



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

## **A Public Process to Determine the Future of the Santa Monica Airport**

Planning Commission

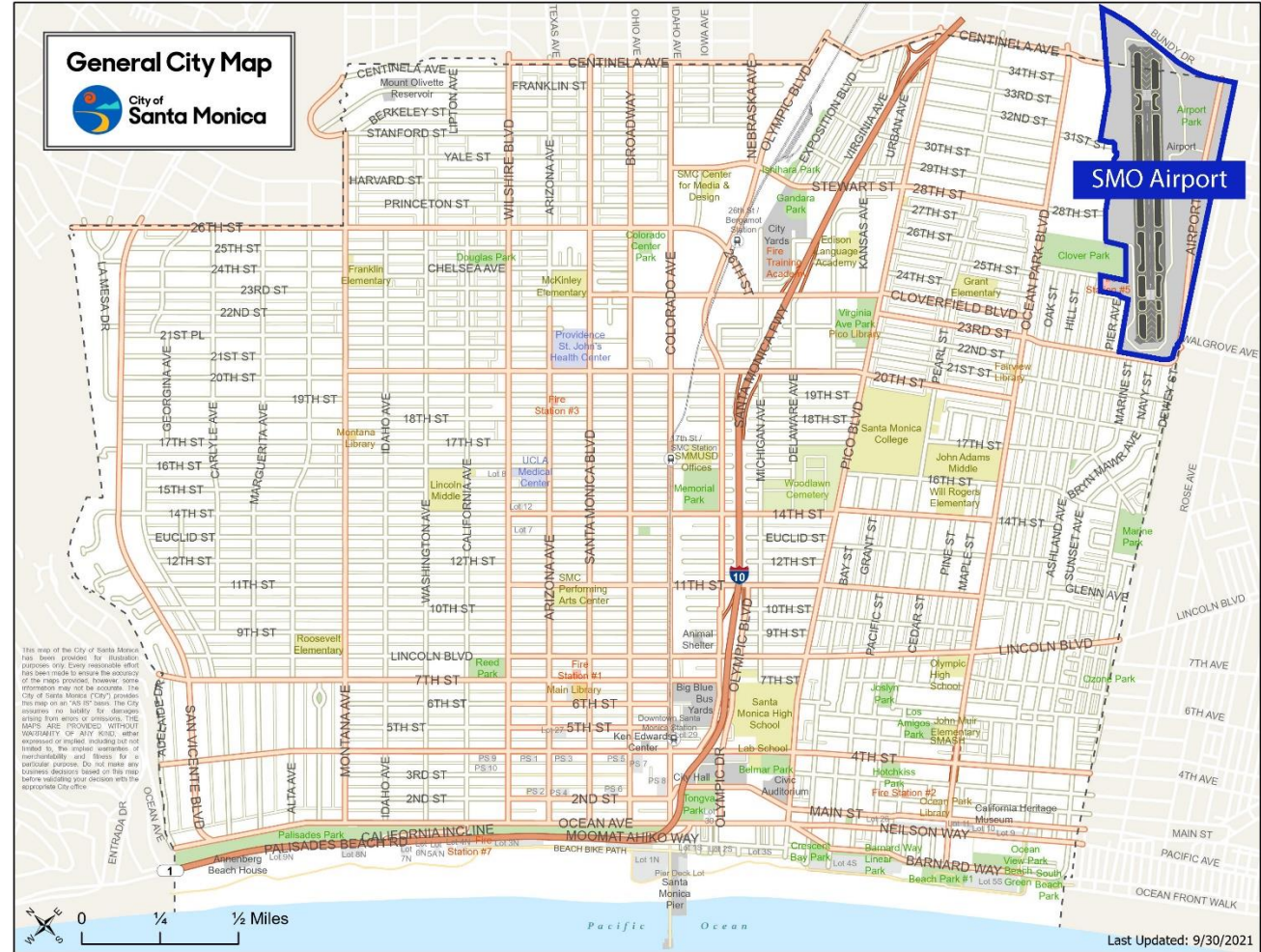
March 15, 2023

<http://www.santamonica.gov/future-of-santa-monica-airport-project>



## INTRODUCE PUBLIC PROCESS TO PLAN THE FUTURE OF THE SANTA MONICA AIRPORT LAND

- Process for community engagement, testing and refinement
- Scope of work including Existing Conditions and Scenario Planning
- Goals and values to guide the project
- Adjacencies





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

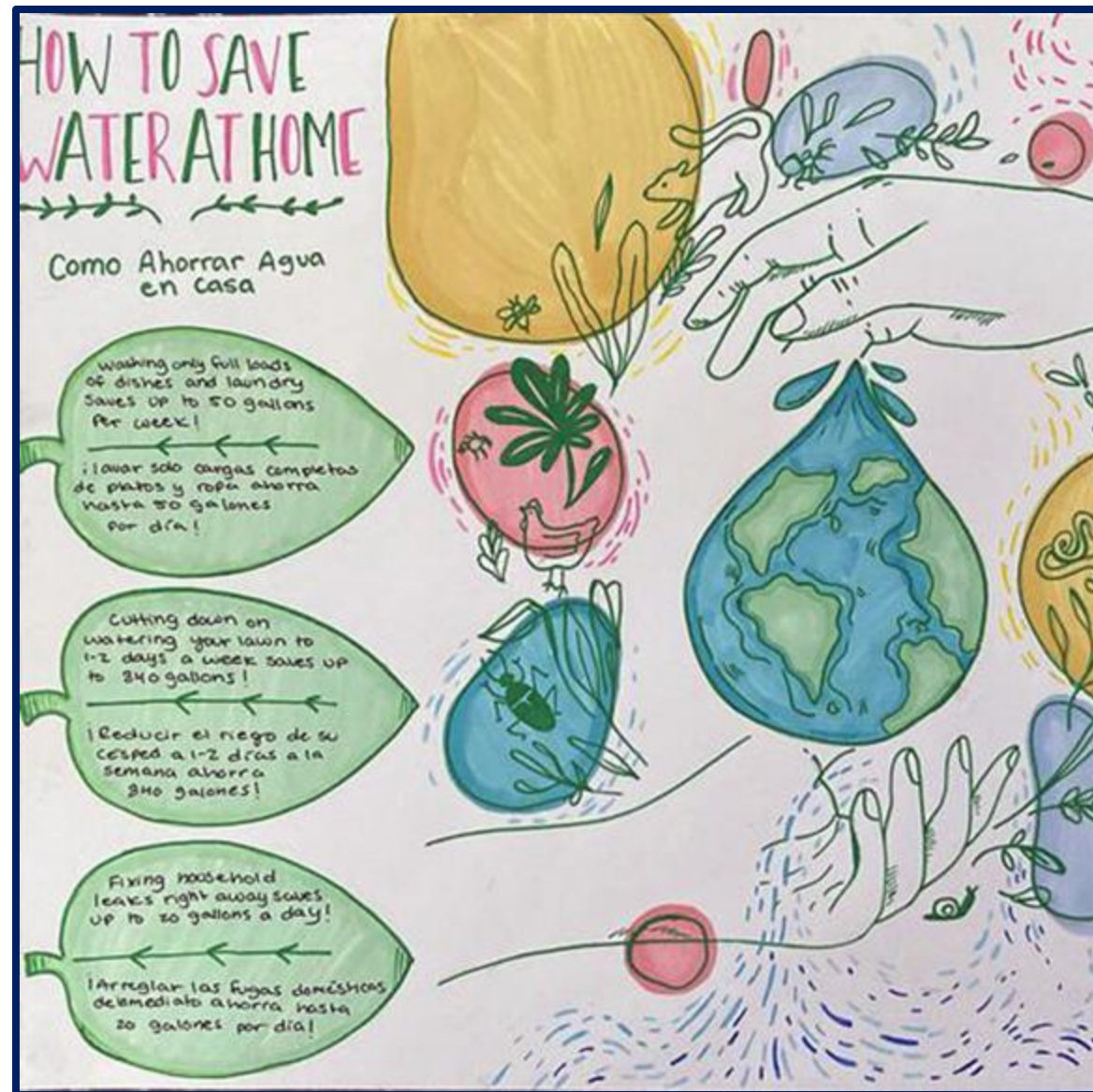
# The Role of Sustainability

---



## PROJECT PRESENTS SUSTAINABLE, GENERATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SANTA MONICA

- Sustainable land management
- Resource conservation
- Regenerative design
  - Water, Energy, Nature & Wildlife
- Equity and inclusion
- Health and happiness





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Background and History

---



Sunset Park

Business Park

Santa Monica Los Angeles

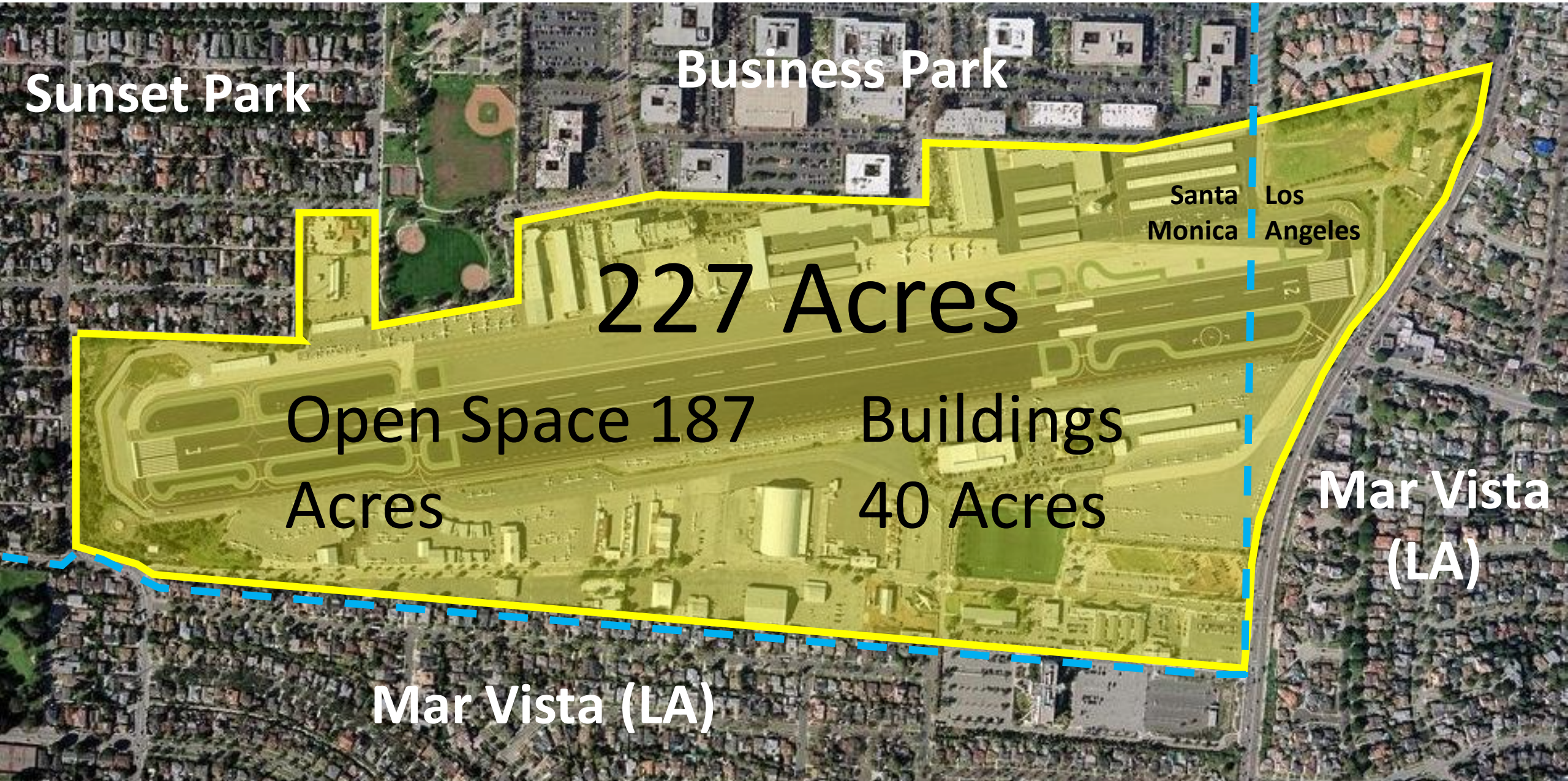
227 Acres

Open Space 187 Acres

Buildings 40 Acres

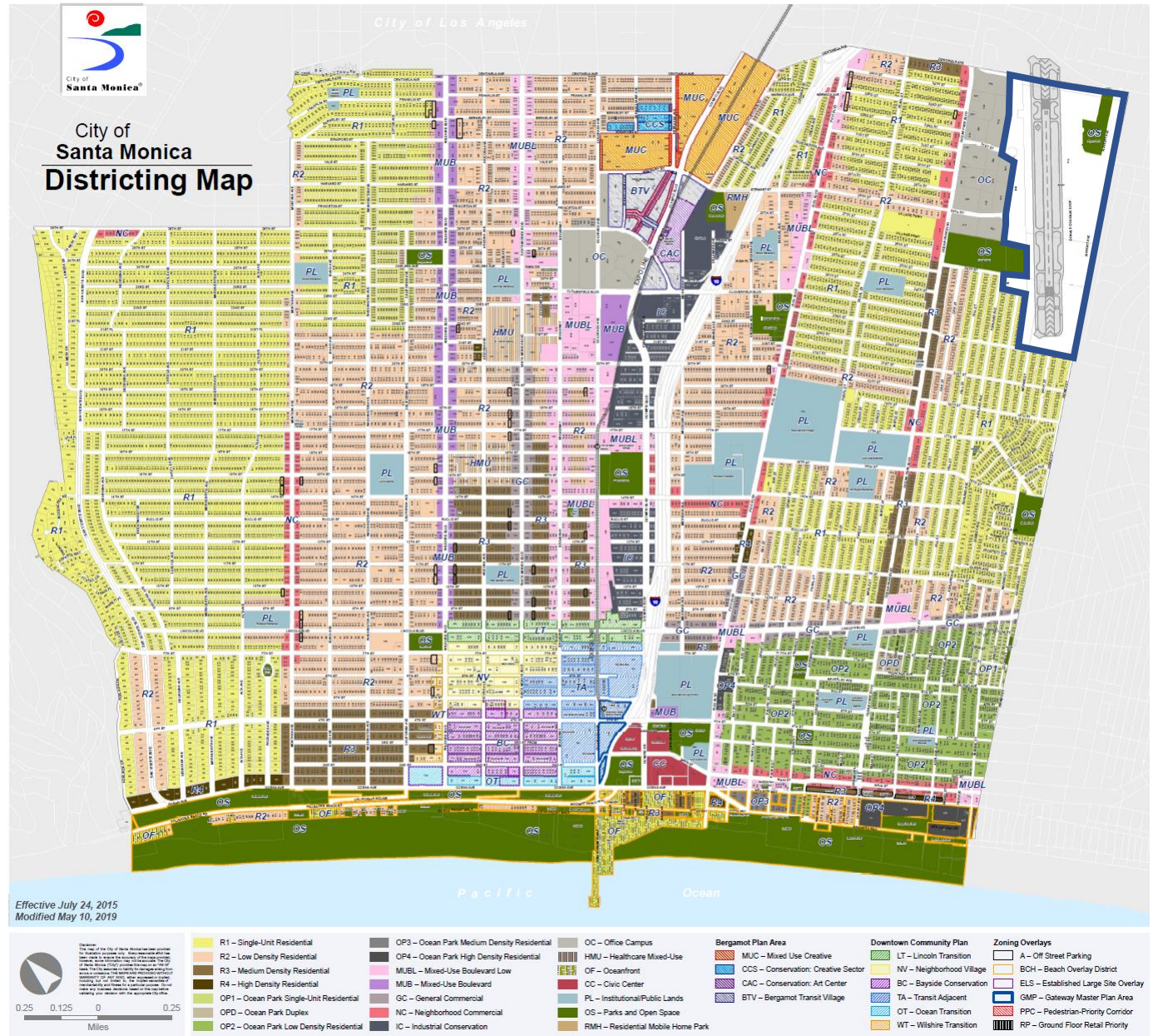
Mar Vista (LA)

Mar Vista (LA)



## GENERAL PLAN AND MUNICIPAL ZONING

- No zoning
  - Managed through complex local, state and FAA regulations
- General Plan Designation
  - Institutional/Public Lands
  - Future use deferred to a Specific Plan
    - Biz Park will pursue separate planning effort



## AIRPORT IS HOME TO AVIATION AND NON-AVIATION INDUSTRIES

- 166 total businesses
- 43 industry sectors
- \$20M annual revenue  
(Airport Fund)
- Recreational uses
- Arts, culture, education
- Retail and restaurant
- Many more...





## CITY HAS LEGAL AUTHORITY TO CLOSE AIRPORT

- Authorized for closure after December 31, 2028
  - Requires Council action
    - Written Notice to FAA
    - Environmental Review
    - Ordinance for enforce and prohibit aviation activities
    - Develop the mechanisms, procedures and penalties for violation.
- Budget established for planning process to determine future use of land

GENERAL AVIATION

### FAA Caves In to City Demand To Close Santa Monica Airport

by Matt Thurber - January 29, 2017, 8:14 PM



*After the city of Santa Monica shortens SMO airport's runway to 3,500 feet, large business jets like those in the background will no longer be able to use the iconic airport. (Photo: Matt Thurber)*



California's Santa Monica Airport (SMO), both historically important and a key part of the National Airspace System (NAS), will close at the end of 2028, the FAA said on Saturday following two weeks of negotiations between city leaders and the agency. Somewhat sooner, possibly within a year, the city of Santa Monica, which owns the 227-acre airfield, will cut the 4,973-foot runway down to 3,500 feet, effectively eliminating access to the larger jets that currently fly there.

Before Saturday's surprise settlement, the city and FAA had been embroiled in multiple lawsuits, with the city council and its airport commission firmly arguing for closing the airport while the FAA and pro-airport proponents repeatedly pointed out that after World War II, the city had signed an instrument of transfer to keep the airport

## FROM FARMLAND TO AVIATION AND MANUFACTURING CENTER

- Airfield dedicated 1923 as “Clover Field.”
- 50,000 people attended the event
- Santa Monica buys airport land from Los Angeles in 1926

pg. 111

### NATION ACCEPTS AIRPLANE FIELD

*Fifty Thousand Persons See Dedication*

*Santa Monica Landing-Place Pleases Army Chief*

*Dozens of Flyers Give Thrill to Spectators*

#### NOTABLES AT BANQUET

The banquet was attended by about 100 reserve officers and was held at the Miramar Hotel. Many officers flew their own planes from Rockwell Field at San Diego, Crissey Field at San Francisco and Mather Field at Sacramento to attend.

The ceremonies at the field began at 3 p.m. when S. L. Berkeley presented the new field on behalf of the City of Santa Monica. In the group that surrounded him were members of the County Board of Supervisors, of the Santa Mon-

SANTA MONICA. — Clover, M. To SE. of city. Alt. 150 ft. Rectangular. 63 A., asphalt surface. Runways 3,000 by 200 ft., entire field available. Pole line, buildings, radio towers. N. Beacon, boundary, approach, obstruction, landing area flood lights. Beacon, rotating green. Service day and night. Left hand turns permitted in landing and taking off SE.; right hand turns in landing or taking off to E. or N.



## A PLACE OF HISTORIC “FIRSTS”

- The first circumnavigation of the world by air took off from Clover Field on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17, 1924 and returned after nearly 28,000 miles!
- Santa Monica hosted the first sanctioned race for female pilots in 1929, flying from Santa Monica to Cleveland.



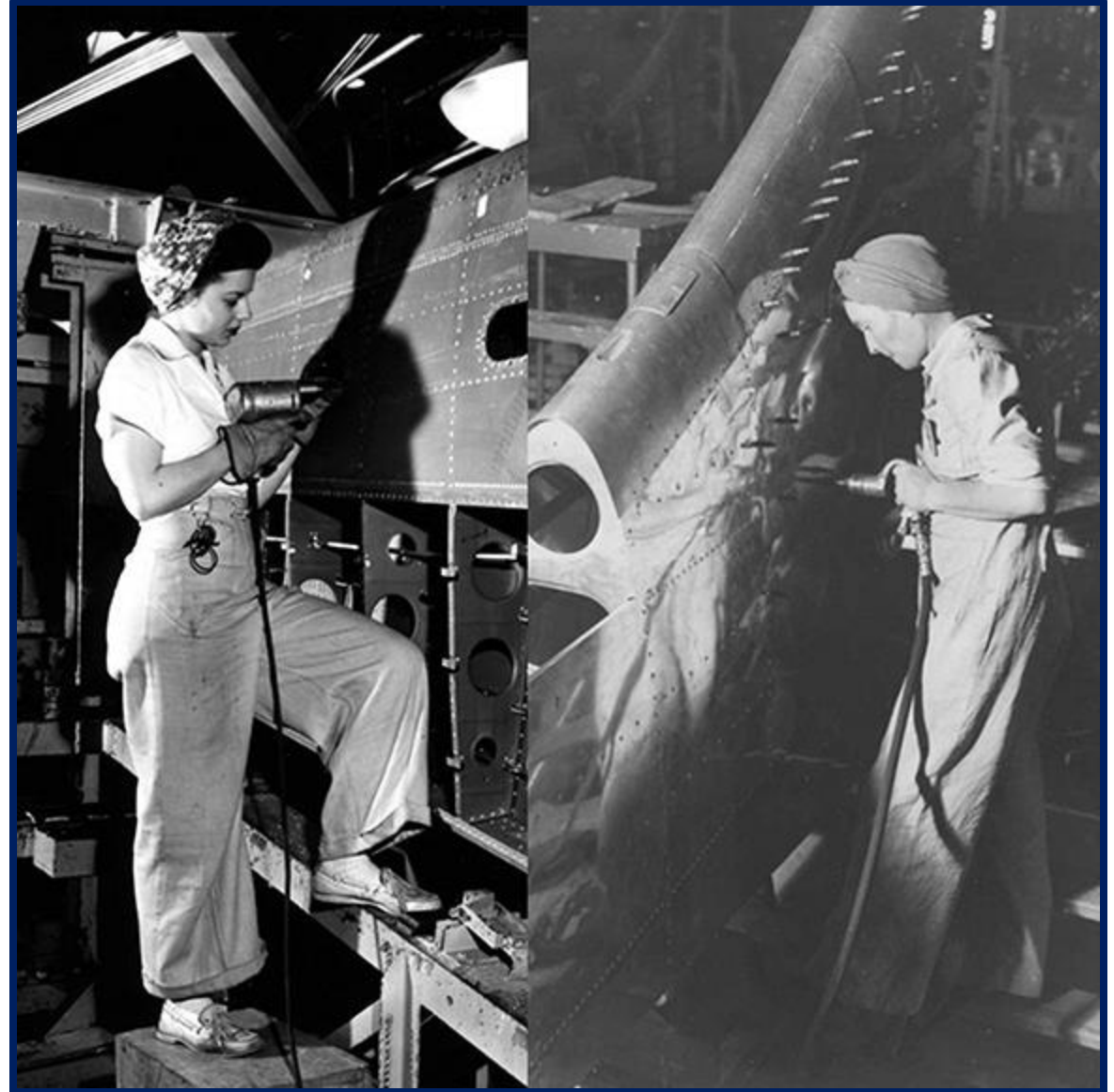
## A PRODUCTION CENTER OF INNOVATION AND INDUSTRY

- The first flight of the Douglas DC-1 prototype predecessor of the DC-3. Clover Field. July 1, 1933.



## ENORMOUS WORKFORCE CREATED DEMAND FOR HOUSING, PARKS, SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

- During its peak years, Douglas employed up to 44,000 employees working three shifts - 24/7.



## EVOLUTION OF AIRPORT CONTRIBUTED TO SANTA MONICA'S DEVELOPMENT

- Douglas Aircraft Company factory along Ocean Park Boulevard in Sunset Park community.



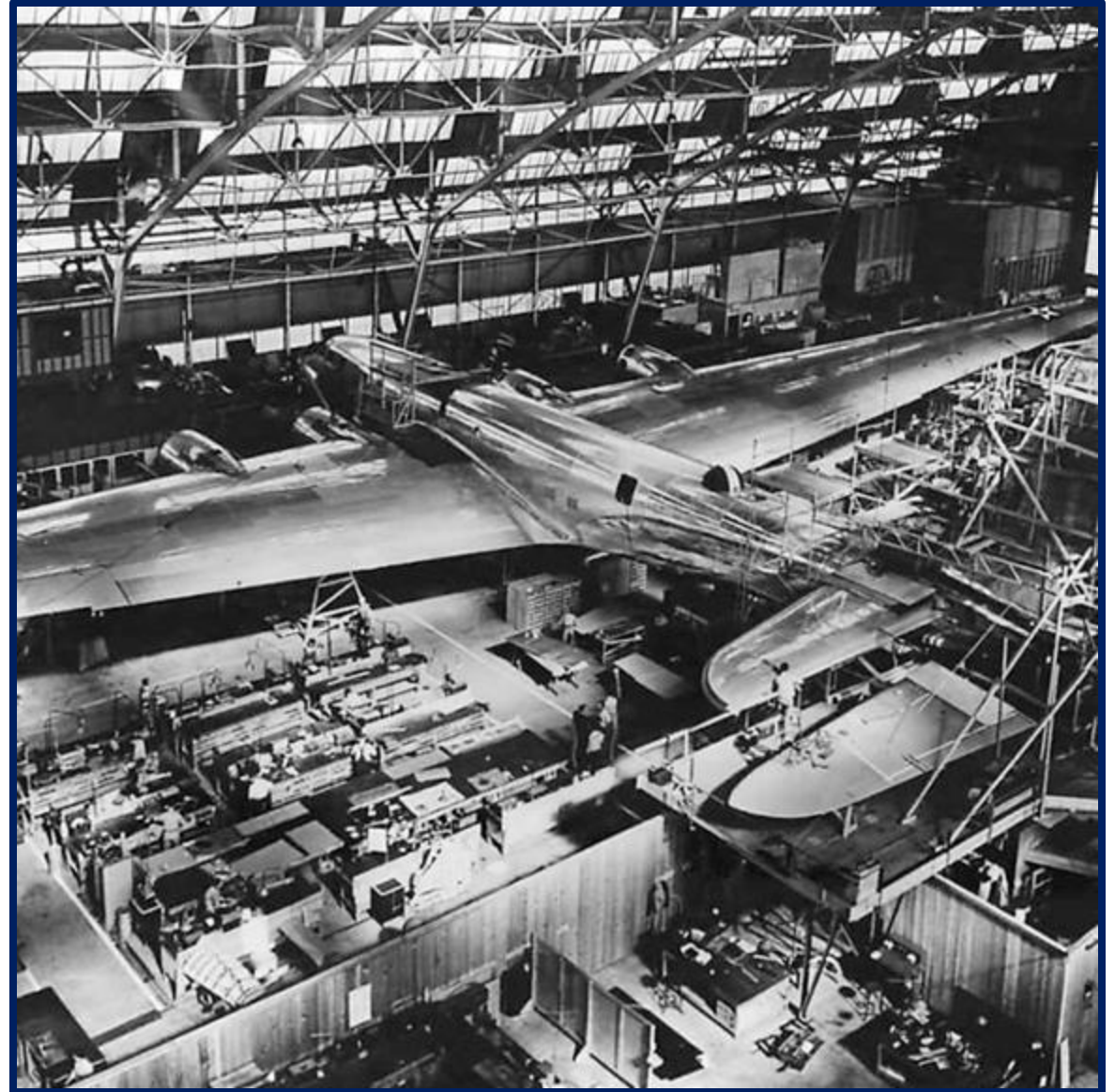
## BELOVED INSTITUTIONS BORN FROM WORKFORCE DEMAND

- In 1939 Douglas built the Aero Theater on Montana in Santa Monica so employees could watch movies 24 hours a day.



## DOUGLAS RELOCATES TO LONG BEACH IN 1967

- In 1958, Donald Douglas asked the city to lengthen the airport's runway.
- Acknowledging the objections of residents, the City refused.
- In 1967 Douglas closed the plant, moving airliner production to Long Beach.

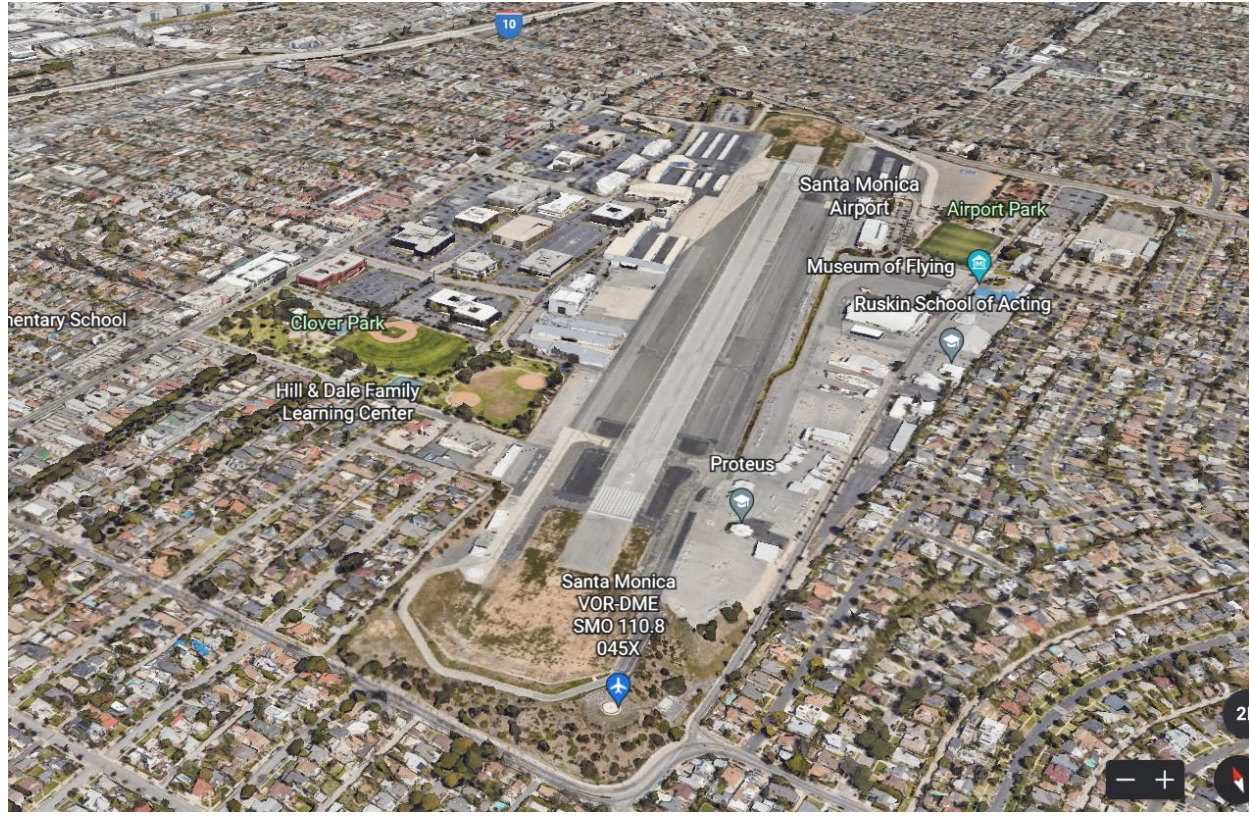




## 100 YEARS OF SMO IN OUR COMMUNITY AS THE REGION GREW AROUND US



1924  
Santa Monica Population: 15,000  
Los Angeles Population: 575,000



2023  
Santa Monica Population: 94,000  
Los Angeles Population: 3,900,000



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Legal History

---



## 50 YEARS OF LEGAL DISPUTES BETWEEN CITY AND FAA

1970's

Adoption of local regulations to restrict operations in order to protect neighbors' quality of life

1980's

Modifications to mitigate noise, impose curfew limits, ban helicopter training, limit aircraft tie-downs, and remove land areas from aviation use

1990's

LA residents sue Santa Monica based on adverse health impacts and nuisance

2000's

City bans larger and faster Category C and D aircraft from using SMO. FAA overturns.

2017

Consent Decree and authorization to close SMO after 12.31.28

## 2014 - MEASURE LC LIMITS LAND USE AT SANTA MONICA AIRPORT

- After Airport closes, no new development until voters have approved limits on uses
- Provides exemptions for:
  - Parks and public open spaces
  - Recreational facilities
  - Maintenance/replacement of existing cultural arts and education uses

“Shall the City Charter be amended to:

- (1) Prohibit new development on Airport land, except for parks, public open spaces and public recreational facilities, until the voters approve limits on the uses and development that may occur on the land; and
- (2) Affirm the City Council’s authority to manage the Airport and to close all or part of it”

60% yes, 40% no



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Clarifying Questions?

---





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# What We've Heard

---



## 2010-2013 FOCUS ON “NON-AVIATION” LANDS

- Community open space
- Access for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit
- Reduce traffic impacts
- New uses for the benefit of the community (arts, culture, education, housing, light retail, etc.)
- Sustainable agriculture projects
- Incubator for green startup businesses
- Green building practices and sustainability
- Infrastructure improvements
- Improve aesthetics



## PROJECTS FROM THAT EFFORT

### 12 ACRE EXPANSION PLANNED

- \$1.3M Design Exercise
- \$35M project (2015 dollars)
- New sports fields
- Pathways
- Community facilities
- Parking

\*This project was never realized, and awaits funding.





## PROJECTS FROM THAT EFFORT RUNWAY SHORTENING

- 2017 – restriping removed 750 feet of operational length from each end of runway
- 2019 – unused ends pulverized and planted to permanently remove runway length
- Shortened from 5,000 feet to 3,500 feet
- Immediate effect in limiting the type and size of aircraft that could operate



## PROJECTS FROM THAT EFFORT

### BUILDING PRESERVATION AND REHAB

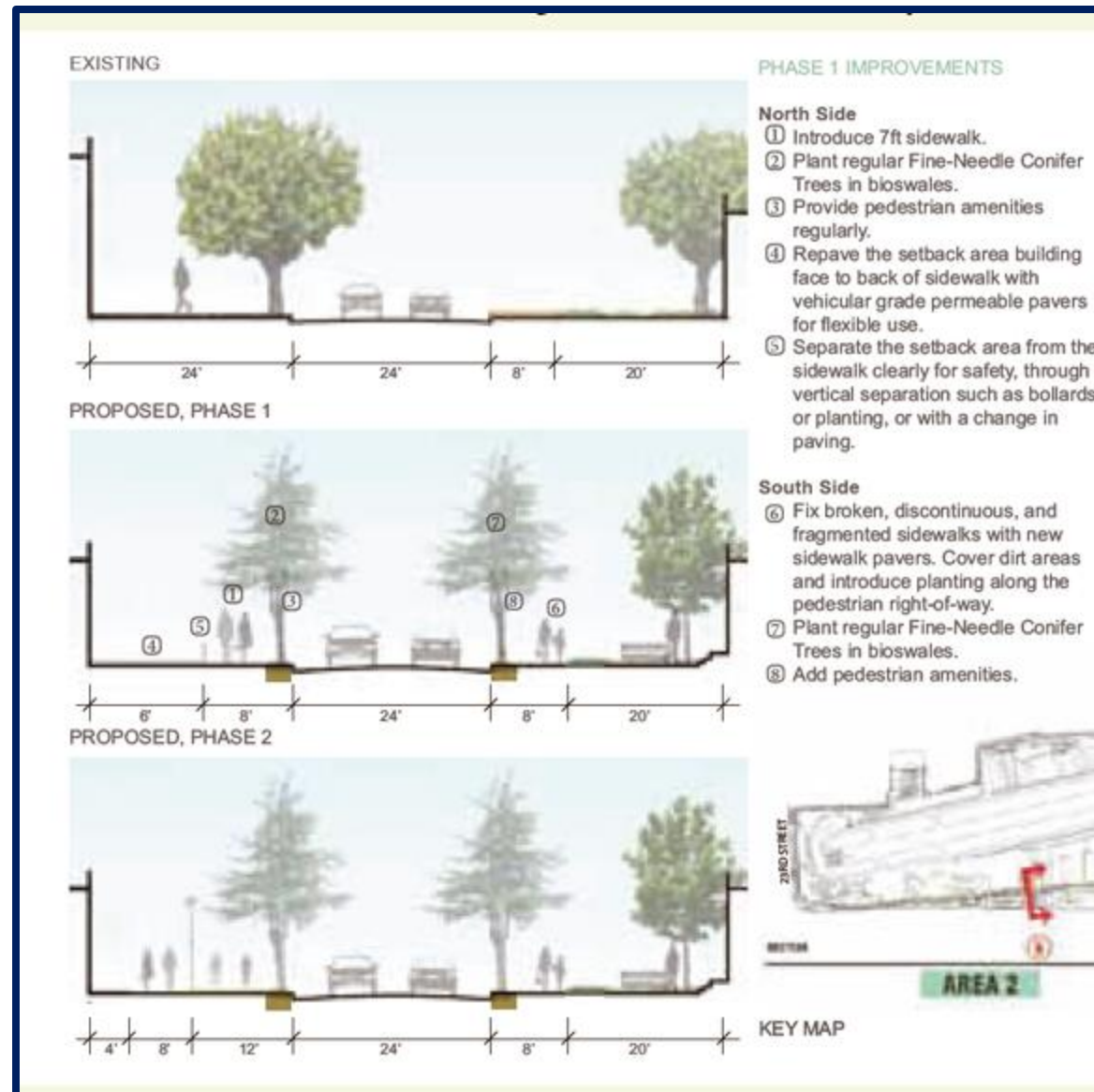
- Upgrading of existing culturally cherished facilities
- Repairs and renovations
- Compliance with local/state regulations



## PROJECTS FROM THAT EFFORT AIRPORT AVENUE

- Effort to improve mobility and access on City easement
- Multi-modal concept

Due to estimated costs, schematic design put on hold pending The Future of the Santa Monica Airport project



# COMMUNITY DIRECTION ON AIRPORT



## HIGH-LEVEL OUTLINE OF PROCESS AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE STUDY

- Global case studies
- Implementation pathways
- Funding approaches
- Staffing and consultant recommendations

\*The Airport Conversion Report was not published due to delays with the Recreation and Parks Masterplan



## CONSISTENT SUPPORT FOR POST-CLOSURE AIRPORT PLANNING

- 1970-Present: Regulations, Modifications, Legal Advocacy
- 2010-2013: Visioning Process
- 2014: prepare for 2015 closure
- 2016: prepare for 2018 closure
- 2017: consent decree and preparation for 2029 closure
- 2022-24: Biennial CIP Budget
  - \$100,000 FY 22/23 for plan startup
  - \$1,000,000 23/24 for planning

### ADOPTED FY 2022-24 BIENNIAL CIP BUDGET PROJECT DETAIL - PUBLIC WORKS

#### Public Works

#### AIRPORT CONVERSION PLANNING

**Project #**  
C0828

**Target Completion Date**  
Ongoing

**Total Project Budget**  
Ongoing

#### Project Description

This project funds the first step towards defining the future of the airport property by engaging the community in exploring the entire airport land's potential to enhance the viability of urban communities and connect with local and regional populations through improved land use strategies, circulation improvements, and recreational offerings including the creation of a grand park that was approved in concept by voters in 2014. The project scope includes the creation of a planning framework spelling out the steps and timeline required for a successful public process. The development of the framework will be supported by community engagement, market and economic analysis that contend with planning alternatives built around land use, design scale, transportation and connectivity, and sustainable policy and governance. These efforts will then lead into the development of a specific plan for the area that focuses on the established vision, land use and zoning creation, required infrastructure improvements, and an implementation plan.

#### Project Justification

With local control of the airport set to arrive in 2029, it is imperative that a planning and community outreach process begin as soon as possible. To ensure a robust and healthy public process that can lead to a successful conclusion, it is necessary to create a clear framework outlining the steps required to get there. This project sets in motion a long-term program of engagement and exploration to reimagine the Santa Monica Airport into a sustainable network of regional and community serving uses that are complimented by a coherent circulation system, a series of verdant parks and landscaping, diverse and inviting public open spaces, state-of-the-art recreational facilities, and reuse of existing buildings to support a sustainable local economy and a cultural/arts community.

Fund	Account	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	FY 26-27
General Fund	C0108280.689000	\$100,000	\$1,000,000	\$250,000	\$3,000,000	\$-
<b>TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET</b>		<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$-</b>



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Why Plan Now?

---



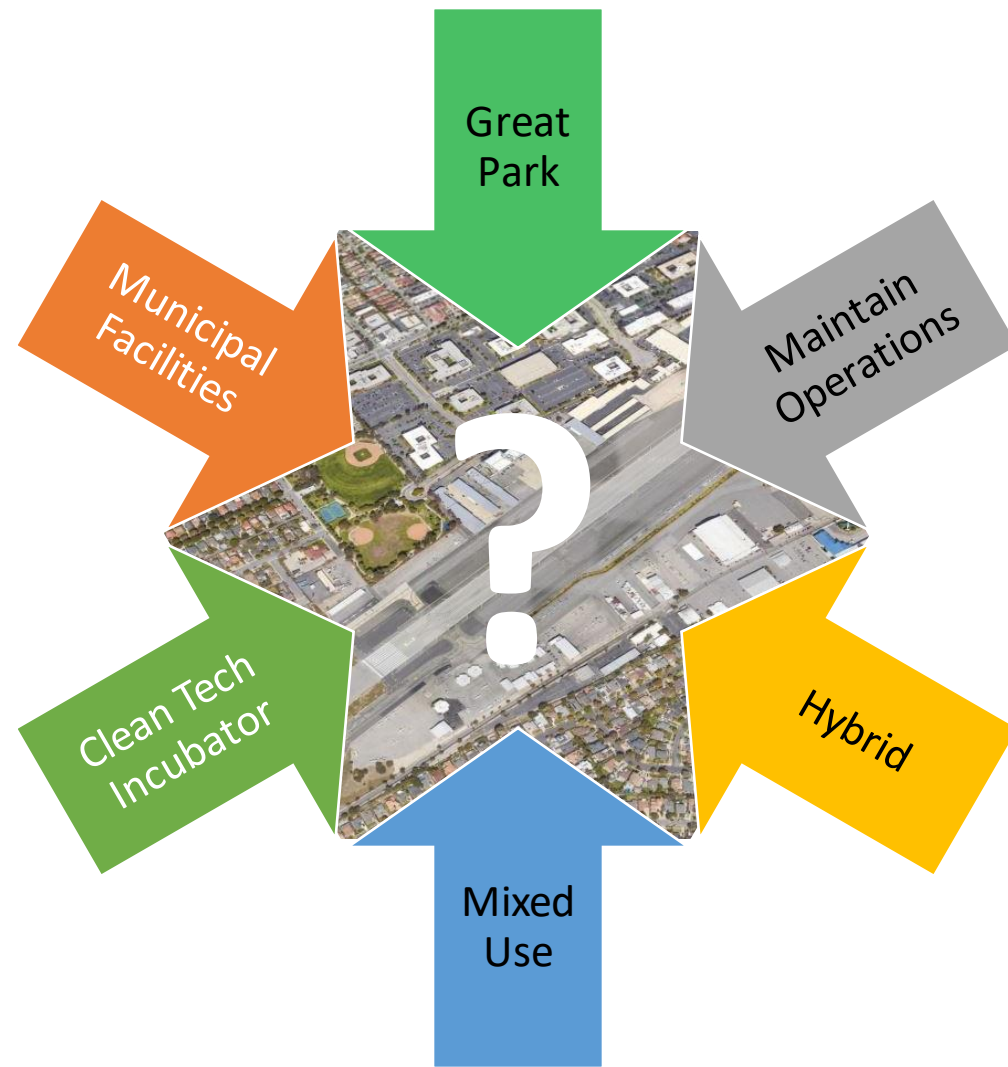
## ADVANCE PLANNING WORK TO ANTICIPATE 2030 ENVIRONMENT

- Lengthy process to plan and reach consensus for entire 227 acres
- Decommissioning process in parallel with planning

### What to Expect Proximate to Closure Period

December 2028: Airport Closure Authorized  
October 2029: Housing Element 7<sup>th</sup> Cycle Due  
2030ish: General Plan Update (LUCE) Due  
Always: Surplus Lands Act

## WHICH WAY DO WE GO?

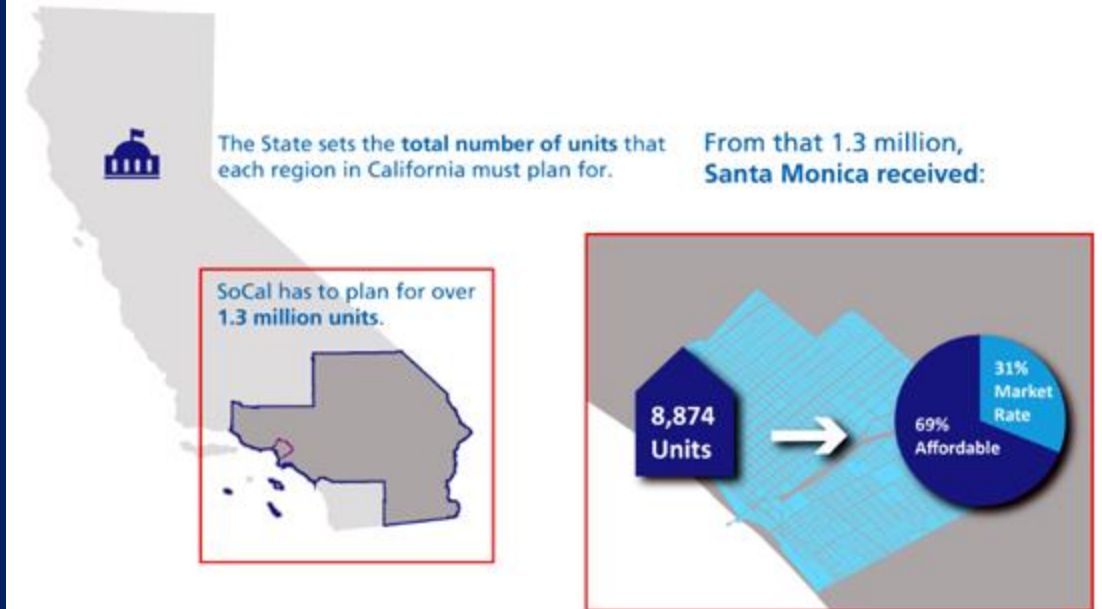




## WHAT TO EXPECT PROXIMATE TO CLOSURE PERIOD (12/31/28)

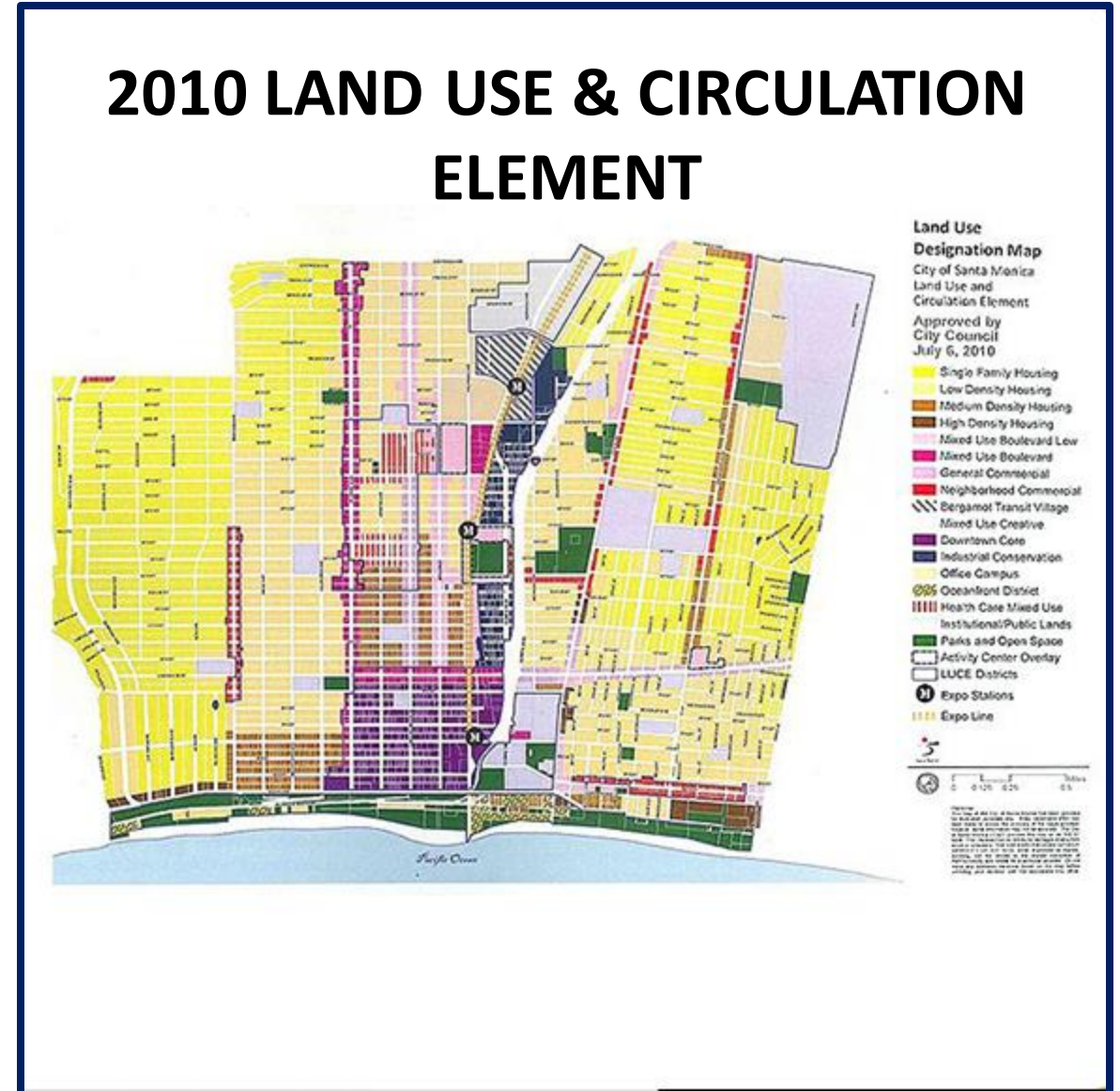
- Housing Element 7<sup>th</sup> Cycle
  - 2029-2038
  - New RHNA Numbers

## 2021-2029 6<sup>TH</sup> CYCLE RHNA



## WHAT TO EXPECT PROXIMATE TO CLOSURE PERIOD (12/31/28)

- 2030 Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE)
  - Updated per State requirements every 20 years
  - Principal land use and transportation planning document
  - Identifies development approach and priorities across a wide range of topics



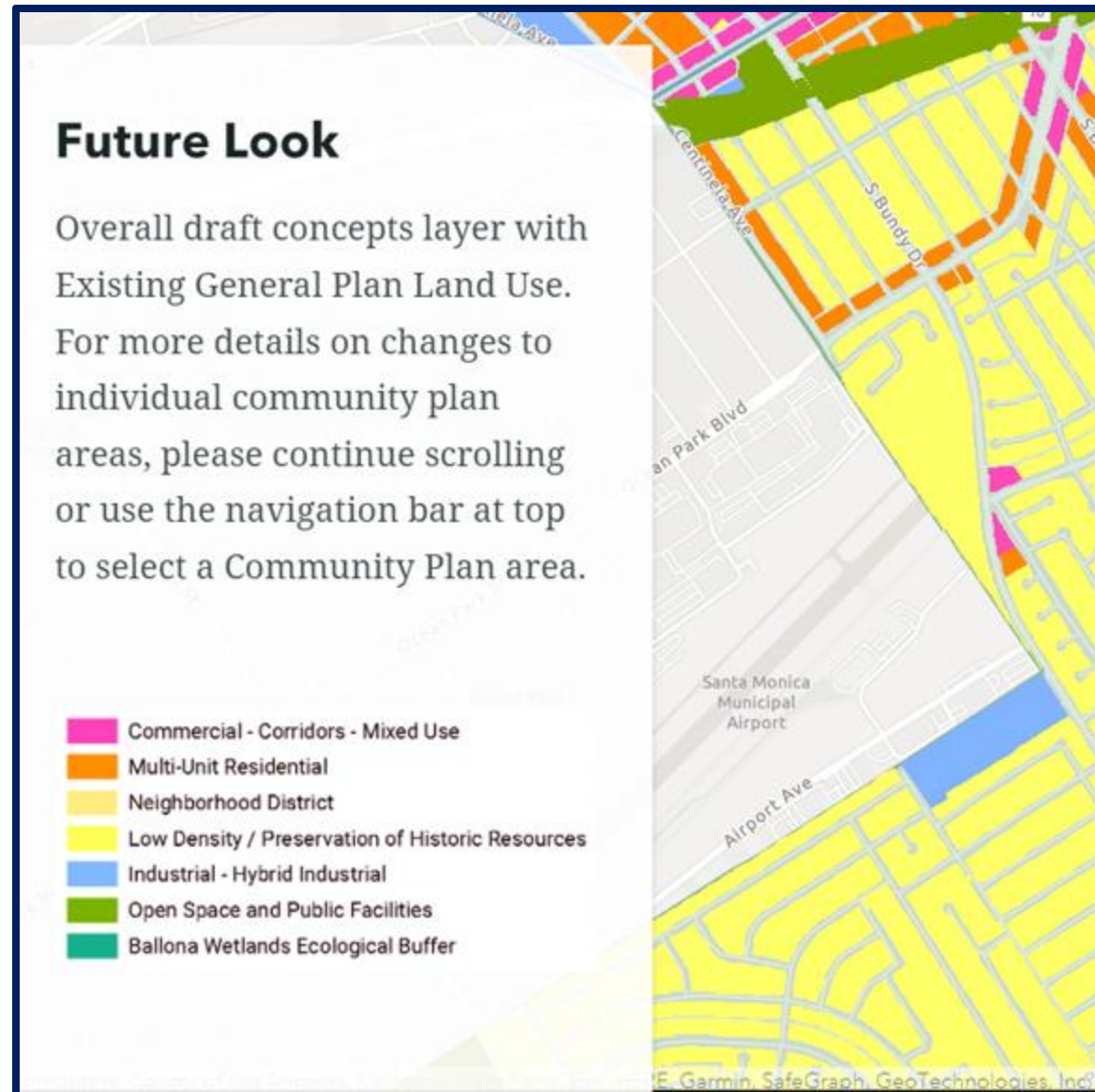
## WHAT TO EXPECT PROXIMATE TO CLOSURE PERIOD (12/31/28)

- Surplus Lands Act
  - Updated and modified year over year
  - Increasingly more aggressive in identifying agency land for affordable housing



## PALMS – MAR VISTA – DEL REY COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

- Process underway to update General Plan land use designations
- Includes 17-acres of Airport land residing in Los Angeles
  - LA has requirement to zone land
  - Initial concept would designate for Low Density Residential
  - Relationship between CSM/LA land use authority currently unclear



## PALMS – MAR VISTA – DEL REY COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE

- Process underway to update General Plan land use designations
- Includes 17-acres of Airport land residing in Los Angeles
  - Initial concept would designate for Low Density Residential
  - Relationship between CSM/LA land use authority currently unclear

### (1) SANTA MONICA AIRPORT

Reserve it for Public Facilities, not the private sector.

Reserve it for multi-use recreational open space and supportive housing.

Use it as a public park, botanical garden like the Los Angeles Arboretum, Huntington Garden, or community garden like Ocean View Farm.

Allow outdoor / al fresco dining, community buildings and 1-story buildings for recreational activities.

Reserve for dense housing preferably affordable housing for workforce, low-income, permanent supportive, transitional, seniors, and bridge housing.

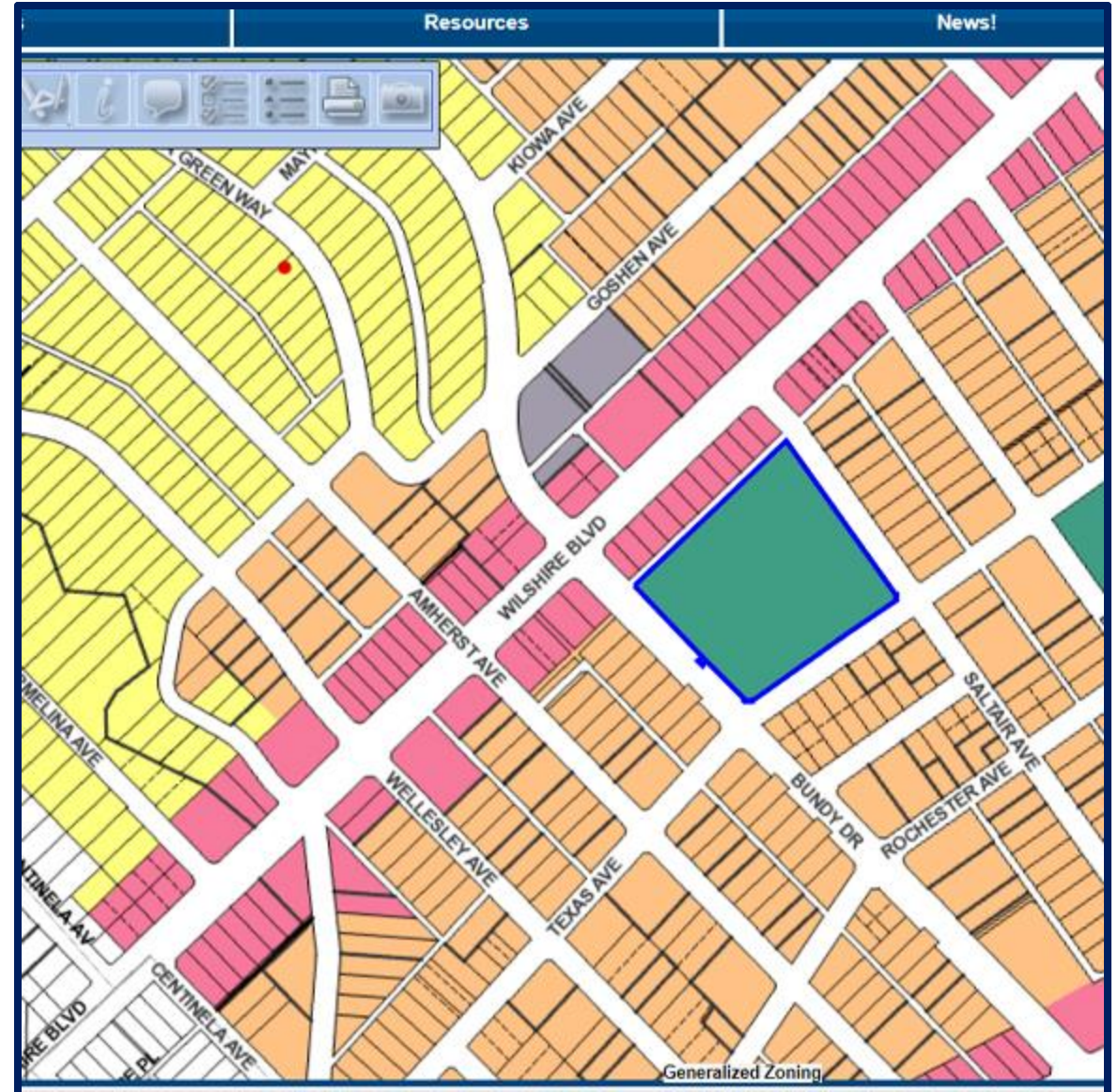
Should be large public land with a combination of green space and community gardens, dense mixed-use, and retention of some of the airport history with buildings no higher than 3-5 stories, enough parking, and a pedestrian and bike linkage.

Consider a Century City or Playa Vista type area at Santa Monica Airport, especially if the Sepulveda Pass Transit corridor passes through Centinela Avenue.

Utilize the affordable housing only zone in the downtown community plan to incentivize the development of affordable/workforce housing.

## PRECEDENT FOR SANTA MONICA PROPERTIES IN OTHER CITIES

- Arcadia Water Treatment Facility
  - LA Zoning: Public Facilities Zone





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Clarifying Questions?

---





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# The Planning Process

---





## THREE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS TO START THE CONVERSATION

What are We  
Working With?

What work needs to be  
done to prepare the land?

What Do We  
Want & Need?

Inclusive, multi-generational  
vision

What Can We Afford?

Economic  
Sustainability

## IDENTIFYING CONSENSUS AROUND COMMUNITY PREFERENCES



## THREE SCOPE COMPONENTS RECOMMENDED

- 1. Establish the baseline.** Comprehensive site evaluation and existing conditions.
- 2. Work with the community.** Outreach and engagement – vision, testing, consensus.
- 3. Scenario planning.** Concept exploration, alternatives planning and refinement around a great park and supporting uses.



Park – Non-revenue generating. Costly to build/maintain.



Mixed Use – Revenue generating. Growth concerns.

## PUBLIC – CITY FINANCED

- Scaled up version of conventional park.
- City leads with public funds.
- Traditionally done in large cities, would be challenging for Santa Monica.

Figure 6: Public Approach Example



## PUBLIC – CITY FINANCED TEMPLEHOFER FIELD, BERLIN

- Population 3,580,000
  - 750 acres
  - \$21.2M annual maintenance costs
  - Housing proposed, but denied
- Would require a significant levy or bond and annual subsidies for maintenance and programming; would have the most limited budget.
  - More modest improvements.



## PUBLIC + BENEFACTOR

- Requires significant private donations
- More conversion of hardscape to parkland and increased access

case studies.

Figure 7: Public+ Approach Example



## PUBLIC + BENEFACTOR GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, NEW YORK

- Population 8,620,000
  - 32 acres park, 50 acres cultural
  - \$291M construction
  - \$16M annual maintenance costs
- Private donations from people and corporations with naming opportunities and possible tie-ins to operation/use of the park.
  - Larger/bigger variety of amenities.
  - UPDATE: Converting to PPP model



## PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

- City partnership with neighborhood development interests.
- Increased access including public transportation connection to the Expo line possible.
- Airport Avenue could be realigned to allow multimodal access and improve intersections.

Figure 8: Public-Private Partnership Approach Example





## PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP DOWNSVIEW, TORONTO

- Population 2,600,000
  - 291 acres parkland
  - \$16.2M annual maintenance costs
  - Sustainable mixed-use community
- Neighborhood development to generate revenue for park development and operations.
  - Most robust improvements.



## GLOBAL PRECEDENTS

- Ellinkon, Greece
  - 600 acres
  - 22-year planning process
  - \$6B Euros project
  - Designed for 1000-year project life
- Seestadt, Austria
  - 593 acres
  - 19-year planning process
  - Initial investment of \$5B Euros





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Outreach & Engagement

---



## JUST, DIVERSE, EQUITABLE and INCLUSIVE

- Multi-year community dialogue requiring a modern approach to outreach.



**WORKSHOPS**



**DEMOCRATIC LOTTERY**



**ONLINE SURVEYS**



**YOUTH EVENTS**



**NEIGHB. GROUPS**



**BIZ GROUPS**



**STAKEHOLDER MTGS**



**REGIONAL PARTNERS**





City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Project Goals

---



## HEIRARCHY OF GOALS TO PROVIDE ACCOUNTABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Council Priorities

Living Community Challenge

Great Park Goals



## ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

- Addressing Homelessness
- Clean and Safe Santa Monica
- Cultivate Economic Recovery and Expand Community & Cultural Offerings
- Racial Justice, Equity, & Social Diversity
- Sustainable & Connected Community

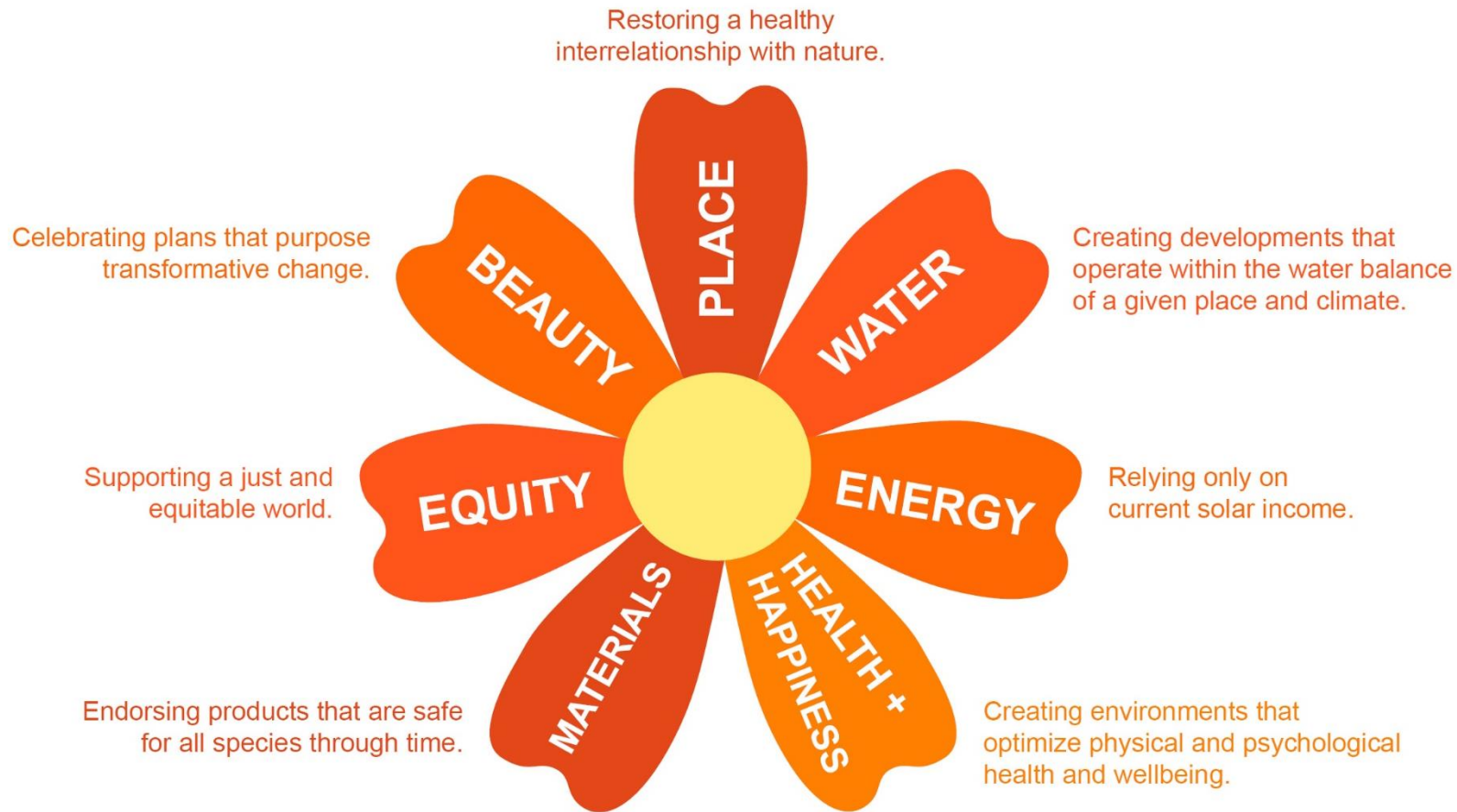
## Council Priorities for FY 2023-2025





## TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE SUSTAINABILITY FOR MULTIPLE GENERATIONS

**Living Community Challenge**



## INCLUSIVE AND SELF-SUSTAINING COMMUNITY SPACE



### CONNECTED.

Enhance connections and integration to local transit and regional connectors to provide multimodal transportation access to the park.



### INCLUSIVE.

Provide programs and opportunities for all. Meet the broad recreational needs of Santa Monica and the regional community. Integrate inclusive play opportunities for all ages, abilities, and types of play.



### FLEXIBLE.

Design the park with flexible and multi-use infrastructure to adapt to changing preferences and optimize programming capabilities.



### SUSTAINABLE.

Support Santa Monica's sustainability and climate change resiliency priorities by advancing green infrastructure and urban greening initiatives at the park.

## Great Park Goals



### CELEBRATORY.

Celebrate the history of the site through design and interpretation and involve existing cultural and educational facilities.



### INCREMENTAL.

Incrementally build improvements to allow for financial self-sustainability and changes in recreational and use preferences.



### SELF-SUSTAINING.

Require the post-closure Airport Park to be a financially self-sustaining facility. Allow for revenue generating opportunities to support the development and ongoing operations and maintenance of the park.



### COLLABORATIVE.

Support public agency partnerships and consider public-private partnerships to develop and maintain the park, as well as to provide community benefits, improvements, and park safety.

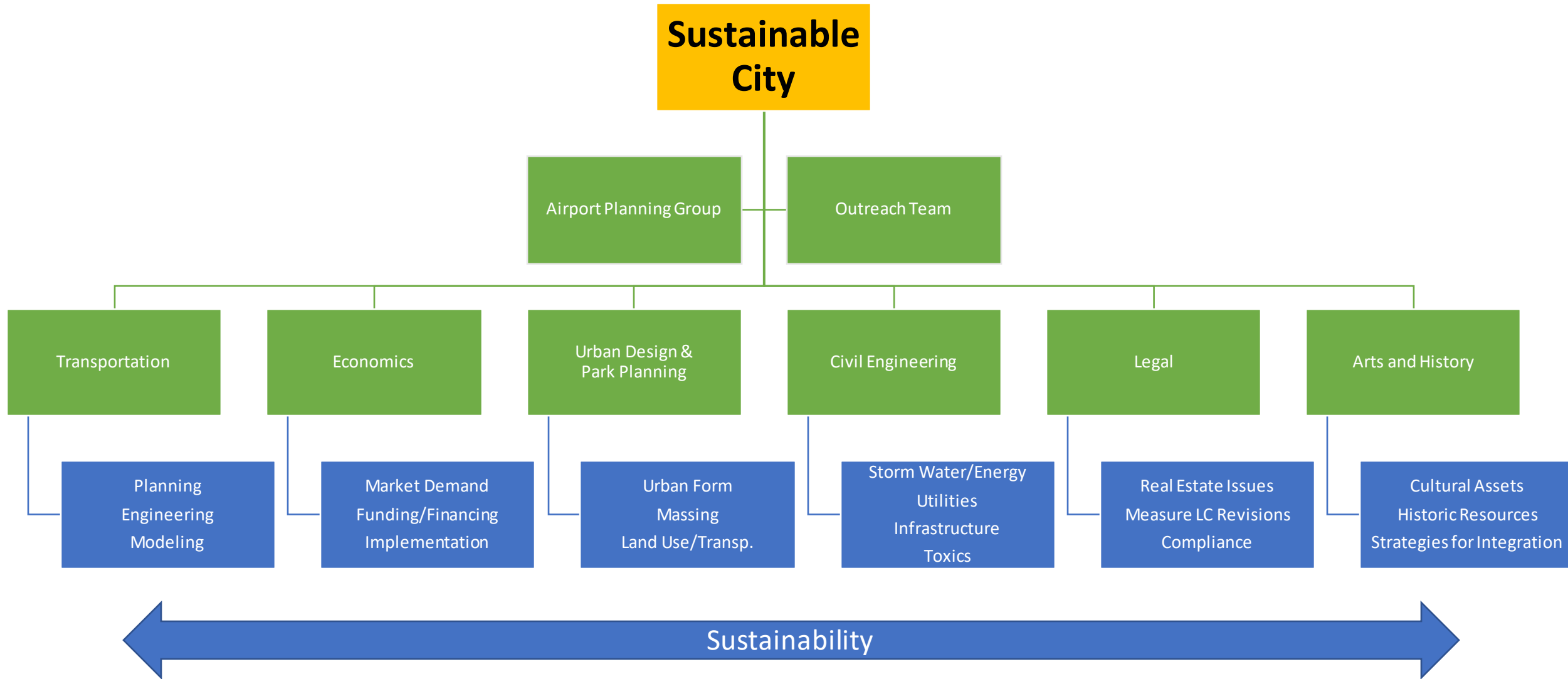


City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# Timelines

---





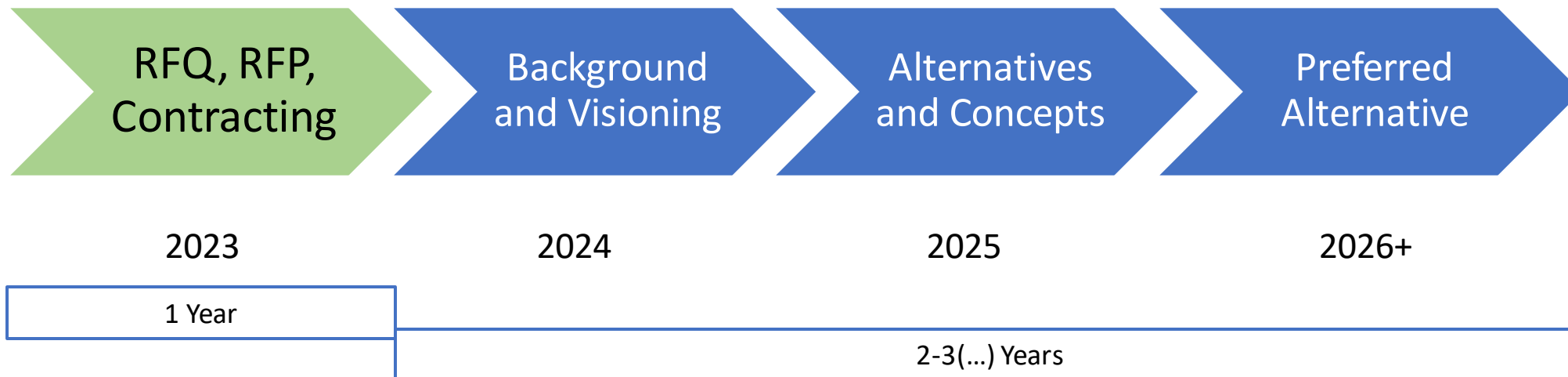
## Project Initiation - 2023

- Council January 24, 2023
- RFQ issued: February 13
- RFQ deadline: March 15
- **Vetting of Quals: April-May**
- RFP Issued: April
- RFP Deadline: May

## Project Completion - 2026 (ish)

- Candidate interviews: June
- Selection: June
- Council Authorization: August
- Contract Execution: October
- **Project Kickoff: October 2023 - January 2024**

## Project Process



## A QUICK RECAP

- Lengthy planning process to determine future use of Santa Monica Airport
- Various scenarios to be explored, centered around a great park
- Modern, multi-year outreach effort to capture the voices of the community
- Goals identified to guide the process and inform the project

## QUESTIONS FOR PC

- Do you confirm goals and values to guide the project?
- Do you confirm the process for community engagement, testing and refinement?
- Do you confirm scope of work including Existing Conditions and Scenario Planning?



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

# **A Public Process to Determine the Future of the Santa Monica Airport**

Planning Commission

March 15, 2023