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Downtown takes a swipe at soliciting DCP feedback

Their office is only minutes from the world famous Santa Monica Beach, but Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. is capitalizing on its proximity to Silicon Beach to collect people's opinions on the district's future.

In a tech-savvy effort to connect with its community, DTSM, Inc. has engineered and introduced its own online survey platform CitySwipe (www.dtsmcityswipe.com). Borrowing the interactive swipe tool immortalized in dating apps such as Tinder and Bumble, CitySwipe has users blaze through a quick-fire, image-driven questionnaire to help define consensus visions for Downtown Santa Monica.

The current inaugural 38-question survey has been designed to mine public opinion on key issues raised in the Downtown Community Plan (DCP), a 15-year blueprint for how land is used in the bustling city center. The City of Santa Monica is currently engaged in the creation of the DCP, with City Council approval coming sometime after the November election. To learn more about the plan visit www.downtownsmplan.org.

After identifying the subject's whereabouts (DTSM, Santa Monica, L.A. County, visitor) and preferred transportation method to DTSM (walking, cycling, driving, Metro) the CitySwipe interface presents a series of visual slides on city-planning topics such as public parking, public art installations, and new development preferences. The prompts are simple, and like dating apps, driven by imagery that



encourages impulse "like" or "dislike" decisions.

"It's exciting to have developed a new way to interact with our district," said Mackenzie Carter, DTSM's director of marketing and communication. "People are busy and their inboxes are full! We had a list of questions and needed to ask them in a way that was fast, easy and fun - unlike regular surveys. Each time we gathered to vet

the questions, we'd swipe our hands through the air - yes, next question (swipe), no, next question - and a light bulb went on."

Launched in June, CitySwipe has been promoted through e-blasts; community meetings at residential buildings, traditional office complexes and co-working spaces; and social media



Everyone's downtown.sm

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GoSaMo offers advice for the traffic averse

Marketing campaign focuses on exciting, educating, equipping people to use public transit

Santa Monica is in the midst of a multi-month marketing campaign to get people out of their cars and try alternative forms of transportation as part of the City's strategic goal to enhance mobility, reduce congestion, and combat climate change.

Known as GoSaMo, the effort began with the COAST open-streets event in June and promotes mobility options including the Big Blue Bus, Breeze Bike Share, ZipCar and pedestrian improvements citywide.

The flagship pedestrian addition is the newly opened Colorado Esplanade, an expanded walkway connecting Expo riders to the Santa Monica Pier and embedded in that new road are several "pedestrian scrambles" that allow walkers to cross in any direction when they have the right-of-way.

"It was our goal to make integration between our existing transportation networks seamless with the arrival of Expo," said Mayor Tony Vazquez when GoSaMo launched. "To really address mobility, it had to be about so much more than Expo. We want to make Santa Monica the leading example of pedestrian and transit-oriented lifestyles in Southern California."

Locals have seen elements of the marketing campaign throughout the city for months but the program also offers practical advice on reducing car trips utilizing an "APP it, MAP it and TAP it" slogan.

"It was our goal to make integration between our existing transportation networks seamless with the arrival of Expo,"

Tony Vazquez
SANTA MONICA MAYOR

GoSaMo is recommending the use of several apps to facilitate transit planning

Google Maps

Google your way around Santa Monica and Los Angeles with easy-to-get transit directions for bus, train, subway, bike, and travel on foot.

Transit App

Enjoy travel flexibility with a user-friendly platform for planning routes, checking current departure times for nearby transit, and scoping out Breeze availability (Internet not needed for some features).

GoLA

Choose between "sooner, cheaper, greener" travel options when planning your route and quickly zero in on your optimal itinerary based on your preferences.

TripGo

Connect personal and public transportation options, check fares, and get live service alerts to craft a perfectly timed route, taking you from car, taxi, or bike to bus, metro, or rail.

Moovit

A real-time app that helps you ride public transit smarter. It provides the smoothest possible route in Santa Monica, and 850-plus cities worldwide.

Social Bicycles

To make it a breeze (pun intended!), use Social Bicycles to manage your account and find, reserve, ride, and return Breeze Bikes with ease.

ZipCar

Reserve wheels when you want them with hourly and daily options (gas and insurance included).

NextBus

Through NextBus, Big Blue Bus and Metro offer riders real-time bus arrival predictions and bus vehicle locations through its easy-to-use apps.

Citymapper

Plan your trip from A to B across all mobility modes (subway, bus, rail, ferry, bike/car sharing, and Uber).

Mapping a route ahead of time is one way to maximize efficiency and GoSaMo has produced some Santa Monica specific maps that highlight destinations within a five-minute walk, bike or bus ride from the Santa Monica Expo Stops. The maps are available online at www.smgov.net/gosamo.

GoSaMo's final recommendation is to get a TAP card and load it with free money.

The TAP card is a single credit-card-sized key that allows users to pay for any public transit system in the greater Los Angeles area. It can hold up to four specific passes (for example a 30-day Metro pass and three 13-ride BBB passes) and cash.

For a limited time, local officials are incentivizing the use of TAP cards with a Buy One, Get One Free promotion.

For the duration of the promotion, if you purchase a TAP card from BBB, you'll receive a second pass for free. In addition, if you add up to \$20 in cash to the card, the City matches that amount.

The promotion is only available on purchases added to a TAP card. Cards can be purchased at Metro Stations, Santa Monica City Hall (1685 Main St.), Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce (1234 Sixth St.), Blue: The Transit Store (1444 Fourth St.), and Santa Monica's Visitor Centers (Main Street, Santa Monica Pier, Third Street Promenade, and Palisades Park), and other locations.

Register your card at taptogo.net and enjoy benefits like Balance Protection and auto-loading.

As an added bonus, the City is offering limited-edition TAP cards featuring commemorative art by three local artists. The special edition cards are available at City Hall or the Transit Store.

Local voters to confront crowded November ballot

Tax increase, slow-growth measure raise stakes

It's election season in Santa Monica and while the national stage features a historic Presidential race, the local ballot will have as much, if not more, impact on local businesses.

Races for City Council (four seats), Rent Control Board (two seats) School Board (three seats) and College Board (three seats) are all expected to be contested this year, some more than others. While many incumbents have filed for reelection, the field is already expanding with more than a dozen individuals requesting paperwork to run for City Council.

For election information, including candidate videos, statements and analysis, visit www.smvote.org.

The November election will include multiple ballot measures. Most cover tax increases and one is specific to local development.

City Hall is asking voters to approve an increased transaction and use tax, functionally identical to a sales tax increase, to fund affordable housing.

The measure proposes a hike of half a percent and would bring the total sales tax to 10 percent in Santa Monica, one of the highest in the state. The current average statewide, with local increases included, is 8.29 percent.

The increase would bring Santa Monica in line with eight other cities that have a 10 percent tax but the local tax could surpass the 10 percent threshold if voters in the County also passes a sales tax increase for public transit projects. That measure calls for a half-cent sales tax increase.

The Santa Monica tax hike would generate roughly \$15 million annually.

Accompanying the tax hike will be an advisory measure asking voters to approve giving half of that cash to local public schools. The advisory measure is not legally binding and the money raised from the tax will go to the City's General Fund, but local officials are quick to point out no council has violated the intent of an advisory measure and doing so would be politically unpalatable.



Santa Monica College will also have a measure before voters in November.

The SMC Board of Trustees has approved a \$345 million classroom repair, career training, and higher education access measure. According to SMC, the measure would address the college's critical facility needs to serve the students of its communities at its current capacity. Most prominently, it will allow SMC to upgrade two classroom buildings on the main campus built in the 1950s; replace temporary trailers from 1984 and 1992 which serve as classrooms; replace or rebuild the art complex; remodel the aging business building; and would qualify SMC for up to \$50 million in matching state funds to assist with the completion of the art complex and the addition of a new science wing to meet the needs of a growing STEM program. It will also allow SMC to repair classrooms, remove asbestos, and bring facilities up to current seismic, accessibility and safety standards.

Critics of the college point to the \$590 million in bond money already approved for upgrades, saying college leaders need to spend wisely instead of asking for more cash.

The Land Use Voter Empowerment (LUVe) initiative will also be on the ballot.

The measure would require a new permit process for major development projects exceeding 32 feet with some exceptions; voter approval of major development projects and development agreements, excluding affordable housing and moderate income and senior housing projects, among others; and voter approval of changes to City land use and planning policy documents.

Supporters of LUVe say it will give power back to residents and help curb real estate speculation, protect ocean views and access to sunlight, and reduce traffic congestion.

Opponents believe it will exacerbate traffic congestion by stifling the construction of housing, and could prevent the reconstruction of buildings damaged in a natural disaster.

Slow-growth measure gets no love from City Hall

The Land Use Voter Empowerment (LUVe) Initiative will be before voters in November and City Hall has released a study outlining the impact of the slow-growth measure.

LUVe will require voter approval for development over 32 feet tall, all development agreements and major revisions to zoning codes. It provides some exemptions for affordable housing and exempts some specific parcels of land.

Ballot measures follow a specific path to reach voters. Once a measure has gathered enough signatures from registered voters to qualify for the ballot, as LUVe has, the City Council has three options: adopt the measure into law without a public vote, schedule a public vote, or request a study of the issue. Once the study is complete, they can either adopt the proposal into law or schedule it for a vote.

Council asked for the study earlier this year and after receiving the 65-page report, moved LUVe forward to the ballot.

Staff's report outlined a raft of potential problems with LUVe. According to the report, LUVe would create inconsistent zoning within the city, endanger the City's ability to meet housing mandates and would jeopardize the ability to rebuild some buildings after a natural disaster.

LUVe author Armen Melkonians, who is running for City Council and a co-founder of the slow-growth community group Residocracy, has accused LUVe opponents of selling the city to developers.

"The City of Santa Monica's 28-day study ... is a weak and inaccurate analysis," he told media outlets. "We are disappointed that our City resources were not used to provide voters with a genuine evaluation of the LUVe Initiative, which the petition signatures show to have a broad and diverse base. The residents of Santa Monica deserve better."

Among the City's conclusions are:

LUVe does not exempt from voter approval buildings reconstructed because of damage if the building exceeds Tier 1 limits. The report states that up to 1,700 buildings (including 1,300 residential properties) would be challenged if forced to rebuild after a disaster. LUVe exempts a specific list of properties from its

regulations allowing large-scale projects to be built on those sites without voter approval. Such zoning is incongruent with the principles of the Zoning Ordinance, according to staff.

Project construction would be significantly delayed even if approved, due to the need to schedule elections for every major development review permit.

Adoption of LUVe would require nine of 11 pending Tier 2 housing projects to go to a public vote. All 11 projects represent 123 housing units.

LUVe would impact the city's ability to provide services to the community because it does not exempt City projects.

"For example, the recently approved Fire Station #1 is 40 feet tall. If LUVe were adopted and applied to Downtown, the fire station would have required voter approval," the report said.

LUVe only applies in areas of the city that utilize a tier system for zoning. However, Downtown and the Civic Center do not utilize the standard tier format because each area was envisioned to have its own specific zoning document. Projects in the Civic Center Specific Plan would not be subject to the public vote of LUVe, and if voters reject the Downtown Community Plan (DCP) zoning standards Downtown would revert to a combination of 1984 and 1998 standards, allowing development to occur without modern guidelines.

Voters would have to approve all major zoning documents under LUVe and the City's study claims the voter mandate would delay implementation of neighborhood protection measures by stalling upcoming documents like the Pico Neighborhood Plan or Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts.

Staff said LUVe would incentive moderate income housing over more low-income housing because the law creates an incentive for 100 percent moderate-income projects. Current zoning rules require deeper affordability concessions from developers.

The study claims the overall impact on housing would be severe and could jeopardize Santa Monica's ability to receive state certification of its housing plans.

According to the report, "LUVe may present impediments to housing that will be difficult to



IF LUVe PASSES, CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECTS OVER THREE STORIES MAY CEASE

overcome and in a worst case scenario, could impact certification of the next Housing Element."

LUVe's requirement for a vote on projects over 32 feet would not apply to housing projects that adhere to existing zoning rules due to a recently passed state law that guarantees developers the ability to build projects that "meet objective general plan and zoning standards." The state override applies only to housing projects and LUVe would still apply to commercial projects.

City Hall also questions the initiative's constitutional validity.

Elected officials have lined up against LUVe. While some, such as Councilwoman Sue Himmelrich, have said they would support a less extreme measure, others have maintained a steadfast opposition to ballot box planning.

"The proposed LUVe initiative, with its indiscriminate and extreme restrictions on all growth in the city, would make it virtually impossible to continue Santa Monica's commitment to affordable housing and diversity," said L.A. County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, who represents Santa Monica. "At a time when our region is facing a shortage of housing - especially affordable housing for low- and middle-income people - making it harder to build new homes is simply wrongheaded and will only deepen the crisis."

DTSM Board Rejects LUVE initiative

The Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. Board of Directors voted overwhelmingly at its August meeting to not support Measure LV, more commonly known as the LUVE Initiative.

The board expressed several concerns about the proposed measure to amend the city's zoning codes so that any development project over 32 feet (two stories) would have to receive voter approval before breaking ground.

City Councilman Kevin McKeown gave a brief presentation to the board, during which he called LV "too extreme." LV co-author Armen Melkonians spoke in favor of the measure, saying it was in response to over-development in Santa Monica, which is bringing in more traffic.

In addition to fears the measure would dramatically reduce the construction of housing, particularly in the Downtown core, several board members also said they were uncomfortable supporting the initiative because it could be challenged in court, exposing the City to an expensive court battle.

They also said residents would possibly be overwhelmed at the ballot box, forced to pour over hundreds of pages of complex planning documents for each construction project up for a vote, something that would be unlikely given people's busy schedules.

All that and no guarantee that the measure would have any impact on traffic given the rising population and Santa Monica's notorious jobs-housing imbalance, leading to a considerable number of daily commuters.

Board Member Bruria Finkel expressed concerns that Measure LV would make housing even more scarce and unaffordable to future generations of Santa Monicans as well as lower- and middle-income workers who are being squeezed out by exorbitant rents.

"[Measure LV] doesn't allow us to do what we need to do [to address the housing shortage]. It ruins our community," she said, expressing the

desire to maintain Santa Monica's diversity and not create an enclave for the wealthy.

Board Members Scott Schonfeld, a developer, and Juan Matute, a transportation and land use scholar at UCLA, wondered what would happen to buildings currently taller than 32 feet if they were damaged in natural disasters and had questions about the measure's impact on public buildings like the Main Library, which is taller than LV's limit, or future fire stations. The measure does not have an exemption for public facilities.

Melkonians said state law already protects a property owner's right to rebuild following a disaster, such as an earthquake, and that LV only changes the approval process for new developments. He said the measure is in response to residents being ignored by city planners and elected officials, which is why it is necessary to put development decisions in the hands of voters. If a development is reasonable, residents will vote for it, he said.

The general election is scheduled for Nov. 8, 2016.

Ambassadors of the Quarter



Congratulations to these Downtown Santa Monica Ambassador employees for their outstanding service

Lorraine Perchak
Hospitality Ambassador



AGE: My favorite age is now.
HOMETOWN: Santa Monica
YEARS AS AN AMBASSADOR: 1 year and 2 months
FAVORITE ASPECT OF THE JOB: Meeting different people from different places.
WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A GOOD AMBASSADOR: Have to love people.
FAVORITE DTSM BUSINESS: Chipotle and IT'SUGAR

Jose Arredondo
Maintenance Ambassador



AGE: Live your life and forget your age.
HOMETOWN: Roughly 50 miles from Orlando, Fla.
YEARS AS AN AMBASSADOR: 7
FAVORITE ASPECT OF THE JOB: Getting down and dirty.
WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A GOOD AMBASSADOR: Hard work and dedication.
FAVORITE DTSM BUSINESS: Subway.

Downtown's economy showing signs of growth

Santa Monica's economic forecast looks bright with Downtown Santa Monica outperforming city and state averages.

The City's sales tax information is about six months behind the national figures but the data for the last quarter of 2015 shows positive growth.

Overall citywide sales tax revenues are up 3 to 4 percent from the same time last year, but Downtown Santa Monica is outperforming the city at large. Revenues on the Third Street Promenade are up 8 percent over 2014 numbers and the remainder of Downtown is actually slightly better, up 8.2 percent over the same time.

Sales growth on the Third Street Promenade has typically outperformed the City and the region for many years and more recently the surrounding areas of Downtown Santa Monica have joined that trend as properties are renovated and new businesses open.

Santa Monica Place has also increased revenues, but by less than DTSM in general and the city at large.

According to the City's figures, Santa Monica Place has increased by about 2 percent.

"Creating an environment that supports healthy retail activity and continues to attract both established companies and entrepreneurs to open leading edge retail, restaurant and entertainment businesses is critical to the long-term health of Downtown,"

Rob York
DTSM, INC. RETAIL CONSULTANT



Jennifer Taylor said the discrepancy is probably a matter of timing. The mall has undergone tenant revisions in the past year and the City's most recent data doesn't reflect the impact of the new ArLight movie theater or Cheesecake Factory restaurant.

Taylor said changes at the mall should benefit the district as a whole.

"By them changing out the tenant mix with more entertainment and leisure activities, so it's not just shopping, that's going to be a help to the overall downtown area."

She said business is improving throughout Downtown thanks to several additions.

"The Laemmle is now open and there are new restaurants on the periphery of Downtown," she said. "In the non-core area, there are more opening on Second [Street], Ocean [Avenue] and Fourth [Street], as well as some flagship retailers coming in. With Patagonia coming to Fourth, near REI, from Main [Street], that's helping expand the retail health of the Downtown area serving visitors and residents alike."

She said Downtown's growing residential population is supporting increased retail sales and the

continued vibrancy of Silicon Beach and its scores of tech-related businesses is also a good sign for the future.

While the Silicon Beach workers are boosting sales, the continued popularity of online sales is a potential problem for sales tax measurements.

While brick-and-mortar stores are adapting to the needs of the customer by becoming showrooms, delivery or return locations, the purchases made online don't count towards local taxes.

"We're finding our anchor stores like Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom are pushing for more online purchasing and that's impacting the health of those stores," she said. "Customers still go into a store to pick up or look at items, but if ordering it online there's a loss of sales tax revenue for the City. We're certainly seeing some impacts of that as retailers are struggling how to embrace technology and convenience of online shopping."

The current fast pace of retail evolution will have wide ranging effects, said DTSM, Inc. retail consultant Rob York.

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In addition to the potential loss of sales taxes from online sales, the expense of adapting to omni-channel retailing, where customers are served in traditional stores as well as through telephone, online, and mobile sales, is placing additional costs on traditional retailers. The need to compete with the pricing of purely online retailers can also reduce profitability even if sales are growing, York said.

There is also a broad trend of consumers increasing expenditures on experiences and entertainment and spending less on merchandise. This requires retailers to provide more than just merchandise by adding in-store experiences, higher levels of service and opportunities to customize products. Due to these shifts in spending, the balance of retail, restaurant, service and entertainment uses Downtown will change over time.

"We try to encourage a business mix that reflects people's preferences and emerging trends," York said. "Retail stores need to be more entertaining and interactive and a number of Downtown stores are flagships that reflect this trend with special services, events and products. Many of the businesses opening Downtown are new dining concepts that are tailored to the local market and climate, with an emphasis on outdoor dining.

"Creating an environment that supports healthy retail activity and continues to attract both established companies and entrepreneurs to open leading edge retail, restaurant and entertainment

businesses is critical to the long-term health of Downtown," York added. "Over the coming months there will be a diverse range of new restaurant and retail concepts joining Downtown such as Plan Check Kitchen + Bar, a gastro pub opening on Santa Monica Boulevard; a new restaurant concept from the team behind Water Grill is planned along Ocean Avenue; and Alo Yoga, a store offering apparel as well as juice, coffee and special events to encourage people to linger and socialize, will open on the Promenade."

"Additionally, a number of existing businesses have reinvested in Downtown recently such as Laemmle's Monica Film Center, which is now a state-of-the-art independent film complex including a new restaurant and a planned rooftop lounge and social space."

Santa Monica's economic indicators mirror the larger national trends. The Consumer Confidence Index improved to 98.0 from 92.4 in May, indicating a slight improvement in consumer sentiment.

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services in June were up a seasonally adjusted 0.6 percent from May 2016 and 2.7 percent above June 2015.

Excluding automobiles, gasoline, building materials and food services, core retail sales increased a strong 0.5 percent in June. The national figures were in contrast to economic forecasts that had predicted slower growth of 0.3 percent for core retail sales in June.

"We're finding our anchor stores like Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom are pushing for more online purchasing and that's impacting the health of those stores. Customers still go into a store to pick up or look at items, but if ordering it online there's a loss of sales tax revenue for the City. We're certainly seeing some impacts of that as retailers are struggling how to embrace technology and convenience of online shopping."

Jennifer Taylor
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR,
CITY OF SANTA MONICA



Business, pleasure expressed at Solidarity



NATASZA CONGDON

"Solidarity was a movement that overthrew the communist government in Poland, we felt like it was a great new name to show the appreciation our restaurant has for our cultural Polish roots; the food, the people and their ideas."

Natasza Congdon
OWNER, SOLIDARITY RESTAURANT

The Power Lunch is a staple of modern business and there's rarely an epic deal that wasn't brokered at least in part over a Cobb salad and a cup of coffee. Solidarity on Lincoln Boulevard hopes to continue that tradition, but with its own local twist.

Solidarity, previously called Warszawa, has undergone a generational shift recently with Natasza Congdon inheriting the business from her mother, Elina O'Lague. Congdon said she wants the restaurant to adapt to its Silicon Beach surroundings while retaining the heart and passion that her mother brought for decades.

"I didn't know my hometown was the hottest place for start-ups," Congdon said. "But it is actually great because I wanted to find a way to make the restaurant a place for people to come together with new ideas and work on new projects together. I want people in here starting businesses. The best and the brightest minds from Silicon Beach are in here all the time."

Congdon comes from a tech background and along with the rebranding, she implemented a few efficiency upgrades.

"We were still hand writing our tickets," Congdon said. "My approach has changed things. We have an online reservation system now. We have a Facebook presence. I've brought everything over that I learned working in the tech industry."

Those lessons include recognition of what's working at a company. For Congdon and her mother, that means preserving her mother's story, and food.

O'Lague came to America from Poland in the 1960s and settled in Berkeley, Calif. where she quickly earned a reputation for her cooking and opened a place near the famous Chez Panisse.

"Whenever I cooked something, people would say 'You've gotta open a restaurant.' So I did," O'Lague said. "And being near Chez Panisse and other restaurants we were always fighting to find fresh herbs straight from the farm."

Congdon said she is proud to continue her mother's legacy and when she rebranded, she specifically chose a name that harkens back to the family's history.

"Solidarity was a movement that overthrew the communist government in Poland," Congdon said. "We felt like it was a great new name to show the appreciation our restaurant has for our cultural Polish roots; the food, the people and their ideas."

Those cultural roots include giving a voice to the people and empowering the longstanding community members that have formed the foundation of the city.

One way Solidarity rewards those locals is with a "secret" bar accessible to those in the know by walking past the host stand and into a repurposed back kitchen.

Congdon said the area serves as a fun, relaxing space for guests that enhances the restaurant's atmosphere and vibe.

For more information about Solidarity or to make reservations, visit their website at <http://solidarityla.com>, call (310) 393-8831 or e-mail hello@solidarityla.com.

The restaurant is located at 1414 Lincoln Blvd. Hours are Tuesday - Sunday 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday Patio is open until 1:30 a.m. Closed Monday.



More time for less money on Breeze Bike Share

Breeze Bike Share, sponsored by Hulu, is gaining traction in Santa Monica with an increasing number of rides, riders and hopefully a self-sustaining financial model in the coming months.

The program opened last year with 500 bicycles at 75 stations throughout the city and officials will be adding 10 additional hubs (five in the Pico Neighborhood and five in Venice) as part of a mid-year revision to the popular program.

In addition to more stations, prices will be simplified.

The general public will have access to four types of plans.

- Pay as you go: \$7 an hour (12 cents a minute).
- Monthly pass: \$25 a month with 90 minutes of ride time per day.
- Annual pass: \$99 a year with 90 minutes of ride time per day.
- Student pass: limited to individuals attending a college/university, at \$7 a month with 90 minutes of ride time per day.

Three specialty plans are available to businesses and low-income residents.

Businesses can purchase annual memberships for employee at a cost of \$79 per year. If a business purchases an annual membership for every employee, the cost of that membership will be \$19 per employee. Specialty plans will be offered to Community Corp. of Santa Monica residents or other qualified low-income households at \$60 per year.

All riders will be subject to miscellaneous fees including a \$20 charge for locking a bike outside the system borders, \$2 for locking a bike more than 100 feet away from a hub and \$1 to replace a lost membership card. Riders can earn a \$1 credit if they pick up a bike from outside a hub and return it to any hub.

The new plans mirror those established in nearby areas such as Beverly Hills, West Hollywood and UCLA. The goal is to provide a seamless network of bike share programs that allow customers to move between areas on a single account.

At a recent City Council meeting, staff said the program is steadily gaining users with 29,000 active accounts. Kyle Kozar, Bike Share coordinator, said



one goal of the new plan system is to encourage more users to pick a monthly or annual pass. Almost 27,000 of the current users are on the pay-as-you-go system but based on their usage, the vast majority would save money with a subscription and the bulk of those savings would go to locals.

Santa Monica residents account for 18 percent of users, but take 44 percent of total trips. Kozar said tracking rides is the most important metric because it relates to the program's ultimate goal, reducing car trips.

The system is approaching an average of two rides per bike per day. Since the program's launch, about 169,000 trips have been taken and about 382,000 miles have been traveled.

Councilman Kevin McKeown said the ridership numbers show the system is appealing to locals and is responsible for providing bicycling opportunities to those who didn't have them before.

"This tells me we're getting people on the street on bikes with Breeze bikes that didn't have their own bike," he said. "This means there are people biking in Santa Monica now who hadn't bought a bike before, maybe they live somewhere where they can't keep a bike and we've enabled that to happen and I think that's a very important point."

The Breeze system has an annual cost of about \$1.3 million per year with a \$675,000 annual

sponsorship from Hulu. Kozar said revenue figures fluctuate month-to-month but the system is on track to break even on an annual basis by the end of the year, or possible, turn a small profit.

Kozar said the money is great, but at the end of the day, getting more people riding is the end goal.

"...we're getting people on the street on bikes with Breeze bikes that didn't have their own bike. This means there are people biking in Santa Monica now who hadn't bought a bike before, maybe they live somewhere where they can't keep a bike and we've enabled that to happen and I think that's a very important point."

Kevin McKeown
SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCILMAN

Council approved old Post Office development

Council has approved the proposed adaptive reuse of the old Post Office Building following an appeal of the project.

Planning Commissioner Jennifer Kennedy appealed the Commission's approval of the project to the Council at their August 9 meeting but Council not only denied the appeal, they softened parking requirements that had been imposed at an earlier meeting.

Skydance Productions purchased the building and has applied for an adaptive reuse project that will preserve the buildings historic elements. Plans call for reducing the first floor from 17,516 to 16,146 square feet, converting the 2,645-square-foot mezzanine level to an 8,508-square-foot second floor, adding an 8,148-square-foot third floor and increasing the basement from 13,807 to 16,516 square feet.

The application also calls for a new 32-foot-tall, 14,490-square-foot building to be built at the rear of the existing landmark building.

The project was approved earlier this year with a list of conditions that included securing 23 off-site parking spots. The Landmark's Commission previously approved a five-foot fence around the project and that decision was not appealed at the time. The fence was explicitly not included in the appeal before council in August but that didn't prevent a lengthy discussion on its merits.

Councilwoman Sue Himmelrich said the entire project, fence and all, should have been up for review at the same time and said the bifurcating of the project lacked precedent.

"I don't remember seeing two improvements for one parcel coming forward in two different proposals,"

"I don't see why reasonable people can't work this out on a project that is this historically significant and this attractive."

Sue Himmelrich
SANTA MONICA COUNCILWOMAN



she said of her time on the planning commission.

City Manager Rick Cole said regulating a project that includes new construction attached to a landmarked building is complicated at best and made more so by the City's regulatory structure.

"We say we want to have adaptive reuse but we want to make sure the landmark people take a look at the historic piece we want to make sure the Planning Commission takes a look at the parking and the this and the that and the ARB looks at the design," he said. "All three of those you have built into the process, this community, this council has said we want all three of these commissions to have overlapping jurisdiction and that's what we're trying to do."

Representatives for Skydance said the fence was a dead issue, citing the lack of a timely appeal of the Landmarks Commission but when pressed by Councilman Kevin McKeown to voluntarily lower the height to 42 inches, Nancy Reid said the company would be willing to discuss changes but stressed the decision has been based on specific research, historic details and safety needs.

"It's the way it is because we got there on a certain path," she said.

After hours of fence-based discussion, council eventually began a discussion of the merits of the appeal and specifically parking on site.

The Planning Commission approved a reduced onsite parking allowance with a condition the company secures deed-restricted parking off-site. However, several councilmembers said that requirement was an unnecessary burden on a project that is already going above and beyond to retain the building's historic character.

Council removed the parking condition and despite concerns over the process and fence height, unanimously approved actual project by denying the appeal. Himmelrich said the fence was the only element she didn't like and said the applicant was being stubborn in demanding the full height.

"I don't see why reasonable people can't work this out on a project that is this historically significant and this attractive."

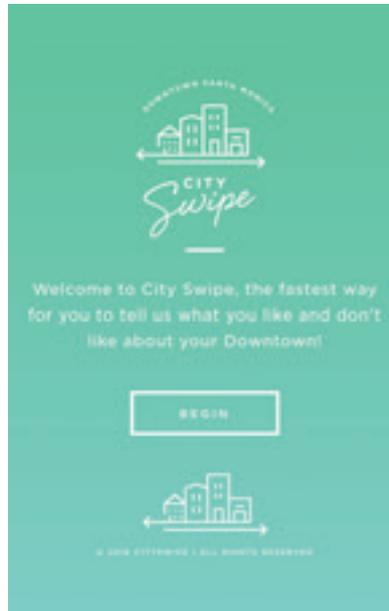
campaigns. Response has been positive - users want to see more programmed public spaces, unique special events, nightlife, and art. With the technology in place, DTSM, Inc. plans to use CitySwipe for a number of programs including ICE at Santa Monica and demographic research, and believes it to be a survey model for all downtown districts.

And no one has to buy anyone dinner.

The survey is part of an ongoing effort to solicit public input into the DCP that will help shape the future goals, actions and concepts for the future of Santa Monica's "living room."

While the app has adapted to the tastes of the Internet dating generation, it's not the only means of participation. In addition to www.downtownsmplan.org, where people can leave comments and read the entire draft plan, city staff is conducting in-person workshops about the topic.

According to staff, the DCP has grown out of the 2010 Land Use and Circulation Element (LUCE) to bring to life a vision of a thriving, mixed-use urban environment that provides multiple opportunities for living, working, entertainment and enrichment.



The LUCE specifically exempted Downtown from its zoning rules to allow for a specific plan that would create an energetic and contemporary downtown for residents, employees and visitors that integrates the Expo light rail and preserves the unique character of the district and its commercial and residential life.

The process has included workshops, public hearings, interviews, presentations before various boards and several draft documents.

Themes of the DCP

- Prioritize the pedestrian experience, maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness, comfort and safety of walking.
- Provide a connected, efficient, and user-friendly circulation network that works for all people, whether they are driving, bicycling, taking the train or a bus, and walking.
- Preserve and enhance Downtown's basic urban form of three- to seven-story buildings, with diverse architecture that provides access to light and ocean breezes.
- Implement the LUCE tier system that requires projects above a two or three story base height to provide community benefits.
- Provide opportunity for exceptional community benefits such as parks, museums, new roads, and preservation of landmark buildings at a few key sites.
- Integrate the Expo Light Rail into Downtown with circulation connections, better signage, inviting spaces, and programs that encourage people to ride transit.
- Address vehicle congestion in Downtown with traffic-flow improvements, signage, transportation demand management and a comprehensive mobility strategy for all road users.
- Provide the framework for maintaining Downtown's economic success through a diverse and sustainable economy and a creative workforce.
- Continue to support new housing in Downtown, including connecting residents to workplaces, open space and complete neighborhoods.
- Support preservation of the buildings and façades that define the Downtown's historic character.

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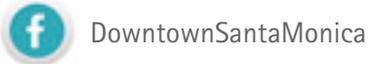
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THE BEAT

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DOWNTOWN SANTA MONICA, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

On behalf of the City of Santa Monica, to promote economic stability, growth and community life within Downtown Santa Monica through responsible planning, development, management, and coordination of programs, projects and services designed to benefit the community as a whole; which includes the District's businesses, property owners, visitors and residents.

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