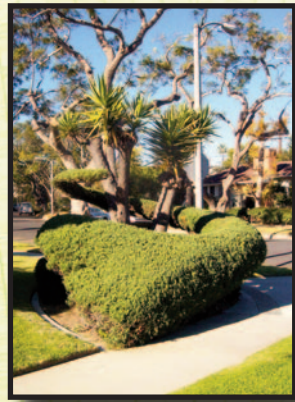




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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### TOGETHER SUPPORTING WESTDALE

• Jerry Hornof



This year's theme is Going Together. After many years of debate related to the operations of Santa Monica Airport (SMO), the airport is slated to close on December 31, 2028, with the 227-acre site transitioning to new uses. There have been a number of groups proposing plans for the best way forward. The primary discussion has been between a 192-acre "Great Park" plan and proposals to include substantial affordable housing, with competing visions highlighting the Santa Monica's urgent need for both open space and housing. Due to the close proximity of the airport to our community, being informed and participating in the discussion is important. It should be noted that in 2014 Measure LC was passed by Santa Monica voters. The measure prohibits new development on airport land, except for parks, public open spaces and public recreational facilities, until the voters approve limits on the uses and development that may occur on the land.

In 2025 the discussion considered three scenarios. The first scenario named "Reuse, Restoration, and Resilience," was the heaviest on green space, adding new water features, sports fields, multi-use paths, and municipal facilities. This option would take the longest time to implement and may also prove the most difficult to finance. This scenario offers the least potential for on-site revenue generation, due to limited development (including 0 units of new housing). The second scenario, called "weaving Park and Community" offered a similar blend of open lawns, water features, recreation areas, walking paths, and parking. Notably, in addition to the preservation and reuse of existing airport buildings, this option would include 32 acres of new housing and commercial development along the northern and southern perimeters of the site which could generate revenue for operations and construction.



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
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The third scenario, "Growing Park, Growing Community," was the most development intensive of the proposed alternatives. With 48 acres of the site reserved for commercial and housing development, the third scenario was also projected to be built in a shorter timeframe than its counterparts, and has the greatest amount of on-site revenue generating potential. This scenario would require voter approval. In July of 2025, the Santa Monica City Council on a 6-1 vote approved moving forward with plans to prioritize open space over housing, supporting this park-centric future thus avoiding a public vote. Santa Monica is currently in a 21-month planning phase, involving community outreach to determine the specific amenities of the new park. To ensure a community-driven process, Santa Monica looks forward to the thoughts of all who might visit the site in the future. References include:

- [www.smacproject.com/#landing-page](http://www.smacproject.com/#landing-page)
- [www.santamonica.gov/programs/the-future-of-the-santa-monica-airport](http://www.santamonica.gov/programs/the-future-of-the-santa-monica-airport)

In a Villager article in May 2024, I described the Metro's Sepulveda Corridor transit project which is planned to bring relief to commuters in the San Fernando Valley and Westside, with Metro, local residents, and the public working to decide what exactly that system will look like. As an update, in January 2026, the Metro Board selected the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), an underground heavy rail line between the Van Nuys Metrolink Station and E Line Expo/Sepulveda Station. Key project benefits of the LPA include fast travel times, strong regional connectivity and stations at major destinations. Additional information: [www.metro.net/projects/sepulveda-corridor](http://www.metro.net/projects/sepulveda-corridor).

I want to thank those who stepped up and paid. We request a small annual dues which allows us to communicate with, and in small ways, take care of our small pocket of homeowners and renters. The membership dues pays for our communications (this newsletter and website primarily), the annual block party and support a variety of community programs and events. Please consider paying your dues of \$30 per year so we can continue our communication and support.



You can check to see if you have paid for 2025, 2026 or 2027 on our website [westdalehoa.org](http://westdalehoa.org) or



using the Quick Response (QR) code on the left. If you find you have not paid, navigate to the Membership section of the website or use the QR code on the right. The essence of community is being, learning, supporting, and doing things together. Going Together is how Westdale HOA thrives.

### CRIME & SAFETY REPORT

• *Soham Patel*

Over the past three months, Mar Vista has maintained the lower crime trend that began in late 2025. Property crime is running approximately 70-80 incidents per month across the MVCC area, down from 95-105 monthly earlier last year. Violent crime remains low, with most incidents involving people who know each other rather than stranger attacks. Mar Vista holds a B+ crime grade, with the west side of the neighborhood considered safest.

Catalytic converter theft is rising again region wide. A late March bust in Norwalk seized 1,800 stolen converters worth \$500,000, but organized crews remain active. Toyota Prius, Honda Civic, and Toyota Corolla models from 2008-2012 are primary targets. A car cover is a simple deterrent.

Residential burglaries continue to follow the 5:00-9:00 PM pattern, targeting homes that appear unoccupied. Some crews disable electrical panels to knock out alarms and cameras. Keep your panel obscured and leave lights and TV on when you're out.

#### Streetlight Initiative: Major Progress

On March 25, Mayor Bass signed Executive Directive 18 launching a two-year project to repair or replace 60,000 streetlights citywide. Work began in May. Solar conversions eliminate the copper wiring thieves target. This followed Council Members Traci Park and Katy Yaroslavsky's \$500,000 Westside initiative announced in February after copper theft left multiple Mar Vista blocks dark. If your streetlight is still out, file a repair request at [cd11.lacounty.gov](http://cd11.lacounty.gov) or call 311.

#### Report Issues

Crime in progress: 911 | Non-emergency: 1-877-ASK-LAPD | LAPD Pacific Division: (310) 482-6334

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Life changes fast. What once felt like the perfect home might now feel too big, too expensive, or just not quite right. You might be wondering: "Should we just stay put or is it time to rethink things? We love our home, but we're working overtime to pay the mortgage!" I've helped many families navigate this exact moment discreetly and strategically. They didn't want pressure.

They don't need to sell. They just wanted to make a smart move that fits their life now without chaos, confusion, or unsettling their kids. Several walked away with a significant gain. All walked away with clarity, confidence, and a better fit for their future.



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COMPASS

*Please renew your Westdale Homeowner's Association membership!!*

### PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES!

•Shari Dunn

We're happy to share that WHOA membership has now grown to more than 150 homes – an appreciable increase in participation and support for our neighborhood community. With over 900 homes in our area, there's still plenty of room for more neighbors to join in. Annual dues are intentionally modest, but when many households participate, they collectively help support the things that make a neighborhood feel connected: community communication,

events, support for local schools and parks, and emergency preparedness through CERT.

Even small contributions make a difference when we all participate. If you haven't yet renewed or joined, we'd love to have you be part of helping maintain the strong community spirit that makes our neighborhood special. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed and helped to keep WHOA active and growing.

Go to <https://westdalehoa.org/membership/> where you can check your dues status and find options for submitting Membership dues.

*<http://westdalehoa.org/membership/membership-support>*

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**WE'LL BRING THE SUPPORT.**

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*You'll make it happen*

- Bring neighbors together and build our community.
- Add your own ideas and touches to make it unique and fun!
- From activities to music, decorations to games—there are lots of ways to add to the fun!

**INTERESTED?**  
*We'd love to hear from you!*

Email [westdalehoa@yahoo.com](mailto:westdalehoa@yahoo.com) or talk to any Board member by **JUNE 15**.

**GREAT NEIGHBORS. STRONG COMMUNITY. UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES.**  
*Let's make this year the best one yet!*



## NATURE REPORT: DOMESTIC BUT DEADLY

•M. Umar

Growing up, all I wanted was a pet cat. When my only pet, a fish, died, I was inconsolable save for the idea that I could get a cat now. This never happened. Whenever I asked why, I was given various understandable reasons ranging from allergies to expenses. But by far one of the most common arguments I heard was that cats need space to roam, so keeping them inside wouldn't be ethical. "Is that true?" I wondered. Answer: not really!

Living in Westdale, I see roaming, "free range" cats on a regular basis. I often can't help but smile when I see a wary tabby trot across a sidewalk or crouch in a driveway. At the same time, there's a sadness to seeing free range cats. Their cuteness belies their negative effects on local wildlife, and the risks they face by exploring residential areas.



Cat owners know that their pets kill small animals like birds or rodents without always eating them. Hunting is an inherent part of cats' instincts. The earliest domesticated cats were



kept around for their ability to hunt pests, eventually becoming the laser-chasing pets we know today. Los Angeles is no stranger to predatory felines; interestingly, our famous mountain lions are more closely related to house cats than actual lions! But while mountain lions are uncommon thanks to human infrastructure, L.A.'s feral cat population is huge for that very same reason.

The unfortunate truth about feral and free range cats lies in the amount of birds they prey on. L.A. is located in a biodiversity hotspot, with over 500 species of native birds. Many of these species experience population decline for a variety of reasons, whether it's habitat loss or disruption of food chains. Cats are one such prominent cause.

Getting data on house cats' predation habits is challenging, but it's estimated that they kill over two billion—not million!—birds every year in the U.S. Feral cats are largely responsible for this, but free range cats with owners play a part too. There's plenty of debate on the extent to which cats deprive local bird populations. In my nonprofessional view, situations where cats pose



a risk to native or migratory birds should be mitigated. Devices like bells or bibs often help reduce cats' hunting habits, as can high-protein cat food (purportedly).

However, a cat running around Westdale isn't just a small, fluffy predator; whenever coyotes are involved, it can become prey. This is a terrible scenario for cat owners, and one that happens all too often. A 2022 study in Culver City found significant overlap between cat and coyote territory, with bad results for cats. This wasn't because the coyotes were expanding their range, but because cats were roaming just about everywhere. Coyotes have been spotted all around Westdale, so caution is advised.

All of this looks fairly grim. The only way to completely prevent predation and threats to cats is to keep them indoors. But for some owners, the idea of keeping cats constantly cooped up may seem unthinkable. Fortunately, there are ways to let your cat go outside safely: taking walks with it on a leash, keeping it inside at night, and reducing its range to your backyard or enclosed porch if you have one. Besides, keeping your cat indoors

will not consign it to misery, as long as its needs are met. Indoor cats are exposed to virtually none of the risks outdoor cats face, and their lifespans are longer for it.

Meanwhile, the issue of how to help both feral cats and native birds is highly debated. In L.A., doesn't change the number of birds preyed on by feral cats. Yes, it's humane to cats, but what about the billions of dead birds? It's a decades-long problem that hopefully reaches some conclusions. Whether you're a cat person, a dog person, or neither neither, domesticated animals clearly shape our environment. Plenty of "wild" animals were brought to L.A. as pets, from omnipresent parakeets to the squirrels chattering overhead. Unlike these animals, cats have lived alongside humans for centuries, with their hunting instincts and independent miens always intact. This is adorable when mouse toys get involved... but terrible for the countless birds that make L.A. their home. To those fortunate enough to have a cat, I hope that you can do your part to help, and that your summer is free of decomposing "gifts."

**Keep looking for creatures this summer!**





THE 3% MORTGAGE MARRIAGE IS GETTING COMPLICATED

•Rebecca Davis & Claire Burns

For the last few years, the most committed relationship in America may not have been between spouses, business partners, or even Angelenos and Erewhon. It was between homeowners and their mortgage rates.

Specifically, those ultra-low, once-in-a-lifetime, “I’ll never let you go” COVID-era interest rates that stayed around 3%.

Honestly, we get it. If you secured one of those rates in 2020 or 2021, congratulations. You essentially won the financial equivalent of the Taylor Swift Ticketmaster war. It felt rare. Untouchable. Worth protecting at all costs.

For years, many homeowners stayed put simply because giving up that rate felt irrational. Why trade a historically low monthly payment for today’s higher borrowing costs? Financially, it made sense on paper. But here’s the thing about paper: it doesn’t account for real life.

Over the past six years, life has changed dramatically for many people. Families grew. Kids became teenagers. Dining rooms became offices. Parents moved in. Remote work became permanent. Some people now need more space, while others are realizing they no longer need nearly as much. And while life evolved, many homeowners stayed frozen in place, protecting a mortgage rate that no longer matched the life they were actually living.

Lately, though, we’ve noticed a meaningful shift happening here in Mar Vista, and that trend extends nationally as well. People are starting to ask a different question. Not: “How do I keep my 3% rate forever?” Rather: “What is the cost of staying?”

Because there is a cost. Sometimes it’s a growing family squeezing into a home that technically works, but no longer functions well day to day. In fact, recent data suggests the market is already beginning to normalize. According to Federal Housing Finance Agency data, the number of mortgage holders with rates above 6% officially surpassed those with rates at 3% or below in 2025, marking a notable shift. The average interest rate of existing mortgages has also

gradually climbed from 3.8% in 2022 to 4.4% in 2025, approaching pre-pandemic norms. Even more recently, industry surveys found that this year, more than one-third of sellers are willing to forgo mortgage rates below 5% to pursue lifestyle changes. In other words, more homeowners are adapting to today’s market realities rather than waiting indefinitely for 2021 conditions to return. That mindset shift is quietly reshaping today’s market, especially in neighborhoods like Mar Vista, where people buy for lifestyle as much as investment value. Buyers here are looking for homes that support how they actually live now: flexible spaces, walkability, outdoor entertaining, room for family, proximity to schools, and a sense of community.

And that matters for homeowners who may have assumed buyer demand disappeared when rates rose. In reality, many buyers never stopped wanting to move. They simply paused as they adjusted to a new financial landscape. Now, many are re-entering the market with a different perspective and more realistic expectations. The emotional frenzy of the pandemic-era market has cooled, but motivated buyers are absolutely still out there, especially for homes that actually fit today’s lifestyle needs.

As neighbors who live and work in Mar Vista, we’ve always believed our neighborhood has a unique perspective on homeownership. People here care deeply about how they live, not just what a spreadsheet says. They stay connected to the community, think long term, and lately, many homeowners are realizing something refreshingly simple: A low interest rate is wonderful, but it’s not supposed to become your entire life plan.

No one is excited to trade a 3% mortgage for a higher payment, but more people are realizing that financial decisions are meant to support life, not delay it indefinitely. That shift matters because many buyers are arriving at the same conclusion. They’re ready for more space, a better lifestyle fit, or simply a new chapter, and they may very well be searching for a home exactly like yours.

We’re always happy to talk through things further. Whether you want to strategize or just meet another friendly face from the neighborhood, we’d love to get in touch: (310) 421-8395.

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## Your Kids Have Been Asking You to Move Closer to Them, and You No Longer Have a Good Excuse.

Maybe it was easier to put it off before, but now the reasons to stay put are starting to disappear—and your kids aren't asking for much, just to be closer so they can look out for you and enjoy more time together.

- You no longer have a dog that needs a yard or daily walks.
- You've retired or stopped commuting to a job.
- The yard and home maintenance have become more tiring.
- Many of your friends have already moved or aren't as active anymore.
- Your grandkids are growing fast—and you don't want to miss it.
- Technology can only do so much; real hugs and in-person conversations matter.

It's not about giving anything up—it's about giving yourself the gift of connection, safety, and being part of their everyday lives. Maybe now is the right time.

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# Villager Bulletin Board

## MAR VISTA PARK REPORT

• Jerry Hornof

Mar Vista Recreation Center (MVRC) is a very active and enjoyed "gathering" space in our community. In March, MVRC greeted a new director, Jovan Herron. We said goodbye and thanked our previous director Keith Rice who is now the director at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center. Jovan has been involved with recreation programs and Los Angeles Recreation and Parks (LARAP) for over 20 years. She is a Los Angeles native and USC graduate. Jovan began her career with LARAP at the Sun Valley Recreation Center. Over her career she has worked in all the LARAP regions. She served as a Program Coordinator for 10 years and has been a facilities director for the last 5 years. Her previous director position was at Rustic Canyon Recreation Center. Jovan is assisted by Program coordinators Conrad Jones and Giannina Hernandez-Campos. She sees her tenure at MVRC as a new challenge. It is a very active recreation center supporting many programs.

Jovan has a strong background in supporting camp programs with experience in programming for children with disabilities. As she begins her appointment at MVRC, she is gathering information from staff and program participants. She recognizes that it is important to gather information and make changes as needed based on addressing issues she observes and understands. Challenges that she recognizes include: 1) Efficiently utilizing and working with the large number of part-time staff, 2) Getting ready for the summer camps, 3) Trying to identify and quickly correct "hot spot issues", 4) Developing a survey to better assess what is working and not working at MVRC, 5) Addressing the encampments at the park, and 6) Maintaining and managing park staff to meet the center needs. She acknowledged how capable and competent our camp director is in making the MVRC camps a success. Welcome Jovan to the Westdale family.

Families who enjoy the children's playground area, the park received a new shipment of sand. The sand level in the playground is better, but the park is in the process of getting another shipment.

Finally, as summer approaches it is important to again remind Westdale neighbors about the wonderful camp programs offered by the park. Both my sons participated in the program as camp participants and when they got older as junior counselors. The camp is available to children ages 5-12 and offers a Friday field trip every week. This year's field trip destinations include Knott's Berry Farm, Discovery Cube, and Wild Rivers. The camp begins June 15th and runs through August 7th. Signups are available on a weekly basis and registration is now open. Visit <https://recreation.parks.lacity.gov/reccenter/mar-vista> for more information.

As always, please enjoy the park and its mission to provide and support vital and enjoyable recreational opportunities in our community.

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