

Residents Will Play a Critical Role in Decisions on City's Character, Traffic and Parking in 2013

Santa Monica is experiencing rapid, transformative development pressure and change. "Hyperdrive" aptly describes the amount of activity we are seeing citywide.

The city, its residents and neighborhood associations¹ are engaged in a myriad of major planning issues and events that will affect Santa Monica's future and all of us. They include traffic, 35 (and counting) pending large development proposals, light rail construction, a radical draft citywide parking ordinance, enactment of a new Zoning Code to correspond to the LUCE, a Downtown Specific Plan, and a Bergamot Area Plan, the future of the Village Trailer Park, the proposed controversial expansion of the Miramar Hotel (as well as two new 5 and 6 story hotels proposed at Colorado and Fifth Street), the shuttering of the Civic Auditorium, the closing of the California Incline for needed repairs, and the City's projected \$4.6M budget shortfall.

In some cases, such as the city's proposed new parking ordinance and a Downtown Specific Plan, residents through their neighborhood associations have objected strongly to the city's failure to conduct communitywide discussion of such important plans before unveiling them at recent Planning Commission meetings (where residents who want to respond to them are limited to 2 minutes, making it difficult to substantively address the plans). Stay tuned for whether these situations are rectified and such workshops are promptly held.

In most other cases, residents and their neighborhood associations have been included in the process and have had a very positive impact, as when the City recently admitted it did not have the capacity to process the ever-growing number of Development Agreements being filed; and our ideas for how to improve the process to arrive at better outcomes, were largely adopted by the City Council.

Residents and neighborhood associations including OPA, have been responding to many of these issues, prioritizing the types of projects that should proceed under Development Agreements, providing basic design and other information requirements for developer led community meetings on proposed projects, changing aspects of the proposed Downtown Specific and Bergamot Area Plans, and reacting forcefully to parts of the newly proposed parking requirements in the zoning code that we believe would negatively impact our neighborhoods and our quality of life.

OPA values your input. Robust citizen involvement has never been more important. All of us as "stakeholders" must continue to do our part to shape

Santa Monica according to the specific needs of our community, turning out at community workshops, Planning Commission and City Council meetings and operating through our neighborhood associations. 2013 promises to be an extraordinary year and OPA will be at the forefront.

¹Santa Monica Neighborhood Associations

Friends of Sunset Park
Northeast Neighbors
North of Montana Association
Ocean Park Association
Pico Neighborhood Association
Santa Monica Mid City Neighbors
Wilshire/Montana Neighborhood Coalition