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Santa Monica Daily Press

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Local rents end 2023 down more than 4 percent

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

A seasonal trend in countrywide rent prices was also reflected in Santa Monica as 2023 came to a finish.

According to a report from Apartment List, which uses data on its platform as well as publicly available census data to gauge rent growth trends, Santa Monica apartment rent prices went down 3.5% from November to December 2023. The median rent in the city now stands at $2,466 for a 1-bedroom and $2,956 for a 2-bedroom. Nationwide, rent price in December fell 0.8%, acting as the fifth consecutive month of decline after a mid-year peak.

"During the late fall and winter months, it tends to be a bit slower, particularly around November, December, around the holidays," said Apartment List Senior Economist Chris Salviati. "Very few people are moving at that time of year, so ... property owners that have vacancies that they're trying to fill at those times will often offer modest discounts to (bring) a lot of folks in."

Over the course of 2023, the city's median rent price fell by a total of 4.2%, outpacing California's drop (1.7%) and the national fall (1%). This is the first year of median rent decline in Santa Monica since the COVID-19 pandemic year of 2020, when rent dropped 17.4% In the final pre-pandemic year of 2019, rent prices rose in the city by 1.2%. Salviati said that the "pendulum may be swinging back" from the pandemic-era skyrocketing of rent prices, which included an "astronomical" national rent index increase of 18% in 2021.

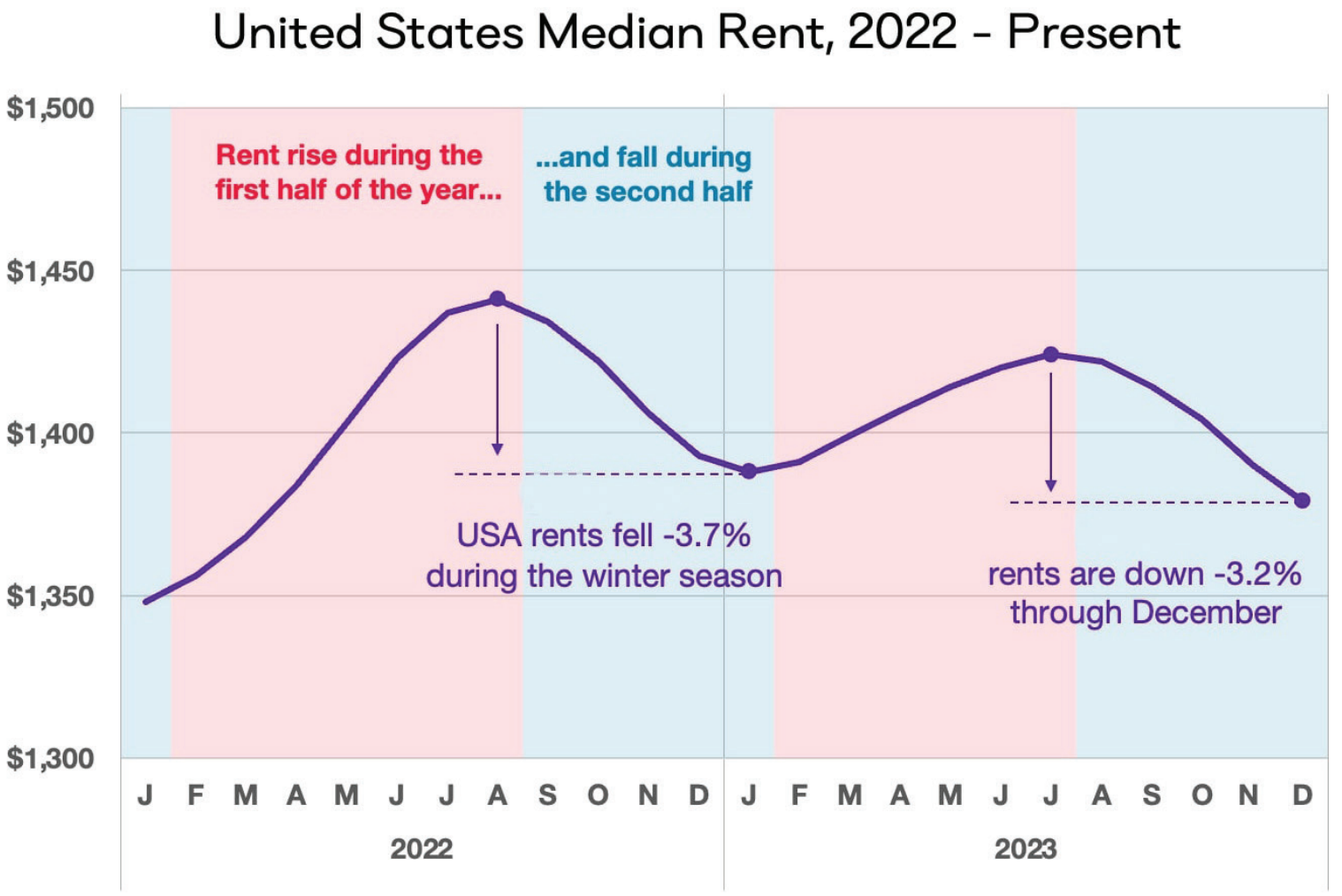
"After prices have already increased that much, I think a lot of folks are just finding that their budgets aren't going up far," Salviati said. "They're really at a certain point, (they) kind of hit a ceiling where renters aren't able to absorb further price increases, because rents have already gone up so much."

The economist also pointed to inflation as a "big storyline," with non-housing budgets for renters also eroding. People uncertain about 2023's macroeconomic conditions led some to be cautious in terms of moving activity, which coupled with a surge of pandemic-era construction projects being completed, led to a shortened demand and heightened supply.

Compared to the Greater Los Angeles metro area, median rent remains 20% higher in Santa Monica than compared cities, of which there were 23 throughout the region. Median rent for the LA metro area is $2,170, dropping by 1.3% from 2022. Salviati noted that the LA rental market is a "little bit unique" due to Los Angeles County in particular lagging behind in post-pandemic increases proportional to the national rent index and neighboring Orange County. The county's rent prices have gone up just 8% over the pandemic period, compared to Orange County's 25% increase. LA and Orange counties had a dip of 2.3% and an increase of 1.5% in median rent price this past year, respectively.

Santa Monica was one of eight cities to experience a drop in median rent prices, influencing the total metro area fall via large population

SEE **RENT** PAGE 11



Courtesy of Apartment List

RENT TRENDS: The United States median rent trends are shown in this Apartment List graphic, with the website also stating that Santa Monica median rent prices went down by 4.2% in 2023.



Community Corp. conjures up revitalization plan for Venice church

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

A historical and cultural cornerstone of Venice's Oakwood neighborhood will be on the mend in coming years due to a new partnership between Santa Monica and Venice organizations.

This past week, Community Corporation of Santa Monica announced a joint partnership with Venice-based Hoop Bus Inc. to revitalize the First Baptist Church, located at 685 Westminster Ave in the Oakwood neighborhood. The 40,439 square foot property, including the church and two adjacent parking lots, was first acquired by the Community Corporation in March 2023, with the church being reimagined as a community and cultural center.

The organization owns just over 2,000 affordable homes in Santa Monica, as well as buildings in the City of Los Angeles and Mar Vista, but this project serves as both the Corporation's first expansion into Venice and the first revitalization project for the nonprofit. The Corporation was asked if they'd be interested in the church by local officials when it hit the market, thinking the nonprofit would "be a potentially good caretaker" of the "historically significant" property, said Community Corporation Executive Director Tara Barauskas. The church was founded as an African-American church in 1910, serving as an anchor of the Oakwood section of Venice's African-American residents. The current church building opened in 1967, and remained a spot for the church congregation until it was sold to a private owner in 2017, with the congregation relocating to Westchester.



Courtesy Photo

CHURCH REVITALIZATION: In January, Community Corporation of Santa Monica announced a joint partnership with Venice-based Hoop Bus Inc. to revitalize the First Baptist Church, a historically significant property in Venice's Oakwood neighborhood.

"As we've been building affordable housing over the years, we recognize that there are a lot of needs in the community, particularly for low income people but also in the surrounding community," Barauskas said. "I've definitely heard more than one person say 'well, it's great that you're building this here, but what's in it for us' ... I've often thought about that question, what more we can do for the community ... so we actually had started trying to address that in some of our newer buildings."

In trying to "step their game up" in terms of helping the community, the organization has been "working closely" with the Oakwood community to figure out the best usage for the property. The nonprofit recognizes the building's status as a "sacred space," with an idea gestating to allow faith-based groups to rent out the church for services, along with using the church as a meeting and event location. For youth activities and programs, the organization found the aid of Hoopbus, a nationally-recognized community engagement service that is helping the Corporation fundraise the church's revival.

Founded by the Venice Beach basketball community in 2019, Hoopbus promotes social and emotional learning at schools through "PE Takeovers," engaging youth in basketball activities and community events in parks and playgrounds, including the Oakwood Recreation Center. The organization operates a fleet of five converted school buses that run community programs in the Venice area and across the United States. Hoopbus offered another example of its commitment to Oakwood and surrounding Venice

SEE CHURCH PAGE 12

FINDING A NEW DENTIST IS TOUGH!
(BUT WE MAKE IT EASY!!!)
If you don't like what we have to say we will give you a copy of your x-rays at no charge
DENTAL CARE WITHOUT JUDGEMENT!
WE OFFER UNIQUE SERVICES
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*Emergencies can be seen today
*Our dentists and staff members are easy to talk to
AND OF COURSE WE DO
• Invisalign • Periodontist on Staff • Oral Surgeon on Staff
• Cosmetics and Implants • Zoom bleaching • and more
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*Offer to non insured patients
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1260 15th ST. SUITE #703 (310) 736-2589
WWW.ALANRUBENSTEINDDS.COM

Performances, speeches, acts of service planned for MLK holiday



Courtesy Photo

DAY OF SERVICE: The City of Santa Monica is getting involved with the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, holding the MLK Day of Service on Saturday at the Main Street Community Garden.

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

A celebration of a national icon will take place Monday at Santa Monica College's Soka Gakkai International (SGI) Auditorium. From 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., the venue at 525 Wilshire Blvd will play host to one of Southern California's largest birthday celebrations for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King on the namesake holiday, with the 39th anniversary event taking the theme "Stop the Hate, Start the Healing."

Presented by The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Westside Coalition, the event is scheduled to include music, a brief theatrical performance, as well as presentations of multiple awards. Along with education awards and the Community Light Award, the coalition's Nat Trives Service Award will be presented to Nat Trives, who served as the first African-American mayor of Santa Monica in the 1970s. After the celebration, the coalition will present a Community Involvement Fair at Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club, located at 1210 4th St.

The event's keynote speaker will be award-winning trial attorney Lisa Holder, who specializes in fields like education equity, employment discrimination and international human rights law. Holder was recently appointed as President of the Oakland-based Equal Justice Society, and also recently completed a two-year term on the historic Reparations Task Force, appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom for the role.

Festivities for the holiday began on Thursday evening with a free screening of "Sing Your Song," a documentary film on the life of singer, actor and activist Harry Belafonte. Held at the Martin Luther King Jr. Auditorium at the Santa Monica Public Library, the documentary screening was followed by a question and answer session presented by the library and the Westside Coalition.

On Friday morning, the Santa Monica Interfaith Council presented a 2024 MLK Freedom Celebration at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Centered around the theme "How to Get to Healing," the event featured speakers Rev. Albert Star, Soka Gakkai International - USA Director of Peace Ian McIlraith and Alisa Osunfunke Orduna; and also featured the Santa Monica College Emeritus Gospel Choir directed by William Bryant.

Events over the weekend also include the Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra's annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. concert at the SGI Auditorium, beginning Saturday at 3 p.m. The orchestra will be joined by guest conductor Gary Pratt, as well as choreographer and dancer Bernard Brown, for the performance.

The City of Santa Monica is getting involved on Saturday with the MLK Day of Service, held at the Main Street Community Garden from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The event plans to bring together the community to support the garden, doing maintenance work and clearing various garden plots. Tools, gloves and water will be provided on site, and registration can be done online or by emailing bee.barba-padilla@santamonica.gov.

At the City event, donations will also be accepted for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's weekend bag program, which gives students who may experience weekend food insecurity nutritious and easy-prep food bags, including two breakfasts, two lunches and two snacks. Food donations of granola bars, instant oatmeal and individual trail mix servings are welcome.

thomas@smdp.com



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **57.2**

FRIDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

NW swell mix drops off through the day. Smaller but clean most of the day — best size west of Dume at breaks facing west.

SATURDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Leftovers from the NW in the morning — looking like the smallest surf in days and the early high tide won't help. Potential for a new, long period NW swell to creep in through the day.

Weather

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 61. East northeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west southwest in the afternoon.
Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 43. North northwest wind around 5 mph becoming northeast after midnight.
Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 62. Northeast wind around 5 mph becoming south southwest in the afternoon.
Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 49.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted	(ft)	High/Low
2024/01/12	Fri	02:48 AM	2.00		L
2024/01/12	Fri	09:06 AM	6.86		H
2024/01/12	Fri	4:27 PM	-1.68		L
2024/01/12	Fri	10:57 PM	3.97		H
2024/01/13	Sat	03:39 AM	1.89		L
2024/01/13	Sat	09:52 AM	6.57		H
2024/01/13	Sat	5:07 PM	-1.42		L
2024/01/13	Sat	11:39 PM	4.15		H
2024/01/14	Sun	04:35 AM	1.83		L
2024/01/14	Sun	10:41 AM	6.00		H
2024/01/14	Sun	5:47 PM	-0.95		L
2024/01/15	Mon	12:22 AM	4.37		H
2024/01/15	Mon	05:39 AM	1.81		L
2024/01/15	Mon	11:34 AM	5.19		H
2024/01/15	Mon	6:26 PM	-0.32		L
2024/01/16	Tue	01:09 AM	4.61		H
2024/01/16	Tue	06:54 AM	1.76		L
2024/01/16	Tue	12:36 PM	4.24		H

Daily Lottery

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

Powerball
Draw Date: 1/10
25 40 43 48 50
Power#: 11
Jackpot: 77 M

Mega Millions
Draw Date: 1/9
12 15 32 33 53
Mega#: 24
Jackpot: 187 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 1/10
12 22 31 37 39
Mega#: 7
Jackpot: 14 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 1/10
15 18 25 32 38

Daily 3
Draw Date: 1/10
EVENING: 6 6 1
Draw Date: 1/10
MIDDAY: 8 5 9

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 1/10
1st: 02 - Lucky Star
2nd: 09 - Winning Spirit
3rd: 08 - Gorgeous George
Race Time: 1:47.83

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Sustainable Quality Awards
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Santa Monica Daily Press

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA
NOTICE INVITING BIDS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Santa Monica invites Contractors to complete and submit sealed bids for the:

Stewart Street & Pennsylvania Avenue Safety Enhancement Project
SP2653

Bids will only be accepted through the CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL, ProcureNow or https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca. They must be received by the specified date and time. Late bids will not be accepted. Please allow sufficient time for uploading of documents. The bid opening will be electronic, all submitted bids will be viewable by the public via ProcureNow immediately after bid close time.

MANDATORY PRE-BID JOB WALK:
N/A

PROJECT ESTIMATE: $4,000,000
CONTRACT DAYS: 548 Calendar Days
LIQUIDATED DAMAGES: $5,200 Per Calendar Day

Bidding Documents may be obtained by logging onto the City's bidding website at: https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca. The Contractor is required to have an **A General Engineering License** at the time of bid submission. Contractors wishing to be considered must submit Bids containing all information required pursuant to the City's Request for Bids.

Pursuant to Public Contracts Code Section 22300, the Contractor shall be permitted to substitute securities for any monies withheld by the City to ensure performance under this Contract.

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: **Proposed Extension of Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2772 (CCS) Authorizing the Establishment of Objective Design Standards for Qualifying Housing Projects that Elect to Use the Streamlined, Ministerial Approval Process Established by Senate Bill 35.**

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to extend Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2772 (CCS) authorizing the establishment of objective design standards for qualifying housing projects that elect to use the streamlined, ministerial approval process established by Senate Bill 35. The Council adopted Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Number 2772 (CCS) on December 19, 2023 and will expire unless extended by Council.

DATE/TIME: **TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024 AT 6:30 PM**

LOCATION: City Council Chamber, Second Floor, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT:
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Members of the public unable to attend a meeting but wishing to comment on an item(s) listed on the agenda may submit written comments prior to the public hearing via email to councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov or via mail to City Clerk, 1685 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, California 90401. Written public comment submitted before 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. All written comments shall be made part of the public record. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

You may also comment in person at the City Council hearing. Please check the agenda for more detailed instructions on how to comment in person.

Address your comments to: City Clerk
Re: SB 35 ODS Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Extension

VIA EMAIL: councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov
VIA MAIL: 1685 Main Street, Room 102
Santa Monica, CA 90401

MORE INFORMATION: If you want more information about this project, please contact Steve Mizokami by e-mail at steve.mizokami@santamonica.gov . For disability-related accommodations, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (310) 458-8211 or (310) 917-6626 TDD at least 72 hours in advance. Every attempt will be made to provide the requested accommodation. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request. Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Lines serve City Hall and the Civic Center area. The Expo Line terminus is located at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, and is a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall, on Olympic Drive, and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the public hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Carmen Gutierrez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-2275.

Santa Monica hit with high surf but no damage











Thomas Leffler

SURF: Visitors to Santa Monica Beach Thursday were greeted with a rare sight, as the Pacific Ocean dispensed sizable waves during the late morning hours. Santa Monica was one of the Los Angeles County beaches put under a high surf advisory by the National Weather Service, remaining through Thursday evening. While high winds and big waves posed problems in some areas, Santa Monica came through the weather event without any damage.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Citywide

City issues request for letters of interest for the revitalization of the Civic Auditorium

The city of Santa Monica has issued a public notice and request for letters of interest for the revitalization of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium as an entertainment, events and cultural arts venue.

The city is seeking an individual or entity to lease the site and, through a Disposition and Development Agreement in the form of a long-term ground lease, to renovate, reopen, program and manage the property.

The City Council designated the Civic Auditorium as surplus land in October 2022 and the California Housing and Community Development Department officially certified the city's completion and compliance with the state process in November 2023, clearing the way for the city to consider proposals for the site from any interested party.

The city seeks vendors with experience in renovating and redeveloping historic structures, experience operating and programming cultural arts venues, financial resources for the development, and a commitment to community engagement and input.

The deadline to register as a vendor through the city's procurement portal and submit a proposal is Wednesday, Jan. 31. Interested parties can find the submission portal online at https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/santa-monica-ca/projects/74628.

TATI SIMONIAN, SANTA MONICA PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Supreme Court case about impact fees could have huge consequences for housing in California

BEN CHRISTOPHER
Special to the Daily Press

A dispute between a 72-year-old retiree in Placerville and El Dorado County over a $23,420 building fee got its day before the country's highest court recently in a case with potentially seismic consequences for local government budgets and housing markets across California and the country.

At issue is just how far cities and counties have to go to justify "impact fees": fees slapped on new construction projects in order to offset the toll new developments take on local infrastructure.

The stakes are especially high in California, where impact fees can tack on hundreds of thousands of dollars to new housing projects that are already among the most expensive to build in the nation.

The plaintiff in this case wants to put new guardrails on those fees. But that would come at a sharp cost: Local governments, restricted by California law from raising property taxes and borrowing funds, disproportionately rely on impact fees to pay for infrastructure like roads and sewer lines.

The justices waded deep into the legal weeds of the case during oral arguments today and seemed alternately frustrated and bemused as they grappled with whether El Dorado County's fee should be treated like the government were seizing a homeowner's property, a simple tax or something in between.

The legal saga began in 2016 when George Sheetz, a retired engineering consultant, built a small manufactured home on a vacant tract in the Sierra foothill city of Placerville. The county stuck Sheetz with the five-figure "impact fee" to fund local roads, highways and bridges. Sheetz paid up, but then sued.

With the backing of a conservative legal nonprofit, the Pacific Legal Foundation, he argued that, contrary to a four-decade old Supreme Court precedent, the county had failed to prove that the fee accurately reflected the wear and tear his small project would likely leave on local roads.

"Everyone loves good roads and schools and public infrastructure, so the government certainly has many tools at its disposal, including taxes to pay for those," said Paul Beard, Sheetz's attorney, in presenting his case before the court today. "What we're saying is that the government can't select a few... property owners who happen to need a permit at any given time — to select them to bear the burdens of paying for that public infrastructure."

The lawyer representing the county countered that officials had done the legally required due diligence to justify the fee. But even if they hadn't, they added, fees passed by local elected bodies that apply equally to all applicants — as opposed to one-off exactions levied on a specific development — don't warrant such close judicial scrutiny.

Requiring cities and counties to enact fees only after they've done a thorough, property-specific analysis of the impact a development would have on roads, for example, "would disrupt if not destroy their ability to fund capital intensive infrastructure necessary to serve new development, bringing such development to a grinding halt," said Aileen Marie McGrath, the attorney for El Dorado.

With so much potentially at stake, the case has drawn the attention of a wide array of competing interests. Building industry groups, conservative property right defenders and Yes In My Backyard advocates have all filed briefs pleading with the court to force local governments to clear a higher bar before charging for the right to build.

A decision against Sheetz would only encourage "unconstrained exactions on new development, further adding to the crushing costs of housing in California and other jurisdictions that refuse to require governments to show any proportionality between the amount of fees demanded and the alleged impacts of new development," the California Building Industry Association wrote in its brief from June.

City and county government groups, along with the governments of both the state of California and the United States, have come to El Dorado County's defense.

Many court watchers expect the court's conservative majority to side with the burdened property owner and require the cities and counties to work a bit harder to justify the fees they impose on new home construction. It remains unclear for now just how far such a ruling could go and whether it might place fresh limits on other widely used housing and revenue-raising policies.

"It seems kind of like a nightmare to figure out where the line should be drawn," Justice Amy Coney Barrett said.

A UNIQUELY CALIFORNIA CASE

Though today's debate took place in the ethereal clouds of abstract constitutional consideration, for California developers, the issue at hand is plenty concrete. As a group, they've spent a generation griping about impact fees.

As of 2015, the average impact fee on a single family home in California was more than quadruple what it was in other states, according to a survey. While such fees were found in a "minority" of jurisdictions outside of California, they were "virtually universal" here.

In a 2018 study from UC Berkeley's Terner Center, impact fees in a survey of California cities ranged from between 6% to 18% of the local median home price.

It's not especially surprising that California cities and counties have come to rely so heavily upon this particular form of financing.

During the high-growth decades of the 1950s and '60s, local governments could easily assume that new development would pay for its own added toll on publicly funded roads and pipes through increased property tax revenue. That changed in 1978, when voters passed Proposition 13, capping local property taxes and muzzling the ability of local governments to borrow or raise new taxes.

That's led to some frustration from El Dorado County and its defenders. If impact fees are intolerable, some have asked, what are the alternatives?

"Unless you want a dirt road and like, you know, bandits out there because we don't have a sheriff, we need to have some level of an assessment done," said Mark Neuburger, a legislative advocate for the California State Association of Counties. "It's unfortunate when it's a noticeable size of your project, but we live in a modern society and this is just part of the expense of paying for it."

Sheetz and his supporters contend that these fees aren't justified solely on meeting specific, related infrastructure costs and point to the wide variability in fees from one city to the next — even between neighboring jurisdictions.

As the city of Oakland noted in a recent report, its typical fee on large apartment projects comes out to $39,264 per unit. The neighboring city of Berkeley, sets the tab at $66,594. Across the Bay in San Francisco, the fee is $74,597.

At the more extreme end, the 2018 Terner Center study found that the city of Fremont imposed a single-family home impact fee of $157,000.

"You look at places like Fremont and they have these immaculate parks that are funded very significantly by impact fees," said David Garcia, the center's policy director. "There's a question whether it's reasonable to want to have top notch services and infrastructure, but for that to come on the backs of new residents."

A FEE OR "OUT-AND-OUT" EXTORTION

The origins of this particular debate date

SEE **HOUSING** PAGE 12



CalMatters

HOUSING: A dispute in El Dorado County may have huge consequences for local government budgets and housing markets.

HOA HOMEFRONT

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Reader Questions – For and Against Virtual Meetings – Who Decides?

KELLY G. RICHARDSON, ESQ. CCAL

Hi Kelly, I wanted to get further clarification regarding the new Civil Code Section 4926. My simple question, which relates to your recent Q&A article covering this topic is, does the board have sole discretion to decide that meetings will be solely telephonic/virtual? My feeling is that such a decision should be put to vote of the entire association, not just five board members who may have less than credible motivations for choosing this approach. I tried to find the answer in the text of the new code but was unable, so I hope you can shed light on this question. E.P., San Diego

Mr. Richardson: I am a member of a board that has passed a rule that requires all board members to participate in board meetings in person. This rule seems to conflict with CA Corp Code 7211(e)(6) which allows board members to participate in board meetings remotely. I have chosen not to participate in board meetings in person due to the harassing and bullying conduct exhibited toward me by several of the other board members. I have been denied telephonic communications, so I am now not able to participate in board meetings because of this board rule. I was told that in the legal hierarchy of statues and regulations, CA law has precedence over any board rules. Is the board rule regarding mandatory attendance at board meetings valid since it appears to conflict with the provisions of California Corporations Code 7211(e)(6)? E.F., Laguna Niguel

DEAR E.P. AND E.F.:

Your concerns illustrate the various angles of the good and bad sides of this subject precisely. Civil Code Section 4926 now allows boards to meet completely in virtual or telephonic mode, so long as certain notifications are announced to the members. It is the board's decision whether to meet in virtual or telephonic format, not the membership at large. It is possible that an association membership could vote to amend their bylaws to specifically ban virtual meetings. However, there are benefits of virtual participation to the members, which would be lost if meetings could only be physical.

Civil Code Section 4926 allows boards to meet purely virtually, and Section 4090(b) allows directors to participate in a meeting telephonically or virtually. These statutes are both permissive, and boards can decide whether to allow virtual or telephonic participation.

I think that a hybrid board meeting is the best option for all concerned, with the directors physically present. Directors are generally more engaged in the meeting when they are physically present, while allowing homeowners the option to attend in person or to watch the meeting on line. This requires a small expenditure by the HOA to obtain one of the many affordable wireless speaker devices – tablets, laptops, and cell phones do a horrible job of capturing the sound.

Most HOAs benefit from having written reasonable meeting rules fostering more mature meeting conduct and informing attendees about what to expect. Such rules could cover how the virtual element of the meeting is set up.

As communication with the members increases, communities typically become more cohesive and therefore governance is more stable. Hybrid board meetings are an excellent way of increasing communication with the membership and making the HOA more accessible to them.

Best regards, Kelly

Kelly G. Richardson, Esq. is a Fellow of the College of Community Association Lawyers and Partner of Richardson Ober LLP, a California law firm known for community association advice. Submit column questions to kelly@roattorneys.com. Past columns at www.HOAHomefront.com. All rights reserved®.

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OPINION LAUGHING MATTERS

Jack Neworth | Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Diabolical Donnie's Dictator Dream

Donald Trump loves buckets of KFC chicken and six packs of Diet Coke. He also loves dictators. His "fave fascist" is Rodrigo Duerte of the Philippines whose personal "Death Squads" murder drug dealers. Trump praises Duerte who replaced due process with machine gun massacres. (During 2016 and 2017 there were 7000 dealers killed in this fashion.)

What seems to impress Donald most is Duerte does some of the killing himself. One can almost hear Trump sigh enviously. This brings me to Trump's infamous "I could shoot someone on Fifth Avenue and I wouldn't lose a vote." Narcissist that he is, I thought made that bizarre remark to prove his popularity. I now think it was a sign of his dictator dream.

Actually, I've always thought the Trump "strongman face," like his Atlanta mug shot, is uncannily similar to the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. (Thus occasionally I refer to Trump as "Donito.")

Trump's worshiping of authoritarians was first revealed to me in December of 2015 not long after he announced his candidacy. He excitedly phoned the MSNBC show "Morning Joe" and exclaimed, "The world's most powerful leader, Putin, called me a "genius!" (What Putin said was "Yarkii" meaning "brilliant" but not in the intellectual sense but more like "Trump is a shiny object.")

Joe Scarborough responded, "You do know Donald that Putin kills journalists and democracy seeking protesters." Like a pouting child, Donito remained silent before feebly countering, "Yeah, well we kill people too!"

Clearly Putin is Trump's hero whereas Trump is Putin's puppet. At the 2018 Helsinki Summit Trump actually said he trusted Putin more than his own intelligence advisors. (The next day Trump said he was misinterpreted.)

2018 was also the 100 year anniversary of the end of WWI for which there was an auspicious event attended by world leaders. Trump anxiously scoured the room for his pal Putin who finally entered and gave him a modest smile. Donito used his thumb and baby finger simulating holding a phone and mouthed, "Call me later." Putin barely nodded.

Part of the WWI tribute to the American soldiers who died in France was a visit to the sacred Aisne-Marne cemetery but Trump canceled his visit. Some speculated it was because rain would ruin his artfully coiffed hairdo that Trump designs to cover his bald spots, but which remind me of cotton candy. Instead, he sent his Chief of Staff General John Kelly.

Recently Kelly finally revealed what he thinks of Trump. "A person who didn't want to be seen in the presence of military amputees; a person who demonstrated contempt for a Gold Star family; and a person who considers our heroes who gave their lives in WWI as 'losers' and suckers.' All I can say is God help us." (Trump countered by calling Kelly "a man with a small brain.")

Among the many rogue dictators Trump envies is N. Korea's Kim-Jong-Un about whom he said, "Imagine, he was only 28 when he killed his uncle and took over the whole country!" At first Trump called him "little Kim" and "rocket man" referencing N. Korea's failed rockets launches. Trump later went weird, "But he wrote me beautiful letters and we fell in love." (Makes me want to gag.)

The two met in N. Korea but Trump was so completely unprepared he didn't even bring up the expansion of Kim's long range missiles. Side by side, the two are comically different in height but both have bizarro hair cuts. And when they turned their backs the pair have matching big bottoms.

Another rogue dictator who regularly receives Trump kudos is Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey who fuels corruption, abuse and ethnic cleansing. (No wonder Trump likes him.) However Trump goes hot and cold on Chinese President Xi Jinping. He actually suggested he won him over with a huge piece of chocolate cake at the White House, "The most delicious cake I've ever tasted," Trump exclaimed.

Trump has said, "I consider him a friend. He's a strong tough guy and I call him King." "But I'm not King, I'm president," Xi replied. Trump said, "No, you're president for life therefore you're King." (Which Trump says wouldn't be a bad idea for the U.S., that is, as long as he was the king.)

Disturbingly, the world is becoming more authoritarian by the minute and if Trump is re-elected I fear we can wave goodbye to democracy. Then again, dictators often meet a brutal end. Mussolini and his wife were killed. And two days before Hitler and his wife Eva Braun, who were married only for a day, committed suicide. (Talk about a short honeymoon.)

The ultimate humiliation, in the town square Mussolini's body was hung upside down. In reading that I immediately wondered if Trump were ever hung upside down would his artfully coiffed hair cover his bald spots.

Jack is at: jackdailypress@aol.com

Eric Uller at Police Activities League (PAL) sexually abused hundreds of children in the late 1980s – early 2000s

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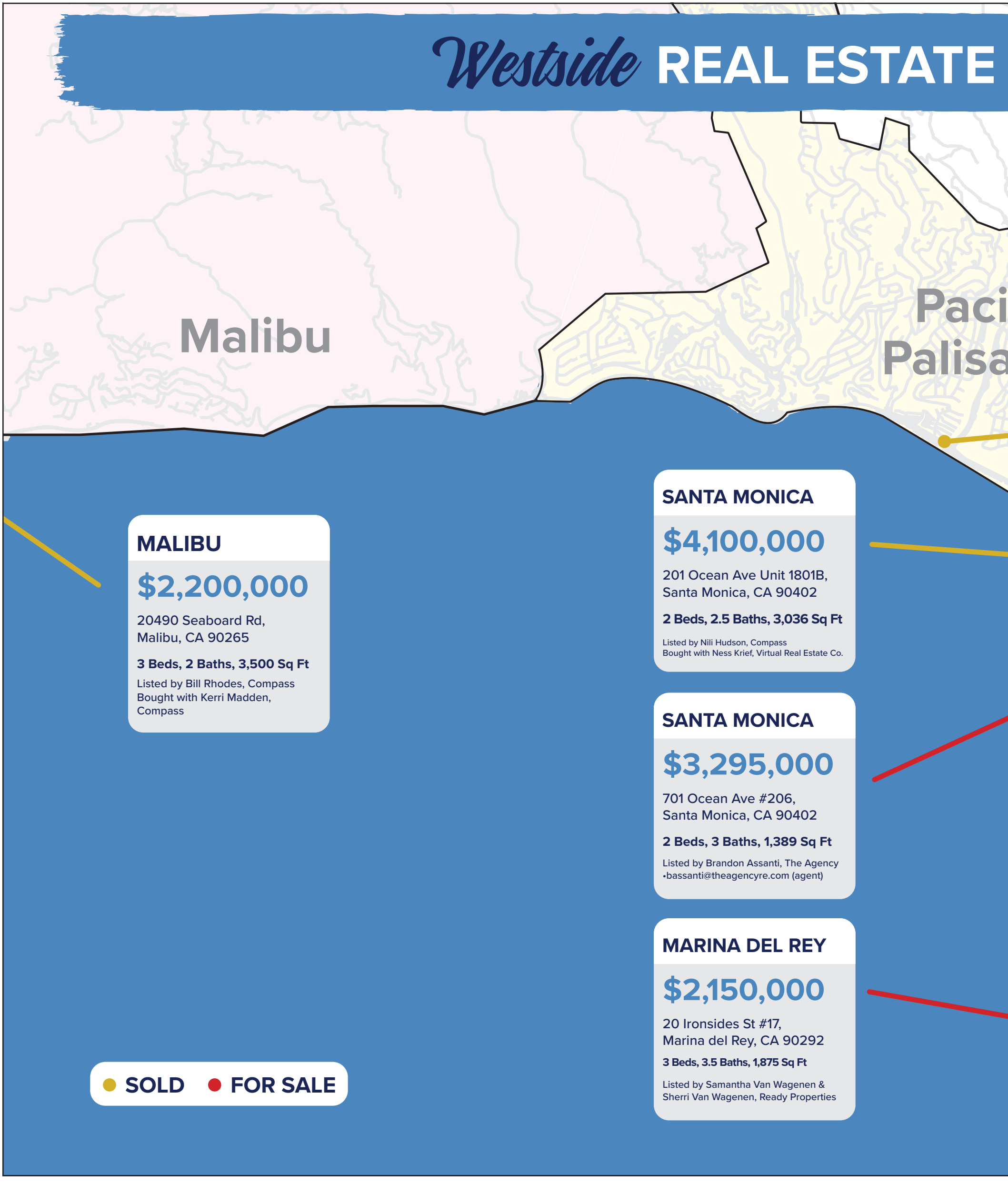
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Bought with Kerri Madden, Compass

SANTA MONICA

$4,100,000

201 Ocean Ave Unit 1801B,
Santa Monica, CA 90402

2 Beds, 2.5 Baths, 3,036 Sq Ft

Listed by Nili Hudson, Compass
Bought with Ness Krief, Virtual Real Estate Co.

SANTA MONICA

$3,295,000

701 Ocean Ave #206,
Santa Monica, CA 90402

2 Beds, 3 Baths, 1,389 Sq Ft

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•bassanti@theagencyre.com (agent)

MARINA DEL REY

$2,150,000

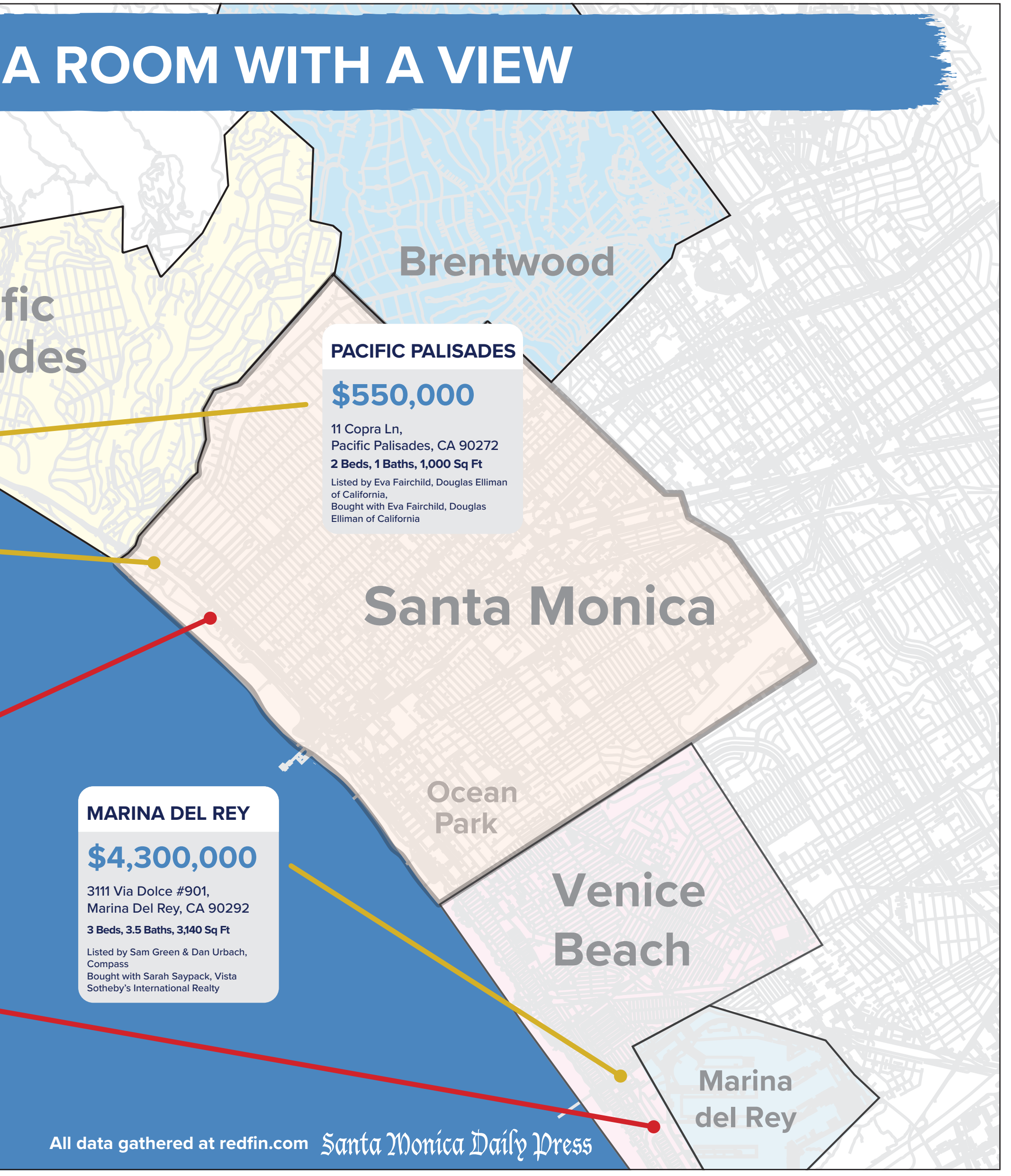
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Newsom OK'd a minimum wage increase for health care workers. Now he wants to delay it



Photo by Miguel Gutierrez Jr., CalMatters

WAGE: Kaiser Permanente employees on strike on Oct. 4, 2023. The workers held a demonstration in front of the Kaiser Permanente South Sacramento location.

ANA B. IBARRA
Special to the Daily Press

California health care workers banking on a state-ordered minimum wage increase later this year might have to wait a little longer.

Because of the state's $38 billion projected budget deficit, Gov. Gavin Newsom on Wednesday said he is seeking changes to a law he signed just three months ago that set the health care industry on a path to a $25 minimum wage.

The first pay increases were expected to take effect in June. It's unclear how long the proposed changes could push back that schedule. Newsom wants the wage increases to take place when the state's fiscal outlook is healthy.

He said he signed the law, Senate Bill 525, in October because he "had a commitment on that trigger" from proponents of the law, meaning that the bill's backers had agreed to tie the wage increase to the state's budget outlook. His administration did not disclose that agreement when he signed the law.

Erin Mellon, a spokesperson for the governor's office, said the administration publicly discussed the possibility of clean-up legislation soon after Newsom signed the law. She pointed to a Los Angeles Times article that published three weeks after Newsom signed the law in which another spokesperson said the administration was working on "accompanying legislation to account for state budget conditions and revenues."

Newsom included his request for a delay in the state budget proposal he released Wednesday. He said he is working with legislators and the law's proponents to craft changes that will be presented in the form of a new bill later this month. His budget proposal said he also wants the Legislature to clarify whether state health workers are exempt from the law.

SEE **WAGE** PAGE 12

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RENT

FROM PAGE 1

centers. Outside of Santa Monica, rent prices fell in 2023 in the City of Los Angeles, Long Beach, Burbank, Pasadena, West Hollywood, Huntington Beach and Mission Viejo. Santa Monica had the second-largest dip in median prices, with the 4.2% mark only bested by Long Beach's 4.3%. Out of the 24 listed cities, Long Beach is now the second-cheapest place to rent a 1-bedroom or 2-bedroom, with the cheapest being Pomona ($1,471 for 1-bed, $1,857 for 2-bed).

Despite the drop, Santa Monica narrowly missed the top five of listed cities in highest median rent price. For both a 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom, Santa Monica was the sixth-most expensive, topped by Lake Forest ($2,725 for 1-bed, $3,254 for 2-bed), Laguna Niguel, Newport Beach, Aliso Viejo and Irvine.

Out of the 24 listed cities, most fell in median rent price during December, with the only growth seen in Long Beach (1.3%), Huntington Beach (0.9%), Anaheim (0.4%), Orange (0.4%) and Fullerton (0.1%).



Scott Snowden

RENT: Prices dropped last year.

thomas@smdp.com

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Petition to Admin Estate

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: Deborah R. Castleman CASE NUMBER: 24STPB00065 To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both of Deborah R. Castleman. A Petition for Probate has been filed by Lindsey Cano in the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles-Stanley Mosk Courthouse. The Petition for Probate requests Lindsey Cano be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. The Petition requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court. The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows: Date: Feb 2, 2024 Time: 8:30 a.m Dept. 9 Room - Address of Court: l Stanley Mosk Courthouse 111 N. Hill St Los Angeles, CA 90012 If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. Attorney or Party without Attorney: Charles M. Palmer SBN 296375 Clovis Law Group, LLP 725 Pollasky Ave, Suite 101 Clovis, CA 93612 01/05/24, 01/12/24, 01/19/24

HOURS MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00am - 5:00pm
LOCATION 1640 5th Street, Suite 218, Santa Monica, CA 90401



FRIDAY | JANUARY 12

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. FREEDOM CELEBRATION
Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council Presents: 2024 MLK Freedom Celebration "How to Get to Healing" on Friday, January 12th, 2024 from 8:30am-9:30am at Mt. Olive Lutheran. Mt Olive Lutheran Church, 1343 Ocean Park Boulevard. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/martin-luther-king-jr-freedom-celebration-tickets-767127207127

PAINT NITE: THE ORIGINAL PAINT AND SIP PARTY
Inspire 2024 with the season painting by the poolside! Bring your people or yourself and take a journey through the forest. The supplies are included. Barbianca at Hotel MDR serves the best wine and a full bar menu. Sadly, that is not included. This is an outdoor event and though there will be heaters, bring a jacket for that extra layer of warmth. Hotel MdR 13480 Maxella Avenue Marina Del Rey. 7 - 8:30 p.m. $42. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/paint-nite-the-original-paint-and-sip-party-tickets-783025128237

WOMEN OF SPACE SERIES: MORE ASTRONOMERS!
There is a long list of distinguished (and often underappreciated) women who have made critical contributions to astronomical research and significant advances in the fields of astronomy and space exploration. In a second installment of this series, Lecturer Sarah Vincent will shine a light on more of these often-hidden figures. 8 - 9 p.m. https://www.smc.edu/community/planetarium/

SATURDAY | JANUARY 13

RUMMAGE SALE
Join Santa Monica Elks Lodge for their two day multi family Rummage sale extravaganza! Are you looking for some fashion finds, unique home decor, or a vast collection of books, DVDs and vintage magazines we have treasures galore. They will be in-door so the parking lot will have plenty of room for parking. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Santa Monica Elks Lodge, 1040 Pico Blvd.

SANTA MONICA SYMPHONY: ANNUAL MLK HOLIDAY CONCERT
In partnership with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Westside Coalition, the Santa Monica Symphony commemorates the legacy of Dr. King. SGI-USA World Peace Ikeda Auditorium, 525 Wilshire Boulevard 3 - 5:30 p.m. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/santa-monica-symphony-annual-mlk-holiday-concert-tickets-681932326947

GARDEN OPEN HOUSE AND MLK DAY OF SERVICE
Join organizers at the oldest Community Garden as someone simply visiting and enjoying a cup of coffee, or put on your work gloves and join us in a Volunteer Day of Service in Honor of Dr. MLK,Jr. They are also accepting donations for the SMMSD Weekend Bag Program (accepting: granola bars, instant oatmeal and individual serving packets of trail mix.) To register to volunteer contact Isabel.Filson@santamonica.gov. Hope to see you at the Gardens to start the new year.
Sponsored by City of Santa Monica Community Gardens and California Climate Action Corps. 9 - 11 a.m. Main Street Community Garden, 2318 Main Street.

PARENTING WORKSHOP: FAMILIES LEARN & PLAY
Discover successful parenting approaches in ways to communicate, handle emotions and more in a casual and fun setting with Noelle Fletcher, LMFT. For parents/caretakers with their children, ages 18 months to 4 years old. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

SUNDAY | JANUARY 14

RUMMAGE SALE
Join Santa Monica Elks Lodge for their two day multi family Rummage sale extravaganza! Are you looking for some fashion finds, unique home decor, or a vast collection of books, DVDs and vintage magazines we have treasures galore. They will be in-door so the parking lot will have plenty of room for parking. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Santa Monica Elks Lodge, 1040 Pico Blvd.

PLANT YOUR OWN GROWBAG AT TESSAGROW'S GARDENING WORKSHOP'S (AGES 4-9)
Get hands-on and plant a growbag with seeds, seedlings and a butterfly while discovering the vital role of insects in our food and more. Merrihew's Sunset Gardens, 1526 Ocean Park Boulevard. $80.
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/plant-your-own-growbag-at-tessagrows-gardening-workshops-ages-4-9-tickets-718061339797

MONDAY | JANUARY 15

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
Join organizers for one of Southern California's largest birthday celebrations for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., honoring his memory and work to ensure equality and civil rights for all people. This year is the event's 39th anniversary and embraces the theme "Stop the Hate, Start the Healing." The multiethnic interfaith program includes inspirational readings, music, and education awards presentations. The event is presented by The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Westside Coalition and sponsored by the SMC Associates, Santa Monica College, SGI-USA, RAND Corporation, and Santa Monica Bay Area Human Relations Council, as well as other organizations and individuals. https://www.mlkjrwestside.org. Soka Gakkai International (SGI) Auditorium 525 Wilshire, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

POP QUIZ TEEN TRIVIA NIGHT
Team up with groups of up to 6 people to compete for gift certificates and prizes. Questions range from pop culture to geography to the natural world... and everything in between. The Daily Pint, 2310 Pico Blvd, 7 - 9 p.m.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
City Hall, 1685 Main Street, 7 p.m. Agenda available online at https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Boards-Commissions/Architectural-Review-Board/

TUESDAY | JANUARY 16

TRAVELING STORYTIME
This engaging & fun weekly series of stories, songs and rhymes travels to different library locations. Limited space; free tickets available at 10:15 a.m. For ages 2-5. Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Avenue, 10:30 - 11 a.m.

CHURCH

FROM PAGE 2

neighborhoods during the 2023 holiday season, providing over 50 Christmas trees and thousands of presents to low-income residents.

"Hoopbus is humbled by the opportunity to be a part of the effort to revitalize the First Baptist Church of Venice, and this historic corner of the Oakwood community," Hoopbus Executive Director Dan Moroni said. "We strive to embody the values of openness and creativity found in the Oakwood community and hope to strengthen our local bonds and inspire our future (generations)."

Barauskas commended Hoopbus' efforts in the project, stating that there has been "great synergy from the start" of the partnership and that the organization is a boon for fundraising, since the Corporation cannot use traditional housing funding for the functionally different revitalization project.

"They want to help young people (as well as) connect communities," Barauskas said. "Connecting community is something that is really foundational to us, and they're also willing to reach out to other fundraising partners that we currently don't have access to. I think that's really complementary to the work we want to do."

Another vital part of project planning is the intention to convert the church's adjacent parking lots into a 100% affordable housing development. The housing arm of the project is also in the "early design stages," Barauskas said, figuring out how much housing can be provided, but added that the housing will most likely be geared towards low-income families.

thomas@smdp.com

WAGE

FROM PAGE 10

CALIFORNIA MINIMUM WAGE INCREASES

The law was one of two bills Newsom signed last fall raising the minimum wage for certain workers in specific industries. A separate law that raises the minimum wage for fast-food workers to $20 an hour starting in April is moving forward. The California minimum wage for other workers is $16 this year.

Close to 500,000 California health care workers are expected to see pay increases under the minimum wage law for their industry once it goes into effect.

The bill came together late in the legislative year after SEIU, the law sponsor, and a group of health care employers, including the California Hospital Association, brokered a deal under which both sides supported the wage increase. Newsom signed it without a clear cost estimate.

Newsom's Department of Finance released a price estimate in November, projecting it would cost the state approximately $4 billion in 2024-25, with $2 billion coming out of the state general fund.

SEIU declined an interview after Newsom's budget remarks. It released a statement that said it would continue working with the administration and the Legislature.

LAWMAKERS ANTICIPATED BUDGET DEFICIT

Newsom's signature on the bill surprised some lawmakers because they anticipated a steep deficit.

"While we didn't know what the deficit was at the time, I, at least, was assuming that the news was going to be not good and I couldn't understand why we would be so deliberately adding to our own overhead," said Sen. Roger Niello, a Fair Oaks Republican who sits as vice chair of the Senate budget and fiscal review committee

The health worker pay law aims to create more sustainable incomes as a way to retain and attract workers in a field that for years now has been dealing with serious staff shortages. The law would cost the state because it applies to workers at state-owned facilities and because the state would likely have to raise Medi-Cal rates paid to providers to offset some of their increased costs associated with the wage hikes.

Before securing a statewide boost in pay, SEIU California and its affiliate chapters pushed to increase wages for health workers at the local level through city ordinances and ballot measures. In 2022, the union secured its first local win in the city of Inglewood, where health workers at private health facilities qualified for a new floor wage of $25 that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2023.

Supported by the California Health Care Foundation (CHCF), which works to ensure that people have access to the care they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford. Visit www.chcf.org to learn more.

This article was originally published by CalMatters.



HOUSING

FROM PAGE 5

back to another legal dispute brought by Californians trying to build a new house.

In the early 1980s, James and Marilyn Nollan, a Ventura County couple, decided to convert their coastal bungalow into a two-story home. The California Coastal Commission, which regulates land use along the state's coastline, issued a construction permit, but only on the condition that the couple give up a slice of their property to allow for a public walkway to the beach.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Coastal Commission had overstepped. If the government wants to take someone's private property in exchange for granting them a land-use permit, there has to be some obvious connection between the property being seized (in this case, a slice of land for a walking path) and the government's purpose in restricting development in the first place (capping a building for the preservation of ocean views), the court held. Because there was no "essential nexus" between the two in this case, Justice Antonin Scalia wrote in his majority opinion, taking the Nollans' property was "not a valid regulation of land use," but amounted to "an out-and-out plan of extortion."

In subsequent rulings, the Supreme Court laid out further limits on this kind of public-sector "extortion." In the 1990s, the court found that the cost of getting a permit also has to be roughly proportionate to the impact a development is likely to have on the public. In 2013, the court ruled that these "nexus" and "proportionality" standards don't just apply to the taking of physical property, but monetary fees made in lieu of giving up land, too.

Sheetz and his legal supporters argue that it's time for the court to apply the "nexus" and "proportionality" rules to El Dorado — and to local impact fees across the country.

THE CALIFORNIA EXEMPTION

In response, El Dorado County and its cavalcade of legal allies put up a double-barreled defense.

First, California courts, along with those in many other blue states, have carved out a major exception to the Supreme Court's rules. Fees slapped on individuals on an ad hoc basis — by say, by the Coastal Commission in adjudicating a single permit — might lack transparency, political accountability and be ripe for abuse. But fee schedules — voted upon by city councils or county boards of supervisors and that apply to all applicants across the board — don't deserve such special treatment, the state's courts have found.

The logic for that distinction, in part, comes down to political accountability.

"A city council that charged extortionate fees for all property development, unjustifiable by mitigation needs, would likely face widespread and well-financed opposition at the next election," the California Court of Appeal noted when it ruled against Sheetz in 2022.

The fee that El Dorado County levied on Sheetz was passed as part of a general road and highway funding program. Sheetz's specific fee was based on the size and location of his single family project, as listed on a menu of such fees on the county's website.

In bringing the case, Sheetz' legal team asked the U.S. Supreme Court to do away with this "California's judicially-created exemption." Some members of the court's conservative majority appeared ready to do exactly that.

"There's just no categorical exemption from legislative enactments — what would be wrong with that holding today?" said Justice Neil Gorsuch.

Treating such a set of fees as comparable to the seizing of an individual's private property could open a whole can of constitutional worms, said UC Davis law professor Chris Elmendorf.

"Why is a fee attached to a development any different from any other kind of tax? No one has a good explanation for that," he said. He also pointed to local inclusionary zoning rules, in which cities permit new housing projects in exchange for a developer making a certain share of the units affordable, as another policy that could find itself on the chopping block if Sheetz succeeds at the Supreme Court.

Another local policy that could find itself ensnared in a ruling for Sheetz: Requirements that large developments set aside space for public art or pay a fee if they don't.

Many of the justices, especially the court's three-member liberal minority, seemed to have a hard time identifying a distinction between across-the-board impact fees and other types of taxation that don't require a court's fine-toothed once-over.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor likened El Dorado County's impact fee system to a set of user fees, building permits or even a road toll.

"If you're going to start saying, as you did, that you're reserving the right to say that a toll could be an unconstitutional taking, I bet New York City is going to be sued very soon on that on that toll to come down into Lower Manhattan," Sotomayor, who was born in the Bronx, told Sheetz's counsel. "At what point do we stop interfering?"

ALREADY COMPLYING

If the court doesn't buy that particular argument, the county put up a second one: It is already abiding by the court's prior rulings.

A state law, known as the Mitigation Fee Act from 1987, requires local governments to justify the fees that they impose with detailed studies that show a connection between the fee levied on a new development and the financial impact that development is likely to impose on local infrastructure.

In conducting those analyses, they argue, California counties are already complying with the Supreme Court's standards.

For Sheetz's proponents, those "nexus studies" are a paltry substitute for heightened judicial scrutiny.

These studies often amount to "high-level black boxes" that can justify a wide range of potential charges, said the Terner Center's Garcia. In California, state courts have historically been reluctant to second-guess those analyses.

If the high court does ultimately decide that a more rigorous, project-by-project analysis is required, the implications could be dramatic — and not in the way that plaintiffs either imagine or hope, warned Jennifer Henning, a lawyer with the California State Association of Counties.

"I don't think it's going to result in zero fees," she said of a possible Sheetz victory.

What it would almost certainly do is "really slow down and make more expensive the process of pulling permits and doing other kinds of development projects," she said. "We're just concerned, particularly in the middle of a housing crisis."

Even Trump-appointed Justice Brett Kavanaugh worried about the practical workability of that requirement in his back-and-forth with Beard, Sheetz's lawyer.

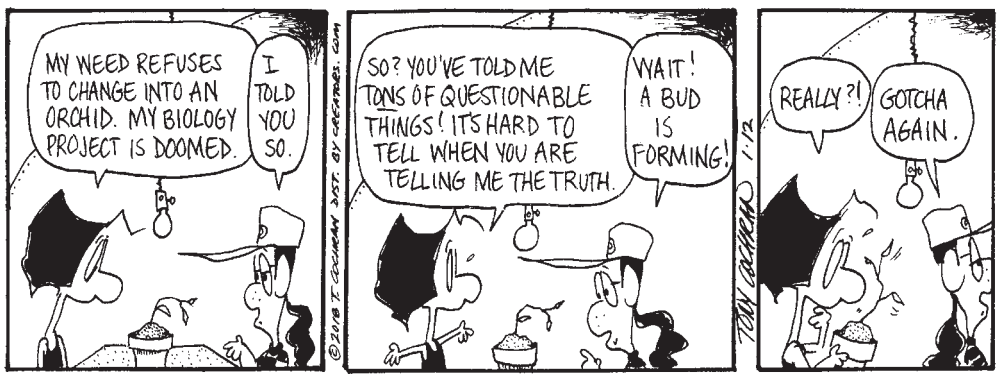
"Your way is going to be more time consuming (and) administratively burdensome," he said.

"It very well may be," said Beard. "But this is a constitutional standard."

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



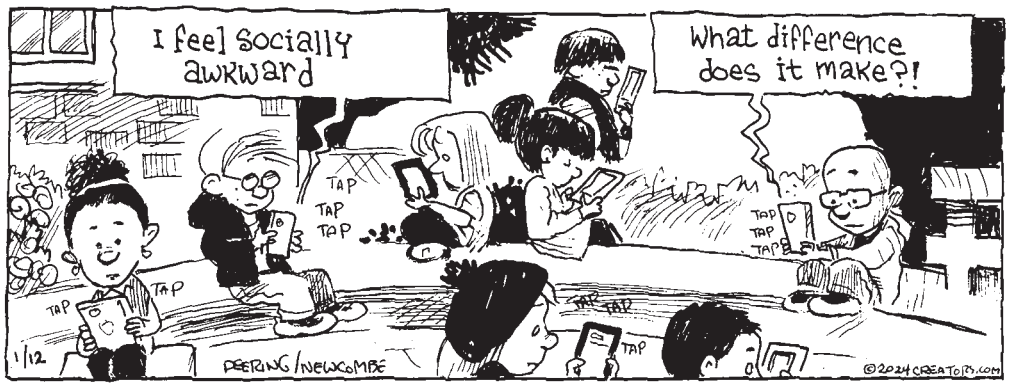
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"I NEVER GET THE CAN WITH THE GENIE."

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.

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Polar studies

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

Amundsen	Fish	Kelp	Poles
ANARE	Flight	Krill	Prohibitions
Animals	Floes	LARC	Ross Sea
Aurora	Frazil	LIDAR	Runway
Base	Glacier	Maps	Ship
Bays	Grey	News	Skua
Biology	Huskies	Nilas	Sled
Blow	Huts	Ozone	Snow
Brash	Icebergs	Penguin	Tourism
Fast	Igloos	Permit	Video
Fins	Indescribable	Petrel	Yachts

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan.12)

Your theme: love in abundance. You'll receive and give adoration, lifting those in your circle and wonderful togetherness will be constant source of fulfillment. More highlights: You'll be an innovator at work. A bonus will give you financial ease. New habits help you build your body and mind, and you will compete in some way too. Gemini and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 20, 1, 15 and 17.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Someone will give you a dose of honesty, but it's only a dollop. This is just a test to see how well you're listening. By listening well enough, you can put together the whole truth of a picture.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). It is said "there are no stupid questions," but there are certainly some more relevant than others. You'll sense the question that is on people's minds, and you'll be bold enough to ask on behalf of many.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You've always wanted to move in exciting circles, and now your own inner circle is the most riveting place to be. You may even decide to let someone new into it, which will help you understand just how interesting things have gotten.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There are no clean endings to this adventure — it's cliffhangers all the way. That's what leads you to the next chapter, then the next book. What's coming is not quite new. Think of it as a spin-off.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You'll remember the time before you knew someone. In some ways you were the same back then, but of course every relationship comes with a set of alterations for both parties — a subject worth meditating on today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll do things the smart way instead of the hard way because you're willing to step back and learn about the whole picture and its interrelating parts. Today is less about working smarter and more about being smarter. You'll gather more information.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Successful outcomes spring from a chill attitude. There's a tranquil space within you, and it will be much easier after you find a tranquil space in your environment. Either clear or create a space of your own or go exploring to find one.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You feel you have a duty, though you may not agree with other people's notion of what it is. The perfect offering lives at the intersection of what you owe, what is easy for you to give, and what will actually help.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're able to be generous with those who need you because you invest your energy well. Sometimes that means declining frivolous asks and avoiding those who want you to do their dirty work.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Romantic love is more often a roller coaster than an elevator. Either way, it makes you appreciate the steady flow and controllable pacing of other kinds of love. For instance, today, platonic love will be a walk in the park.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). With people who share your humor, the tedious parts of life are opportunities for bonding. The problems can be worked through more easily. You can get a lot accomplished with serious people, but it's not as fun.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The world is full of potential delights, though you won't know which ones will be specifically pleasing to you until you sample a variety. After all, nothing is inherently delightful. Pleasure is a response, not design.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

W	A	R	E	■	O	C	C	A	M	■	S	O	L	D
E	L	E	C	■	P	R	A	D	A	■	Q	U	A	D
L	I	M	O	■	P	A	N	A	M	■	U	Z	I	S
S	T	I	N	G	O	P	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	■
H	O	T	M	E	S	S	■	■	B	E	D	■	■	■
■	■	■	A	T	E	■	G	R	I	N	■	F	L	U
E	M	O	J	I	■	B	L	U	R	■	C	O	U	P
M	A	D	O	N	N	A	A	N	D	C	H	I	L	D
U	S	E	R	■	E	R	R	S	■	H	E	L	L	O
S	T	S	■	T	R	E	E	■	L	E	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	F	A	D	■	■	T	O	E	S	H	O	E
■	P	R	I	N	C	E	C	H	A	R	M	I	N	G
D	I	A	Z	■	R	U	L	E	D	■	O	T	R	A
A	N	T	Z	■	E	R	A	S	E	■	V	I	E	D
S	T	A	Y	■	D	O	M	E	D	■	E	T	D	S

Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

5	6	7	4	1	8	9	3	2
9	3	4	5	2	7	6	1	8
1	2	8	6	3	9	4	7	5
6	9	1	7	4	5	8	2	3
4	7	2	3	8	1	5	6	9
3	8	5	9	6	2	1	4	7
2	4	6	8	5	3	7	9	1
7	5	3	1	9	4	2	8	6
8	1	9	2	7	6	3	5	4

	4		7			3		2
	5			8	2		9	
	9		3					7
4				9		1		6
		9		4		5		
5		6		3				9
9					8		6	
	6		9	2			7	
2		7			3		1	

Newsday Crossword

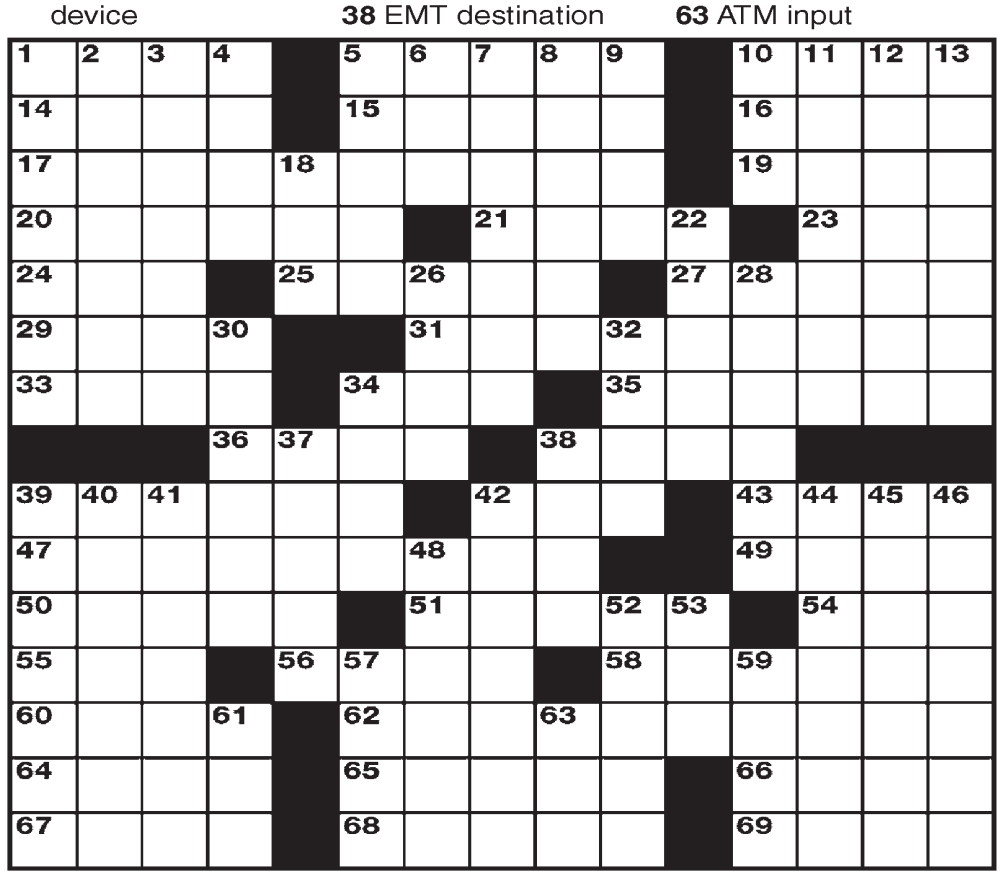
NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION by Kevin Christian
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 *Absolutamente!*
5 Hanukkah croquette
10 Former *Idol* judge DioGuardi
14 Action icon from Hong Kong
15 Cosmologist Hubble
16 Overdo, in a way
17 '50s marionette idol
19 Jamaica neighbor
20 Withdraw
21 Break (off)
23 CAT kin
24 Shortest sign
25 Gobs of
27 Prattled
29 Sale advisory
31 11-season ABC sitcom
33 Repetitive routine
34 Shivery sound
35 Least friendly
36 Mao colleague
38 Adhere to
39 Antebellum
42 What many tablets run on
43 European chain
47 21-year *20/20* host
49 Wellness fluids
50 Valuable bar
51 Shelter org.
54 Hogwarts nickname
55 Part of SOP
56 Interstate H1's locale
58 Pull back a parka part from
60 Bring aboard
62 Disney Channel's Lizzie McGuire
64 Whiny teens
65 DVD category
66 Head and Shoulders rival
67 Sparrow of cinema
68 Penchants
69 More than a little

DOWN

1 Top student
2 "Fingers crossed"
3 Followed through
4 Subcontinental prefix
5 Caused
6 Noisy distraction
7 Poorly rated
8 Stevenson plot device
9 Singer from Donegal
10 Big seller of buckets
11 All Bryn Mawr grads
12 Scotch concoctions
13 Opposing
18 Charlton's *Ten Commandments* adversary
22 Perón in *Evita*
26 Shortened preposition
28 German gymwear brand
30 Defiant comeback
32 Diner display
34 Bklyn. or Manhattan
37 "Couldn't help it!"
38 EMT destination
39 Scammed with spam, say
40 Program's length
41 Wonton alternative
42 Sugar regulator
44 Roulette bet
45 Mistake seeker
46 Beach bug
48 Female surfer
52 Scientific breakthroughs
53 Some unspecified
57 Literary whaler
59 Alternate puzzle title
61 Precognitive skill
63 ATM input



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