



# FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK

A California nonprofit corporation of Sunset Park residents • Box 5823, Santa Monica, California 90409-5823 • FriendsofSP@yahoo.com

## NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Layout by Bill Josephs

### Santa Monica Airport

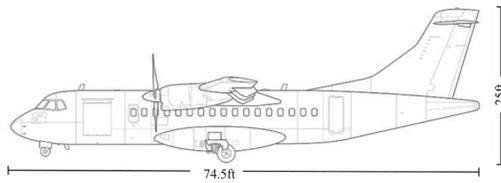
Air carrier Jet Suite X (JSX) has recently applied to begin operations at SMO, proposing to use 30-passenger ATR 42-600 aircraft to serve regional destinations. SMO has not seen aircraft this large since Douglas Aircraft closed its Santa Monica facility in 1975.

Both Los Angeles World Airports (which manages both LAX and Van Nuys Airport) and the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority have filed formal objections to JSX's operations based on safety and other concerns. They joined two of the nation's largest airlines and pilot unions in warning that the Part 135 "public charter" business model exploited by JSX undermines the FAA's One Level of Safety policy and bypasses TSA and Part 139 certification standards.

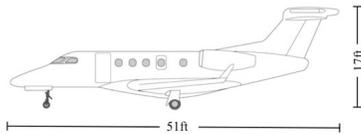
Van Nuys Airport (VNY), like Santa Monica Airport, is a general aviation facility that lacks Part 139 certification. Even at VNY, a much larger, better-equipped field further from homes, Los Angeles World Airports has taken a firm stance opposing JSX-type operations for the same safety, security, and compliance reasons now before the City of Santa Monica.

Montgomery Field (MYF) in San Diego has also not yet approved JSX and the ATR 42-600. Both VNY and MYF might eventually approve the JSX stationing, but they will likely go through a comprehensive safety and regulatory review before they do. That should provide adequate caution to Santa Monica for our much smaller and more restricted General Aviation airport. Our City Manager has 120 days from the date the application was filed to make a decision on the lease. He can be contacted at [Manager@santamonica.gov](mailto:Manager@santamonica.gov)

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**ATR 42-600**  
Proposed to operate by JSX



**Embraer Phenom 300**  
Currently operating at SMO



**Cessna 172 R**  
Currently operating at SMO

*The size of the aircraft Jet Suite X plans to operate compared to executive jets and piston-propellered aircraft currently using Santa Monica Airport.*

### Fairview Library

The Fairview and Ocean Park branch libraries, which have only been open for "self-service" two days per week, will soon return to full service. The two libraries are scheduled to re-open for "full service" three days per week in January 2026. In July 2026, that will increase to four days per week.

### Santa Monica Resources for Residents Experiencing Food Insecurity

With the federal government shutdown threatening critical food assistance for millions of Americans in November, the city wants to ensure that the community is aware of local resources available for households experiencing food insecurity. Various resources are available for residents whether documented, undocumented, or in mixed status households. The city's Human Services Grants Program funds several programs. This includes:

- A weekly *food pantry* at Virginia Avenue Park, which serves an average of 220 households weekly and is run in coordination with Westside Food Bank. Westside Food Bank contributes to many regional food banks and has a variety of available resources.
- *Meals on Wheels West*, which assists homebound individuals, both elderly and/or disabled
- *WISE Diner*, which provides lunch to seniors Monday through Friday at the Ken Edwards Center at 1527 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

If you are a Santa Monica resident experiencing food insecurity, please don't hesitate to contact the Human Services Division at (310) 458-8701 or [humanservices@santamonica.gov](mailto:humanservices@santamonica.gov) for assistance.

## The Future of the Santa Monica Airport

In **1926**, Santa Monica voters passed a Parks Bond to purchase land which, in 1928, opened as the city's largest park. It included an 18-hole golf course, playgrounds, tennis courts, archery range, recreation center, picnic grounds, a grassy air strip, and was described in a local paper as "The Brightest Crown jewel in Santa Monica's Crown."

In **1941**, the federal government leased the property to provide protection for the adjacent Douglas Aircraft Company and participated later in extending the runway to 23<sup>rd</sup> Street on the west and to Bundy Drive on the east.

In **1975**, Douglas Aircraft relocated to Long Beach, and its property on Ocean Park Blvd. was later developed into Clover Park and the Santa Monica Business Park.

In **2014**, Santa Monica voters passed Measure LC, which prohibited new development on the Airport land except for parks, open spaces, and public recreational facilities, until voters approve limits on uses and development, and it affirmed the City Council's authority to manage the Airport and to close it. See [www.ItsOurLand.org](http://www.ItsOurLand.org) for more information.

In **January 2017**, the City of Santa Monica and the Federal Aviation Administration negotiated a Consent Decree. It allowed the city to reduce the runway length from 5,000 feet to 3,500 feet and install Runway Safety Areas. It also required the city to operate the Airport until December 31, 2028.

In **February 2017**, the City Council passed Resolution 11026, implementing the consent decree and authorizing all actions necessary to ensure closure of the Airport on December 31, 2028.

In **January 2023**, the City Council approved a public process to determine the future of the Santa Monica Airport and signed a contract with Sasaki Associates – <https://www.Sasaki.com> – to conduct community outreach and design a park. Since then, the Santa Monica Airport Conversion Project staff – <https://www.smacproject.com/> – held community events and ran online surveys. A draft "park only" plan is scheduled to be presented after the beginning of the year.

Two local organizations are advocating for a large park: The Great Park Coalition at <https://greatparkcoalition.org/> and Airport2Park at <https://airport2park.org/>

## Emmalie Award – Alex Novakovich

The "Emmalie" Award this year was awarded to Alex Novakovich. Alex moved to Santa Monica in 1974 and fell in love with the city. She moved to Sunset Park in 1996 with her husband, Larry, and two small children. Their kids went to Grant, JAMS, and Samohi and she was an active parent volunteer at all three schools. She also served for a number of years as Executive Director of the Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra which provides free concerts for the community. She continues to work with the Symphony.

Alex joined Friends of Sunset Park in 2016, when the organization came to the rescue of her neighbors on 26<sup>th</sup> Street. The City of Santa Monica had enabled the sale of three small apartment buildings at the end of their block to Step Up on Second, an organization that houses the homeless mentally ill. There were many issues, and Alex and her neighbors spent years negotiating with city staff, with the support of FOSP their effects finally culminated in a Good Neighbor Agreement.

Alex was subsequently elected to the FOSP Board of Directors, where she served with distinction. She volunteered to cater FOSP Annual Meetings. One of her innovations was the creation of the Friends of Sunset Park Beach Towel Drill Team, which she choreographs and leads in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade on Main Street every year, much to the delight of the parade goers.

Although Alex is no longer on the Board, she still serves as our Communications Chair, collaborating on the weekly "What's New" emails, updating the FOSP website, and helping with the FOSP general membership meeting.

The "Emmalie" Award is named in honor of the late Emmalie Hodgins, one of the founders of Friends of Sunset Park, and it is dedicated to those who have volunteered their time and energy for the benefit of the Sunset Park neighborhood. It was the FOSP Board's pleasure to present the award this year to Alex Novakovich.

### Communications

To keep the community informed, Friends of Sunset Park sends out weekly emails to its members entitled "What's New." It includes city announcements, a calendar of events, and links to articles in local newspapers from the previous week. We also maintain a website at [www.friendsofsunsetpark.org](http://www.friendsofsunsetpark.org), a Facebook page (search for "Friends of Sunset Park – Santa Monica"), and an Instagram page at <https://www.instagram.com/friendsofsunsetpark>. Residents can also email us at [FriendsofSP@yahoo.com](mailto:FriendsofSP@yahoo.com)

### FOSP Community Events

In **May 2025**, FOSP co-sponsored an "Art in the Park" event with the Sunset Park Business Association.

On **July 4**, the renowned FOSP Beach Towel Drill Team marched in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade on Main Street, much to the delight of parade goers!

On **July 19**, FOSP held a General Membership Meeting & Celebration in Clover Park. The Mayor and Police Chief spoke, the "Emmalie" Award was presented to Alex Novakovich, tables were staffed by Meals on Wheels, Friends of the Library, and the Great Park Coalition, and door prizes donated by local businesses were handed out.

On **August 5**, FOSP had a table at the "National Night Out" event in front of City Hall.

And, on **October 18**, FOSP hosted an outdoor family-oriented movie ("Coco") at Clover Park. A local band, the Jane Fondas, opened the event.

**FOSP email:**

[FriendsofSP@yahoo.com](mailto:FriendsofSP@yahoo.com)

**FOSP website:**

[www.friendsofsunsetpark.org](http://www.friendsofsunsetpark.org)

**FOSP on Facebook:**

Friends of  
Sunset Park - Santa Monica

**FOSP on Instagram:**

[www.instagram.com/friendsofsunsetpark/](https://www.instagram.com/friendsofsunsetpark/)

## Tired of Overdevelopment?

**2864 30<sup>th</sup> Street:** Rather than applying for a zoning change and paying the required fees, the owners of the two-story office building behind the retail center on Ocean Park Blvd. with The Counter and Il Forno Caffè, and their counsel, worked behind the scenes with Planning staff for a year to develop a staff recommendation to City Council to upzone the property. The Neighborhood Commercial zoning would allow the development of an 85-foot-tall building, directly across the street from one- and two-story homes. Opponents described this as “spot zoning,” which is illegal, but 5 City Council members APPROVED the upzoning: Dan Hall, Barry Snell, Carolin Torosis, Natalya Zernitskaya, and Jesse Zwick. Lana Negrete and Ellis Raskin voted AGAINST the upzoning. Regarding the adjacent parking lot, a deed restriction was agreed upon which would prevent development of that parcel for the next 10 years.

**Gelson’s Replacement Project:** The “Lincoln Center Project” (twelve 6-story apartment buildings with 521 units) is temporarily on hold as the developer has apparently had trouble with financing.

**1320 Pico Blvd:** This project includes 147 apartments in an 8-story building. According to state law, there will be no public hearing at either Planning Commission or City Council.

**3205 Ocean Park Blvd:** A 7-story apartment building called “Ocean Park Apartments” is planned, with 102 apartments. The project gets a 50% density bonus per Assembly Bill 2345, and an additional 50% density bonus per Assembly Bill 1287, plus additional incentives and waivers. There will be no public hearings.

**2800 28th Street:** The proposed project calls for replacing a 112,000 sq ft office building with a new complex with 375 homes. BXP would set aside 44 apartments for very low-, low-, and moderate-income renters in exchange for the rights to build a larger structure than would otherwise be allowed by zoning rules. No public hearings.

**2612 Ocean Park Blvd:** A demotion permit application sign has been posted in front of this office building next to Clover Park.

### What can you do?

- If you have questions or concerns about the state housing laws, such as the density bonus, which are allowing these large projects, you can contact State Senator Ben Allen at [Senator.Allen@Senate.ca.gov](mailto:Senator.Allen@Senate.ca.gov) and Assemblymember Rick Zbur at [Assemblymember.Zbur@Assembly.ca.gov](mailto:Assemblymember.Zbur@Assembly.ca.gov)
- Here are two organizations keeping an eye on state housing legislation: <https://www.LivableCalifornia.org/> and <https://www.UnitedNeighbors.net/>
- Our Neighborhood Voices is a grassroots nonprofit sponsoring a 2028 ballot initiative. If passed, it would restore the authority of local representatives to decide what gets built in our communities by amending the California State Constitution, which trumps state laws. <https://www.our-neighborhoodvoices.com/>



## How to Start a Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch is a partnership between the Police Department and residents that provides you the opportunity to get to know your neighbors, and allow officers to get to know you and your neighborhood. In an effort to reduce crime and enhance quality of life in your community, SMPD Crime Prevention Coordinators will show you how to protect yourself, your neighbors, and your property from crime. Sta-

tistical data, along with criminals themselves, confirm that when neighbors organize, the opportunity for crime is drastically reduced.

To join an existing Neighborhood Watch group, contact the Community Relations Unit at (310) 458-8474 to see if there are any active groups in your area. If there are currently no active groups in the area, you can be the first to start one!

## Saving the Civic Auditorium

The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium is a City Landmark, built in 1958 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which provides opportunities for federal and state tax incentives and grants to assist with its future restoration and rehabilitation. It was closed to public events in 2013 due to costly seismic repair requirements.

In 2022, the City Council made formal moves to sell the historic Auditorium. Alarmed at this possibility, residents formed “Save the Civic” – <https://www.savethecivic.org/> – with the belief that that publicly owned spaces for music and the arts are important cultural venues, and that they should be restored, not liquidated, or used for other purposes.

During 2023, Save the Civic found a group of investors interested in restoring this historic building and operating it as a world-class performing arts center at no cost to taxpayers. The Revitalization Partners Group (RPG) is a consortium of LA-based companies: Make Good Group, Geysler Holdings, The (Irving) Azoff Company, Oak View Group, and Live Nation.

On March 25, 2025, the Santa Monica Council approved the execution of the Exclusive Negotiation Agreement (ENA) with RPG in a 7–0 vote. However, on October 14, 2025, four City Council members voted to terminate the ENA: Dan Hall, Caroline Torosis, Natalya Zernitskaya, and Jesse Zwick. Three Councilmembers voted against terminating the ENA: Lana Negrete, Ellis Raskin, and Barry Snell. Here is a short video from RPG entitled “The Santa Monica Civic Reimagined”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTuyjx0Bk4>

### FOSP Board

President – Clare Thomas  
Vice President – John Reynolds  
Secretary – Zina Josephs  
Treasurer – Aliceann Grusin  
Robb Brown, Nikki Kolhoff,  
Cathy Larson, Jeanne Laurie,  
John Murdock

## Realignment Plan

On October 23, 2025, the city released the details of a “Realignment Plan” to be voted on by the City Council on October 28. There was no Council study session or community outreach regarding the 34-page plan.

At its meeting on October 28, the City Council unanimously approved the realignment plan, aimed at restoring public safety, revitalizing the downtown core, and achieving fiscal stability by 2028. The multi-year framework responds to mounting challenges, including rising homelessness, deteriorating public spaces, declining tourism revenues, and a projected \$29.6 million structural deficit by fiscal year 2026–27

The plan will deploy \$60 million in previously allocated reserves to fund immediate investments in public safety, capital improvements, and organizational capacity, while pursuing new revenue streams to balance the city’s operating budget.

It includes re-opening Fairview and Ocean Park branch libraries, as well as hiring additional Code Enforcement staff to provide seven-day coverage and evening response. Samoshel will be relocated outside downtown, but it’s not clear where.

The plan also includes a proposal for a city parcel tax to be placed on the 2026 ballot. The way parcel taxes work, the owners of the Fairmont Miramar Hotel, for example, would be taxed the same amount as an individual homeowner. It’s also not clear if there will be an exemption for property owners over age 65, as is allowed with the school district’s Measure R parcel tax.

Additional information here: <https://www.santamonica.gov/press/2025/10/24/santa-monica-charts-path-to-realignment>

## Emergency Preparedness

Disasters can happen at any time, and being prepared for the next emergency can be easy with these simple steps:

- *Get a Kit:* Have enough supplies for seven days. Your kit should include food, water, blankets, clothing, sturdy shoes, medications, flashlight, radio, and any other supplies you rely on daily. Here’s a checklist to get started: <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20250602/how-build-kit-emergencies>
- *Make a Plan:* Create a household communications plan, emergency meeting locations, and routes to get to the meeting places. Consider the needs of your household, especially those of children, older adults, and pets. Make plans on how to handle specific medical, dietary, language needs.
- *Be Informed:* Find natural hazard zones in Santa Monica using <https://myhazards.caloes.ca.gov/> – Sign up for SMAAlerts here: <https://www.santamonica.gov/process-explainers/how-to-sign-up-for-sm-alerts> – Additional information here: <https://www.santamonica.gov/topic-explainers/emergency-preparedness>

## Height Limits for Hedges and Fences

The city has established the following maximum heights for hedges, fences, and walls:

- Front yards – 42 inches (3½ feet)
- Side and rear yards – eight feet for fences and walls, twelve feet for hedges. (No height limit for hedges that are adjacent to or within ten feet of an alley.)



The “Save Fairview Library” rally at City Hall in April 2025



Alex Novakovich leading the 2025 FOSP Beach Towel Drill Team at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade



The 2024 Beach Towel Drill Team in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade



FOSP “movie night” at Clover Park on October 18, 2025

