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Marketing Long Beach As A Package Deal To Tourists

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer



The staff of the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. Front row (left to right): Joseph Jenci, Senior VP, Sales & Services; Gary Watters, Sales Coordinator; Heather Gonzalez, National Sales Director; Loren Simpson, Director of Digital Communications; Pauline Taylor, Sales Coordinator; Shannon Yates, Sales Event Coordinator; Troy Karnoff, National Sales Director; Steve Goodling, President & CEO; Iris Himert, VP/Special Projects; Cindy Robbins, Controller; Jan Miller, Membership Director; Karen Thomas, Executive Assistant; Susan Valen, National Sales Director; Kathy Ford, Sales Coordinator; Claudette Baldemor, Membership Director. Back row (left to right): Lori Elgayar, Convention Services Manager; Bob Maguglin, Director of Public Relations; Jennifer Gonzalez, National Sales Director; Larry Jones, National Sales Director; James Robinson, National Sales Director; Barbi Ajemian, CMP, VP Convention Services; Kelly DeSimas, Digital Communications Manager; Iian Campbell, Intern. (Photograph by Matt Fukushima courtesy of the Long Beach CVB.)

Whether it's scouting for whales in the bay, day trips to Catalina Island or shopping for vintage finds on 4th Street, there are plenty of activities visitors to Long Beach can busy themselves with. Still, the city's history as an oil town, a naval base and later its

industrial development as part of the nation's largest port complex have at times overshadowed its leisurely offerings.

"Long Beach, if you go back in its history, because of its beaches and because of its proximity to Los Angeles, was the getaway

for the residents of L.A.," Steve Goodling, president and CEO of the Long Beach Area Conventions & Visitors Bureau (CVB), told the Business Journal. He noted that as residential and industrial development expanded,

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City Plan To Address Climate Change Is Costly But Necessary, Experts Say

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer

California is famous for its sunny weather and abundant coastline. But this location, so favorable to the agriculture and tourism that has long played a significant role in the state's

strong economy, also puts it at a special risk in times of rising sea levels and a changing climate. "We're a coastal city, so it is incredibly important for us to get smart about climate change and

do it quickly," Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia told the Business Journal.

The City of Long Beach recently unveiled a first draft of

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Long Beach May Consider 15% Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance

■ By **DON JERGLER AND KAREN ROBES**
Contributing Writers, Long Beach Media Collaborative

This article is part of "The Housing Divide: Making it in Long Beach," a series of stories from the Long Beach Media Collaborative examining the impacts of the statewide housing crisis on our city. The Collaborative was initiated by the Long Beach Community Foundation and is funded by the Knight Foundation. Visit www.longbeachmc.org for more articles in this series and the award-winning previous series "The Digital Divide: Strengthening the Signal."

You can talk about a national housing shortage, but in Southern California it can easily be called a housing crisis. The lack of affordable housing grows worse and more apparent every year, with fewer than 30% of Los Angeles County residents able to afford a median priced home, according to figures from the California Association of Realtors.

This year, some 200 pieces of state legislation were introduced to address housing issues in some form. One idea being pushed across the nation stands to be among the most controversial. Speak the phrase "inclusionary housing," and it will stoke passion among affordable housing advocates, and draw words of caution from the development community.

Inclusionary housing policies have been adopted in more than 500 jurisdictions in 28 states, according to the National Housing

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More Millennials Identify As LGBTQ+ – But Will They Be Counted?

■ By Editor **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**

In recognition of Pride Month, this edition's Millennial Pulse is about those among our generation who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer). And, compared to the number of out individuals in prior generations, that goes for a lot of us.

The estimates for just how many among the Millennial generation – which includes those aged 22 to 37 – identify as LGBTQ vary wildly. For example, GLAAD published a survey by Harris Poll in 2017 that found as many as

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PortSide: Keeping Up With The Port Of Long Beach

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer



Administrative Aide Claudia Escobedo has had a long career with the City of Long Beach. Escobedo, who immigrated to the United States from Chile almost three decades ago, began working for the city’s housing authority in 2001 and went on to work for the office of former Vice Mayor Bonnie Lowenthal until 2008, when she joined the Port of Long Beach. “You reach a point where you want to do something different,” Escobedo explained, noting that she felt drawn to governmental work because of the job security and benefits. As an administrative aide with the port’s maintenance department, Escobedo handles a variety of tasks that can be summarized by one overarching goal: making sure that operations at the port run smoothly and safely. Among other things, Escobedo is in charge of ensuring that water usage at port construction sites is monitored. Escobedo keeps an eye on the meter system to ensure that harmful pollutants are filtered out before water flows off the site. “Everything has to be environmentally safe; [tenants and contractors] have to make sure that they’re not going to damage our environment,” she explained. Her other tasks include working with the port’s financial department to secure reimbursement for damages on port property, and even fun tasks, like making sure the port’s floats are ready for appearances at events such as the recent Pride parade. “That’s why I love working for the maintenance division, because we do so much of everything,” Escobedo said. ■



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Pilot Program For Minority Business Owners Provides Perspective And Community

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer

It's Friday afternoon and the small conference room on the third floor of Long Beach's soon-to-retire city hall is brimming with laughter. Around the long conference table sits a diverse group of people, immersed in chatter, cracking jokes, as attendees continue to trickle in.

The participants of this lively meeting are at city hall to celebrate their graduation from the city's GROW Long Beach pilot program, an initiative designed to help entrepreneurs of color grow and expand their businesses. Spearheaded by the city's economic development department and led by GROW Long Beach Consultant Vivian Shimoyama, the program seeks to connect business owners with resources and help them develop a vision for the future growth of their companies.

"For our pilot, we wanted to select businesses that were committed to growth, based in Long Beach and they're all minority-owned businesses," Shimoyama said. As the City of Long Beach creates programs to support the priorities laid out in its Economic Blueprint, inclusion has emerged as a crucial target point. "What [we did is seek out] these individuals, to make sure that they were at the table and we could help them grow their business, Shimoyama said. "So we were looking at not only economic inclusion, but racial equity."

The pilot program is part of a larger initiative to empower business owners of color funded by the Citi Foundation and Living Cities. "While the impact of small business growth on the U.S. economy is widely appreciated, the potential of minority-owned small businesses is often overlooked," Ed Skyler, Citi's executive vice president for Global Public Affairs and chair of the Citi Foundation, said in a press release. "These cities recognize this untapped potential and are coming



GROW Long Beach Participants and Administrators from left to right: Juan Carrillo, Ambitious Ales; Arturo Enciso, Gusto Bread; Vivian Shimoyama, GROW Long Beach consultant; Seyed Jelali, city economic development officer; Semira Araya, city business development specialist; Jeff Beasley, Bundts on Melrose; Jennifer Bermudez-Perez, Growing Roots; Jessica Somera, ARCA World Logistics; Maurice Yim, Pow Wow Pizza; Deidre Norville, Our Essence Beauty Supply. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

together to rethink how they work with minority-owned small businesses to help them grow and create high-quality jobs." In total, the initiative awarded \$500,000 in grant funds to programs in Atlanta, El Paso, Long Beach, Newark and Rochester in 2018.

Once in the program, entrepreneurs interviewed by the Business Journal said, the racial and ethnic composition of the cohort didn't play a significant role for them. What they found most valuable about the group was the sense of community it created as they all faced tough questions about the future of their businesses.

"Everyone supports one another, everyone helps lift each other up and gives advice," program participant and owner of Pow Wow Pizza Maurice Yim said. "Before that, I was just going through this alone and I felt alone, like I didn't really

have anyone to turn to. So just meeting all these other people that were like-minded, but also wanted to see me succeed and help each other succeed, it was great. It motivated me to work even harder."

Yim, who used to work as an office network administrator, started his culinary career in 2010. He continued working in his day job, but started taking culinary classes in his spare time and eventually left his job in IT for a position at the Nordstrom Bistro and Cafe at the Los Cerritos Center Mall. From there, he worked his way up through local kitchens, from the James Republic restaurant at the Courtyard Marriott in Downtown Long Beach, to the Sir Winston's Restaurant and Lounge on the Queen Mary and eventually the Teranea Resort in Rancho Palos Verdes. Then, six months ago, Yim started his own business, Pow Wow Pizza.

"This is a whole new world to me. I've worked in kitchens before, as a sous-chef, where I was in charge of doing scheduling and ordering produce, stuff like that. But this added a whole other layer on top of that," Yim said. Tackling the challenges he now faced as a business owner is what led him to the GROW Long Beach program. "My objective was to get a better understanding of how to run a business. This is my first business and I pretty much do everything on my own."

Looking back at the 12 hours of educational programming he received through GROW Long Beach and toward the mentorship phase ahead, Yim said he's already achieved a lot. "Now that I have things in perspective, I have something that I can work towards. It makes things a whole lot easier and more fulfilling as well," he explained. ■



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Inclusionary Housing

(Continued from Page 1)

Conference, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that pushes for building more affordable housing. The Building Industry Association of California (BIA) reports that roughly 200 cities in California have adopted inclusionary zoning ordinances. These ordinances require developers of market-rate housing to include affordable units – the number of units are typically determined based on the area median income (AMI), with income requirements often ranging from 50-120% of AMI – or to pay a fee in-lieu that goes to an affordable housing fund.

Most (80%) rental programs require units to remain affordable for at least 30 years, while one-third of inclusionary housing programs require 99-year or perpetual affordability for rental and/or for-sale housing, data from the BIA shows.

Long Beach has over 176,000 housing units, including single-family homes, apartments, town homes and condominiums. Despite this range of housing opportunities, the city faces numerous challenges in ensuring that people at all economic levels have access to safe and affordable housing near jobs and transit, according to a webpage devoted to the city's Inclusionary Housing Study, which is still in the works.

That study, along with some options to implement policies, is expected to be presented to the Long Beach City Council by the end of the year. Policy suggestions could include a mandate that developers of market-rate housing either designate 15% of units in their projects as affordable or that they pay into a fund for affordable housing, according to Christopher Koontz, manager of the Long Beach Development Services Planning Bureau.

Koontz sees the 15% requirement as a middle-ground in cities up and down California – some cities require roughly a quarter of units built in new developments to be considered affordable, while other cities require a little as 5% of units to be affordable.

“Obviously when you get 15% of the units affordable, that’s a lot more affordable [housing] than what you have before,” Koontz said. “It does depress the total amount of development done, and increases costs to the builder, so you have to find the correct balance of those tradeoffs, and what’s right for the cities. So that’s the kind of economic analysis and hard work that we’re doing, but we’re also talking at community meetings about what they’d like to see, so we hope to wrap that up this calendar year.”

Santa Ana is one city that has a 15% inclusionary zoning requirement. It applies to new residential projects located within the city, including new construction and condominium conversions. For-sale units and rental units are restricted to a target income level group at the applicable affordable housing cost for a minimum of 55 years.

In Long Beach, there isn’t much empty space left to build on. Most developments are tear-down and rebuild projects, or must be built in spaces with tight constraints. “The days are long gone of building these thousands of units of affordable developments,” Richardson said. “Now it’s mixed income. It’s more balanced.” He added: “Long Beach is growing and developing, and we need to make sure some of that is affordable.”

A large portion of new developments coming out of the ground are on parking lots and small parcels, according to Brian Ulaszewski, principal and executive director for City Fabrick, a nonprofit design studio.

These small parcels create a barrier to development, particularly in densely packed downtown, where a large share of the city’s new housing is being built. Ulaszewski said there are numerous parking lots and vacant lots in downtown that are not yet spoken for, but noted that they are spread out around the area. “It’s difficult to get two or three parcels next to each other to make a good development footprint,” Ulaszewski said.

Inclusionary Cost

Tim Piasky, CEO of the Los Angeles/Ventura Chapter of the Building Industry Association of Southern California, believes inclusionary housing comes at a cost. “What one has to consider is, ‘Where does that subsidy come from?’” Piasky said. Market-rate units end up subsidizing affordable units and raising the overall cost of each unit, he said.

“It pushes up the cost of the rent or the purchase price on the other units,” Piasky said. “If the market can bare that increase, then the project still moves forward.”

If the market cannot bare it?

“Then the project doesn’t happen,” he said.

A study by San Jose State University in 2012 on inclusionary zoning shows cities with inclusionary ordinances ended up with 8% fewer homes and 9% higher prices between 1980 and 1990, and 7% fewer homes and 20% higher prices between 1990 and 2000.

A more recent analysis in 2016 by Capitol Matrix Consulting, a Sacramento-based economic and policy consultancy, estimated that a 15% inclusionary zoning requirement applied to all new housing built in California would result in a \$67,000 increase to the price of remaining market-rate units.

“Most of the studies will show that there is an overall decrease in the overall housing production,” said Piasky, who believes any inclusionary zoning program should be voluntary and incentive based.

There are also studies that show that inclusionary zoning policies do not lead to significant declines in overall housing production or to increases in market-rate prices. The National Housing Conference’s Center for Housing Policy has published briefs looking at the



Christopher Koontz is manager of the planning bureau within Long Beach Development Services. According to Koontz, a policy recommendation to designate 15% of units as affordable in new developments could be coming to the city council before the end of the year. (Photograph by Stephen Carr)

impact of inclusionary zoning on the housing market. One brief, “Separating Fact from Fiction to Design Effective Inclusionary Housing Programs,” found that inclusionary zoning policies have not driven housing costs up in the vast majority of cases where they exist.

The brief, published in 2016, looked at more than 500 local jurisdictions that implemented inclusionary housing policies at that time. “The most highly regarded empirical evidence suggests that inclusionary housing programs can produce affordable housing and do not lead to significant declines in overall housing production or to increases in market-rate prices,” the brief states.

Dave Powers, vice president of multi-family development with Sares-Regis Group, which has several projects ongoing in Long Beach, is more frequently encountering inclusionary zoning and affordable requirements on developers. “We’re coming across that more and more,” he said. “You don’t make money on affordable housing, you just don’t.”

Powers said he has run into opportunities to develop in cities where inclusionary zoning is in place, and did not go ahead with a project because he couldn’t make the numbers work.

However, since Sares-Regis focuses on large developments, Powers believes many of the firm’s projects may still be able to go ahead with a 15% inclusionary zoning requirement in place. He speculated that developers of smaller projects would severely struggle under such a policy.

“There’s a limit to what we’re willing to do,” Powers said. He cautioned that city planners thoroughly consider any new zoning requirements on market rate developments before they are enacted. “I think they need to be careful about what they’re going to ask for,” he said.

Derek Burnham, principal at Burnham Planning & Development and the former planning administrator for Long Beach, consults with developers and helps them through the permitting pro-

Brian Hendricks, founder of Magis Realty LLC, a boutique real estate development and services firm focused on Santa Ana and its downtown area, thinks the requirement is a disincentive because it makes it difficult for developers to turn a profit on their projects. “It’s brutal,” Hendricks said.

The idea behind inclusionary housing, he explained, is the higher you make the requirement – 15%, 20%, more – the more affordable units will be built. But developers shy away from areas with high percentage inclusionary zoning requirements, or they reduce the size of their planned developments to save money – either way, it yields fewer affordable units, Hendricks said. “It doesn’t pencil at all,” he said. “A lot of projects actually never happen because the inclusionary fee or requirement is so high. A practicality is it can actually reduce the overall number of affordable units that are developed. It goes to the point of making no sense at all.”

However, Hendricks is not entirely against affordable requirements for market-rate developments. “I’m a huge advocate of affordable housing. I’m all for it,” he said. He believes a 7% requirement would be reasonable, would enable developers to build and make a profit, and would better serve the goal of getting more housing built.

“You will get three times as many projects going, and you actually end up winning,” Hendricks said.

Angel’s In The Details

Ninth District Councilmember Rex Richardson is one member of local government who has expressed a strong interest in bringing more affordable housing to the city. One proposal he supports is to get more accessory dwelling units, also known as granny flats, built. A series of state statutes have made building an ADU much easier. Long Beach, which adopted an ordinance on ADUs in 2017, has seen a spike in ADU developments, which can be either 800 square feet or half the size of the main

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The Beacon, an affordable housing development by Century Housing, consists of 160 units in two buildings at 1201-1235 Long Beach Blvd. One building includes 39 supportive housing units, while the other is made up of 121 units reserved for seniors. (Photograph by Stephen Carr)

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residence, whichever is the smaller of the two.

More than 100 ADU projects have been built and about 231 applications have been filed with the city, according to Long Beach Development Services. Most of the permitted ADUs are garage conversions or other changes to an existing structure.

Richardson said cities can no longer wait for help, or guidance, from the federal government. “We’re no longer simply administrators of federal policy,” Richardson said. “A lot of the social issues that plague our cities, the innovation and the advocacy and putting a focus on those things, really comes from cities. There is a lot that cities can do that can have a direct [impact] on that.”

Richardson believes there is a need to create more housing for all income levels: affordable housing, supportive housing, student housing, senior housing.

Richardson likes to use the phrase “the angel’s in the details” to make his point that affordable housing is a blessing to those who need it. “Mixed income housing is a smart way to develop affordable housing,” he said. He believes developers ought to leverage increasing demand for market rate housing to offset the costs of building more affordable units.

Richardson believes there is already one significant incentive in place for developers of market-rate housing in Downtown Long Beach, where so many units are slated to go up with the promise of premium pricing. The city commissioned and footed the bill for an environmental impact report for the entire area, so any developer coming into downtown is able to forego the often costly and time-consuming EIR process.

Small Parcels

There has been a 60% increase in adults ages 45 and up renting in the last decade, and there are 75 million adults ages 18 to 34 entering the rental market, according to the multi-family industry group WeAreApartments.org.

The group says that between now and 2030, the nation will need 328,000 new apartment units to be built every year to accommodate household growth and losses to the housing stock.

cess, design review, and other steps and regulations. He has worked on numerous developments throughout the city.

Burnham noted that there is no shortage of considerations that must be taken into account before an inclusionary zoning ordinance is put in place, such as land cost, construction costs, as well as present and future rental rates or sale prices. Even with all those elements accounted for, it will come down to the scale of each project, where bigger developments, such as those Sares-Regis is working on, will be better able to better absorb an affordable mandate, he said. “I think it can work, but it’s going to have an effect on the smaller margin projects,” Burnham said.

The Building Industry Association, which opposes mandatory inclusionary zoning, has suggested that if an ordinance is passed, that those regulations only apply to projects greater than 50 units. “Small and medium size projects less than 50 units have a much more difficult time taking advantage of economies of scale and possible incentives,” reads a position statement from the group.

Burnham said many developers, regardless of the size of their planned projects, do shy away from places with affordable housing requirements, sometimes because they don’t feel they can make enough money or that they won’t make any profit or could even lose money on a project. “Developers will always want to have the best return that they can earn,” Burnham said. “It does place a bigger burden on whether a project’s feasible.”

Richardson, however, doesn’t believe that developers will be turned off by requirements to include affordable units in market rate developments. “Do developers want to make money?” he asked, making note that housing prices are high and the real estate industry is a lucrative business. “I support an inclusionary housing policy. That has to be part of the mix.” He added, “We need to protect, preserve and produce affordable units.”

Koontz, the Planning Bureau manager, said affordable housing has been built in Long Beach. “We’ve actually produced a good amount of very low-income housing units,” Koontz said. “Obviously not nearly enough in comparison to the demand. But we [are] very proud of the work that we have done. For the past several decades we have recog-

nized the rising cost of housing and the housing shortage.”

However, like Richardson, Koontz believes it’s not just more low-income housing that the city needs. “We’d love to see some more middle-income housing, not just exclusively luxury housing, and I think we’re looking at how we do that,” Koontz said. “But it’s also about the units themselves. So, a discussion we have day in, day out with the development community is not just building studios or one-bedrooms, but trying to get more two- and even three-bedroom units.”

Richardson agreed with Koontz that

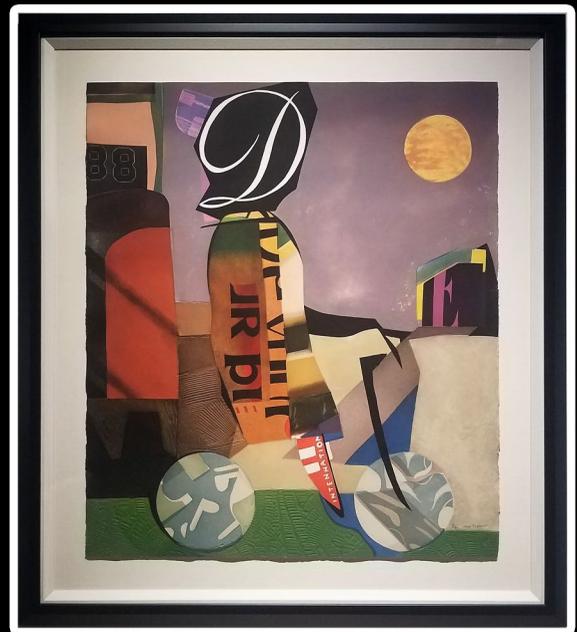
simply building more affordable housing for low income residents in the city won’t cut it.

“We can’t lose sight of the conversation about home ownership,” he said. “It’s the still the No. 1 way for people to build wealth and have economic resiliency. A whole generation of people are having a hard time breaking into home ownership. That’s going to have long-term effects to our long-term economy, to make sure people own homes. We have to be more thoughtful in the policies and decisions we make because we want to make sure there’s a future.” ■

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As Lena Gonzalez Heads To Sacramento, Long Beach Gears Up For Special Election To Fill Council Vacancy

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer



While the citizens of Long Beach now have one political vacancy filled with a new state senator representing them (as well as the residents of several Gateway Cities), they now must contend with a vacancy and upcoming special election for the city's 1st District council

seat. After being elected with 69% of the vote to serve as state senator for California's 33rd District, Lena Gonzalez resigned from her position as councilmember of Long Beach's 1st District last week. She was sworn into state office on June 12.

Voter turnout for the special election to fill the state senate district – left vacant by Ricardo Lara, who was recently elected to serve as state insurance commissioner – was 11.4% in Long Beach, according to the office of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk. Within her hometown, Gonzalez won 66.5% of the vote.

According to Long Beach City Clerk Monique De La Garza, a special election to fill the council seat must

be held by November 5. Los Angeles County will run the election, and has estimated the cost will run \$260,000, De La Garza said. "We anticipate going to council in early July with the declaration of vacancy and the call for the election," she said, explaining the first steps. "If that's the case, then our nomination period would start July 15 and go through August 9. So it's a compressed timeline. Unlike a primary or special election, everything happens a little bit faster."

Two candidates have already announced their intention to run. Mary Zendejas, a member of the Long Beach Transit Board of Directors and the board for the nonprofit Disabled Resources Center, announced her candidacy on June 7. "I have worked to improve our public transit systems, advocated for more affordable housing and tenant protections, and helped ensure that people in wheelchairs have equal access in the workplace," she stated in a press release. "I am excited to bring a new and unique set of perspectives with me to City Hall." Zendejas works as the director of regional accounts for GNS Medical Supplies and holds a bachelor's degree in communications from California State University, Long Beach.

Elliot Gonzales, a former member of the Long Beach Sustainable City Commission, announced his candidacy at an event at Harvey Milk Promenade Park on June 8. He told attendees that he is a progressive democratic socialist. "In our vision, society is concerned about what type of world we leave behind for

future generations," he said. Gonzales said that his platform calls for a green New Deal, which includes a shift to 100% renewable energy and divestment from oil as an energy source. He is also focusing on affordable housing.

Another 1st District resident, Ray Morquecho, launched a website in March indicating his intention to run, but he has made no formal announcement since. He did not return a request for comment.

To ensure that the 1st District council office continues to operate before the election, Mayor Robert Garcia on June 12 appointed one of his own staffers, Daniel Brezenoff, as administrator to manage the office in the interim. He will not vote at city council meetings or propose legislation, according to a statement from Garcia's office. "First District residents deserve the highest level of service and representation until they can elect a new councilmember," Garcia said of Brezenoff, who is the senior advisor on his staff. "Daniel's many years of experience at City Hall and in the 1st District make him an excellent choice to ensure residents' needs are addressed during the transition period."

"I'm looking forward to working closely with 1st District residents again, and to making sure they continue to have a voice at City Hall," Brezenoff stated, referring to his previous tenure as legislative director for Garcia when he served as 1st District councilmember. "We don't want 1st District residents to miss a beat during this transition." ■

New Ethics Commissioners Yet To Be Announced, Expected To Take Oath In August

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer

Seven months after Long Beach voters approved Measure CCC, creating a City Charter and Ethics Commission, Mayor Robert Garcia and City Auditor Laura Doud are reviewing applications for a total of four seats on the commission to be filled by their offices. "The voters voted overwhelmingly to establish an ethics commission," Garcia said. "It's also something I and the city auditor have always believed in. Most cities have one."

Selections are expected to be made in June, according to a memorandum by the city attorney's office, but both Garcia and Doud said they did not have a final list of appointees to share at this point. However, Garcia did share his priorities for the two candidates he is asked to select. "We want people with integrity, folks that care about their

community and most importantly, we're looking at what's laid out in the charter," he said.

The charter, which was approved by voters on November 6, 2018, requires two of the members selected by the mayor and city auditor to have special expertise in matters of particular interest to the commission, including public policy, campaign finance, auditing of compliance with ethics laws, protection of whistleblowers and technology as it relates to open government. The other two members are required to "have involvement with civic organizations with a demonstrated history of involvement in local government," according to the ordinance. The remaining three commissioners are appointed by the mayor's and auditor's appointees.

"I think that this is a great system,"

Garcia said. "I love that the appointments come from the community, come from the auditor, not just me, which is basically how every other commission works." Many other cities, he noted, have ethics commissions that are fully appointed by the mayor, just like all other commissions in the City of Long Beach. "This is the only commission in the city where only two of the members are directly appointed by the mayor," Garcia said.

Once assembled, the commission is tasked with assisting departments in developing their conflict of interest codes and developing an educational program for newly elected officials. They will also be asked to make recommendations to the mayor and the city council regarding campaign finance reform, governmental ethics and conflicts

of interest. During its first meeting, the four commissioners selected by Garcia and Doud are expected to review applications for the remaining four commissioner's seats and receive a refresher on relevant laws, such as the Brown Act and Robert's Rules of Order. Future meetings will include the confirmation of the remaining councilmembers as well as a review of the city's current ethics handbook, policies and procedures.

A tentative timeline released by the city attorney's office in March estimated for the confirmation of commissioners by the city council to take place in July. According to the same timeline, commissioners are expected to complete background checks, file the FPPC Form 700 Statement of Economic Interest and take their oath in August. ■

Broadway Redesign Draws Mixed Reactions

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer



This month, the city is expected to put the finishing touches on the Broadway street reconfiguration, which reduced the number of lanes on the major thoroughfare to one in each direction in favor of new bike lanes protected by a row of parking spaces. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

Two ambitious projects designed to improve safety for cyclists and calm traffic along Broadway are scheduled for completion in the upcoming months. For a total investment of over \$9.6 million in local and federal funds, parking-protected bike lanes have been added to Broadway between Cesar Chavez Park and Redondo Avenue, as well as on 3rd Street from the same park to Alamitos Avenue. Spanning a little less than three miles in each direction, the projects have received mixed reactions from local residents and businesses.

The changes included a “road diet,” which cut down the number of lanes from two to one in each direction, and follow the “Complete Streets” concept. The idea behind Complete Streets is to promote alternative means of transportation, such as cycling, by sectioning off portions of the road and protecting them with a buffer zone of parking spaces.

Ken Davis, co-owner of the Hot Java coffee shop at the intersection of Broadway and Junipero Avenue, isn't convinced. “It's awful, I hate it and it doesn't work,” he said of the newly reconfigured roadway. Davis said he still noticed cyclists riding on the sidewalk, and that the new setup erased any parking and loading zones in front of his business. “I'm a coffee shop – my business is in the morning. And we've seen a dramatic decrease in business because customers can't get here,” he explained. “It's taken a dramatic hit on our business, to where we're fighting to make up that loss. And it'll be years.”

Other businesses in the area reported similar experiences. “We've noticed a decline [in] our business, in our sales, because there's less parking available,” Mandie Ireton, a manager at Gallagher's Long Beach Pub & Grill, told the Business Journal. She also noted that some drivers might not feel comfortable using the new parking spaces out of fear that they could back into the bike lane and collide with cyclists. “A lot of people feel that it's really unsafe the way that it's set up,” she said, adding that in conversations with other businesses in the area, she heard similar concerns regarding the safety and availability of parking on Broadway following the completion of the project.

According to the City of Long Beach Public Works Department, over 100 diagonal parking spaces were added on 2nd Street and 1st Street to alleviate parking issues. City Engineer Alvin Papa said the department didn't have exact numbers for the amount of parking spaces on Broadway before and after reconfiguration, “as the amount of parking varies by the vehicle length and how close vehicles park.” He also noted that the city was looking into the idea of restriping Appleton Street between Los Alamitos and Junipero avenues to add 60-70 parking spaces. “Without a doubt, there's less parking between Alamitos and Redondo,” Davis said. “I want an accountability of how many parking spaces we actually lost on Broadway.”

Evan Whitener, owner of The Bicycle Stand bike shop on Broadway,

said he understands that residents and business owners might have a tough time adapting to the new layout and the changes in neighborhood traffic that came with it. “It is a hard pill for them to swallow and I cannot speak for them,” Whitener said. “It takes five years to swallow a pill like that. It doesn't go down easily, and you can't expect people to change their mind instantly.” But, Whitener added, in the long run he thinks businesses will benefit from the shift to alternative transportation methods the new layout encourages. “We continue to find ways to fix the problems around us,” he said. “So even though we're losing parking spaces, if we just have more opportunities to do things without using cars, well, then hopefully that won't become quite as much of an issue.”

Personally, Whitener noted, he feels much safer spending time in the neighborhood around his business and strolling around the neighborhood with his son because of the separation the bike lanes have created between pedestrians on the sidewalk and traffic on the road. “That's something that I never foresaw, and I'm very grateful for the benefit of that, aside from whether or not it's perfect,” he said. “Perfection is a moving target and it takes feedback and understanding of use to hone these things and make them perfect. . . . It's going to take time and revision over a period of years, not weeks or months.”

Second District Councilmember Jeannine Pearce expressed a similar sentiment. In a May 30 newsletter sent

out by her office, Pearce acknowledged that the results “aren't perfect.” In the newsletter, she informed constituents that she has made several formal requests to improve the new layout, including the elimination of red no-parking zones wherever possible as well as designated “loading islands” and trash bin zones. “I am a firm believer that we never get things right the first time, that we must work incrementally to get it right,” Pearce said in her newsletter. “This corridor and project is a true work in progress, but one that will ultimately create safer streets for cars, pedestrians and cyclists. It is important for me that you know your voices are heard.”

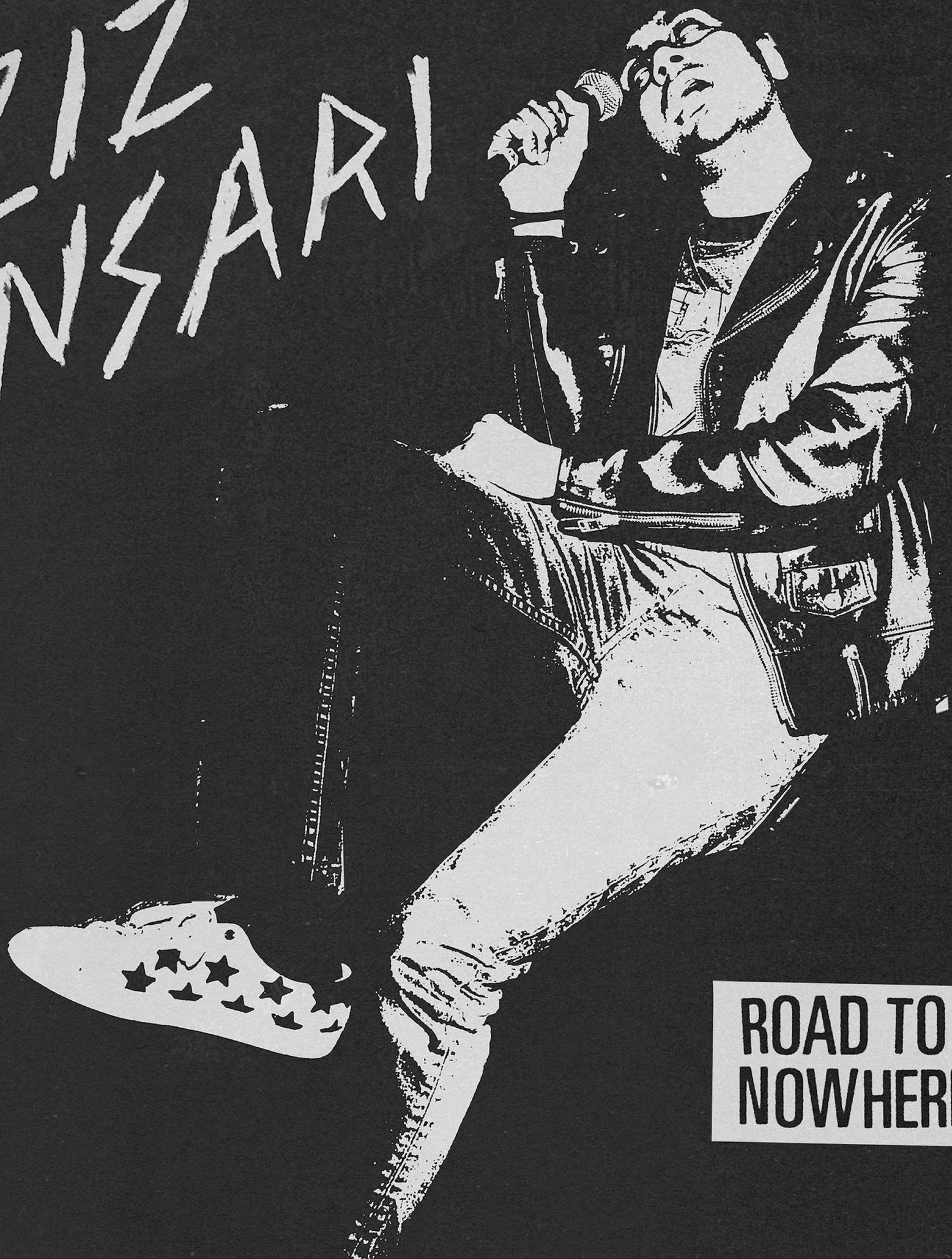
Cameron Vodegel, owner of the My Bicycle bike shop on Broadway and Orange Avenue, said he's supportive of the project overall, but noted that the design of the project felt rushed. “It's great, but they should have asked the businesses before they designed it,” Vodegel said, adding that a bike lane on just one side of the street might have been preferable to the current configuration. He also expressed some concerns over safety. “Broadway is a very fast-moving street and it's kind of dangerous, still. There's a lot of blind spots on the intersections,” he said.

Vodegel suggested that the new bike lanes could be made safer by adding yield signs on intersections, lights to illuminate the path at night and setting a lower speed limit for cars. More outreach and education might also help drivers, residents and cyclists understand the new system and make it safer for everyone, he added. “This is a new style of bike path and a lot of people just don't know how to deal with it,” he said.

Some residents have welcomed the calmed traffic, said Sidney Cramer, president of the On Broadway Business Association. “The people that live on the street say it's quieter, and the feedback is good,” he said. Cramer himself drives almost the entire length of the street on his daily commute and said the road diet has made his trips down Broadway calmer. “The one nice thing about it being one lane is the drive is less stressful,” he noted. “Maybe it adds a couple more minutes to the drive, but hopefully the drive is a little more pleasant.”

Cramer said he hasn't noticed an impact on the length of his commute, but he's also heard concerns about the rearranged parking spaced in the area. He noted that the new layout wasn't very intuitive and time limits had not yet been painted on the green curbs, resulting in tickets for drivers who overstayed their welcome. “I think it will take time for people to adjust and understand the layout,” Cramer said. ■

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Real Estate & Development

■ By BRANDON RICHARDSON
Senior Writer

West Gateway Development Project Delayed

The ambitious 752-unit, 40-story development proposed by Trammel Crow at 600 W. Broadway has been delayed, according to the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners June 10 agenda. Port documents state that “significant changes to the project design are required to meet city planning requirements resulting in project cost increases and extended design, EIR [environmental impact report] document procurement and entitlements schedule.” The result is an anticipated seven-month delay in the project’s approval schedule. The closing date for escrow on the 5.6-acre, Port of Long Beach-owned property was initially set for June 28; however, Trammel Crow requested a seven-month extension to January 31, 2020, which was unanimously approved by the board of harbor commissioners during the meeting. The port purchased the property in 2011 for \$8 million and is selling it for \$30.25 million.

102-Unit Affordable Housing Project Breaks Ground

For the third time in 2019, Long Beach celebrated the groundbreaking of an affordable housing project in Midtown. Construction on AMCAL Multi-Housing Inc.’s Las Ventanas project commenced on June 6, and is slated to bring 102 affordable apartments to the community in 2021.

“We have an incredible homeless problem here in the State of California,” AMCAL Vice President of Development Alexander Pratt said during the event, citing a recent report that the number of chronically homeless people has in-

creased 17% in L.A. County since 2018’s count. “I think the exciting thing about this project is its high-quality housing, the leveraging of transit and the leveraging of opportunities where we’re bringing a community together.”

The project consists of one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments for individuals and families earning between 30% and 60% of the area median income. Rather than keeping people of certain socioeconomic levels separate, Pratt noted that the Las Ventanas community will have a mix of households at various income levels, which is a better housing method than taking “the poorest people” and putting them in a “poor area with decent housing.”

Located at 1795 Long Beach Blvd., the project is directly across the street from a Metro Blue Line stop, allowing residents easy access for commuting. The building design includes clean technologies, with one-third of the complex’s energy coming from solar panels.

“The building is LEED Gold, so it’s a sustainable building, which we’re really happy about, and there’s going to be great amenities for residents. I really love that,” Mayor Robert Garcia said. “What better way to celebrate the history of this neighborhood than to put [in] housing.”

Las Ventanas residents will have access to a computer lab and an 8,167-square-foot outdoor recreation area, including open spaces, a play area, outdoor seating and barbecues. The project also includes 4,000 square feet of ground floor retail.

The Long Beach Community Investment Company (LBCIC) approved a \$4 million acquisition loan in 2017 for the purchase and development of the site by AMCAL. “This is the third project we’ve dedicated in Long Beach just this year,



Construction is underway on AMCAL Multi-Housing Inc.’s 102-unit affordable housing development, Las Ventanas. Pictured from left: John Thomas, board chair of the Long Beach Community Investment Company; Alexander Pratt, vice president of development for AMCAL; Mayor Robert Garcia; Tyler Curley, chief of staff for then-Councilmember Lena Gonzalez; Linda Tatum, director of Long Beach Development Services; and Dennis Murata, L.A. County Department of Mental Health Service Area 8 district chief. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)



American eatery The 908 opened its doors to the public at Long Beach Exchange on June 2. Pictured from left are co-owners Juan Carlos Guerra, Ian Moston, Ciaran Gough and Todd Miller. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

with many more to come,” LBCIC Board Chair John Thomas said. “This is another project that demonstrates our attention to detail – detail of architecture, a sense of place and a sense of community.”

Through the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), 15 of Las Ventanas’ units will be reserved for individuals suffering from mental illness who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. In addition to housing, these residents will have access to resources such as case management.

“When we talk about the most vulnerable population among the homeless community, these are individuals who have been stigmatized and who are homeless due to their mental illness,” DMH Service Area 8 District Chief Dennis Murata said. “In order to sustain housing for families . . . there needs to be additional support. We’re here to provide that.”

The 908 Restaurant Opens At LBX

Owned and operated by Long Beach residents, The 908 opened its doors at the Long Beach Exchange (LBX) on June 2, serving up guests classic American fare. Located at 3850 Worsham Ave., Suite 410, the restaurant’s menu includes items such as a burger, a 32 ounce tomahawk ribeye, pork chops, fried chicken, lobster mac ‘n’ cheese and salmon, to name a few dishes.

“We really started working on this concept and reached out to the landlords at LBX in February of 2018. We knew we wanted a lot of local influence,” co-owner Ciaran Gough said, noting architecture by IDA and logos by Ritual Design, both Long Beach companies. “Originally, we were playing with the idea of calling it ‘The 90808,’ but then we felt like we wanted to celebrate the whole of Long Beach and not just one ZIP code.”

The 4,087-square-foot restaurant – and 900-square-foot patio – is owned and operated by four partners: Gough, Ian Moston, Juan Carlos Guerra and Todd Miller, with additional financial backing by four investors. Gough has lived in Long Beach for 16 years and has a long history in the restaurant industry, including a nine-year stint as an executive with Yard House. Moston is a Long Beach native and has owned Riley’s on 2nd Street in Belmont Shore for 13 years.

The night before opening The 908, Gough said the team held an event for around 300 family and friends to celebrate, as well as work out any kinks prior to opening to the public. Opening day went smoothly, with only minor issues, which Gough said is expected of any restaurant in its infancy. Thus far, guests have been “impressed” with the restaurant’s offerings, he added, noting the menu is relatively small, which allows the restaurant to focus on quality.

“Our whole concept is really Long Beach based,” Gough said. “We really wanted to create a restaurant that we would want to hang out in and felt like there was something missing [in terms of] an elevated dining experience on this side of town, but with a lot of that Long Beach swagger.”

To achieve some of that swagger, the partners reached out to the California State University, Long Beach, art department and ultimately commissioned students Mathew O’Connor and Riley Waite to paint a large mural inside the restaurant depicting Long Beach in a graffiti art style. The artists also created several smaller accent pieces that are hanging in the eatery.

New Cafe Opens Near Traffic Circle

Executive Chef Marc Chitwood and entrepreneur Nicholas Stoks celebrated the opening their first culinary partnership, Steel Cup Café, earlier this month. Located at 2201 N. Lakewood Blvd., the cafe is founded on the partners’ shared values: community, creativity and environmental consciousness. Steel Cup’s organic coffees and teas are Fair Trade and Rainforest Alliance-certified in order to keep in line with their mission to operate as an environmentally sustainable business. Additionally, the owners have opted to utilize plant-based containers that are 100% biodegradable, rather than single-use plastics. The food at Steel Cup is prepared from scratch daily, with a menu that includes “classic cafe favorites with an artisan twist,” according to Chitwood. Menu items, including sandwiches, salads, brunch plates, breakfast options and pastries, are made using goods sourced from local vendors and producers. A three-day grand opening celebration is planned beginning Friday, June 21, including

live music, raffles and local vendor pop-ups. Steel Cup Café is open daily from 5 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cannabis Retailer Purchases Long Beach Dispensary For \$13M

Major cannabis retailer MedMen recently announced that it is purchasing Long Beach dispensary One Love Beach Club for \$13 million.

“We’re excited to welcome Long Beach to the MedMen family and continue our growth in the most important cannabis market in the world,” CEO Adam Bierman, MedMen stated in a press release.

One Love was established in 2009 at 2767 E. Broadway as one of the city’s first marijuana dispensaries. The shop closed when the city banned marijuana sales, but was one of the first to reopen following legalization by voters in 2016.

MedMen is paying \$10 million of the transaction in voting shares, \$1 million in cash at closing and \$2 million in deferred cash. Subject to regulatory approvals at the local and state level, the transaction is expected to close within 45 days from the announcement.

“It has been an honor serving the Long Beach community over the past ten years,” the Abrams family, owner and operator of One Love, said in a statement. “We look forward to MedMen continuing to provide our community with high-quality cannabis.”

MedMen currently operates 22 dispensaries across five states, including Arizona, California, Illinois, Nevada and New York. The company is in the process of opening 10 more locations, including locations in Florida and Massachusetts.

Cannabis Testing Facility Construction Completed

Irvine-based cannabis testing provider Gala Pharmaceutical Inc. completed construction on its latest testing facility in Long Beach, the company announced earlier this month. Gala is in the process of ordering equipment and has begun steps toward accreditation for the new facility. “Our plan of positioning Gala to play a key role in providing quality testing services to customers in Southern California is just around the corner,” CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors Maqsood Rehman stated. The company did not immediately respond to a request regarding the location and size of the facility.

Recent Transactions By Local Firms

The following is a list of recent multi-family and office property transactions by the teams at Kinnersy’s Brokerage House and Stepp Commercial:

- 319 Walnut Ave. – Stepp Principal Robert Stepp and Senior Vice President Michael Toveg represent-

ed the seller, a private Long Beach investor, in the \$2.6 million sale of this six-unit apartment complex in the Alamitos Beach neighborhood. The buyer is L.A.-based Vamidi LLC. Built in 1967, the property includes five two-bedroom units, three one-bedroom units and eight parking spaces.

- 1969 Cedar Ave. – Stepp Principal Robert Stepp and Vice President Mark Witsken represented the seller, an L.A.-based private investor, in the nearly \$1.78 million sale of this two-building, six unit apart-

ment property in the South Wrigley neighborhood. The buyer was also an L.A.-based private investor. Built in 1955, the property was recently renovated and includes on-site laundry facilities, parking and air conditioning in all units.

- 2017 E. Broadway, #201 – Kinnersy’s President Cameron Jacques and Vice President Brian Russell were the listing brokers in the nearly \$1.36 million sale of this 2,730-square-foot office condominium to KW Engineering, which is relocating from 920 Atlantic Ave. ■

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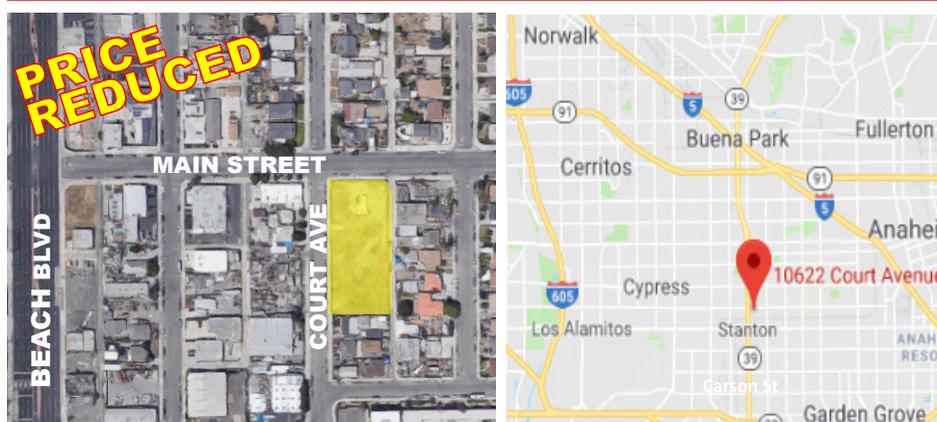
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Building A Better Long Beach: Foreign Investment Bringing Condos And Retail To Central Long Beach

■ By BRANDON RICHARDSON
Senior Writer

For the last 15 years, an undisclosed foreign investment company has been developing large-scale residential and commercial projects around the world, according to local real estate agent Oriana Shea. To date, the company has only three projects in the U.S.: a Holiday Inn in El Monte, a mixed-use development called Hawaii Ocean Plaza in Honolulu and Long Beach Garden Home.

“They basically started looking at areas like Long Beach that they felt had a housing shortage,” Shea, team leader and listing specialist at The Oriana Shea Group, a Long Beach-based real estate agency handling sales for the project, said. “They were looking for an area to develop that was up and coming, and also close in proximity to the ocean. There is opportunity for growth and development [in Long Beach].”

Located at 1570-1598 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach Garden Home consists of 14 one-bedroom and 22 two-bedroom condominiums on the second through fourth floors of the development. All one-bedroom homes are approximately 1,000 square feet and include one to 1.5 bathrooms and one or two balconies. The two-bedroom units are approximately 1,300 square feet, with 2.5 bathrooms and one balcony each. All 36 condos include one subterranean parking space per bedroom, a full-size washer and dryer, stainless steel appliances and a gas cooking range.

Residents will have access to an on-site gym, as well as a garden area on the second floor, adding outdoor space apart from the units’ balconies. “It’s a private garden setting with a fountain [and] barbecue area,” Shea said. “It really affords

the homeowner that feel of the indoor-outdoor living experience.”

According to Shea, the condos will not be listed until around August, after the model units are completed in July; however, reservations are already being made. The condos range from \$450,000 to just under \$600,000, depending on the number of rooms and the location within the building – better views equal greater value.

“It’s a way lower price point [in terms of] price per square foot than . . . any of the recent development in downtown. And people that are commuting in and out of L.A. can walk to the Blue Line,” Shea said.

Homebuyers who purchase a unit prior to construction completion will have their choice of finishes, including tile, cabinets, countertops and flooring – various hardwood and carpet options are available. Unlike some projects, the final sales price of the home is fixed, and will not increase based on the finishes chosen by homebuyers, Shea added.

The ground floor of Long Beach

Garden Home features five for-sale retail spaces ranging from 1,440 to 2,558 square feet for a total of approximately 10,000 square feet. Each commercial unit includes central air conditioning and one parking stall for every 250 square feet of retail, which equates to 40 spaces total.

Despite investors purchasing the land in 2015, construction did not commence on the \$20 million project until 2017, Shea explained. The grand opening is currently slated for before the end of the year, but she noted the date could be pushed to early 2020 if there are any delays in construction.

“The reaction and the response that we’ve had from people that have started coming into the sales gallery has been phenomenal. I’ve said for years Long Beach has been a well-kept secret . . . in terms of housing affordability,” Shea said. “I have a feeling it’s not going to be that way for too much longer. But, relatively speaking, to be able to live close to the beach and have access to this urban lifestyle – it’s kind of a no-brainer far as I’m concerned.” ■



Long Beach Garden Home, a 36-condominium development at 1570-1598 Long Beach Blvd., is expected to be completed by the end of the year, according to Oriana Shea, team leader and listing specialist at The Oriana Shea Group, the real estate agency handling sales for the project. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

CITY OF LONG BEACH BID OPPORTUNITIES

TITLE	BID NUMBER	DATE
Temporary Medical Staffing	RFQ HE19-072	06/20/2019
Oracle Hardware, Installation Service and Premier Support	ITB T119-093	06/24/2019
Large Potable Water Valve Replacement	WD-30-15	06/25/2019
Shop Equipment Repair & Maintenance	ITB FS19-043	06/26/2019
Improvements to Taxiway C	R-7139	07/01/2019
Contract for Local Street Improvements	R-7153	07/02/2019
Inmate Telephone and Video System	RFP PD19-079	07/10/2019
Cast Iron Water Main Replacement Project	WD-28-17	07/11/2019
Maintenance Office Remodel	RFP FS19-048	07/25/2019
Qualification and Selection of Peer Reviewers	RFQ DV17-112	Continuous

Some of the listed projects have scheduled mandatory pre-bid meetings which may have already occurred due to publication lead times

Bidder Registration

To receive notifications of bid opportunities, register with the City of Long Beach at www.longbeach.gov/finance/business-info/purchasing-division/purchasing-division/. Additional details on upcoming bids and how to register can be found on the website.

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Realty Views: Delinquent Mortgages Are Dropping to Record Lows

■ Perspective By **TERRY ROSS**

While the housing market is experiencing a malaise this spring with homes lingering for longer periods on the market and buyers being more cautious about how much they are willing to spend on a dwelling – which has impacted home prices in all areas of Southern California – the low number of homes carrying delinquent mortgages indicates solid national consumer strength.

As of February, the number of mortgages that were past due by more than 30 days had dipped to a 19-year low for the month at 4%, and the foreclosure inventory rate was at a 20-year low at 0.4%. This is remarkable, considering how strong the residential real estate market was in the early 2000s before

the recession hit in 2008.

According to CoreLogic, these early-year statistics are driving consumer home equity to record levels, which is contributing to the low delinquency rate.

“The persistently impressive economic expansion continues to drive down housing market distress, with delinquencies and foreclosures hitting near two-decade lows,” CoreLogic’s deputy chief economist, Ralph McLaughlin, stated in a May press release. “Furthermore, with unemployment at a 50-year low, wage growth nearing double-digit inflation and a positive demographic structure that will drive housing demand upwards, the future of U.S. housing and mortgage markets

look bright even if short-term indicators suggest cooling.”

This might seem like a statistical anomaly, since most sellers and their agents have seen a softening of the market this year and a slight lowering of expectations when it comes to asking prices. But the good news is that the current blip in price escalation does not appear to be impacting the ability of owners to make their payments and hold onto their homes. This says volumes about the current U.S. economy and that many of the lessons of the housing bubble have not fallen on deaf ears.

“We are on track to test generational lows as delinquency rates hit their lowest point in almost two decades,” noted Frank Martell, president and CEO of CoreLogic. “Given the economic outlook, we are likely to see more declines over the balance of this year. Reflective of the drop in delinquency rates, no state experienced a year-over-year increase in its foreclosure inventory rate so far in 2019.”

Not all states and metro areas share the same trend – and those that are seeing the most and least delinquencies among the 10 largest cities is somewhat surprising. New York, Miami and Houston have the highest delinquency rates at 5.0 or higher, while the lowest among the Top 10 is San Francisco – the priciest area in the country. Holding the ninth ranking is Denver. Both of these

metro areas are below 2% in delinquencies of 30 days or more. Los Angeles is eighth at 2.5%.

When it comes to statewide figures for mortgages that are at least 30 days behind, Mississippi, Louisiana, New York, Alabama and West Virginia are all well above the national average of 4%. The states with the lowest rates of delinquent mortgages of 30 days past due are North Dakota, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and Colorado, all with rates of around 2% or lower. None of these states are on the ranking of America’s most affordable housing markets, so these numbers attest to the strength of the economies in these areas since homeowners are keeping up with their payments for the most part despite the fact that housing costs are relatively high when compared to median incomes in the area.

This trend is actually good news for the housing market and the economy in general, and demonstrates that some of the larger problems with homeownership have been rectified by some of the changes in regulations for lenders – along with the various programs that have helped homeowners to modify their mortgages.

Terry Ross, the broker-owner of TR Properties, will answer any questions about today’s real estate market. E-mail questions to Realty Views at terryross1@cs.com or call (949) 457-4922. ■



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Under the leadership of operator Urban Commons, the Queen Mary has expanded its cultural offerings from dining experiences and historical tours to include festivals and concerts organized in partnership with event magnate Goldenvoice. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)



Harbor Breeze Cruises Vice President of Operations Nilda Langston Parrado said her company focuses most of their advertisement online. “We always try to be on the forefront of advertising,” Parrado Langston noted. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

Marketing Long Beach

(Continued from Page 1)

and the city’s breakwater was built, its reputation as a beach and surf town began to fade away. But the tide may be turning again. “I think we’re at this inflection point where Long Beach is being re-discovered as an urban waterfront destination,” Goodling said.

The waves and surfboards may not come back anytime soon, but a bustling, walkable downtown – as well as a growing host of activities and attractions – is bringing in a new demographic of vis-

itors to Long Beach. “We’re known for being a city on the water, on the Pacific Ocean, with a lot of urban playing options,” Goodling explained. “Long Beach is unique in that it’s not a fabricated or synthesized resort experience. It’s a real city, it’s a real, urban environment.”

While creating a new scene for visitors to explore, the revitalization of downtown has also helped emphasize the city’s long history as a center of commerce, he added. “It’s just wonderful to see what’s happened downtown in terms of this new construction and renovation,” Goodling said. “It just reminds you of

what this community was and still is. So I think as Long Beach moves into this next wave of new growth, renovation, restoration, that it’s going to bring even more people down here.”

To create awareness of the city’s expanding options for entertainment and leisure travel, the CVB is counting on a combination of traditional print advertising and social media campaigns. For the recent #WeAllGrow summit, which brought Latina bloggers and influencers from all over the nation to Long Beach, the CVB organized a pre-summit excursion to showcase everything the city has to offer to a young, diverse demographic.

“No matter where you are in your journey in life, you can come here, have an amazing experience and take that away with you,” CVB Director of Digital Communications Loren Simpson said. “So for social media and our PR efforts, that’s what we’re getting out there.”

The outing organized ahead of the #WeAllGrow summit was carefully crafted to highlight experiences that could be shared on social media and increase the profile of Long Beach as a destination for a young and diverse demographic. “No one wants an itinerary set by a robot. They want to have a local’s perspective, they want to know what’s the best place to have noodles, or ramen, or Greek food,” Simpson explained. “[For] anyone who knows of us and knows about Long Beach, it’s about an authentic experience.”

Working with individual writers and smaller publications as well as social media influencers has become a crucial part of destination marketing, Goodling explained. “It used to be [that] you’d be happy if you were written up in the New York Times. Now you’re happy if you’re written up in 20 different, smaller publications,” he said. “Nowadays, it’s very fractured how people get their information. That’s something we’ve really had to work with, because you no longer just choose a publication, you have to choose a variety of publications in both print and digital.”

But the bureau’s focus on social media marketing doesn’t mean print advertisements are completely passé. Together with the Queen Mary, the Aquarium of the Pacific and the City of Long Beach, the bureau is running a double-page ad

in the June, July and August issues of Los Angeles Magazine, following similar campaigns with Sunset magazine and the American Automobile Association (AAA)’s Westways publication.

Combining the CVB’s advertising efforts with those of other major players in the city’s tourism industry is a new approach, said Goodling. “In the past, each entity had their own ads. So as you’re going through a magazine, they would be on different pages and people wouldn’t see or necessarily think: Long Beach,” he explained. “But now that they’ve all been brought together, Long Beach stands out.”

John Jenkins is the COO of Eagle Hospitality REIT Management Pte. LTD, the trust behind Queen Mary operator Urban Commons. Jenkins said combining forces with the city and the CVB to market Long Beach as a tourist destination has been a symbiotic approach. “I think they’ve used the Queen Mary – and we’ve used the city the same way – in making sure that at every opportunity, we get to play off each other and we get to make sure that people want to come to the City of Long Beach,” Jenkins said. “There’s a lot of cross-marketing.”

Other local businesses are also using the city’s diverse opportunities for entertainment to promote their product. Nilda Parrado Langston, vice president of Harbor Breeze Cruises, said developments along the city’s waterfront have helped her company frame its services as part of an integrated vacation experience to clients from the San Francisco Bay to the emerging Asian market. “We put packages together that could be attractive to that specific clientele,” Parrado Langston said.

To promote that experience, especially overseas, the company works with travel agents and other partners. “We work with them, educate them a little bit, so they can put [together] an attractive package that they can in turn sell to their clients,” Parrado Langston said. Noting that the city has made great strides in its public perception, especially with regards to public safety, Parrado Langston said the only thing left to do for tourism-focused companies like hers is to help promote it. “We just need to keep spreading the word [on] what we have to offer,” she said. ■



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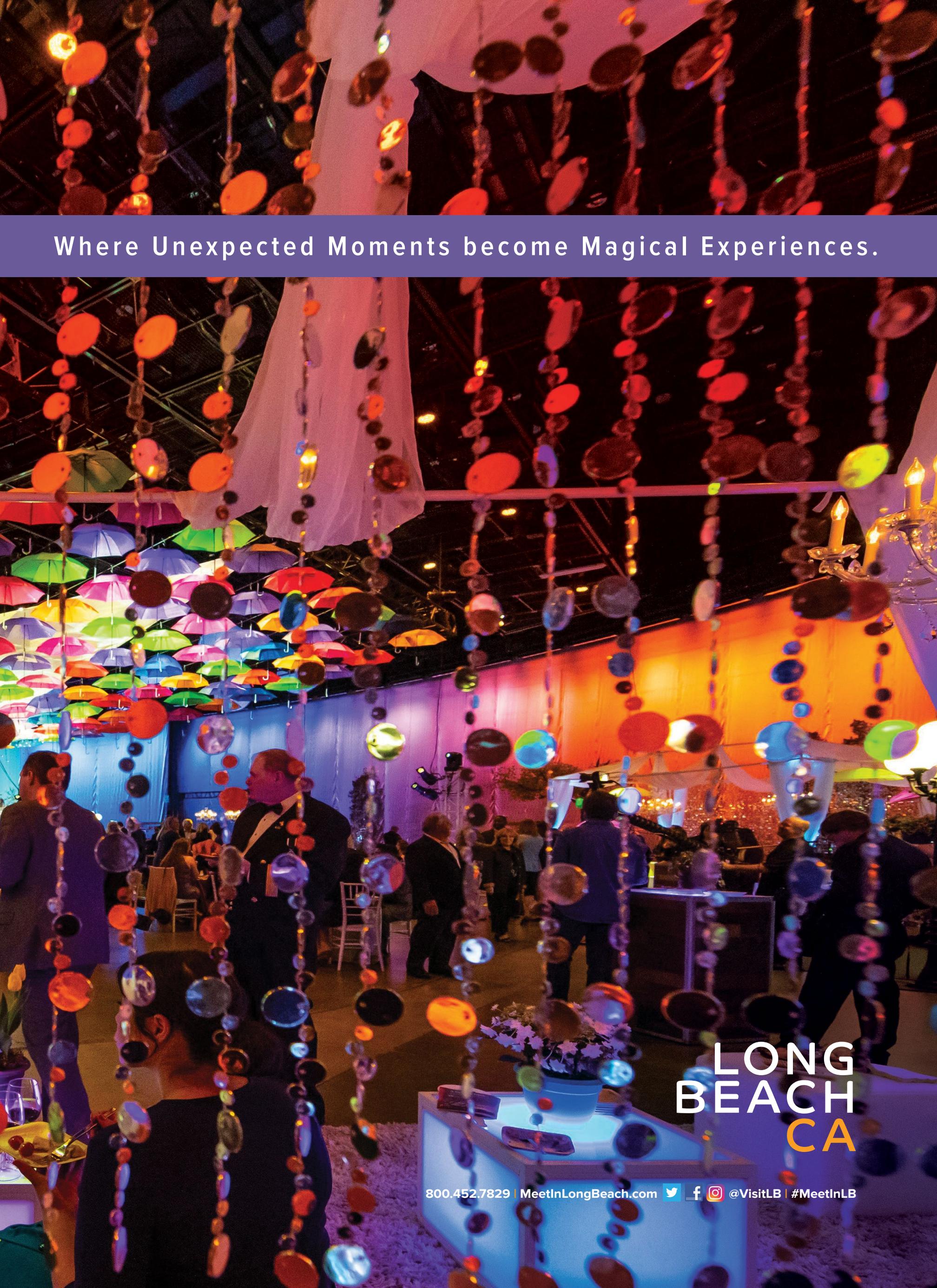


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Angels On The Shoreline: A Catalyst For Change?

■ By MICHAEL GOUGIS
Contributing Writer



The so called “elephant lot” at the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center is 13-acres of dead space on days when there are no large events at the venue. The City of Long Beach has proposed it as a potential future site for Major League Baseball’s Angels, should the team choose to relocate from Anaheim. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

There has yet to be a single double-play. No one has yet crossed home plate, nor has the first pitch been thrown. The idea of a new baseball stadium to house Major League Baseball’s Angels franchise remains only an idea, with city officials talking to the Anaheim-based team and studying plans on how to make a waterfront stadium project work, physically and financially.

But the proposal has sparked one topic of discussion that some argue is long overdue: Modernizing, improving and enhancing the city’s waterfront area and, by doing so, enhancing the city’s downtown.

Representatives of residential and commercial uses in the waterfront area and in the downtown region say that the area in question – the 13-acre lot near the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center – is one of the city’s greatest underutilized assets. And city officials have said in the past that the waterfront area needs more attention from the city to help drive its development and future.

Properly developed, they say, a stadium could generate benefits to the city and to the region that go beyond the national attention and direct monetary gains associated with attracting a major sports franchise to a city. The ancillary benefits – increased business activity in the surrounding regions, for one – are not small. And other communities have used stadium projects to drive related infrastructure improvements like public transportation.

“We need change. I think that it is a wasted resource,” says Debra Fixen, property manager at Shoreline Village, the waterfront shopping and dining entertainment center that overlooks the harbor near the site of the proposed stadium. “We need another thing for people to do, something to attract them here. That’s what is missing right now.”

There are no shortage of cities and local governments chasing the money associated with hosting major league sporting events. After decades of having no National Football League teams, the Los Angeles area now has two. The Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach is one of the most successful sports franchises in the world, attracting an international television audience, and is viewed as one of the most prestigious IndyCar races in the series.

Against that backdrop, when Long Beach and Angels officials confirmed that they were engaged in talks to build a new stadium on the waterfront area, the discussion centered around the finances and logistics of the development. But there are other impacts that are of no small interest to the hundreds of business owners and thousands of current and future residents who would live in the shadow of the new facility.

And there is a sense of hope that the discussion about a new stadium will highlight the need for revitalizing the waterfront region.

“I’m excited that the city is finally having a serious dialog about the high-

est and best use of that property. It’s remained undeveloped for a long time, and it could be put to better use for our city and our downtown,” says John Sangmeister, owner of Gladstone’s restaurant on the waterfront and a longtime advocate for new investment and development in the area.

“I just ask that the city be mindful of all the stakeholders and seek their input early in the process. I think the city has come to recognize that there are 150 businesses on the waterfront, and they are mindful of that. And it’s really appreciated,” Sangmeister says.

One of the key impacts on the area could be the opportunity to create a more cohesive, pedestrian-friendly environment linking the waterfront, the convention center complex and the downtown area. More destinations in the area would attract more visitors. Properly-developed walking-friendly thoroughfares create a sense of comfort that attract more visitors and customers to a region, as well as newer and higher-end developers.

Beyond that, a sports complex that brings in visitors on a regular basis would more closely align with the changing face of the waterfront area, says Fixen, who also serves on the Downtown Long Beach Alliance’s executive committee. The successful Aquarium Of The Pacific, the new residential complexes and the successful renovation of the Pike all have contributed to changing the nature of the waterfront. “It’s not the same as it used to be,” Fixen says.

New development requires a balance of uses, with each serving to support the other. Retail doesn’t thrive in a vacuum, and nor does residential or entertainment. But linked together, they can feed each other in a way that makes a community thrive.

It’s hard to ignore the changes that have been wrought over the past 20 years just north of Long Beach, in the core of downtown Los Angeles. In the 1990s, downtown Los Angeles was anchored by a convention center isolated by large parking lots and surrounded by older apartment buildings. There was little retail or entertainment, and restaurants were largely confined to the security of large hotel complexes.

The establishment of the Staples Center, the associated L.A. Live retail, residential and entertainment development, and the redevelopment that has followed has absolutely transformed what was once an area to be avoided.

“At a high level, any proposal to revitalize the waterfront area has the potential to be a benefit to the city. It would bring a lot of vitality to the area, as we’ve seen in other cities that have had downtowns that have embraced a franchise of this nature,” says Ryan Altoon, executive vice president of AndersonPacific, LLC., which is developing high-end apartment complexes in the area.

Altoon also is a member of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance executive committee, and suggests that a revitalized waterfront would be a benefit to the downtown area as well. After all, many of the types of uses that followed Staples Center into the heart of downtown Los Angeles – restaurants, hotels and retail and entertainment – already exist in the downtown Long Beach area.

“A revitalization of the waterfront could help create a holistic, comprehensive and well-thought-out physical connectivity between the waterfront and downtown areas that would allow the city to take advantage of being something unique – a metropolis on the water,” he says.

Whether or not the Angels come to Long Beach is still up in the air. Some speculate the city is just being used as a bargaining chip for the baseball team with its current home, the City of Anaheim. Others are more optimistic. But generally speaking, there seems to be a sense around town that the waterfront needs the kind of attention a stadium, or other comprehensive development, would bring. Last September, Mayor Robert Garcia unveiled a plan meant to address that need – a waterfront visioning process that would eventually result in development on the convention center’s 13-acre parking lot. With the site slated for use in multiple events in the 2028 Olympic games, it may be some time before a cohesive plan emerges. ■

CVB Sales Team Leaders Count On Hospitality And Teamwork To Woo Clients

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer

Coming in early, checking in with their team of sales directors, rushing off to have lunch with a client – there’s not a dull moment in the day for the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau’s (CVB) Vice President of Sales and Service John Jenci and Associate Vice President of Sales Kenya Stamps. Together with their team of in-house and remote national sales directors, Jenci and Stamps are in charge of pulling in new business for the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, as well as the bureau’s partners in the local hospitality industry.

Working with a team that’s spread out across the country comes with its challenges. “You can’t deal with this group of sales directors as a whole, you really have to be in a leadership role and manage those folks individually,” Jenci explained. Depending on their location and the client they’re hoping to secure, sales directors need different levels of support from their team leaders that can range from an in-person lunch with the client’s meeting planner to an invitation to the Grand Prix.

But having a national sales force pays off, said Jenci. “Those [national sales directors are] going to the soccer games and basketball games with their kids and the meeting planners’ kids,” he noted. “They’re part of that

community, so that’s the real advantage.”

Once a prospective client visits the city to explore their options, Jenci, Stamps and their team work to ensure they get to see the city in its best possible light. From their travel to Long Beach to their first point of contact, their itinerary for the trip down to the goodie bags they find in their hotel room, the CVB’s sales team works to make their guests feel at home.

“The way that we make clients feel when they come in to see the city, to consider it for selection for a meeting or an event, is unlike any other location I’ve ever been in,” Jenci said. “There’s a whole process of planning that goes on before the client even shows up in Long Beach.”

Both Jenci and Kenya came to the CVB from the hotel industry. Prior to joining the bureau, Jenci served as the director of sales and marketing for HEI Hotels and Resorts in Palm Springs. Stamps was formerly the general manager at Kokua Hospitality in Long Beach. Both told the Business Journal that the opportunity to work with a variety of hotels and to represent an entire city presented an exciting new challenge. “You have clients that are international and you’re representing a destination, which is broad-based,” Jenci explained. “That’s the big attraction.”



Kenya Stamps joined the leadership of the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau’s sales team in November 2018, following a career in the city’s hotel industry. (Photograph by Matt Fukushima courtesy of the Long Beach CVB.)



Joseph Jenci, who grew up on the East Coast, told the Business Journal the great weather and relaxed “West Coast vibe” is what has kept him in the Golden State for almost a decade. (Photograph by Matt Fukushima courtesy of the Long Beach CVB.)

For Stamps, who was born and raised in Long Beach, the opportunity to represent and promote her hometown was especially exciting. Stamps’ father, she recounted, came to Long Beach with the Navy in the 1970s, and the family has lived here ever since. “Being able to see all of the different phases that Long Beach was and what it is now is really exciting,” she said. “And being able to share that [with] the people we talk to is just what makes me happy about selling Long Beach.” Finding creative ways to promote Long Beach and help her team secure a big client for the city is what drives her every day, Stamps explained. “It’s really about finding out what they need to close the piece of business and just being that resource

for them; that’s what gets me going.”

This year, inviting prospective clients to the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach proved to be a successful sales strategy, Jenci noted. With a new booking by the United Motorcoach Association secured for 2022 and proposals for events that would generate approximately 14,000 room nights in the works, the team is moving on to its next challenge, the annual Washington, D.C. sales mission. Jenci has high expectations for the summit, which will feature special guest Amy Blackman, who will be presenting her research on Long Beach as a case study of meeting industry trends. “I think there’s going to be a significant buzz in Washington, D.C. after this event is held,” Jenci said. ■



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Ahead Of The Curve: Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center

■ By **MICHAEL GOUGIS**
Contributing Writer

Imagine showing up for a seminar designed to give you specific, precise directions on the path to follow to ensure the future success of your business. On the first day of the seminar, you get a simple document listing five things that you need to do to thrive in the future.

You look it over, and you realize that you're already doing every one of those things.

This is exactly the situation that the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center finds itself in.

Earlier this year, the Marriott Foundation and the PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association) unveiled the results of a yearlong study on the future of professional conventions. At a conference in Pittsburgh, consultant and strategist Amy Blackman presented the findings of the report, which was titled "The Future Of Meetings & Events."

Looking on was Joseph Jenci, a senior vice president for sales and ser-

vice at Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. As Jenci was walking through his notes from the conference, that refrain – "we're already doing all these things" – kept echoing through his mind. So back at home, the convention center's management came up with an idea – why not ask Blackman to come through the Long Beach facility and see if, indeed, Long Beach was as on-course as it seemed?

Blackman agreed to visit, and was, in her words, "blown away."

"Long Beach is simply ahead of the curve on all five of the trends," Blackman told the Business Journal.

Blackman was chosen to participate in the study by the group hired to do the report – New York's Fahrenheit 212 – precisely because she was not part of the hospitality industry. Her organization, Fruition Co., is a management consulting firm that specializes in brand coaching, market strategy and audience



Steve Goodling, president and CEO of the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (left), and Charlie Beirne, manager of the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, work together make sure the city and its convention center keep ahead of meeting industry trends. (Photograph by Matt Fukushima courtesy of the Long Beach CVB.)

engagement in a wide variety of fields. Marriott and the PCMA wanted outside voices to help them understand exactly what conference attendees wanted, not just what convention managers hoped their attendees wanted.

The five trends are:

- Emotional Intelligence
- Orchestrated Serendipity
- Multimodal Design
- Bigger Than Oneself
- Clear Sense Of Place

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Long Beach was particularly adept in delivering on the trends of Orchestrated Serendipity and Multimodal Design, Blackman said. “In many conference centers, the corridors are simply a way of getting people from one conference room to the next,” she said. “There’s no place for the attendees to sit and converse with each other. And that interaction is critical. Long Beach has conversation pods throughout the facility, with comfortable chairs and lights, places where you want to sit, places where you can actually have a conversation with other attendees. It’s a total coffee shop vibe, and that’s how people really learn and absorb.”

The other key element that made the Long Beach facility stand out was its adaptation of the idea of Multimodal Design. Between the different rooms and facilities, and all of the ways in which those facilities can be customized, event planners have the ability to create a conference or event that reflects its personalities and tastes, Blackman said.

A veteran of the music industry, Blackman is not shy about using the phrase “crappy rock concert hall” to describe outmoded convention centers. And she was impressed by the effort Long Beach has put into creating modern, configurable spaces with creative rigging of walls, lights and other design elements, particularly in the Pacific Room, where even the ceiling height can be altered

to meet the design needs of a particular conference.

“I’ve never seen anything like it. Depending on how you do it, you can’t see the seats, you can’t see the walls, you can’t see the ceiling - it’s crazy,” Blackman says.

This level of cutting-edge convention capability isn’t an accident. It’s the result of years and \$65 million worth of investment into making the complex a destination that meets the future needs of conventioners, and one that draws on the lessons learned from a past success, said Steve Goodling, president and CEO of the bureau.

“We hosted the TED Conference for five years,” Goodling told the Business Journal. “We watched how they conducted their conventions. Everyone was treated like an adult. They created spaces where attendees could sit and converse. Most convention centers are not conducive to these small discussions.

“We designed spaces that facilitate these connections, what they call social cohesions or social collaborations. It’s these interactions at the conference that make the difference,” Goodling said.

The ability to customize the spaces helps build connections with people who aren’t at the conventions through the creation of what Goodling called “Instagrammable spaces,” settings that lend themselves to sharing the convention



Amy Blackman is the author of a white paper about the future of meetings and events. After a visit to the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, she realized the venue was ahead of the game on all the trends she identified. (Photograph courtesy of the Long Beach CVB.)

experience through social media. While large corporations have production budgets that allow them to create custom convention spaces, national organizations and trade associations frequently don’t have those budgets. Goodling said that providing those organizations the ability to customize their environments helps Long Beach to attract those orga-

nizations to the facility.

And in turn, that helps connect attendees with others and helps build the connectivity that is so crucial to the success of any conference, Goodling said.

“At the end of the day, for our work and strategy to be recognized – it’s a huge endorsement,” he says. ■



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CVB Chair Imran Ahmed Reflects On Changing Hospitality Industry

■ By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Editor

Imran Ahmed, general manager of the Long Beach Marriott, has worked in the hospitality industry since 1984, when as a young man he took a job as a banquet waiter at a hotel in Maryland after recently immigrating from Pakistan. He was just over 18 years old. Since then, Ahmed has worked in nearly every aspect of the hotel industry, from the front desk, to sales, to management. After five years in Long Beach, Ahmed has taken the reins as chair of the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), the nonprofit that oversees convention and tourism marketing for the city.

Most of Ahmed's career was spent in Maryland, where he went to college for marketing and raised a family, he told the Business Journal. There, he worked for Marriott, then Sheraton, and then Ramada before taking a job at a Marriott in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. After nearly five years abroad, Ahmed returned to Maryland in 1998 to work at a Courtyard by Marriott hotel owned by a franchisee, Ruffin Hotels. In 2013, the company sold the hotel, and offered Ahmed the position in Long Beach. It was a big move for him and for his family, but with one child graduating college, another finishing high school and the youngest just eight years old, he and his wife agreed it was good timing. "And I have been here ever since," he said.

Ahmed has worked in nearly every aspect of the hotel business over the years. "My first management position was with the Sheraton as night manager," he recalled. "Then front office manager, assistant general manager. And from there I switched from operations into sales. There are very few people who do that kind of career change." Ahmed continued, "The only department that I have not worked in a hotel is accounting and engineering. But I know how to manage them."

Working his way up over the years from banquet waiter to general manager took "a lot of blood, sweat and tears," Ahmed said.

Since Ahmed arrived in Long Beach in 2014, he has been a member of the Long Beach CVB board of directors. In that time, he has seen the hospitality industry change significantly. "Not only the hotel industry, but Long Beach as a city has transformed," Ahmed said. Areas of the city that were dark and vacant have been transformed into active vibrant spaces, he said, using The Cove at the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center as an example. Located beneath the Terrace Theater Plaza, The Cove is a segment of Seaside Way

that runs between the center's parking garage and the entrance to the facility's Seaside Ballroom. While it was once little more than a dark, cavernous street, the center and CVB have invested in the space to transform it into a well-lit, active events venue.

Changes like these benefit the local hotel industry, particularly in downtown, Ahmed explained. "There are certain clients that were never interested in Long Beach. And then when they come in and they see how the city has transformed from the last time they were here 10, 12, 15 years ago, they are all intrigued," Ahmed said of potential convention and meeting clients. "Some of them have already had their conventions in Long Beach."

For the past few years, the local hotel industry has boasted high occupancy rates and increasing room rates. But Ahmed said the industry is faring on the scale of fair to moderate, at the moment. "The reason why I say that is because we have certain challenges within the City of Long Beach that we are trying to overcome," he said. "We are learning how to do business with WW passing. We have been doing our business in a way for the past 100 years. Now it's a different way of doing it."

Measure WW, which was passed by Long Beach voters in November, requires hotels to limit the workload of their housekeeping staff to a certain square footage each day. According to Ahmed, this has resulted in the need for additional staff, which has proven difficult at a time when unemployment is at a record low. "If you talk to any of the hotels – small, large, medium, whatever size they may be – we are having a serious problem finding people who want to clean rooms," he said. "It's a very tight labor market."

Having to hire more workers also increases the cost of doing business, and shrinks profit margins, according to Ahmed. "Every hotel is weathering through that cost right now," he said.

Hotel occupancy began decreasing slightly around November of last year, according to Ahmed, who speculated that decreases in travel may be attributable to economic or political uncertainties. "The travel industry in general is very connected to the stability of the country or the area," he said, adding that "one tweet or one tariff increase" is often enough to reduce travel in the business community.

There are multiple new hotels planned in Long Beach, including at least three in downtown and one near the airport. Ahmed said he views the additional competition as an opportu-



Imran Ahmed, right, is the general manager of the Long Beach Marriott. After five years in Long Beach, he is serving a two-year term as chair of the board for the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB). He is pictured at his hotel with CVB President/CEO Steve Goodling. (Photograph by Matt Fukushima courtesy of the Long Beach CVB.)

nity. "I think the market will be fine. The rooms will be absorbed one way or the other," he said. "And, if not, then that gives us as a CVB a bigger opportunity to bring bigger conventions – the conventions we couldn't even touch [before]."

Being a member of the CVB is a benefit to Ahmed as a hotel manager because it helps him plan, he explained. "First of all, we know what's going on in the area. We can strategize, forecast and organize ourselves. If there is a big citywide [convention], we know there is going to be a push towards our area," he said. Ahmed's hotel is located inland on Long Beach Airport property, so his clientele mostly consists of business groups visiting the area's office

parks. However, when a large convention comes to town, some of those visitors spill over from the downtown area to his hotel.

"The convention and visitors bureau . . . puts us in the right direction of where the rest of the country is going, because they have a lot more resources than what one hotel [has]," Ahmed said. "We get to know what is happening in L.A., what is happening in San Diego and other major convention cities."

Ahmed said that the CVB is active in attracting business to Long Beach, but also makes sure to distribute that business across the various hotels in the city. "Everybody thrives when there is a convention here on the weekend," he said. ■

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Climate Change

(Continued from Page 1)

its Climate Action and Adoption Plan (CAAP), a document that lays out priorities in adapting to the effects of climate change and strategies to reduce the city’s impact on global climate. Threats identified in the plan include extreme heat, deteriorating air quality, drought and flooding. Steps to reduce the city’s climate impact include changes to its transportation system, its buildings and energy use, and its handling of waste.

The CAAP is part of an effort to address climate change on a local level. In 2015, Garcia became a signatory to the Global Covenant of Mayors, a climate-focused collaboration between city leaders from Albania to Zimbabwe. “This plan came out of my commitment to meet climate goals in the future and to be a part of this global coalition of mayors that is taking on climate change,” Garcia said. “I think the plan is doing a great job of doing that, and I’m really proud of the work so far.”

The preliminary plan was developed with the help of AECOM, a City of Orange-based consulting firm that was awarded the \$400,000 contract in December 2016. Scientists, researchers and experts from the University of Southern California, the University of California, Los Angeles, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the Aquarium of the Pacific contributed to the plan as part of a scientific working group.

“The CAAP is really just a roadmap of what needs to be done,” Alison Spindler, a planner with the Long Beach Development Services Department who serves as the lead on the CAAP project, told the Business Journal. “The next steps will involve a much more detailed identification and analysis of funding and financing mechanisms that can help us get there.”

The proposed actions will be costly. “We do know from our preliminary information that the costs are substantial, and that the city does not have the means to cover the costs of all those actions,” Spindler said. “But we also know that the costs of inaction are substantial as well.” With a list of action items on the table, she explained, the city and partnering agencies can now seek out state and federal grants to fund the implementation of the plan. She noted that an assessment district, where residents pay into a fund to be used for climate adaptation and mitigation actions, might be another option to offset costs.

Extreme heat is the climate threat expected to affect the largest number of residents most intensely. Additional tree canopies, increased public access to water and more prevalent use of “cool roofs” and “cool walls” are among the action items proposed to combat the effects of extreme heat. Cool roofs and walls are designed to reflect sunlight, reducing the amount of the sun’s energy that can heat up buildings.

One of the costliest climate impacts the city needs to adapt to, according to Spindler, is the rising sea level. “With

sea level rise, the physical infrastructure that’s required to protect the coastal region will be costly and will definitely require a greater financial strategy,” she said. In the short-term, the plan suggests creating a new floodplain ordinance that would set safety standards for buildings and new construction in the city’s flood zone, and dune restoration along the city’s beaches. In the long-term, the plan goes as far as studying the option of “managed retreat for vulnerable shoreline infrastructure.”

“We’re looking at all options, all the time. Because as much as possible, we want to be able to protect and maintain our assets along the coast,” Spindler said. “But we have to consider all options as the information continues to evolve and as the science continues to evolve to really understand that. That area of the city is also under the state’s coastal commission jurisdiction, so we’re also compelled by the coastal commission to at least investigate that option.”

To help prevent a worst-case scenario, such as evacuating the city’s coastline, the plan also suggests a long list of steps the city government, local businesses and residents can take to reduce their impact on the climate. Among those are plans to establish “future emerging mobility zones,” where residents may access city-run carpool services, similar to a new program connecting Los Angeles resi-



Readying the next generation for green jobs and fostering a green industry is an important part of climate change preparedness, said Alison Spindler, Long Beach Development Services planner and Climate Action and Adaptation Plan program lead. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

dents to Metro stations in their area.

The concept first emerged in the process of Long Beach Transit’s System-wide Transit Analysis and Reassessment (STAR), according to Spindler. “A lot of these groups are already doing great things,” she said. “[The question is:] how do we build off of that, how do we create that sort of citywide framework where it’s all mutually reinforcing, to have that collective impact approach?” Other proposed actions are an increased emphasis on electric-powered air travel at Long Beach Airport and a program for separating organic waste, such as green bins.

“Long Beach is not alone in this,” Spindler said. “I think we’re all recognizing that the past no longer predicts the future in the face of climate change and that we need to be prepared to keep ourselves safe, to keep our economy thriving and to invest in a greener economy for our future.”

The city will continue its outreach efforts to include residents in the process of finalizing and implementing the CAAP, Garcia explained. “People need to understand that climate change is happening. There is no other option but to prepare.” ■



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Green News In Brief

■ By BUSINESS JOURNAL STAFF

Bolsa Chica Conservancy Names Port Of Long Beach Conservator Of The Year

The Port of Long Beach has been named as the 2019 Conservator of the Year by the Bolsa Chica Conservancy, a nonprofit dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. The port was selected because of its leadership in and commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and protecting wildlife and the environment, according to a statement from the conservancy. The award is being presented at the nonprofit's annual ball on Saturday, June 22, at the Waterfront Beach Resort in Huntington Beach. "The Port of Long Beach has a long, historic connection to the Bolsa Chica wetlands, investing funds to restore tidal flow, creating one of the most successful wetlands restoration projects in the state of California," Grace Adams, Bolsa Chica Conservancy executive director, stated. "The Bolsa Chica Conservancy recognizes

the Port's leadership and significant contributions to conserve wildlife, air, water, soils, the community and overall sustainability."

City Of Carson Unveils SoCal's First Electric Trash Truck

Southern California's first all-electric trash truck began operating in the City of Carson on May 27. The vehicle is part of Waste Resource Technologies' (WRT) 13-truck fleet that services the city. According to Carson city officials, most California trash trucks are powered by compressed natural gas (CNG), with each emitting approximately 5.9 metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) annually. "Carson is committed to providing a sustainable environment for residents to live, work and play," Carson Mayor Albert Robles stated. "This means that we are using the latest technology and cleanest method of collecting, recycling and converting our residents' waste. The new electric truck is



100% emission free and a major step to help improve the quality of life in our city." The remainder of WRT's fleet consists of near-zero emission CNG trucks, which each emit approximately 3.3 metric tons of CO2 annually, opposed to 23.6 metric tons emitted by traditional diesel trash

trucks. The emission-free truck is one of many green initiatives Carson is undertaking, including placing solar panels atop all city-owned buildings, citywide recycling events and volunteer support for local school gardens. (Photograph courtesy of the City of Carson.) ■

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Waste-To-Power Plant On Terminal Island Gets \$14 Million Makeover

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Staff Writer

In the industrial landscape of the San Pedro Bay ports, with cargo trucks whizzing by, the Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (SERRF) hardly stands out. But behind the gray metal facade of the Terminal Island structure, 1,380 tons of municipal waste are turned into power every day. Now, over 30 years after SERRF first started operations in July 1988, key parts of the power production plant are undergoing a \$13.7 million renovation.

“It’s been maintained fine, but after so long, it’s like a car: you have to go in and replace major pieces of equipment,” Charlie Tripp, manager of the facility, told the Business Journal. SERRF was initially designed to run until December

2018, when the bonds for its construction had been paid off and a long-term power purchasing contract with Southern California Edison ran out.

Rather than retire the facility, the City of Long Beach and SERRF operator Covanta Energy decided to rejuvenate it. “For the last five years, we had been looking at other options: was there a technology out there that we could replace SERRF with? And we really couldn’t find anything,” Tripp said. “The fact is that this technology, as long as it’s maintained – and we have added additional pollution control equipment over the years as regulations changed – was still viable.”

The concept of turning waste into



Charlie Tripp, manager of the Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (SERRF), said in addition to maintenance repairs on the 30-year-old structure, his department is considering an upgrade to its collection mechanism for ferrous metals, like steel, if prices for scrap metal pick up again. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

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energy through combustion originated in Europe. “In Europe, they’ve been burning trash for over a hundred years, primarily because they didn’t have fossil fuels,” Tripp explained. “Most of the waste in Europe isn’t landfilled, it’s actually burned.” In California, energy had traditionally been produced using hydropower technology or fossil fuels, according to Tripp. But gas and oil crises in the 1970s and 1980s lead to legislation that promoted the diversification of the country’s power sources, giving way to more alternative energy production. SERRF was one of over 100 alternative power plants across the nation to be built during that time, Tripp noted.

Inside the facility, trash from black bins collected by waste-hauling companies is burned in combustors. The heat created by the burning waste is used to boil water, creating steam pressure, which transmits the power through a turbine. “If you blow onto a pinwheel, it spins. Same thing happens when you inject steam into this turbine, it spins, and the back of the turbine is attached to a generator,” Tripp explained. “The generator is what gives us power and pumps the power to your home, my home, everyone’s.”

In 2017, a consulting firm was brought in to study the feasibility and cost of continuing the power plant’s operations until at least 2044. The estimated cost of \$13.7 million will be



The SERRF facility generates revenue from drop-off fees paid by waste haulers and the sale of power created by burning solid municipal waste. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson.)

jointly covered by Covanta Energy and the city’s SERRF fund, contributing \$5 million and \$8.7 million, respectively. The city’s contributions will not come from funds previously dedicated to other city programs, Tripp noted, adding that over the three decades of its existence, SERRF has contributed \$70 million in revenues to the city’s General Fund rather than received support from city coffers.

“The facility has been a real suc-

cess, from a taxpayer standpoint, a money standpoint. And also for Long Beach, [which is] taking responsibility for the trash we create as a community, not shipping it somewhere else, to a distant landfill or something like that,” Tripp said. In its effort toward zero waste, the city is still in need of landfill alternatives like SERRF, he noted.

The four-year renovation program is scheduled to be completed in 2020, and all major parts of the power production

process will be updated, one portion at a time, Tripp explained. “It’s a lot of work, a lot of planning is going into it, and then you try and do it so it doesn’t interrupt our customers,” he said. “Except for this one month right now, we’ve been able to continue to do the equipment updates and not interrupt many of our customers.” If there’s money left over, Tripp said, they might even give the work areas a new paint job. “Shine it up a little,” he said, smiling. ■

Recycling in Long Beach



Commercial Recycling

State law (AB 341) requires recycling for any commercial property that generates four or more cubic yards of waste per week. This includes multi-family residential properties with 5 units or more.



Commercial Organic Recycling

State law (AB 1826) requires businesses that generate 4 or more cubic yards of waste per week to arrange for organic waste recycling services. Organics include food, yard trimmings, and food-soiled paper.

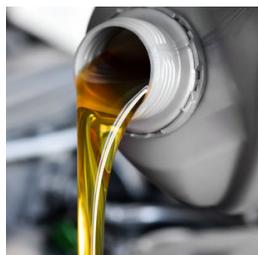
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(Continued from Page 1)

20% of Millennials identify as LGBTQ. The national polling organization Gallup posted an estimate in May that found 8.1% of Millennials identify as LGBT. That's quite a difference, so which is closer to the truth?

There are a number of factors to consider, including the number of individuals surveyed in each poll. GLAAD surveyed 2,037 U.S. adults, while Gallup surveyed 340,000. However, also consider that Gallup significantly limited its rainbow by not including "questioning" or "queer" as a possible identifier. Queer is a term often used by individuals who feel other LGBT identifiers are too limiting or do not quite describe them accurately.

In any case, both surveys agreed on one major point – that there are more Millennials who outwardly identify as LGBT/LGBTQ than among older generations. Gallup found that, in 2017, 3.5% of Generation X and 2.4% of Baby Boomers described themselves as LGBT.

"I would venture to say that there are not more LGBTQ Millennials now when compared to previous generations, but there are more openly LGBTQ Millennials because people are coming out younger," said Porter Gilberg, executive director of The LGBTQ Center Long Beach. The nonprofit provides free and low-cost resources to Long Beach's LGBTQ community. "As we make more social and legal advances, and as there's more visibility in the world of people who are openly LGBTQ, it creates a more robust and safer environment for folks to come out."

For a brief moment, it looked as though the federal government might step in to collect more definitive data around the LGBTQ population in the United States. During the Obama Administration, at least four federal agencies queried the Census Bureau about collecting more data on LGBTQ Americans in its 2020 American Community Survey, according to NPR.

In 2017, under the Trump administration, the Census Bureau ultimately decided only to include questions about LGBTQ people in relationships, which will leave a large swath of the community unaccounted for. No prior Census has included any LGBTQ-specific questions at all.

For Gilberg, the limited decision equates to erasure of an entire community. "That is really an issue that I [feel] has to do with erasure, because if the data isn't there then people don't exist," he said. "The erasure, from my view, is part of a broader agenda to reduce resources for our community."

Research shows that LGBTQ people experience greater social and economic disparities, including higher rates of homelessness and poverty, and an increased likelihood to be the victim of hate crimes and domestic violence, Gilberg explained. "When you don't have [federal] data that empirically substantiates that, there's not a need for funding to support those communities to increase equity and reduce negative life outcomes," he pointed out.

Recent studies by TD Bank and TD Ameritrade found that LGBTQ Millennials experience greater financial instability than their peers. A 2018 survey found that LGBTQ Millennials earn on average about \$8,400 less per year. The same report found only 29% of LGBTQ Millennials felt financially secure. Meanwhile, the popularity of wealthy LGBTQ individuals in the media has created what Gilberg referred to as the "gay money myth," or a perception that LGBTQ individuals are wealthier than others. "However, the reality is when you look at the LGBTQ community broadly, there are significant income disparities," he said.

Gilberg said that many of the core issues the LGBTQ community has faced over the generations still exist. Hate crimes against the community have increased in the past year, and in L.A. County LGBTQ people were the second-most frequently targeted group for hate violence, he emphasized. Fear is still being used as a rallying tool to enact discriminatory policies, Gilberg said, citing the Trump administration's military ban on transgender individuals as an example.

While the entire community is contending with these challenges, the different generations among the LGBTQ population bring a different set of life experiences to them. Those in the Stonewall generation, who came of age at or before the time of the 1969 Stonewall uprising, grew up prior to any social or legal protections for LGBTQ people, Gilberg said.

"When we think of the Stonewall generation, we are talking about a generation who by virtue of our culture was very often subjected to really intense trauma and oppression," Gilberg said. Millennials, on the other hand, were born when the first laws to protect LGBTQ rights were being written. "We're talking about people who grew up and maybe had to wait 20 to 30 years to see marriage equality, whereas our older generation has waited two or three generations to see that," Gilberg noted.

Some elders in the LGBTQ community do feel, perhaps because of these differences, that the Millennials among them aren't doing enough, Gilberg observed. "But there are just as many Millennial LGBTQ people and younger who are very active in their communities, that are leaders in their communities making great strides," he said. "Every generation has people who ride on the coat tails of the people who are leading a movement. . . . But every generation also has a significant number of leaders who step up to the plate and do good in their communities."

Of interest to Long Beach LGBTQ Millennials: The Center has a social group called 20-Somethings that meets regularly to help connect post-high school adults with others in their community. Joel Gemino, The Center's youth services manager, noted that the program helps young adults to connect and make new friends outside of a school setting, which can be difficult for any person transitioning to adulthood. For more information about The Center's programs, visit centerlb.org. ■

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