



# FRIENDS OF SUNSET PARK

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## JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Layout by Bill Josephs

### **Santa Monica Airport**

The next Airport Commission meeting will be on Monday, January 22, at 7 pm at City Hall. At its February 26 meeting, the Commission will host a panel of experts on the topic of “leaded” Avgas, which is used by piston/propeller planes. In August 2023 alone, there were 5,120 landings and takeoffs by piston/propeller planes at Santa Monica Airport.

**Video:** A former FOSP Board member, Gavin Scott, has produced a short video entitled “Our Park—Our Future—Episode 1” which is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wK6xJqdyLc>

**Airport Conversion:** On December 19, the City Council approved an agreement with Sasaki Inc. to assess the existing Airport site conditions, gather public input, and propose options for the future of the airport land centered around a “Great Park” consistent with Measure LC.

In addition to bringing on Sasaki to assist, the city also plans to hire a new principal design and planning manager dedicated to the project, pending Personnel Board approval in January 2024.

With Sasaki and additional staff resources onboard, the Airport Conversion Planning Project is set to kick off in early 2024. Sasaki will lead research and public outreach efforts in 5 distinct phases, ideally wrapping up with a preferred alternative going to City Council at the end of 2025.

► **Phase 1 – Charting the Course:** Sasaki and staff will conduct extensive review of background materials to produce a summary and analysis that lays out a clear framework for the process. This includes looking at policy documents, historical and cultural resources, and gathering information on the environmental, cultural, and planning opportunities and limitations for the site, as well as the community’s initial needs and desires.

► **Phase 2 – Discovering the Place and Setting the Stage:** This phase involves a comprehensive assessment of the current environmental conditions, transportation and infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and regulatory frameworks related to the airport site. Sasaki will also explore options for funding strategies for a proposed project and create a draft of the guiding principles. These prin-

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### **Gelson’s Teardown Project: January 29 Hearing**

The proposed housing project at 2601 Lincoln Blvd., which involves replacing the grocery store and retail center at the SE corner of Lincoln and Ocean Park Blvd. with 521 apartments in twelve 5-story buildings, has received Administrative Approval from Planning staff. A hearing is scheduled on **January 29<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM** at the **Architectural Review Board** at City Hall to review the project’s design, colors, materials, landscaping, lighting, and signage.

***This will be the only public hearing for the project, and it will be held in the City Council Chamber at City Hall.***

The project was submitted for City review on March 11, 2022. It consists of 521 total housing units, of which 53 units are affordable to Very Low-Income households.

**State Density Bonus Law** – According to the city, the applicant is eligible for State-mandated benefits under the State density bonus law. It requires the City to grant a “density bonus” to housing projects that set aside a certain number of housing units as affordable. State density bonus law includes procedures that allow the applicant to request up to three “incentives or concessions,” which allow for deviations from the City’s regulations, and unlimited waivers or reductions of development standards. State law does not allow the City to interpret that these incentives, concessions, waivers, or reductions of development standards mean that the project does not comply with City regulations.

Under State density bonus law, the applicant has requested a 50% density bonus based on the number of proposed affordable housing units.

**AHPP** – The proposed project is required to comply with the City’s Affordable Housing Production Program (“AHPP”), which

requires a minimum of 10% of the “base” housing units (before any units granted under State density bonus law) be affordable to very low-income households. The applicant is proposing to provide 15% or 53 of the base housing units on-site as affordable to very low-income households. This exceeds the City’s minimum AHPP requirements.

The AHPP would normally require that all affordable units be provided as 2-bedroom units. The applicant is requesting an incentive or concession under State density bonus law that would allow the proposed project to provide 41 one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom units instead of 53 two-bedroom units.

**AB2334:** Effective January 1, 2023, AB 2334 requires a State Density Bonus to be calculated from the project’s base density, as follows:

- Base FAR – 1.5
- Base Density – 348 units (295 market rate units; 53 very low-income units)
- Apply 50% Density Bonus to Base Density – 348 Base Density Units × 50% = 521 Total Units in Project (468 market rate units; 53 very-low income units)

Project website: <https://santamonica.gov/pending-project-updates-2601-lincoln-boulevard>

### **Holiday Tree Collection through January 31**

Remove all decorations such as tinsel, lights, and stands. Place your tree curbside or in the alley next to your waste containers for automatic pick-up. Do not leave trees in parking lots or parks. No 311 request required. Natural trees will have a second life as mulch and compost. However, flocked trees (trees with synthetic snow) cannot be turned into compost due to the synthetic materials used in the artificial snow, and these will be collected as trash. Questions? Email [zerowaste@santamonica.gov](mailto:zerowaste@santamonica.gov)

### **Saving the Civic Auditorium**

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, the City formalized a process seeking qualified suitors to lease, restore, and operate the Civic with an announcement calling for experienced entertainment and operating entities to submit letters of intent by January 31<sup>st</sup>. As a part of that process, community engagement plans must also be submitted. The City Council and City Manager are moving forward in a timely manner, and FOSP thanks everyone in the community who came together to save the Civic and restore it as a first-rate concert and performing arts center. To receive updates, visit the website [savethecivic.org](http://savethecivic.org) and register your contact information.

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- ciples will be the basis for the planning scenarios of Phase 3 and will go before the City Council for comment before moving to the next phase.
- ▶ **Phase 3 – Defining the Future of Place:** Sasaki will work with the community to explore and test various scenarios for the future of the airport land, generating alternatives that are environmentally sound, financially viable, and programmatically feasible and closely align with the established guiding principles for the “Great Park,” but explore different emphasis and organization of those principles. This work culminates in the preferred scenario that considers the previous information, community input, and City Council approval to date.
  - ▶ **Phase 4 – The Path Ahead:** The team will develop a detailed strategy for a phased implementation of the preferred alternative from Phase 3, while also considering innovative ways to initiate on-site activations from day one of city possession of the airport land on January 1, 2029. This proposal would be presented to the City Council for review and approval.
  - ▶ **Phase 5 – Preferred Scenario Plan Vision Book:** Following City Council approval of the preferred alternative, Sasaki will compile a comprehensive document comprised of the research data, reports, community outreach sessions, and the scenario planning alternatives as well as the details of the preferred plan and next steps for implementation.

Sasaki, in partnership with city staff, is set to host more than 60 meetings and listening sessions with community members, city boards and commissions, and the City Council in various formats.

**The original “Great Park”** – The 227-acre airport property represents nearly 5% of the city’s total land area. Purchased with a park bond in 1926 and opened in 1928, the park included an 18-hole golf course used for PGA tournaments, tennis courts, lawn bowling, horseshoes, trap and pistol shooting, archery, a clubhouse, picnic grounds, and a football field. It was described in a local newspaper as “The Brightest Jewel in Santa Monica’s Crown.”

**Airport Closure** – The city has obtained authorization to close the airport for aviation uses after December 31, 2028, and passed a resolution in 2017 codifying that plan. The property is subject to voter-approved Measure LC, which restricts development on the airport property to only allow parks, public open spaces, and public recreational facilities, and the maintenance and replacement of existing cultural, arts, and educational uses.

## Fairview Library

The Fairview Branch Library at 2101 Ocean Park Blvd. is still self-service only, which allows users to pick up items on reserve, use the library space, access materials and resources, or use a computer. Self-Service hours are Tuesdays 12 NOON to 8 PM, and Fridays 10 AM to 5 PM. Pre-authorization to use Self-Service is required. Sign up at [smpl.org/SelfService-Hours/](https://smpl.org/SelfService-Hours/)

The Fairview Library Open House & Children’s Holiday Book Fair on December 5th drew 242 attendees, plus 43 participants at the morning Storytime. The next Storytime for ages 2 to 5 will be on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30 AM, with free tickets available at 10:15 AM. Information about the Main Library and the other branches is available at <https://smpl.org>

## Calling 911

Below are some pointers for residents when calling Dispatch:

Help dispatchers by carefully listening to questions and answering them in the order dispatch provides. Every question has a purpose to keep the community and our first responders safe. Answering multiple questions does not delay Police, Fire or EMS response.

- ▶ Share that you want Officer contact when making the call to find out what happened.
- ▶ If you use a landline to make a call to 911 or 310-458-8491, but would like to receive OEM/PD text updates, please provide the dispatcher with a cell phone number.
- ▶ Email [OEM@santamonica.gov](mailto:OEM@santamonica.gov) if you have an interaction with a dispatcher where the level of professionalism is substandard. We take these concerns seriously and review the recorded audio and the call for service report to identify any improvements.
- ▶ 911 Dispatch Education Video Series: <http://tinyurl.com/2trxv7nr>

More Information on Public Safety Communications:

- ▶ <https://www.santamonica.gov/process-explainers/how-to-report-an-emergency>
- ▶ SMPD Beat 2 Neighborhood Resource Officer: [Edgar.Navarro@santamonica.gov](mailto:Edgar.Navarro@santamonica.gov)
- ▶ SMPD Crime Prevention Coordinator: [Halima.Barreto@santamonica.gov](mailto:Halima.Barreto@santamonica.gov)

## FOSP Board

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## Copper Wire Theft

The City has recently been hit by multiple wire theft incidents in various areas including Sunset Park, Pico, Downtown Santa Monica, and Ocean Park neighborhoods. As a result, some street lights are out. City staff is currently working with the Santa Monica Police Department and the City’s emergency electrical repair contractors and suppliers to repair the infrastructure and to restore service to the City. Due to the nature of this crime, expect extended repair times. If you see what appears to be suspicious activity or vandalism of City electrical boxes or theft of copper wire by destruction of City streetlight infrastructure, please call the non-emergency police number at (310)395-9931 and report the incident as soon as possible.

## Height Limits for Hedges and Fences

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

- ▶ Front yard – The maximum allowable height for hedges, fences, and walls is 42 inches (3½ feet).
- ▶ Side and rear yards – The maximum allowable height for fences and walls is 8 feet. The maximum allowable height for hedges is 12 feet, although there is no height limit for hedges adjacent to and located within 10 feet of an alley.

## Emergency Contacts and Additional Assistance

- ▶ 9-1-1 – If someone is experiencing a medical emergency, a crime is taking place, or if there’s an immediate threat to someone’s life or safety.
- ▶ (310) 458-8491 – For non-emergency Police and Fire response in Santa Monica.
- ▶ 2-1-1 or visit [www.LA-HOP.org](http://www.LA-HOP.org) – Submit a request for homeless outreach assistance using the L.A. County Homeless Outreach Portal.
- ▶ (800) 854-7771 – If someone is experiencing a psychiatric / mental health crisis, contact the L.A. County Department of Mental Health.
- ▶ 9-8-8 – The National Suicide Prevention Hotline provides free 24/7 confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
- ▶ 3-1-1 or email [311@santamonica.gov](mailto:311@santamonica.gov) – Submit a Santa Monica-specific request for services, including trash pickup and graffiti removal.
- ▶ [SantaMonica.gov](http://SantaMonica.gov) – City website