Interim City Manager Lane Dilg subsequently asked former Santa Monica Police Chief Jacqueline Seabrooks to come out of retirement to serve as Interim Chief of Police beginning October 26, 2020. Seabrooks began her law enforcement career in Santa Monica in 1982, then served as Police Chief in Inglewood from 2007 to 2012 before returning to Santa Monica to serve as Chief from 2012 to 2017. She will participate in the December 14 FOSP Zoom meeting.

**Car Break-ins** “Why You Might Want to Wrap Your Car Fob in Foil” – 7/6/18 – *Detroit Free Press*

“Given that the best way to store your car keys at night is by putting them in a coffee can, what’s an ex-FBI agent’s advice to protect cars from theft during the day? Wrap car fobs in aluminum foil. “Although it’s not ideal, it is the most inexpensive way,” said a cybersecurity expert who retired in 2017 from the FBI....Now, as CEO of GlobalSecurityIQ, she suggests clients go online and spend a few dollars to buy a Faraday bag to shield the fob signal from potential theft. Imagine a traditional sandwich bag made of foil instead of plastic...”

**Catalytic Converter Theft** The catalytic converter (also known as a cat) is an emissions control device located in your car’s exhaust system. Harmful gases from the engine flow through the cat, where they are transformed into water vapor and carbon dioxide. The result is a reduction in pollutants from the car’s tailpipe. Thieves are drawn to catalytic converters because these devices contain certain precious metals, including rhodium, palladium, and platinum, which make used converters valuable to metal recyclers. Thieves only need a battery-powered tool or a hack saw to separate the converter from the exhaust pipe. Toyota Priuses and SUVs are popular targets due to easier access.

### To prevent theft:

- Park in a well-lit, highly visible area (near security cameras when possible).
- Park your car in the garage whenever possible.
- Buy a device that locks your car’s catalytic converter in a cage made of steel wire rope.
- Park high-riding vehicles (i.e., trucks and SUVs) near low-profile cars. Doing so will make it difficult to access the converter on the taller vehicle.
- Etch your vehicle’s license plate number or VIN number into the converter. This will make it easier to trace the converter if it’s stolen.

## Housing Element, continued from page 1

Bay Area Council and Silicon Valley Leadership Group, and authored by state Sen. Scott Wiener in 2018, has inadvertently doubled the “Regional Housing Needs Assessment” in California. Use of an incorrect vacancy rate and double counting, inspired by SB-828, caused the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to exaggerate by more than 900,000 the units needed in SoCal, the Bay Area, and the Sacramento area....”

- **“Death by 9,000 Cuts”** – Mario Fonda-Bonardi – 2/27/20 – Santa Monica Mirror – <https://smmirror.com/2020/02/death-by-9000-cuts>
- **“Craven Santa Monica Solicits Input after the Fact for 8,874 Housing Units They Agreed to”** – 11/4/20 – *Santa Monica Observer* – <https://www.smonobserver.com/story/2020/11/04/news/craven-santa-monica-solicits-input-after-the-fact-for-additional-8874-housing-units-they-agreed-to/5021.html>

## Coronavirus Update

Information updated daily: <https://www.santamonica.gov/coronavirus>

Hotline: 310-458-8400, 8 AM to 5 PM

Email: [info@SantaMonica.gov](mailto:info@SantaMonica.gov)

Free COVID-19 testing: <https://covid19.lacounty.gov/testing/>

Donate to “We are Santa Monica” (Santa Monica COVID-19 Relief Fund): <https://www.calfund.org/wearesantamonica/>

Programs to help you save money on utilities and food during COVID-19: <https://tinyurl.com/y7ngkahx>

- Apply for CARE and FERA to lower your electricity and gas bills.
- Apply for the California Lifeline Telephone Discount Program to lower your phone bills.
- Switch to free internet if you have school-aged kids.
- Get help putting food on the table by applying for CalFresh.
- Switch to discounted rates with Spectrum or Comcast.

## Santa Monica Airport (SMO)

**Airport Commission** Boeing engineer and former Army flight instructor Bruce Malarky has joined retired Air Force Major Joseph Schmitz, PhD; attorney Geoffrey Neri; environmental engineer Chris Waller; and Commission chairperson Andrew J. Wilder. The January 2021 meeting will be held via teleconference. The agenda will be posted online at least 72 hours before the meeting at <https://www.smgov.net/departments/airport/commission/>

**Airport Red Light Petition** As Southern California Edison has installed taller light poles in alleys in the Sunset Park neighborhood, they are required to notify the FAA about new poles installed near the Santa Monica Airport. The new poles are actually shorter than some neighborhood trees. The FAA merely “recommends” rather than “requires” the red lights. But until the City tells SCE to stop, more and more residents will have extremely bright red lights shining into their bedroom windows all night long. To sign an online petition, go to: <https://smofuture.weebly.com/red-lights.html>

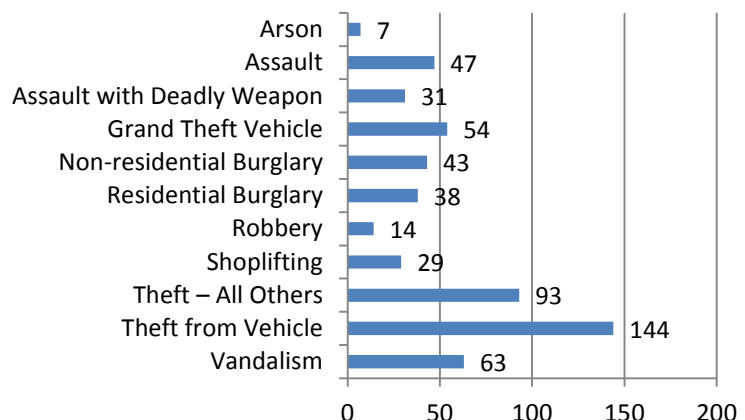
**Operations** Aircraft landings and takeoffs at SMO in September 2020 included 5,522 piston/propeller planes, 261 turbo-props, 124 helicopters, and 156 jets, for a total of 6,063 operations.

## Santa Monica Public Library

The libraries are closed until further notice – [www.smpl.org](http://www.smpl.org)

**Curbside Pickup** You will receive notification that your holds are ready by email, text, or phone. Items will be available at the pickup location you selected: the Main Library or Pico Branch 10 AM to 4 PM, Mon–Fri, or the Montana Avenue Branch 10 AM to 4 PM, Mon and Wed. Bring your Library card or ID, wear a mask, and practice physical distancing. **Note:** No service December 24-25 and January 1-2. Also, Curbside Pickup will be available only at the Main Library December 28-31.

## Sunset Park Crime Mapping: January 1 through November 30, 2020



Add your voice to your neighborhood.

Join us!

**FriendsofSunsetPark.org**