



# BEVERLY HILLS

IN FOCUS An Official Publication of the City of Beverly Hills

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# BEVERLY HILLS - IS ADVANCING

## Beverly Hills Is Looking Forward

**B**everly Hills. Two words and an enormous image: Glamour. Style. Quality. Say it out loud and everyone knows you're talking about a place unlike any other.

While the worldview of Beverly Hills may coincide with reality, residents and workers know there's much more to the City than image. Mere perception doesn't sustain top-rated police

New projects carry definable community impacts, which give rise to concerns about quality of life issues.

Beverly Hills residents are not alone in their concerns about development. Throughout the nation, cities grapple with ideas on how to use planned development for the betterment of their communities, while protecting the integrity of their neighbor-



It's the City's job to conduct a rigorous review of all those impacts, everything from traffic to air quality, and to find a balance with quality of life expectations. The right balance helps the City continue providing high-caliber services while maintaining Beverly Hills' reputation as a world-class city.

Key to achieving a balance between development and quality of life issues is input from residents and stakeholders. At commission hearings, neighborhood forums and City Council meetings, the Beverly Hills citizenry is encouraged to weigh in on all development proposals. The dialog that occurs is both healthy and beneficial, as it exposes concerns, illuminates possible alternatives and invests people in the life and progress of their city. In the end, if a project is approved, it embodies compromises made along the way to ensure the best possible fit for the community.

Listed on the back cover are development projects now under construction or soon to be considered.

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*Cities need smart development plans to keep pace with the ever-changing marketplace, to maintain their economic viability and to support a wide range of community services.*

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and fire departments, and a worldwide brand doesn't produce outstanding public services.

Those successes come from tangible sources: the hard work, time, and energy of an engaged community and the leaders who know that a thriving, vibrant city doesn't rest on its laurels.

As Beverly Hills moves forward, perhaps no other topic in the City is as hotly debated as development. For good reason.



hoods. But one fact remains clear: Cities need smart development plans to keep pace with the ever-changing marketplace, to maintain their economic viability and to support a wide range of community services.

In recent years, the City has seen a significant increase in development applications. Many of these projects were designed as upgrades to residential and commercial buildings, injecting new life to worn-out structures and under-utilized sites. Other, major projects will provide a vital funding source for the City—significant because City budget forecasts point to expenditures outpacing revenues very soon.

*(continued on back cover)*



# ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶ BEVERLY HILLS - IS VISIONARY

## Get Involved in the City's Future

### General Plan Review

Call it a roadmap to the future. Officially, it's a General Plan review and the City is completing its updates over the next six months. Residents, the business community and other stakeholders, working in tandem with the City, will help plot in detail every major element of Beverly Hills—from transportation and land use to housing and conservation. When the document is completed, it will embody the vision and values of the community, serving as a long-range planning tool, as well as a guide for all public and private development



Mandated by state law, the City's General Plan is its "blueprint," setting forth Beverly Hills' goals, policies and direction for the next 20 years. More than that, though, the document gives residents a voice in the future of their city, and provides the framework for charting a vision for the community.

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*What do you want for Beverly Hills during the next two decades? Get involved and have your say.*

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### Traffic Initiatives

A major concern of citizens in Beverly Hills are traffic-related issues. City leaders are continually on the lookout for new and better ways to keep cars going with the flow – and away from the neighborhoods.

Over the next three months proposals will be reviewed regarding Santa Monica Boulevard, one of the city's most congested roadways. Find out more information on traffic issues by visiting [www.beverlyhills.org](http://www.beverlyhills.org).



# ▶▶ BEVERLY HILLS - IS COMMUNICATING

## Ask Bev

Share your questions with *Ask Bev*, the City's new electronic tool for residents to resolve issues. Email: [AskBev@beverlyhills.org](mailto:AskBev@beverlyhills.org). Look for a response in the next issue.

### What are issues the City looks at when considering a development project?

The City has a rigorous planning and review process for all development projects considered for approval; public input is a critical part of this review process. The City examines many things when it evaluates development projects, including traffic impacts, architectural design, economic benefit, and overall compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and/or existing businesses.



Helping businesses to stay in town or move to Beverly Hills is a vital economic development goal of the City; business retention and attraction generates revenue to support and maintain the high level of services delivered to our residents and businesses.

### How does the City use high-technology?

It pays to be smart—financially, socially and environmentally. Beverly Hills' *Smart City Initiatives* were introduced three years ago and already these high technology initiatives are returning dividends to the community. Take a look:

**FlexPay Parking Meters:** These solar-powered meters give drivers the option of using either coins or credit cards. They're easy to use, convenient and secure. Believed to be the first of its kind in the nation for single-space parking, the FlexPay program complements Beverly Hills' commitment to promote cutting-edge, energy-efficient products whenever possible.



**Water Conservation:** The City uses "smart" irrigation controllers at parks and operates a high-tech water leak detection program. For more information and ideas for conserving water visit [www.beverlyhills.org](http://www.beverlyhills.org).



## ▶ BEVERLY HILLS - IS SERVICE ORIENTED

### Employee Spotlight - George Chavez

City staffers help our community move forward. Meet George Chavez, Assistant Director of Community Development and City Building Official, shown with resident Dale Shephard.

#### The job:

“We enforce building and municipal codes before and during construction. The Code Enforcement staff also deals with quality of life issues such as barking dogs, property maintenance, graffiti abatement and rent control, along with offering free dispute resolution services.”

#### Man of the people:

The Building and Safety staff interacts with more than 150 residents and business owners every day. “I enjoy maintaining personal contact with the residents of Beverly Hills I’ve met over the years. It gives me great pride in knowing I’m a resource that residents can turn to. As a matter of fact, I’ve intentionally kept the same telephone number for the last 19 years for this reason.”

#### What’s new:

“We just upgraded our permitting software to provide a proactive, web-based request and notification system, so we can send customers emails the day before an inspection and give them a two-hour appointment window. After the inspection, we send another email letting contractors and owners know detailed results of the inspection.”

#### All in a day’s work:

Beverly Hills is the only city in California with the authority to inspect school district buildings. “I’m really proud of this program which lets the City’s building inspection staff extend its expertise to Beverly Hills Unified School District buildings. We have a vested interest in the success of our schools, and this is one way we can help support the kids in our community.”





# BEVERLY HILLS - IS A LEADER

## City Earns Highest Honors

### Top Fiscal Credit Ratings

The nation's three major credit agencies awarded a Triple A bond rating—the highest possible rating—to the City of Beverly Hills. Less than 100 cities received this honor, and Beverly Hills is the only one in its class to earn this rating. Equally impressive, Standard & Poor's and Moody's gave the elite rating to the City's water enterprise bonds, making it one of only 15 municipal water utility systems in the U.S. to be rated Triple A by the agency, and the only one so rated in California. These prestigious ratings reflect the City's financial strength, as well as its programs in financial administration.

### Information Technology Receives Excellence Award

The City's Information Technology Department nabbed one of the most coveted awards, the prestigious 2007 Excellence in Information Systems award from the Municipal Information Systems Association of California (MISAC). The award is presented

to agencies which excel in budgeting and strategic planning, Internet applications, disaster planning and network security.



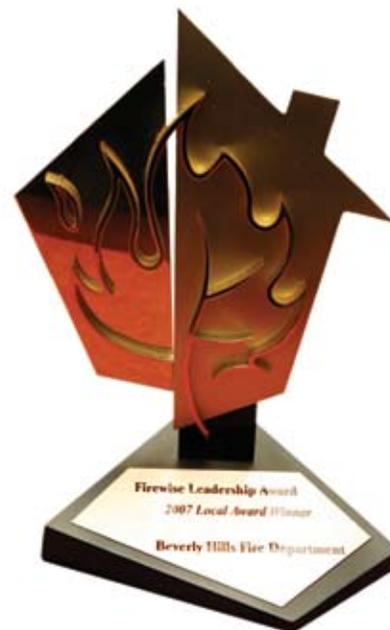
### Police Department Has Fastest Response Rates in Southern California

Staying true to form, the highly regarded Beverly Hills Police Department logged response times that averaged less than three minutes—and in many cases police responded in less than two minutes. Backed by such statistics, the Department

has one of the fastest response rates in Southern California—an achievement fully appreciated by those needing quick police action.

### Fire Department Excels

Beverly Hills Fire Marshal Greg Barton has been recognized by the National Firewise Communities Program with its prestigious Firewise Leadership Award. Recipients of the award are selected based on innovative approach to community wildfire education and preparation in their region.



For further information please log onto [www.beverlyhills.org](http://www.beverlyhills.org).





# BEVERLY HILLS - IS ADVANCING

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▶ **Montage Hotel/Public Gardens.** The development is for a 201-room luxury hotel that is being built privately for more than \$200 million. Taxpayers benefit because the project revitalizes a neglected area and it will bring in more than \$5 million annually in new revenue. This new development will provide an additional 419 public parking spaces.

▶ **William Morris Agency.** Neighboring cities lured away Beverly Hills' other major talent firms, but the City successfully worked to retain this prestigious agency. The new development plan involves an expansion of office space for the firm.

▶ **Legacy Project.** This mixed use residential project includes ground-level retail space and 54 condominiums located on Wilshire Boulevard.

The following proposals are currently being reviewed by the Planning Commission. Learn more about them, as well as how to provide feedback to the City, by visiting [www.beverlyhills.org](http://www.beverlyhills.org).

▶ **Beverly Hilton Revitalization.** This project calls for a new Waldorf Astoria and two condominium towers at the current Beverly Hilton site.

▶ **9900 Wilshire (Robinsons-May Site).** A condominium with a small amount of retail and restaurant development has been proposed to transform this former department store into a mixed use development.

▶ **Residences at Saks Fifth Avenue.** This mixed-use project combines condominiums with street level retail spaces.

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*On the cover are Beverly Hills residents Ilona Sherman, Adam Sherman, Lauren Kurtz, Jared Kurtz, Samantha Kurtz, Dale Shephard, and Joe Shooshani.*

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