71 percent of schools not in “good repair”

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The vast majority of Santa Monica schools are in need of repair according to recent data provided to state regulators, but the reality on the ground may not be as dire as the paperwork suggests.

The Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) Board heard an update to several state-mandated reports last week including a facilities update that said 71 percent of the district’s facilities are not in “good repair.”

School Districts are required to self-assess their physical facilities as part of a wide-ranging evaluation that also covers topics like teacher

FOR SALE: Negotiations for the Civic continue.

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

City Council will meet on Tuesday, July 18 to hear updates, but not necessarily make decisions on, some big ticket items including potential sale of the Civic Auditorium site.

While updates and study sessions are part of the agenda, new business includes establishing legislative priorities for the upcoming year and a revised ban on private wells in the city.

STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION
Santa Monica pays lobbyists to advocate for causes at various levels of government and those contracts are up for renewal this week.

Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange (SYASL) and The Ferguson Group, represent the city as State and Federal lobbyists to advocate for its interests and objectives before the governments in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. These lobbyist representatives work to advance the City’s legislative goals, monitor and influence pending legislation, identify funding opportunities, and engage with elected officials and their staff to advocate for the City’s positions.

The contracts for both groups will expire in December 2023 and while both contracts will go out to bid, staff are asking for limited budgetary authority ($25,000 with Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange resulting in a five-year agreement with a new total amount not to exceed $273,021) to continue state legislative advocacy services through December 2023, aligning with previous Council authorization.

Staff are also asking the council to align its lobbying efforts with already adopted priorities that include...
What happened to the big changes to California elections?

SAMEEA KAMAL
Special to the Daily Press

The campaign text messages have stopped, and your recycling bin is finally empty of mailers. But while it’s not election season anymore, California lawmakers are still tinkering with how voting happens.

The number of election-related bills introduced this session — close to 50 — is average, election officials said. But that number has been whittled down since January, and this week’s policy committee deadline may narrow the active proposals more.

Some bigger measures failed early on — including a constitutional amendment, inspired by the 2021 failed recall of Gov. Gavin Newsom, to limit a recall ballot for statewide officials to only asking voters “yes” or “no” on removing the official. Under the proposal, a recalled governor would be replaced by the lieutenant governor and others would be replaced in a special election.

Another constitutional amendment that fell by the wayside would have changed the state superintendent of public instruction from an elected position to one appointed by the governor.

Sen. Scott Wiener, a San Francisco Democrat, dropped his effort to provide more detail to voters on who is funding ballot measures after the bill was heavily amended in committees. The amendments “reduced the impact to the point that it was no longer worth passing,” said Erik Mebust, spokesperson for Wiener’s office.

And a bill that would speed up vote counting by changing how mail ballots are processed is in limbo, having passed the Assembly but been sent to the Senate appropriations “suspense file.”

That issue has been a key focus for Kim Alexander, president of the nonpartisan California Voter Foundation, who says the state’s notoriously slow results are not just embarrassing but bad for representation and voter confidence.

“The longer that it takes to determine a winner in a contest, the less time that winner has to prepare an agenda for their stint in public office,” she told CalMatters. “The longer that it takes to get the results out to the public, the more suspicious people become.”

She’s not surprised, however, that momentum for bigger election changes has diminished: “Unfortunately, people get really excited about election issues during and immediately following elections. And then you get to the start of the new year and folks might put that behind them.”

But there are still some proposals that could impact voting in 2024. Here are some of the key bills:

**MAKING SENSE OF THE BALLOT**

Ballot language can be confusing. Look no further than Proposition 8, which asked voters to ban gay marriage. Voting “no” meant voting “yes” on gay marriage, while voting “yes” meant gay marriage would be disallowed.

The 2008 measure was approved by 52% of voters, then superseded by the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2012 ruling legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide. But it’s not the only example: Propositions 6 and 10 on the 2018 ballot — a repeal on the state gas tax, and a rent control measure, respectively — drew similar confusion.

Assembly Bill 421, authored by Culver City Democrat Isaac Bryan, would simplify language on the ballot to make more clear what voters are deciding. When he introduced the bill, Bryan said its aim was to curb abuse of the ballot measure process — increasingly being used by wealthy corporations to overturn laws.

The 2024 ballot already includes two such measures: one by the oil and gas industry to overturn a ban on new oil and gas wells within 3,200 feet of homes, schools, hospitals and mother’s office.

**VOTING:** A voter casts their ballot at a polling station at the Sacramento County voter registration and elections office in Sacramento on Nov. 8, 2022.

Photo by Rahul Lal, CalMatters

**SEE ELECTION PAGE 4**
Budget troubles won’t change California Gov. Gavin Newsom’s goals for 2nd term, he tells AP

ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

Throughout the various crises in California Gov. Gavin Newsom’s first term — the deadly COVID-19 pandemic — the state’s record-smashing budget surpluses were always there to smooth things over.

Now, as Newsom moves to build his national profile for political aspirations beyond the governor’s office, looming multibillion-dollar deficits could threaten to unravel the things on which he’s staked his reputation, including free kindergarten for every 4-year-old and free healthcare for low-income residents regardless of their immigration status.

On Monday, after signing a budget that cut, delayed and borrowed to cover a $31.5 billion deficit, Newsom convened hundreds of agency officials, department heads and deputies for an all-day meeting to stress the importance of protecting those commitments.

“I have a sell-by date, three and a half years. That clock’s ticking,” the Democratic governor told The Associated Press in an interview the next day. “I’m a milk carton, you know? And I don’t want to get sour.”

Newsom spoke broadly about his plans for navigating the state’s challenges during his second and final term in office, which runs through January 2027, with deficits that could reach a combined $81 billion over those four years.

How Newsom governs the nation’s most populous state through the budget downturn may serve to bolster or diminish his credibility on the national stage. Newsom has repeatedly said he’s not running for president in 2024. But he’s increasingly stepping beyond California as a surrogate for President Joe Biden — and future standard bearer of the Democratic Party. He’s burnishing those credentials by raising money for Democrats in red states and casting himself as a political and cultural foil to Republican rivals like Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Newsom told AP that California’s budget troubles won’t change his agenda or stop him from taking big policy swings, such as free kindergarten for every 4-year-old and free healthcare for low-income residents regardless of their immigration status.

“He’s going, ‘That said, you know, it’s that we are supportive of the direction she’s taking.’”

More broadly, Newsom wants voters to approve a $4.6 billion bond to build 10,000 new clinic beds and homes for people with mental illnesses. He has also proposed changing how the state spends money from a nearly two-decade old ballot measure that raised taxes on millionaires to fund mental health services.

“Newsom doesn’t see his second term as playing defense to prevent cuts to some of his priorities. Instead, he said, his job is to implement the promises he made in his first term. But some adjustments are inevitable.

Newson has committed to spending more than $50 billion on climate projects and protections over the next few years, an unprecedented amount of environmental spending. But he reduced that commitment by a few billion dollars this year to balance the budget, drawing criticism from some environmental groups who accused him of backtracking.

This year Newsom paired the climate spending with an overhaul of building and permitting codes to speed up how long it takes to put up things like wind turbines and solar farms. Newsom said the changes were necessary because the climate spending “meant nothing unless we could deliver on it.”

Still, some environmental groups initially opposed them, seeing them as a ploy to benefit projects they say have no ecological benefit, like building new reservoirs. They’ve grown increasingly critical of Newsom’s environmental policies over the years, with one environmental group calling him the state’s worst governor on water and endangered species issues.

The dispute is personal for Newsom, who said he bonded with his father, a California judge who died in 2018, from a young age over support for environmental causes.

“You find me a governor in the country with a record like ours, and yet (environmental groups) are still so quick to criticize. I don’t know how that advances the cause,” he said. “I don’t think they’re building more trust around here.”

Newson still has his eye on national politics, including plans to lobby other state legislatures to pass an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would impose a waiting period for all gun purchases, ban assault rifles, require universal background checks and raise the minimum age to buy a gun to 21.

To boost that effort, he’s using money from a political action committee he started to raise money for candidates and causes in Republican states. He recently met with Democrats in Idaho and Utah, and he’s received invitations to other state party conventions.

“I’m not just raising money. I’m writing checks,” Newsom said. “I’m not surprised I’m getting calls.”

Los Angeles

Water Garden presents “Watch at Water Garden,” a free summer movie series featuring Sister Act and Super Mario Bros.

Water Garden continues their summer movie series “Watch at Water Garden” with free outdoor screenings of SISTER ACT on Thursday, July 20 and SUPER MARIO BROS. on Thursday, August 17. The family-friendly festivities will take place at Water Garden in Santa Monica, and the screenings will begin at 8 p.m. depending on sunset. Both free events are open to the public, and RSVPs are required.

Guests can arrive as early as 5 p.m. to enjoy live music tied to each film and are encouraged to bring blankets and picnic baskets. Tasty snacks from SweetPea Catering will be available for purchase on site as well. For any inquiries, please visit @watergardensm on Instagram.

LOCATION: The Great Lawn at 1620 26th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90402

TO RSVP TO SISTER ACT on Thursday, July 20 - https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeszNqgwBmXgpfZR_Vil5m53pHmNwVvLix-mlLui4FOL2KjR/viewform

TO RSVP TO SUPER MARIO BROS. on Thursday, August 17 - https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7FrIwv8PBOtue5EpszEDvHvKx7su4GmXlp57d04AhbanfFX8vw/viewform

SUBMITTED BY JUSTINE CASTILLO

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and other “sensitive” facilities; another by the fast food industry to overturn the law creating a state council to set wages and other workplace standards.

But the current version of the bill is vastly different than what was first introduced.

Originally, the bill sought to curb disinformation by requiring signature gatherers to disclose whether they are paid or volunteers; mandating training and registration with the Secretary of State’s office; and instituting a three-year ban if someone violates the law.

In its latest form, the bill focuses on one primary fix: clarifying ballot language for referendums to either say “keep the law” or “overturn the law.” It’s also now an urgency bill, so if it becomes law, it can take effect for new measures added to the 2024 ballot.

Bryan’s office did not make him available for comment on the amendments.

SEIU California, part of the Empower California Voters coalition backing this effort, says while it plans to continue fighting for further reforms to signature gathering, the bill still “resounds urgently to pain points reported by voters: confusing ballot language that is easily exploited by corporations spending their vast wealth to veto policies they don’t like,” Tia Orr, the union’s executive director, said in a statement to CalMatters.

“Under AB 421, voters’ ballots will match their intent,” she wrote. “We know that the best way to do this is a clear statement of what a voter is choosing: to keep or overturn the law.”

Clearing up the language has strong bipartisan support among voters, according to a poll published in June by UC Berkeley’s Institute of Governmental Studies: 81% of registered voters said they supported clarifying whether a referendum’s intent is to uphold or overturn a law.

Poll respondents also supported other aspects of AB 421 that have now been gutted: requiring a portion of signatures for a referendum to be gathered by volunteers, a requirement that the top three funders of a referendum be disclosed on the signature pages and requiring paid signature gatherers to sign a statement saying they are giving voters accurate information.

WHO DRAWS YOUR DISTRICTS

Redistricting is the once-a-decade process of redrawing election districts after each Census to make sure each has the same number of people. But without guardrails in place, those who draw the maps can use the process to preserve their own power.

For legislative and congressional maps in 2010 and 2020, California adopted an independent commission to take the power out of the hands of elected officials. The idea has trickled down to some counties and cities, but because state law doesn’t require local independent commissions, local redistricting has varied widely, leading to some allegations of gerrymandered maps.

That’s why, this year, we’re seeing more bills to require independent redistricting — though some may overlap. The bills are scheduled to go before two different committees today and must pass to stay alive this session.

Building on ordinances in Los Angeles, San Diego, Fresno, Riverside and Kern counties, legislation this year proposes independent redistricting commissions for Orange and Sacramento counties.

Sen. Maria Elena Durazo also introduced a bill for the city of Los Angeles, though that was later amended to any charter city with a population of at least 2.5 million.

But is this piecemeal approach best? Assemblymember Bryan argues that a statewide bill is needed.

That’s why he introduced two bills. The first is AB 1248, which would require independent redistricting commissions for cities and counties with more than 300,000 residents by the next round in 2030 and would include school and community college districts.

“This is an approach that really answers the question and calling that’s coming statewide,” Bryan said at a July 5 Senate elections committee hearing.

If the statewide requirement fails, though, Bryan has a backup plan: AB 764, which strengthens rules around redistricting, regardless of who draws the maps.

Officials from Common Cause California, a good government advocacy group that is co-sponsoring AB 1248 and AB 764, said they’re excited to see the “groundswell of support” for independent redistricting this year.

“There are some technical amendments to do to make sure the bills don’t conflict with each other,” said Laurel Brodzinsky, legislative director for the organization. “But definitely on a policy level, it’s really exciting to see.”

The bills are opposed by groups representing local governments, including the California State Association of Counties, the Urban Counties of California and the Rural County Representatives of California.

In their opposition letter, they wrote that commissions needed more financial resources and support to achieve the goals of the bill and without it “we are concerned that counties will be set up for failure and such a failure would only serve to validate public distrust in the redistricting process and in our democratic systems that are already under intense public scrutiny.”

WHO FUNDS CAMPAIGNS

Where there’s talk of election reform, you can expect talk of campaign finance.

A bill by Democratic Sens. Tom Umberg of Santa Ana and Ben Allen of Redondo Beach that cleared the policy committee deadline last week proposes expanding public financing of campaigns. The intent of SB 24 is to level the playing field for candidates against those backed by wealthy corporations or interest groups.

If passed, the bill will ask voters to decide in November 2024 whether to lift the ban on public financing of campaigns for state offices or interest groups.

California voters have previously rejected similar ballot measures — though, unlike the current legislation, all three of the failed bills proposed a specific public financing program for state offices.

Bonta cited threats against fellow legislators in her introduction of the bill, which is before the Senate appropriations committee.

As public servants, there is a lot we humbly and willingly sacrifice to serve, including spending time with family and our privacy,” she said. “However, the one thing we should never be willing or expected to give up is our sense of safety, or the safety of our families, and those who work closely with us.”

This article was originally published by CalMatters.
**GUEST COMMENTARY**

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

**ENDING MONO LAKE DIVERSIONS TO LOS ANGELES WOULD HELP THE ENVIRONMENT BUT HURT THE CLIMATE**

By Jim Newton

California’s effort to secure water supplies is a struggle older than the state itself.

It played out during the Gold Rush, and it defines modern San Francisco and Los Angeles. It has created divisions between north and south as well as east and west. It consumes endless political energy and mountains of literal energy, spent by moving water from the Sacramento Bay Delta to San Jose and Southern California, from the Colorado River to the Los Angeles basin, from the Sierra Nevada to the Bay Area.

In all of that, Mono Lake is a small data point, barely a dot on the state’s vast water map. So why is Mono Lake suddenly attracting attention in water circles?

A coalition of environmentalists and Native American tribes – the Kutzadika’a Paiute have lived in the Mono basin for centuries – are fighting for that water, arguing that Los Angeles, which began diverting streams away from the lake in 1941, should give up its rights and let the lake be. That would allow Mono Lake’s surface level to rise, though it still would confront the more ancient problem of evaporation.

There’s a lot of history behind this struggle, as there is in all matters involving California water. And that early history does not reflect well on the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power’s stewardship of Mono Lake. After receiving its permits to draw water from the area in 1940, the DWP did so voraciously. The level of the lake dropped by 45 feet from 1941 to 1982.

In 1994, the state water board put a halt to that, limiting the amount the DWP can take in any given year. In the years since, the lake has slowly rebounded, though its condition remains delicate. Paradoxically, the argument for forcing Los Angeles to end its diversions from the Mono basin now rests largely on the fact that, since 1994, it hasn’t drawn that much water anyway. So, if it’s already prevented from taking more, why not stop drawing this water altogether? To advocates, that seems like common sense; to the DWP, it feels like being punished for having succeeded.

In the big scheme of things, it’s true that the amounts that DWP takes from the Mono Lake basin are tiny (no water is drawn from the lake itself, since it’s briny; the DWP gets its water from four creeks that feed the lake). Today, the DWP withdraws no more than 16,000 acre feet a year, and it often takes much less than that.

Compared to Los Angeles’ overall usage, that’s a pittance. The city
**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**Main Library**

Santa Monica Public Library Presents Author Charles Fleming on Secret Stairs & Secret Walks

Santa Monica Public Library presents author Charles Fleming on Thursday, July 27 at 5:30 p.m. in the Main Library’s Multipurpose Room, 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

Author and veteran journalist Charles Fleming tells stories from his books Secret Stairs: A Walking Guide to the Historic Staircases of Los Angeles and Secret Walks: A Walking Guide to the Hidden Trails of Los Angeles. This program celebrates the launch of the Library’s newest RED (Read Engage Discover) Kit, which includes walking poles, a DVD copy of L.A. Story, and several books, including Fleming’s Secret Walks, reflecting the theme, “Walking in L.A.” A book sale and signing follow the program.

This program is free and open to the public. Seating is limited and on a first arrival basis. The Santa Monica Public Library is wheelchair accessible. For disability-related accommodations, email library@ santamonica.gov at least one week prior to the event. Ride your bike or Big Blue Bus. Bicycle parking racks are available at the Library.

SUBMITTED BY BARBARA FLEEMAN

**LAKE**

FROM PAGE 5

consumes about 500,000 acre feet of water annually, so even in a big year, the water from the Mono watershed amounts to no more than about 3% of the total.

Still, that’s enough water to supply some 45,000 homes or as many as 20,000 people in the denser areas of Los Angeles (San Francisco, with its more tightly packed population and fewer gardens, stretches an acre foot of water to about eight households).

Mono Lake is an important way station for migratory birds and a vital shorebird habitat. If the level of the lake falls too low, it exposes land bridges that connect the lake’s major nesting island to shore, allowing coyotes to dart across the bridge and disrupt the birds. That makes keeping the lake level high enough to preserve the islands an important priority.

And yet, despite recent droughts – and even with the DWP’s diversions – the water has not fallen to the level that creates coyote bridges in decades. The level of the lake today is more than 10 feet higher than it was in 1981, according to the DWP.

“There’s nothing even remotely like a land bridge out there now,” Martin Adams, the DWP’s general manager and chief engineer, said in an interview this week.

On the issue of conservation, I asked Adams whether he would walk away from the agency’s water rights in the Mono Lake area if the DWP could find an additional 16,000 acre feet through conservation.

His answer was simple: no.

The DWP’s first priority with conservation, he said, is to cut back on importing water from expensive, environmentally inferior alternatives. If suddenly granted a windfall, “we’ll purchase less water from the Metropolitan Water District,” he said.

That makes good financial sense. Metropolitan water is expensive – about $750 per acre foot – because it has to be shipped, either from Northern California through the State Water Project or from the Colorado River, where other states and Native American tribes are fighting for their rights.

But it’s not just money. There are environmental ramifications as well, and Martin’s priorities make good environmental sense. Metropolitan water has to be shipped long distances, and as a result, it requires huge amounts of electrical power (water is heavy and very hard to move uphill). In fact, moving water from point to point is among the largest uses of electricity in California.

Since generating electricity is one of the main contributors to carbon emissions, it’s bad for the climate to move water.

By contrast, the Los Angeles Aqueduct, the genius project of William Mulholland, brings water from the Owens Valley to Los Angeles from Mono and the Owens Valley by gravity alone. In fact, it generates a bit of power as it flows south. That’s the opposite of spending energy to heave water over mountains from the Bay Delta or the Colorado.

So, financially, it does not make sense for DWP to cut off Mono Lake supplies. And the environmental costs would be mixed: It might shore up bird habitat that is not presently jeopardized, but it would do so at the expense of contributing to climate change.

I ran all of this by Jeff Kightlinger, former general manager of the Metropolitan Water District and one of California’s most highly regarded water experts. Kightlinger doesn’t have a dog in this fight. If anything, a decision by the DWP to abandon its rights to Mono Lake water would help Kightlinger’s former agency, since DWP might be forced to buy more water from Southern California’s giant importer.

Nevertheless, Kightlinger sympathized with the DWP on this one.

Yes, he said, there are issues related to birds, but those mostly seem under control – no land bridges are endangering the nesting areas. And yes, there are gains to be made in conservation, but Kightlinger agreed with Adams that it’s hard to see why the DWP would give up a clean water source in the eastern Sierra, where it gets water essentially for free, in return for spending more money and using more energy to buy it from Metropolitan.

“All of these resource decisions involve trade-offs,” he said. “I’m not hearing the compelling argument in this case.”

Could that change? Of course – if the lake levels begin dropping again, putting the birds in danger. Or, if prolonged drought meant that even the DWP’s modest withdrawals from the area’s creeks cut off the supply to the lake and it falls into a downward spiral.

If history is any guide, this fight will drag on for a long time. For the moment, a very wet winter has allowed it to not feel pressing. But it hasn’t gone away.

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

Virginia Ave.

Weekly Assistance with Nutrition and Health Care Access

The City of Santa Monica is partnering with Providence St. John to provide the public with complimentary help with nutrition and health care access at Virginia Avenue Park. As part of Providence St. John’s Community Health Program, trained community health workers will be available to meet in person with community members at the Park Center Building at Virginia Avenue Park on the first Tuesday of the month from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., and the second, third and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The trained Providence St. John’s staff will assist with enrollment in CalFresh, the State of California’s food subsidy program created to improve nutrition through access to healthy foods. Staff will also help community members navigate enrollment and questions for MediCal and Medicare.

If you have questions about whether you qualify for benefits or need help completing enrollment forms, you can make an appointment by calling (310) 458-8688. Drop-ins are also welcome.

SUBMITTED BY DELANA GBENEKAMA
California still has an anti-gay marriage law on the books. Voters could remove it next year

This vote goes beyond faith. It goes to the damage it causes to me and my LGBTQ+ families and friends

- Caroline Menjivar Democratic Sen.

Sophie Austin is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.
addressing homelessness, ensuring a clean and safe environment, fostering economic recovery, promoting racial justice and equity, and building a sustainable and connected community.

WELL BAN
Council will consider a revision to existing prohibitions on new well construction prompted by the adoption of regional water restrictions.

The City of Santa Monica is a member of the Santa Monica Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SMBGSA), which was established in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014. The SGMA aims to ensure sustainable management of groundwater throughout California and the local agency is required to prepare a plan for the area that complies with state requirements.

With that plan complete, the City needs to amend the Regulatory Code to align with the plan. The existing rule was enacted in 2018 to prohibit the installation or expansion of groundwater wells until a plan was adopted or explicitly authorized by the plan. The revised ordinance will continue to prohibit the installation or expansion of wells within the City of Santa Monica, unless approved unanimously by the SMBGSA. This ensures that groundwater management aligns with the goals and requirements outlined in the GSP and the SGMA.

RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY
The City has been working to address historic disparities faced by Black and Latino communities through community engagement efforts. To tackle these challenges, the city has developed a comprehensive plan that treats equity as a core function.

Council will provide feedback and input on the plan this week.

The plan involves evaluating policies for unconscious bias, conducting equity impact assessments for City projects, empowering residents through grants, and providing staff growth opportunities. The City will engage in a robust community engagement effort, beginning with a panel discussion on strategic alignment, followed by a seven-month phase dedicated to identifying collective issues and gathering equity priorities and challenges from residents.

Engagement opportunities include large community listening sessions and smaller community-led meetings, with stipends identified and key issues, collaborate with relevant departments, and co-generate solutions with the community, building upon existing programs.

After the community engagement process, the DEI team will present priorities and proposed solutions to the City Council.

SURPLUS LAND ACT NEGOTIATIONS
Negotiations continue for a pair of city-owned properties that could become affordable housing if sold.

Two bidders are vying for the Civic Center at 1855 Main Street. The historic property is unsafe and had been vacant for years before being listed as "surplus." The Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District has agreed to sell the land for the convert it into an athletic center for Samohi and Community Corporation has also expressed interest in using the land for housing.

A second property is also in the surplus process at 1636 5th Street with AMCAL Multi-Housing and Cypress Equity interested in the site. The City has said they want the building to become affordable housing and/or a behavioral health center.

In order for underutilized, or "surplus", city-owned property to be renovated, leased or sold for any purpose, the city must first offer it up to be turned into affordable housing, parks and recreation, or schools.

The rule came about due to California’s Surplus Land Act (SLA), signed into law in 2019. According to SLA guidelines, "the purpose of the amendments is to promote affordable housing development on unused or underutilized public land throughout the state to respond to the existing affordable housing crisis."

Council will hear updates on the negotiations during its closed session on Tuesday.

Council will meet on Tuesday, July 18 in City Hall, 1685 Main Street. Closed session begins at 5:30 p.m.
Welcome to a year of new influences. Because you’ll become more like the people who are around you, you’ll seek the company of those you admire and be welcomed into their fold. More highlights: Ten small but very lucrative investments, a challenge that winds up defining a project, and a life-changing invitation. Taurus and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 31, 6, 17 and 42.

TODAY’S BIRTHDAY (July 17)

ARIES (March 21-April 19). People don’t always do what they say they will, but you’re willing to work with them anyway in hopes of a better outcome. There is no wrong move today, but there are benefits to doing the thing that is a little harder for you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Only you know how to best serve the interests of those close to you. You’ll care for loved ones like no other. There’s a secure feeling for anyone lucky enough to be on your team.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). For those committed to growth and improvement, fear is an inevitable part of life. You’ll talk yourself through some helpful, positive ideas. Fear may not go away, but you don’t need it to. The important thing is not to let it stop you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your senses keep you connected to a vital physicality today. Your body is part of the nature it moves through. You’ll explore delights that simultaneously contribute to both health and pleasure.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You can be serious in your intent without being heavy-handed in your approach. There’s no right or wrong perspective, but there are ways of seeing things that are more or less helpful in moving you toward a particular goal.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Credentials point to where a person has been, but they can’t guarantee outcomes going forward. As you decide who to entrust with a job, pay more attention to the current interaction than to past credentials.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22). Give yourself props for the dozens of little things you do to keep this show on the road. Every time you treat yourself right, feed someone, help others get where they’re going and the like, it’s a triumph.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You fit many different descriptions, and yet you’re far too complex to fill out just one, so getting to know you takes time. Anyone who tries to assess you in terms of a category will wind up limiting their knowledge of you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). With a stranger, you can shine in the moment without thinking about the past or future of a relationship. There’s some magic in this, and you’ll have fun discovering who you are within the fresh context of a new person’s eyes.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You don’t want to borrow trouble, though you may anticipate it for the sake of preparation. It’s OK to think about what could go wrong, but do so only long enough to create safeties, solutions and contingencies.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Many opinions sound reasonable enough but are patently false. Question all critical assertions, especially those made by your own inner critic. It’s not necessary to try and control or judge yourself to any strict degree today.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The past is an anchor that you do not have to tether yourself to. You will come to terms with what happened and let go of your grievances, freeing you to soar above what was once burdensome.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY’S SUDOKU

Sudoku

ACROSS
1. Wild guess
5. “Golly!”
9. Backyard storage building
13. Largest of the Three Bears
14. “Do others…”
15. Weighing device
17. Right now, in a memoir
18. Heartbeat
19. Frozen bag with peas, carrots, corn, etc.
22. Has a snack
23. Bikini top
24. Physicians, for short
26. Adversary
27. Hoopters league: Abbr.
30. Biden was his vice president
32. Raisin cereal
34. Wedding cake level
35. White, frozen dessert
38. Help with a crime
39. __ vera (burn-soothing plant)
40. Tastes of a lollipop
41. __ Misécrables
42. Place with exercise machines
43. Intense anger
44. “Ready when you ___!”
45. High cards in poker
47. Frozen shellfish shaped like an airborne insect
55. Remove, as pencil marks
56. Row of people waiting
57. Milky-colored gem
58. “Snowy” marsh bird
59. Only slightly
60. Cola or root beer
61. Cheese in a Greek salad
62. Photos, informally
63. Where Ever lived

DOWN
1. Junk email
2. Auto with a meter
3. Acme
4. Army outpost
5. Green tropical fruits
6. Initial phase
7. Male deer
8. Optimistic feeling
9. Underwater diver’s gear
10. Building’s corridor
11. “So what ___ is new?”
12. Barely passing grades
15. Tire in a trunk
20. Windshield sticker
21. “Letter” kind of steak
24. Great ___ (very large dogs)
25. Leave out
26. Clock dial
27. Sibling’s daughter
28. Bird’s nose
29. Shirt-sleeve fillers
30. Egg-shaped
31. ___ in the woods (innocent one)
32. ___ of January, Brazil
34. High school math
36. Level of a bakery cake
37. Look bad together, fashionwise
42. Say “Welcome!” to
43. Updates, as a clock
44. On an ocean voyage
45. Crime suspect’s excuse
46. Skeptical person
47. Hamburger meat
48. Strongly recommend
49. Small fruit pie
50. Back of an envelope
51. Thorny red flower
52. Apple’s music player
53. Manufactured
54. Make preparations

MORE OF STAN’S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan’s archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords

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54. Make preparations

IN THE FREEZER

32. Soothing ointment
33. ___ de Janeiro, Brazil
34. High school math
36. Level of a bakery cake
37. Look bad together, fashionwise
42. Say “Welcome!” to
43. Updates, as a clock
44. On an ocean voyage
45. Crime suspect’s excuse
46. Skeptical person
47. Hamburger meat
48. Strongly recommend
49. Small fruit pie
50. Back of an envelope
51. Thorny red flower
52. Apple’s music player
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54. Make preparations
Agnes

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE

Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART

Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE

Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING

FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 15 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

Back to school

H T E C N E I R E P X E W E N
R O U H A P P Y S T U D Y O E
U I L C G Y R E P E A T I X U
L D O R K T Y A S S E S A S T
E E A H E S P O R T E M I R R
R S E D C T H S S T S I L E O
S K N B E S T O S U S A I W N
M Y A A E O P U P B I N E S S
U G C S R L B O S E M G Y N T
S H N Y O M L C T U A O L A E
A B E U O R A S L P B P E T S
S O D H E R P A O E A O V O P
W O R K Y L S P Y V D L I M U
O K A L A T E R A E H U L S E
T S G Y R N A C I D G I R L S

Acid
Alumni
Answers
Atoms
Bags
Bells
Books
Boys
Cane
Choir
Desk
Essay
Exams

Garden
Girls
Grass
Happy
Hear
Laptops
Last
Late
Lists
Lively
Loud
Miss
Neutrons

New
experience
Noise
Obey
Open
Page
Pets
Play
Repeat
Rhombus
Rude
Ruler
Scary

Sport
Story
Study
Sums
Swot
Teach
Test tube
Tuckshop
Type
Upset
Utter
Work

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY’S WORDS PUZZLE.
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**MONDAY | JULY 17**

**SANTA MONICA ARTS COMMISSION**
The Arts Commission of the City of Santa Monica exists to ensure a regular and ongoing assessment of arts programs in the City, develop arts programs of innovative form, recognize and encourage the arts as a service of local government and enrich the lives of all citizens by exposure to art in its various forms. Civic Center Parking Structure. 333 Civic Center Dr.

**TUESDAY | JULY 18**

**DROP-IN EVENT: HANDS-ONLY CPR**
The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is coming once a month to provide drop-in hands-only CPR training. Come anytime between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., it only takes about 10 minutes to complete the training. This training is:
- A life-saving skill that will help you feel more confident to respond in an emergency.
- CPR without mouth-to-mouth breaths
- Only to be used on teens or adults
- No documents are required from anyone who would like to be trained.

Palisades Branch Library, 861 Alma Real Drive
Pacific Palisades

**AN EVENING WITH LISA SEE**
Renowned author Lisa See speaks on her process and the research behind her new book, “Mandarin Women”. We'll hear from Ms. See about her inspiration for the story and the research that went into her creation. Sign books after her talk, and copies will be on sale. Santa Monica Reads selections. Ms. See will sign books after her talk, and copies will be on sale.

Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 6 - 7 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY | JULY 19**

**BIZ@SUNSET MIXER**
Biz@Sunset Mixer! Meet business professionals while enjoying appetizers and beverages. Please register in advance to attend. Opportunity To Win Raffle Prizes! On the beach at Lifeguard Tower 415 Pacific Coast Hwy 5 - 8 p.m.

**THURSDAY | JULY 20**

**ACTIVE AGING MULTIMODAL OUTING**
The Active Aging multimodal outing provides a comprehensive experience of walking, biking, and taking transit in one set for older adults. This outing is not only a fun group hangout but also shares tips for seamless transferring between different modes of active transportation. Meeting Location: WISE & Healthy Aging (1527 4th St # 2) Bike Route: Expo Bike Path Cost: Free! Transit fare will be covered by Active Aging Pilot Program. Don’t have a bike? No worries! We will be providing e-bikes and helmets for people who don’t have their own bicycles, and it’s free of charge. You’re also welcome to bring your own bike and helmet. 1 - 3 p.m. Register online at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/active-aging-multimodal-outing-tickets-66976033017

**SUNSET PICNIC**
It’s Sunset Picnic at Annenberg Beach House! Bring your favorite picnic dinner, fancy or casual, bring your family and friends, and your fun activities — games, dominoes, checkers. Enjoy a fun, casual beachfront summer evening with a musical duo vibing in the background and S’mores for dessert. No glass or alcohol are allowed. Annenberg Community Beach House. 415 Pacific Coast Hwy 5 - 8 p.m.

**MONTANA AVENUE BRANCH BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP**
This community-led, monthly book discussion group currently meets in person. The book selection for July 20 is Clark and Division by Naomi Hirahara, one of the selections for Santa Monica Reads All Summer Long, our Adult Summer Reading program. Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Avenue 6 - 7 p.m.

**FRIDAY | JULY 21**

**SEASIDE STORYTIME WITH SANTA MONICA PUBLIC LIBRARY**
Join in the courtyard as librarians from Santa Monica Public Library share ocean-themed stories, songs, and action rhymes. For ages 2 and up. No registration required. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Hwy 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**LOVEBUG AND ME**
Enjoy this musical storytime for little ones at the Pico Library. We’ll sing songs, dance and play along with LoveBug & Me Music. For ages 0-2. Limited space. Free tickets available at 10:15 a.m. Pico Branch Library, 2201 Pico Blvd. 10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

**WEATHER**

Monday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, sunny, with a high near 76.
Monday Night: Patchy fog after 1pm. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 63.
Tuesday: Patchy fog. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 76.
Tuesday Night: Patchy fog. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 65.

**DAILY LOTTERY**

- **Draw Date: 7/12**
  - Powerball: 70
  - Megapost: 875 M

- **Draw Date: 7/13**
  - Powerball: 20
  - Megapost: 5

- **Draw Date: 7/13**
  - MegaMillions: 5
  - Megapost: 30

- **Draw Date: 7/14**
  - MegaMillions: 13
  - Megapost: 50 M

- **Draw Date: 7/14**
  - Megapost: 50 M

**SURF REPORT**

**MONDAY FAIR**
- Surf: 2-3 ft
- Thigh to waist
- More marginally rideable surf likely. Mainly small SW swell but could also have some small S tropical swell in the mix.

**TUESDAY POOR TO FAIR**
- Surf: 2-3 ft
- Thigh to waist
- One of the smaller days in some time unless NW winds will nudges up. Tiny southerly swells.

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