

Long Beach Business Journal

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Long Beach Area's Newsmagazine

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Downtown Long Beach Is Booming



Photograph by Brandon Richardson

■ **MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA**

As 2019 draws to a close, the Long Beach economic boom continues. The economic expansion we’re experiencing – with record low unemployment, an ever-expanding tourism industry, and new residential and commercial development springing up – is impacting the entire city. But nowhere is it more apparent than in our downtown.

With hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment over the past several years, and its status as the only major city with a coastal downtown between San Diego and San Francisco, Downtown Long Beach has become one of the premier urban centers in America. Parts of our downtown that were

once marked by empty storefronts are now thriving as new shops, businesses and restaurants open to serve the residents moving into the thousands of new residential units. New festivals offering art, music, food and other cultural experiences are bringing customers to downtown businesses from all over the city and throughout the region.

One reason for this success is that Downtown Long Beach is safer than it’s ever been, and in fact is one of the safest major downtowns in the country. A high level of public safety supports continued economic activity – and that economic activity helps keep our neighborhoods safe.

In the past year, we saw the expansion of the Aquarium with the Pacific Visions

wing, significant new housing, the start of the Breakers hotel redevelopment, and the Long Beach Museum of Art’s downtown annex. New development projects on the way include what will be the tallest building in Long Beach, the West Gateway project, a teaching hub for Cal State Long Beach at “The Streets” at 4th and Promenade, and hundreds more new residential units, including at Long Beach and 3rd on the old Acres of Books site.

These trends are so encouraging that we’ve doubled our goal for new housing units downtown over the next five years from 4,000, when I first entered office, to 8,000.

This isn’t to say there aren’t challenges. We need more workforce housing, and

we continue to face a major challenge with homelessness. To address these issues, we need to see continued economic growth, which creates the jobs our residents need, and provides the city with the resources to tackle complex problems.

I’m extremely optimistic about our downtown. The diversity, creativity, and sense of community here will continue to make Long Beach a great place to work, raise a family, and invest. If you haven’t been downtown in a while, please consider this my personal invitation. Come out and see all the positive changes, support our local businesses, and enjoy our unique waterfront. Downtown Long Beach is booming and the future is bright. ■

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Downtown Long Beach Alliance Adapts To Changing Times



Kraig Kojian, president and CEO of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance, is pictured with DLBA Board Chair Silvano Merlo, manager of the Courtyard by Marriott Long Beach Downtown, atop the Landmark Square building on Ocean Boulevard. Behind them, office buildings, hotels and residential high-rises line Ocean Boulevard, which stretches into the distance along the city shoreline. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Editor

Serving the community since 1937, the nonprofit Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA) oversees downtown's business improvement district, comprised of two assessment areas where fees collected from commercial and residential property owners go towards services related to security, beautification, marketing, economic and community development, events, maintenance and advocacy. As 2020 approaches, the DLBA continues to adapt with the times, structuring its programming to meet the greatest needs of the neighborhoods it serves.

In 2020, the biggest influence in the area is going to be the addition of new housing, according to Kraig Kojian, president and CEO of the DLBA. "Residential development is going to continue to drive the economy in our downtown, both for service businesses as well as retail," he said.

Thousands of new residential units are being built throughout downtown – and while Kojian said this investment is driv-

ing the area's economy, he also cited the need for affordable housing as a challenge. Many of the developments, like the recently completed Oceanaire on Ocean Boulevard and Park Broadway across from the Billie Jean King Main Library, boast some of the area's highest rents for luxury living. Kojian noted that the need for housing that is more affordable is one facing not only Downtown Long Beach, but the State of California as a whole.

When the Long Beach Planning Commission received a commissioned report on inclusionary housing needs in Long Beach earlier this year, the DLBA hired Los Angeles-based firm Beacon Economics to conduct a peer review, Kojian noted. "We have found some of their assumptions to be somewhat questionable, so we commissioned Beacon Economics to do a peer analysis," he said. "We are meeting with our executive committee again on Friday of this week . . . to identify a menu of recommendations that we want to make to our board on December 18, where it will then codify those recommendations in a position statement."

An issue linked closely to that of af-

fordable housing is homelessness, and it is one the DLBA continues to address, according to Kojian. The DLBA staffs two homeless outreach specialists trained to communicate with individuals experiencing mental health issues, he noted. Additionally, he said, "We're lucky enough to have a [city] health department that can face and address these challenges from a very myopic perspective, rather than say a regional perspective that the county has to address."

Another challenge facing downtown, and much of the country, is the future of retail. Kojian noted that online shopping has had a dramatic effect on shopping habits, creating challenges for brick and mortar stores to stay in business. Luckily for downtown, the influx of residential developments ought to support the restaurants and retailers in the area, he noted. In particular, Kojian has seen an abundance of new food and beverage establishments over the past couple of years.

"I would like to see the [residential] development happen quicker to be able to help support some of those establishments that have already come online, projecting their business based on the number of residents that will be coming," Kojian said. "It becomes almost the chicken and the egg – do I develop a food and beverage establishment now in anticipation of this development occurring, or do I wait until it gets closer and closer?" He added, "Time is money. And regardless of what side of the equation you're on – whether you're on the development side or creating an establishment – it can't come quick enough."

The opening of the new Long Beach Civic Center – which not only heralded the opening of a new city hall and main library but also the return of the Port of Long Beach's administration offices to downtown – has been beneficial for businesses in the West Gateway neighborhood, particularly those near the Los Angeles County Gov. George Deukmejian Courthouse, according to Kojian.

The next phase of the civic center project, dubbed the "midblock," will add new residences and a new version of Lincoln Park to downtown. "We want to make sure

that that is a quality open space with amenities for all people and families that help support that area," Kojian said of the future park. "Gathering places are really important for downtowns, and that is our major gathering space as far as open space is concerned. We really have to make it right."

To help new and existing businesses strategize, the DLBA continues to grow its economic development programs, and in recent years has placed particular emphasis on workshops for business owners and entrepreneurs. These are spaced throughout the year so that those interested can continue to build upon their expertise, Kojian noted.

The DLBA's economic development programming includes: 1 Million Cups Long Beach (an entrepreneurial program affiliated with the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation) the Women-Owned Business Accelerator, Google Workshops, the Entrepreneur Education Series, the Winter Small Business Workshop and others. Details about these programs are available at downtownlongbeach.org.

"We want to give them a strong foundation to build their business," Kojian said of his organization's economic development services. "We want to be able to provide some guidance and some direction with this toolbox of resources," he said, noting that the DLBA not only educates businesses, but also helps direct them to financial resources like the city's microloan program.

When it comes to marketing downtown, this year the DLBA experienced quite a bit of growth on its social media platforms. "The past year has been very successful for DLBA social media," Kojian said. "For example, on Instagram we saw 29% growth on organic impressions in 2019 with the top 20 impressionable posts of all time coming from this past year. In 2019, we earned one million impressions on Twitter, four million on Instagram and almost seven million on Facebook." He explained, "We attribute these results to a consistent strategic posting schedule, regularly engaging with community accounts and producing valuable content for our fol-

(Please Continue to Page 12)

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(Continued from Page 10)
lowers.”

The majority of the DLBA’s spending goes toward its clean and safe programming, which includes a wide variety of services geared toward beautification and security. This year, the DLBA conducted a survey on the public’s perception of safety in downtown, and is preparing to implement some new initiatives based on the results. For example, in 2020, the DLBA will conduct a “walk audit” of the business district to identify areas where additional lighting is needed. At the request of local stakeholders, the DLBA also plans to “host some workshops for downtown building managers and businesses and their staff as to how to work with persons experiencing mental illness and homelessness,” Kojian noted.

One clean and safe program already underway is a partnership with the city prosecutor’s office and the Long Beach Police Department, in which business and property owners can grant the police the authority to warn, cite or arrest trespassers even if an owner or manager is not present.

To keep downtown active and engaging for the community, the DLBA continues its placemaking efforts aimed at improving the public realm. This year, it participated in Park(ing) Day, an international event that temporarily converts parking spaces into community gathering places. “This year, we did it out in front of the Edison Theatre. We built off the flower installation

[art exhibit] that was at the Edison, and we extended it out in a seating area outside. We built out the space for parking day,” Kojian explained. The DLBA also continues to use The Loop, an outdoor art installation it spearheaded at Pine Avenue and Ocean Boulevard, for events like its music series Live After 5.

Next year, the DLBA is installing new pedestrian wayfinding signage, according to Kojian. “This program is going to be in concert with the citywide gateway signage as well as vehicular signage that they are introducing throughout the entire city,” he said. The signs will direct pedestrians to different neighborhoods and destinations in downtown. “We’re going to introduce 12 new pedestrian signs as Phase 1 for our program in 2020, and then look at adding more pedestrian signs in the future.”

In 2020, the DLBA plans to continue offering events to activate downtown. Its outdoor Live After 5 music series will continue beginning in April, after most inclement weather has passed, Kojian noted. The DLBA’s Taste of Downtown and Summer & Music series will also return next year.

Overall, Kojian has a favorable impression of the current business climate in downtown. “The business attitude and the culture is very positive,” he said. “The new operators . . . and investors that we’ve had come on board are very optimistic about what’s happening and what will happen.” ■

Faces Of Downtown: Fern Nueno



Fern Nueno is a project manager with the Long Beach Economic Development Department. During her time working for the city’s planning department, she played a role in the re-envisioning of Harvey Milk Park at the Promenade in Downtown Long Beach, where she is pictured. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Editor

Through her work with Long Beach Development Services and now with the city’s economic development department, Fern Nueno has contributed to a variety of efforts to improve the city’s downtown.

As a project manager with economic development, Nueno oversees the leasing of city-owned property, much of which is located along the downtown waterfront, including the office complex Catalina Landing and the retail center Shoreline Village.

Nueno first joined city staff as a planner focused on long-range plans for Long Beach, including the Land Use Element, Bicycle Master Plan and other documents. She also served as the staff liaison for the city’s Queen Mary Land Development Task Force, a group of community stakeholders brought together by the city to develop a vision for the land around the Queen Mary.

Some of Nueno’s favorite projects were those that made a visible impact on the downtown. “I worked a lot on the parklet and sidewalk dining guidelines. We worked really closely with business

owners in downtown and the DLBA on that,” she said, referring to the Downtown Long Beach Alliance. Since revising these guidelines, downtown has become known for its parklets – parking spaces converted into patios that both provide an atmospheric setting for business patrons and also help slow traffic on downtown streets.

“It’s fun looking at activating public spaces and including placemaking and art,” Nueno reflected.

Nueno also looks fondly on her time engaging the community to improve Harvey Milk Park at the Promenade in downtown. “Harvey Milk [Park] is such an asset in downtown and in the city,” she noted.

When she takes her government hat off, Nueno can be heard once a month on Long Beach Public Radio, 99.1 KLBP, co-hosting the show “This Is Long Beach.” The show highlights Long Beach’s unique neighborhoods. “Every month, we pick a different neighborhood in the city and we try to highlight it by talking about the history, culture, food scene [and] all of that. And we’ll interview business owners, employees, residents of the area, and anyone who has a unique perspective to tell,” Nueno explained. To hear past episodes, visit soundcloud.com/thisislongbeachradio. ■



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Developing A Better Downtown: Looking Back At The Downtown Plan’s Impact



In 2012, the City of Long Beach adopted the Downtown Plan, a series of development and design guidelines that streamlined the permitting and entitlement processes for developers. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **MICHAEL GOUGIS**
Contributing Writer

What do you do with a city’s core when its defining element is an empty

mall, a hulking structure that blocks off traffic and pedestrian flow through the downtown area? How do you lay the groundwork for something better? In January 2012, Long Beach ap-

proved a new plan for its downtown area. It was a bold vision, one that put some of the responsibility for environmental approval of developments on the city’s shoulders, one that asked residents to adopt a new way of thinking about parking, transportation and what kind of businesses should be in an urban core.

So far, planners and those involved in the process say, that gamble is paying off.

“We had to convince them that this is the way to go. And look at what has happened,” says Suja Lowenthal, former 2nd District city councilmember and vice mayor of Long Beach during the time the plan was developed. She is now the city manager of Hermosa Beach.

Since the plan was adopted, in the relatively small area that comprises downtown proper there have been 534 residential units completed and occupied, another 1,346 residential units in the construction phase and another 2,620 approved and awaiting groundbreaking.

It’s a major transformation, but to bring it along required a major re-visioning of what a downtown should look like and how to get it to happen.

“When I was a resident in downtown – for seven years we were there, even before I ran for office – I realized that we had a dying, barely functioning mall. It was a cavernous thing, and it was a visual sign that downtown was dying,” Lowenthal says.

“There was some development coming in. But what was obvious was that every project was built on a variation [from development guidelines]. They could just not build something that was right for downtown without variation. And when you’re always asking for variations, residents start to think that you’re asking for something that you shouldn’t be asking for.”

So it was apparent that the city’s existing codes did not account for what developers were looking for in downtown projects, and that the city’s guidelines were not attracting the projects the city wanted. Someone looking at the plans in place at the time wouldn’t really know what the city wanted.

“We were not following practices that cities follow when they are on the path to . . . turning their downtown around to be the heart and soul of their cities. There was no North Star, so to speak. We had a lot of turning around to do,” Lowenthal says.

“It was the right time and the right mix of disasters that made it obvious that we couldn’t put this off anymore. The only way to do that was to update the planning and zoning codes. Otherwise, you could not define a vision. For me [as] an urban planner – it could not have been better. I could not squander that opportunity.”

The plan, developed over a span of years, reduced the emphasis on the automobile. Parking requirements were reduced, and pedestrian-oriented, ground-floor uses were encouraged to help “activate” downtown’s streets, says Linda Tatum, director of Long Beach Development Services.

“There is an emphasis on sustainability, on walkability,” Tatum says. “The developments had to contribute to downtown. The ground floor had to be ‘activated’ – encouraging interaction with the pedestrian traffic. You’re not looking at a blank wall when you are walking down the street,” she says.

Concurrently, the plan created a greater emphasis on public transit as a way of getting to and getting around downtown, rather than requiring vast expanses of parking.

“Over time, transit service will get better. And with the advent of alternative travel modes, we went with a tran-

(Please Continue to Page 16)



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Construction crews work on Shoreline Gateway, a 315-unit residential project at 777 E. Ocean Blvd. At 35 stories, once completed, the structure will be the tallest building in Long Beach. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

(Continued from Page 14)

sit-oriented development approach. We minimized parking as a way of incentivizing people coming in to downtown, and we wanted to use a transit-oriented approach to incentivize people to use alternative transit modes,” Tatum says. “In the most successful downtowns, you don’t find a lot of parking.”

And lastly, the city shouldered part of the heavy lifting when it came to environmental approvals. Instead of requiring each new development to generate a complete environmental impact report (EIR) on its own, the city created a Program Environmental Impact Report. This report, in a nutshell, covered a lot of the ground that would be common to each individual project and addressed the issues associated with growing downtown comprehensively, rather than development by development.

“When someone came in with a proposal, they didn’t have to do the complete EIR. They could supplement it with technical studies that take a few months rather than a few years,” Tatum says. Not only does this speed the approval process, but it makes the developments more attractive to the investment community.

In Tatum’s view, the plan is a statement about what the city wants and a statement that the city is willing to work to make it happen.

“It demonstrated the city’s knowing what it wanted in the downtown, and the city council and the community saying, ‘We know what we want, we want to continue to improve it, and we want to be a world-class city.’ And we have this plan to demonstrate our commitment to it,” she says. “It is the city kind of grasping its destiny by the horns.”

For Lowenthal, the plan sets the tone and the city’s expectations for new development for anyone thinking of coming into the downtown area.

“Without it, we would have seen some stagnation, and when we saw something developed, it would have been piecemeal and mediocre. We did not have anything to incentivize developers to bring their A-game. With the plan in place, we were able to say, if you’re not bringing your best, don’t bother,” Lowenthal says.

“We would not have been able to set the standards for what the residents deserve, and for what future generations deserve.” ■

Faces Of Downtown: Anthony Davies And Mike Wellman



Atomic Basement Comics owners Mike Wellman, left, and Anthony Davies said their store is opening on January 1 at 400 E. 3rd St. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

Mike Wellman has been a part of the comic book community for 25 years. For the last 15 years, Wellman worked at The Comic Bug, a store he helped create in Manhattan Beach. Now, along with business partner and longtime friend Anthony Davies, Wellman is gearing up to open Atomic Basement Comics at 400 E. 3rd St. in Downtown Long Beach.

“My initial plan was for a Downtown L.A. location near the Alamo Drafthouse because I think that’s going to be a really nice geek hub. But nothing really jived with us,” Wellman said. “So, our friend gave us a tour of Long Beach. I love records, so we checked out Fingerprints and found this incredible arts district that’s blossoming.”

According to Wellman, the reason the East Village Arts District caught his attention is because his comic store is going to put a much greater emphasis on the comic creator than other comic shops. Every Wednesday night, after regular business hours from 7-10 p.m., Atomic Basement Comics will become The Lab, a

space for comic writers and artists to collaborate and create. Every year, Wellman and Davies will select one locally created comic to publish through Wellman’s publishing company Atomic Basement.

Wellman said he plans to strengthen his ties to Long Beach by collaborating with the annual Long Beach Comic Expo and Comic Con events, as well as by hosting special events such as signings and Free Comic Book Day in public spaces, including nearby parks. He also noted a desire to partner with LBMA Downtown (the downtown location of the Long Beach Museum of Art) located across the street from Atomic Basement, to showcase local comic book artists.

“There’s just so much to do; I’m like a kid in a candy store. And it’s walkable – that’s what I like about Long Beach,” Wellman said. “A lot of creators live here and I have a feeling I’m going to meet a lot of new people, so I’m excited about that.”

Wellman and Davies plan to open Atomic Basement’s doors on January 1, with a grand opening celebration on Saturday, January 22. ■

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California Dreaming: The Downtown Shoreline's Future

■ By **MICHAEL GOUGIS**
Contributing Writer

The Angels are not coming.

That means drastic change to the downtown shoreline isn't likely to happen soon. But the city's dalliance with a Major League Baseball franchise has brought attention to one of the city's perhaps most-overlooked potential resources: the vacant lots just east of the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center complex.

"It truly is one of the last great waterfront spaces to be developed in California," says Steve Goodling, President and CEO of the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

So, what to make of 13 acres of clear, contiguous space with a view of the Pacific?

Stakeholders and civic leaders have a wide variety of ideas on what they would like to see in the area, and some pretty clear ideas on what they would rather not see. And it comes down to a much more difficult question than other cities face when looking at developing generic properties. It's not about just filling a parcel with stores or apartments.

There seems to be a clear consensus

that whatever happens in the space should be something that will be specific to Long Beach's identity and/or enhance the things that right now make Long Beach unique.

"We want something that is unique, something that is iconic," Mayor Robert Garcia told the Business Journal.

One common comment focused on the desire to retain the things that are working in the area. Right now, the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach is the biggest single event in the city, and Jim Michaelian, president and CEO of the Grand Prix Association of Long Beach, says there's no reason that the race can't co-exist with the development of the downtown waterfront, and that is consistent with recent developments in the world of motorsports. The two new Formula One venues for 2020, for example, are right on the outskirts of Amsterdam and deep in the heart of Hanoi.

"It's a challenge, but also a great opportunity, and we want to be part of it," Michaelian says. "There are going to be a lot of new people living in downtown, especially by 2028. I look forward to seeing some of the concepts that might be integrated into that area. To be able to continue our event ... is of significance to us, obviously," he continues. "Hopefully,



Downtown Long Beach's shoreline is home to one of the largest undeveloped parcels of land remaining in the city. Just beyond the marina pictured here, the surface level parking lot at the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center is the focus of renewed discussion about how best to connect the downtown waterfront to the area's urban core beyond Ocean Boulevard. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

in the end, there's the opportunity for the convention center to continue to operate in a functional way, and also to see how we grow that part of the city in terms of its attractions and how it fits in with all of the developments taking place."

Similarly, Goodling suggests that fu-

ture developments take place in sync with the activities of the existing convention complex.

"What we're interested in is a project that would enhance, synergize and energize the [convention center]. The conven-

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(Continued from Page 17)

tion center complex has become a feature to be used by the community in addition to generating economic activity,” he says.

Goodling adds, “Our hope is that it will enhance what is already occurring. It’s important to recognize that since we re-positioned the arena seven years ago, it’s gone from being in use 95 days of the year to 285 days. More than 30 percent of conventions use the [arena] space. If we didn’t have that space, we would have 30 percent fewer conventions. This re-use project has generated significant additional activity for downtown and the city.”

Additional retail space does not seem to be high on anyone’s wish list. In partic-

ular, there seems to be little desire to build a shopping center that looks like – well, every other shopping center.

“What we don’t want to do, I think, is to recreate the retail that we’ve already seen everywhere else,” Garcia says. “It needs to be a major draw: entertainment, sports, arts, something that is unique to the area.”

What does seem to be common is the desire for something unique to Long Beach. Jerry Schubel, president and CEO of the Aquarium of the Pacific, suggests that uses reflecting the area’s history as a port of call would be one way to differentiate the Long Beach shoreline from others.

“We need to have something like

Pike’s Place in Seattle – something that captures the essence of the area,” he says. “There ought to be something that tells the story of the ports. We need to do something that is as unique to the area as the beignet is to New Orleans.”

Whatever grows in that location should not be isolated from the downtown core, Garcia said. Development should enhance the pedestrian flow from the area to downtown, with strong walkways connecting the area south of Ocean Boulevard to the north of that street, he says.

“We have a lot going on in downtown, and we want to be sure [people] can access the waterfront. What is missing now is the ability to do that as a pedestrian,” he says.

The city has some time on its hands to plan, Michaelian points out, noting that Long Beach has committed to hosting events for the 2028 Olympic Games in the area. And that gives planners and interested parties the luxury of thinking long-term about what is potentially one of the most significant future developments on the Pacific coastline.

“In my opinion, we were fortunate that the Angels decided to stay in Anaheim,” Schubel says. “Right now, it’s reminiscent of that book, ‘The Geography of Nowhere.’ We have to look at the area as a whole. This is one of the city’s greatest opportunities.” ■

A New Civic Core

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

In 2006, talk began of a new Long Beach Civic Center – a new city hall, a new port headquarters, a new state-of-the-art library, a revitalized Lincoln Park and the development of something more. Fast forward to 2019: half of that \$1 billion plan has come to fruition.

“The new civic center, with city hall, the port headquarters and the library, has been a great addition to the downtown core. We’ve seen businesses spring up in the area and residents are happy about the activation,” Mayor Robert Garcia said. “I’ve talked to a lot of neighbors that have seen great improvements in the direct neighborhood. And most importantly, we have really accessible facilities. It’s been a success and we’re excited about the growth.”

The new city hall and Port of Long Beach headquarters are each 11-story buildings, totaling a combined 511,000 square feet. The city hall building includes the new Bob Foster Civic Chambers and an entire wing dedicated to services for easier public access, such as a permitting center and cashiers. The buildings opened on July 29.

The new 92,500-square-foot Billie Jean King Main Library opened its doors on September 21. The remaining pieces of the dream that began 13 years ago

are the revamping of Lincoln Park and the private midblock development, which will be on the sites currently occupied by the old city hall and main branch library buildings.

“We’re looking for a vibrant mixed-use development that helps bring a new 24-hour residential component to the civic center site,” Jeffrey Fullerton, project director for developer Plenary Properties Long Beach, said. “It’s one of the things that has been lacking over the years.”

While plans for the forthcoming private development are being kept under wraps, Fullerton confirmed that the current iteration calls only for residential and retail uses. When initially announced, the project also included an option for a hotel.

“We are in a housing crisis as a state, so the more housing, the more density that we can create in the core is really important. We want to create as much housing as possible, so we’re really pushing the envelope,” Garcia said. “The initial plan called for around 300 units of housing, but we’re pushing that to see if we can actually get a lot more. Any time you put in hundreds of units and thousands of people, you are creating a stronger urban core because it means that there are more folks shopping and supporting businesses.”

Garcia said that he is “very interested” in partnering with the Long Beach Unified School District and Plenary to create a teacher’s village within the mid-



While the new city hall, Port of Long Beach headquarters and Billie Jean King Main Library opened earlier this year, plans for the private mid-block development of the Long Beach Civic Center have yet to be finalized. However, project manager Jeffrey Fullerton of Plenary Properties Long Beach said he expects plans to be finalized in the “first part” of 2020, followed by the demolition of the old city hall and library structures. (Photograph by Matt Fukushima)

block development. He explained that the village would have affordable housing designated for Long Beach teachers. As a whole, Garcia noted that the new civic center is an important transformation because the old civic center was closed off to the public due to its design. However, he said the new civic center’s openness exudes transparency.

Fullerton noted that the development team and city staff are still in the planning phase, with architecture plans still incomplete. However, he added that he

anticipates demolition of the former city hall building and library to begin in the “first part” of next year, once plans for the new development are finalized and approved.

“An ‘urban waterfront playground’ I believe is the tagline [for Downtown Long Beach] that . . . has been used for some time and we’re really starting to see that come true,” Fullerton said. “I think it’s one of the best untold beachfront stories in Southern California, and we’re excited to be a part of that.” ■



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Continued Development Adds ‘Pizzazz’ Throughout Downtown Long Beach



Work is underway on Holland Partner Groups’ Pacific-Pine development at 635 Pine and 636 Pacific avenues. The project consists of 271 units in two eight-story buildings. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia has often shined a spotlight on the amount of

development occurring throughout the city, particularly in downtown, stating that the city is “booming” – and it’s easy to see why. In 2019, six developments were completed downtown, with 23 proj-

ects under construction or approved and six more proposed, totaling more than \$3 billion of investment by developers, according to city staff. Long Beach Development Services Director Linda Tatum attributes the flurry of downtown developments, in large part, to the Downtown Plan, the city’s guide for development and design standards that streamlines the development process in the area.

“One thing the Downtown Plan did, and we’re now starting to see the fruits of it, is make Downtown Long Beach attractive for investors. Success breeds success, if you will,” Tatum said. “The plan has incentivized developers to invest in the downtown, be it residential, mixed use or commercial development.”

In 2019, six completed developments brought 621 new residential units to downtown. More than 3,500 residential units and 209 hotel rooms are under construction or have been approved, with an additional 816 residential units and 919 hotel rooms proposed by developers. Many of these projects include thousands of square feet of commercial space, which will bring additional retail and services to

residents and visitors alike. These figures do not include future commercial and hotel uses at the proposed Queen Mary Island because those plans have not been finalized by developer Urban Commons.

Tatum acknowledged that every development boom eventually recedes as vacant land becomes scarcer, particularly in a city like Long Beach that is already mostly built out. However, Tatum said this inevitable slowdown in coming years is not a bad thing. In fact, she said it will be a good opportunity for city staff to assess the impacts of these new developments and reexamine the Downtown Plan to ensure it still fits with what is needed and desired in the area. The plan could then be updated to focus on infrastructure and mobility, or continue to emphasize the creation of housing. But for now, the development of vacant land and surface parking lots is positive for Downtown Long Beach, she said.

“The key objective is to make downtown a safe and attractive place that people want to come to. When you have dead spaces, it feels like a failure; it feels like

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Demolition has begun on a portion of the historic Acres of Book building to prepare for the Broadway Block development by ONNI Development Group. The project consists of 400 units in two buildings – a 21-story tower and a seven-story mid-rise – and 32,800 square feet of commercial space. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

(Continued from Page 19)

something went wrong there,” Tatum said. “To the extent that we’re filling in those gaps, it just demonstrates that it’s a hot market and that [Long Beach] is a place that people want to invest. It fills out the fabric of what the vision is for the city. The downtown will be more vibrant and more active – new development really starts to create the pizzazz.”

Compiled by Long Beach Development Services and the Long Beach Business Journal as of December 9, the following list includes details of all downtown developments completed in 2019, as well as those under construction, approved and proposed, alphabetically.

Completed in 2019

442 Residences

Address: 442 W. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: Ensemble Real Estate
Building Height: Four stories
Units: 94
Parking: 152 spaces
Amenities: A 1,633-square-foot rooftop deck with outdoor kitchen, fitness center, plaza-level pedestrian paseo and dog park.
Start/Completion Dates: 2017/2019

AMLI Park Broadway

Address: 245 W. Broadway
Developer: AMLI Residential
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 222
Commercial Space: 6,007 square feet
Parking: 320 stalls
Amenities: Pool and deck areas, a podium-level clubhouse, and ground floor fitness center and multi-purpose room.
Start/Completion: 2016/2019

Huxton

Address: 227 Elm Ave.
Developer: City Ventures
Building Height: Three stories
Units: 40 townhomes
Parking: 40 one-car garages, 10 guest parking spaces
Amenities: Solar powered, all-electric townhomes. A community room building, outdoor courtyards and an integrated pedestrian paseo. On-site bike storage and a bike repair room.
Start/Completion: 2017/2019

The Linden

Address: 434 E. 4th St.

Developer: Sares-Regis Group
Building Height: Five stories
Units: 49
Commercial Space: 2,500 square feet
Parking: 82 stalls
Amenities: Fitness center, outdoor kitchen and community spaces, and ground floor bicycle kitchen.
Start/Completion: 2017/2019

Long Beach Civic Center

Developer: PECP
Building Height: 11-story City Hall (411 W. Ocean Blvd.); 11-story Port Administration Building (415 W. Ocean Blvd.); two-story Billie Jean King Main Library (200 W. Broadway)
Start/Completion: 2016/2019

Oceanaire

Address: 150 W. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: Lennar Multifamily Communities
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 216
Commercial Space: 1,500 square feet
Parking: 406 stalls
Amenities: A courtyard sitting area, fitness center, pool and deck area, and a clubhouse, as well as improvement of Victory Park and the development of a new city fitness park and dog park at the Seaside Way grade.
Start/Completion: 2016/2019

Under Construction/Approved

5Nº at The Streets

Address: 495 The Promenade North
Developer: Long Beach Center, LLC
Building Height: Four stories
Units: 20
Commercial Space: 4,604 square feet
Parking: 30 stalls
Amenities: A 24-hour eatery on the ground floor.
Start/Completion: 2018/2020
Status: Under construction

The Alamitos

Address: 101 Alamitos Ave.
Developer: Sares-Regis Group
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 136
Commercial Space: 2,560 square feet
Parking: 174 stalls
Amenities: Fitness center, rooftop deck and club room, bike kitchen and storage room
Start/Completion: 2017/Early 2020
Status: Under construction

Aster

Address: 125 Long Beach Blvd.
Developer: Raintree-Evergreen LLC
Building Height: Eight stories
Units: 218
Commercial Space: 7,292 square feet
Parking: 312 car stalls, 44 bicycle stalls
Amenities: 11,600-square-foot, open-to-the-sky courtyard with a swimming pool, spa, barbecue area, and lounge seating amenities on the third floor. A bicycle kitchen and a co-working space on the ground floor with Long Beach Boulevard frontage. A 749-square-foot rooftop lounge on the eighth floor.
Start/Completion: To be announced (TBA)/TBA
Status: Approved

The Beacon

Address: 1201-1235 Long Beach Blvd.
Developer: Century Housing
Building Height: Beacon Place – Seven stories; Beacon Pointe – Five stories
Units: 160
Commercial Space: 6,184 square feet
Parking: 200 car stalls, 72 bicycle stalls
Amenities: The two buildings will be connected at their third levels by a 23,735-square-foot courtyard. The courtyard area will include a 1,311-square-foot community room. Other amenities include a 1,100-square-foot library, two media rooms, supportive services space, a 1,400-square-foot fitness center and large building lobby areas.
Start/Completion: 2017/Early 2020
Status: Under construction

The Breakers Building

Address: 210 E. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: Pacific6
Building Height: 14 stories
Units: 175 hotel rooms
Commercial Space: 13,300 square feet
Parking: TBA
Amenities: Ground floor dining, ground floor wine bar, penthouse dining, rooftop bar, spa and fitness spaces, and meeting rooms.
Start/Completion: 2019/TBA
Status: Under construction

Broadway Block

Address: 200-250 Long Beach Blvd.
Developer: ONNI Development Group
Building Height: 21-story tower, seven-story mid-rise
Units: 400
Commercial Space: 32,807 square feet
Parking: 582 car stalls, 104 bicycle stalls
Amenities: A proposed partnership with California State University, Long Beach for programming of commercial/public spaces, and a housing component for students.
Start/Completion: 2019/TBA
Status: Under construction

Broadway And Magnolia

Address: 500 W. Broadway
Developer: Ensemble Real Estate
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 142
Commercial Space: 4,110 square feet
Parking: 191 car stalls, 21 electric vehicle stalls, 94 bicycle stalls
Amenities: Ground floor retail/restaurant space, ground floor bike kitchen.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

The Hotel

Address: 107 Long Beach Blvd.
Developer: Yogesh Patel
Building Height: Five stories, 30,620 square feet
Units: 34 guest rooms

Parking: 1,440 stalls
Amenities: TBA
Start/Completion: 2019/TBA
Status: Under construction

Inkwell

Address: 127-135 E. Broadway
Developer: Raintree-Evergreen LLC
Building Height: Eight stories
Units: 189
Commercial Space: 10,000 square feet
Parking: 268 car stalls, 40 bicycle stalls
Amenities: A fitness room, club room, roof decks and a swimming pool
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

Locust Long Beach Apartments

Address: 1112-1130 Locust Ave.
Developer: South Park Group
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 97
Parking: 122 car stalls, 20 bicycle stalls
Amenities: A bicycle kitchen, a 2,000 square-foot fitness center, a 2,588 square-foot courtyard and 2,500 square feet of open space.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

Mixed-Use Project

Address: 1101-1157 Long Beach Blvd.
Developer: Rockefeller Partners
Building Height: Eight stories
Units: 120
Commercial space: 6,000 square-feet
Parking: 150 car stalls, 45 bicycle stalls
Amenities: Pool deck
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Under construction

Mixed-Use Project

Address: 507 N. Pacific Ave.
Developer: Anastasi Development Company
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 157 condominiums
Commercial Space: 9,000 square feet
Parking: 209 stalls
Amenities: Two recreation decks and a rooftop deck.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

Ocean Center

Address: 110 W. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: Pacific6
Building Height: 14 stories
Units: 80
Commercial Space: 7,200 square feet
Parking: 160 stalls
Amenities: Rooftop terraces and common spaces.
Start/Completion: 2018/TBA
Status: Under construction

Ocean View Tower

Address: 200 W. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: MEIAO Investment
Building Height: 12 stories
Units: 106
Parking: 150 stalls
Amenities: Pool and spa, community room, fire pit, fitness room, outdoor dining and a dog run.
Start/Completion: 2017/TBA
Status: Under construction

The Pacific

Address: 230 W. 3rd St.
Developer: Sares-Regis Group
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 163
Parking: 244 car stalls, 50 bike storage spots
Amenities: Rooftop deck and club room with a kitchen, fitness center, outdoor kitchen, community living rooms, and a bike work-

shop and storage room.
Start/Completion: 2017/Early 2020
Status: Under construction

Pacific-Pine
Address: 635 Pine Ave./636 Pacific Ave.
Developer: Holland Partner Group
Building Height: Two eight-story buildings
Units: 271
Commercial Space: 1,305 square feet
Parking: 341 car stalls, 56 bicycle stalls
Amenities: Pine Avenue building features one retail space, one main resident lobby and one amenity room; Pacific Avenue building features a main resident lobby and ground floor residential uses.
Start/Completion: 2018/2021
Status: Under construction

Residences At Linden
Address: 135 Linden Ave.
Developer: Residences at Linden, LLC
Building Height: Five stories
Units: 82
Commercial Space: 4,091 square feet
Parking: 135 car stalls, 20 bike stalls
Amenities: A courtyard, an enclosed terrace, an outdoor roof terrace, a 549-square-foot gym and a 1,244-square-foot club room.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

Residential Project
Address: 320 Alamitos Ave.
Developer: Urbana Development, LLC
Building Height: Seven stories
Units: 77
Parking: 105 stalls
Amenities: A 4,081-square-foot rooftop deck and a 793-square-foot community room.

Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

Residential Project
Address: 825 E. 7th St.
Developer: Firth Howard
Building Height: Five stories
Units: 19
Parking: TBA
Amenities: TBA
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

Shoreline Gateway
Address: 777 E. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: Anderson Pacific, LLC
Building Height: 35 stories
Units: 315
Commercial Space: 6,700 square feet
Parking: 458 stalls
Amenities: A 4,081-square-foot rooftop deck and a 793-square-foot community room.
Start/Completion: 2018/TBA
Status: Under construction

Sonata Modern Flats
Address: 207 Seaside Way
Developer: Ensemble Real Estate
Building Height: Five stories
Units: 113
Commercial Space: 2,000 square feet
Parking: 176 stalls
Amenities: A media room, a 3,309-square-foot roof deck and a 3,000-square-foot club/exercise room.
Start/Completion: 2017/2020
Status: Under construction



The Alamitos, a 136-unit residential development by Sares-Regis Group at 101 Alamitos Ave., is expected to be completed early next year. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

Third + Pacific
Address: 131 W. 3rd St.
Developer: Ensemble Real Estate
Building Height: A 23-story high rise and an eight-story mid-rise.
Units: 345
Commercial Space: 16,000 square feet
Parking: 483 stalls
Amenities: 5,841 square-feet of club rooms, fitness and amenity areas.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

West Gateway
Address: 600 W. Broadway
Developer: Trammel Crow
Building Height: Six buildings ranging from six to 40 stories
Units: 756 units
Commercial Space: 3,200 square feet
Parking: 1,440 stalls
Amenities: TBA
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Approved

(Please Continue to Page 22)

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(Continued from Page 21)

Proposed/Under Review

Adaptive Reuse Hotel Project
Address: 110 Pine Ave.
Developer: Pine Street Long Beach, LLC
Building Height: 13 stories
Units: 210 hotel rooms
Commercial Space: 6,000 square feet
Parking: TBA
Amenities: A rooftop food and beverage space and 7,659 square-feet of recreation space.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Proposed

American Life Hotel
Address: 100 E. Ocean Blvd.
Developer: American Life, Inc.
Building Height: 30 stories
Units: 429 hotel rooms
Commercial Space: 50,359 square feet
Parking: 151 stalls
Amenities: 23,512 square feet of restaurant space and 26,847 square feet of meeting and ballroom functions
Status: Under review

Assisted Living Facility
Address: 810 Pine Ave.
Developer: Global Premier Development
Building Height: 10 stories
Units: 78
Parking: 70 stalls
Amenities: A front porch, rooftop garden and terrace.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Under review

First Street Hotel
Address: 123 W. 1st St.
Developer: Pacific Property Partners
Building Height: 38 stories
Units: 280 hotel rooms
Commercial Space: TBA
Parking: 252 stalls in an eight-level parking structure
Amenities: Lounge, fitness room, terrace and restaurant space.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Proposed

Ocean Village
Address: 1-11 Golden Shore
Developer: Greenlaw Partners
Building Height: Eight stories (Buildings 1 & 2), seven or eight stories (Building 3)
Units: 738
Commercial Space: 10,000 square feet
Parking: 1,063 stalls
Amenities: Entertainment terrace, fireside terrace, garden room, game lawn, and resort pool and spa.
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Under review

Queen Mary Island
Address: 1126 Queens Hwy.
Developer: Urban Commons
Building Height: TBA
Units: TBA
Commercial Space: 36,349 square-feet
Parking: 5,772 to 6,472 stalls
Amenities: 2,400-foot-long boardwalk with retail shops, cafes and entertainment space
Start/Completion: TBA/TBA
Status: Under review ■

Faces of Downtown:
Pastor Wayne Chaney, Jr.



Antioch Church’s lead pastor, Wayne Chaney, Jr., sees the church’s acquisition of The Vault 350 on Pine Avenue as an opportunity to engage the community. “We want to be at the front end of the cultural conversation,” Chaney said. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

Pastor Wayne Chaney, Jr., lead pastor of Antioch Church, has always felt a strong connection to Downtown Long Beach. Chaney’s great-grandmother worked on Pine Avenue, where she introduced his parents to one another. “It precedes me, the connection to Downtown Long Beach,” Chaney said. “But it’s always been a place where we shopped, went to the movies, hung out.”

The first Long Beach Gospel Fest, a project of Chaney’s, took place on the corner of Broadway and Pine in 2009 and at the Marina Green in the following, until the annual celebration entered a hiatus in 2015.

Now, Chaney is planning to bring music back to the same streets that have long felt so familiar to him and his family, with Antioch’s acquisition of The Vault 350, a former concert venue located at 350 Pine Ave.

When he was younger, Chaney wouldn’t have foreseen that he’d be leading the church through such a major transition – let alone leading it at all. “I did not want to go into ministry, I

wanted to go into law,” he remembered. But when he visited his grandfather, the founder of Antioch, almost two decades ago, he realized the church had suffered some losses. “The once booming ministry had dwindled,” Chaney recounted. “It just broke my heart.” In an effort to return the 58-year-old congregation to its former glory, Chaney worked on building its youth program. In 2003, he took over as lead pastor.

Currently under renovation, the Vault will soon provide a new home for the church, which currently holds Sunday services inside the auditorium of Long Beach Polytechnic High School. By renting out the space for concerts and events to cover operational costs, Chaney hopes to free up the church’s funds for programming.

“In this day and age, we have to be wise about our resources, but also make sure that our massive vision isn’t financed on the backs of contributing members,” Chaney said. “We want as many of our dollars to go toward transformation as possible: the transformation of people’s lives and the environments we live in.” ■

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City Bets On Public-Private Partnership To Bring New Innovation Hub To Life



Activating the second floor of the building was one of the city's main objectives when it sent out a request for proposals for the Shaun Lumachi Innovation Center, according to Long Beach Economic Development Director John Keisler. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

Located at 309 Pine Ave., the building soon to house the new Shaun Lumachi Innovation Center represents prime Downtown Long Beach real estate. But the facilities, which once served as a satellite location of the Small Business Development Center hosted by Long Beach City College, were in need of significant, costly improvements.

In 2016, city staff began soliciting proposals from thousands of companies to come up with a plan that would allow for the necessary improvements and turn the building into a center for innovation and entrepreneurship. They received 14 proposals and chose to move forward with a plan presented by local coworking space company Blankspaces, created in collaboration with LBCC, according to a city staff report. Jerome Chang, Blankspaces' founder and architect, said the center is expected to open its doors in February 2020.

Originally, the center was to be fully operational in spring 2018, according to a press release by the city's economic development department sent out in January of that year. In its December 2017 agreement with Blankspaces, the city committed to paying the full cost of capital improvements to the facility, \$250,000, an investment it plans to recoup through rent charged to Blankspaces, Economic Development Director John Keisler explained. "We'll get 100% of our investment back over the 10 years [of the contract]," he noted.

The rental rate offered by the

city was competitive enough to entice Blankspaces to take on a space much smaller than its facilities in Santa Monica, Culver City and Irvine, Chang said. The building on Pine Avenue comes in at just under 5,000 square feet. "We were able to get the economics to work out because the city is the landlord, versus a private landlord," he said. "They charge less because they have other objectives they're trying to hit."

For the city, the opportunity for organizations like the Downtown Long Beach Alliance and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to host workshops and seminars at the center was a key factor in the decision to select Blankspaces' proposal, Keisler said. "We found a way to not hit the taxpayers, we found a way to rehab a space, owned by the city, that was not being utilized," he noted. "There's more coming in terms of the programming that we envision for a really dynamic center for innovation and entrepreneurship."

Some of that programming will be provided by the SBDC. "We're really excited, and have been for a long time, at the prospect of being able to once again bring our services to Downtown Long Beach," SBDC Director Brad Pollak said. "The plan is to advise and to offer workshops there based on how it fits in with the schedule, needs and availability of Blankspaces."

The company will be renting out work and meeting space in the building to entrepreneurs and small businesses for a fee, and offer those spaces to the SBDC and other nonprofit entities for free. "I think it's an excellent partnership," Pollak said. Renderings



Blankspaces founder and architect Jerome Chang said his firm's local roots and focus on facilities with a relatively small footprint have given it an edge over national and global competitors. "When you walk into our space, it's much more local, intimate," he explained. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

of the interior design include both closed parcels and open communal spaces.

The center is named in honor of Shaun Lumachi, co-founder of the Long Beach Post and a luminary of the city's business community, who sat on several nonprofit boards and served as the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce's vice president of governmental affairs in the early 2000s. Lumachi died in a car crash in Key West, Florida, on a trip representing the city's Workforce Investment Board in 2011.

"Shaun Lumachi was an incredible man, husband, friend and contributed greatly to Long Beach in many ways," Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia, a close friend and Long Beach Post co-founder, told the Business Journal. "The opening of the Shaun Lumachi Innovation Center in partnership with

Long Beach City College will further the work he achieved."

Having a physical space for the SBDC and other agencies in the city to host their programs is crucial, Chang said. "The City of Long Beach does not exist in a virtual realm; it's not a Facebook group," he explained. "It's an actual city, with concrete and glass and people. So if you're going to deploy some kind of initiative for small businesses, there has to be a physical component to it."

The new center will be a space where federal, state and city efforts to empower small business will come to life, Chang said of his vision for the project. "You can feel and see the buzz, you can feel and see the results. It's quite tangible," he said. "Not just to the small businesses, but to the public. Keisler shared Chang's enthusiasm: "We're in a really cool spot." ■

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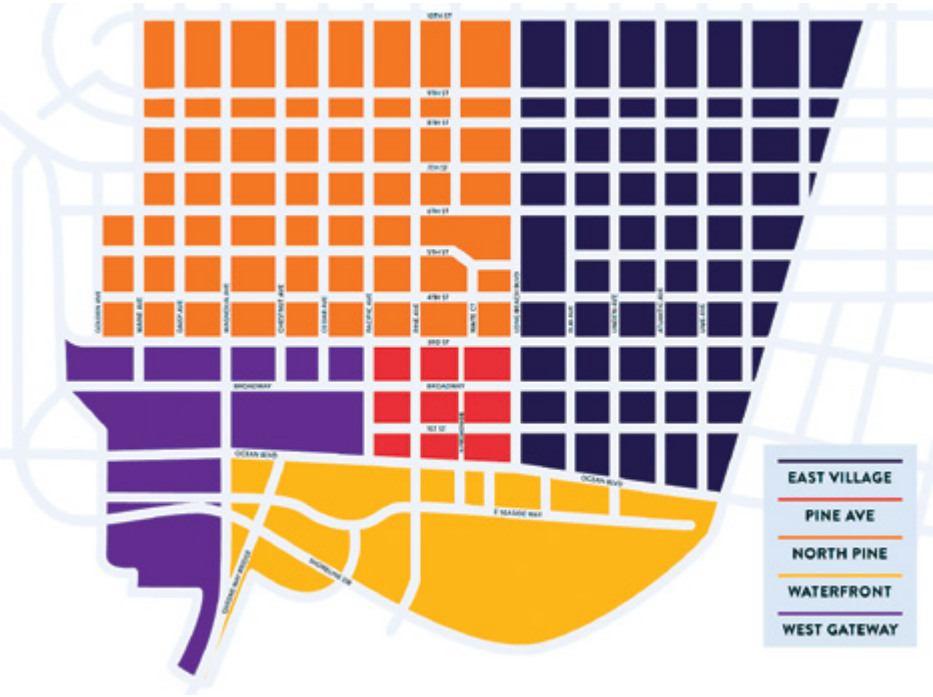
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Map Of Downtown Long Beach Neighborhoods



This map depicts the neighborhoods that make up Downtown Long Beach – specifically, it encompasses the area served by the Downtown Long Beach Alliance, the nonprofit organization tasked with overseeing downtown’s two assessment districts. Within these districts, property owners are assessed a fee to pay for services beyond those provided by the city. These include efforts oriented toward cleanliness and safety, marketing, economic development, events, place-making and more. (Map courtesy of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance)



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Faces Of Downtown: Jewels



Long Beach’s preeminent drag queen entertainer and host, pictured at Hamburger Mary’s, helps raise money for numerous organizations every year. (Photograph courtesy of Jewels)

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

Over the last 21 years, Jewels has solidified herself as a Long Beach icon and champion for LGBTQ+ advocacy, not only within the LGBTQ+ community but also through her citywide charitable efforts and her work as an entertainer and event host.

“I’m a strong believer in giving back to the community . . . and putting good out into the world. I think being an active part of our city, not only the culture and arts communities, but also helping those who need assistance, is super important,” Jewels said. “It’s not only the right thing to do . . . it enhances that sense of community.”

In 1998, when she was 18 years old, Jewels moved from a small desert town near Death Valley to Long Beach. Shortly after the move, Jewels began her work as a Long Beach entertainer as part of the live “Rocky Horror Picture Show” at the Art Theatre of Long Beach.

Now, as one of Long Beach’s preeminent drag queens and event hosts, having performed and hosted events at Hamburger Mary’s since 2001, Jewels

is in a unique position to assist in local fundraising efforts. She noted that through her working relationships, she can connect nonprofit organizations with entertainers and venues to support their causes. She sponsors, organizes and works numerous events annually to benefit The LGBTQ Center Long Beach, the AIDS Food Store and other Long Beach organizations.

This year, the annual Easter Walk, which Jewels is a part of, raised over \$40,000 for the CARE Center at Dignity Health St. Mary Medical Center. Over the years, Jewels has played a key role in raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for various causes; however, she doesn’t have the faintest idea of exactly how much. “I don’t keep track of that,” she explained. “Most of my fundraising efforts are collaborative. If you’re keeping stats on what you personally raise, that’s kind of an egotistical move.”

Jewels has been recognized and honored for her efforts, including being inducted into the Equality Plaza Honor Wall at Harvey Milk Park in 2018. This year, she was presented a key to the city by Mayor Robert Garcia on December 17. ■





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Downtown Craft Booze Boom Continues With Expanded Offerings

By BRANDON RICHARDSON
Senior Writer

Craft alcohol – brands that are produced by local or regional operators in smaller quantities than booze giants such as Anheuser-Busch or Jack Daniels – has been growing in popularity, with an onslaught of new companies over the last several years. The trend did not bypass Downtown Long Beach, which has makers that offer a wide variety of inebriating beverages.

“Craft anything ties you closer to the actual person that’s making it. If you look at the large company manufacturers, you don’t know who they are; it’s not local,” Joe Farrier, co-owner of the yet-to-open Ficklewood Ciderworks at 720 E. Broadway, said. “Craft is local. You know the individual. I think in Long Beach that’s a big deal. It’s more about community. When you look at some of these areas where you see a boom of craft beverages, it’s because the people want to know who is making what they’re consuming.”

Craft beer is a \$27.6 billion per year industry and makes up 24% of the U.S. beer market, according to

the Brewers Association, a nonprofit with more than 5,261 U.S. brewery members. The U.S. craft spirits market is expected to achieve revenues of more than \$20 billion by 2023, with a compound annual growth rate of 32%, according to a July 2018 report by Research And Markets.

In 2018, the U.S. wine market was worth \$70.5 billion, with imported wine accounting for just under one-third. In 2017, the U.S. hard cider market dipped to \$470 million from \$536 million in 2016; however, smaller brands experienced 71% growth over those two years, according to Forbes. Local and regional cideries make up 25% of total revenues generated by the industry each year, according to Statista.

Downtown’s oldest craft beer producer is Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery, which opened in 1997 and brews approximately 800 barrels (24,000 gallons) of beer annually. Though it is a corporate restaurant and brewery with 24 other locations nationwide, the beer brewed in downtown is unique to Long Beach, General Manager Johnny Diaz explained.

“All [Rock Bottom locations] have

the same menu as far as dining, but each location has its own brewer that brews basically whatever they want,” Diaz said. “I mean, there are five categories that we have to abide by – we have to have a light, a malty, a fruity/spicy, something that’s hoppy and something that’s dark. But . . . we can brew anything within those constraints.”

This year saw the introduction of two firsts in the Long Beach craft beverage scene: the city’s first distillery in Portuguese Bend and the first winery in Waters Edge Winery. Portuguese Bend, the brainchild of Lola’s Mexican Cuisine and The Socialist owner Luis Navarro, opened in September and currently offers a vodka and two gins, both of which are distilled on site. Navarro said his team recently began the process of distilling three rums – a Caribbean spiced rum, a white rum and a navy proof rum suitable for Tiki drinks. Future plans include whiskey and bitters production.

Navarro explained that he thought up the concept for Portuguese Bend six years ago, but that rules and regulations dating back to just after prohi-

bition have kept craft alcohol at bay in many areas. “[These laws] have never been reevaluated to update them to current times,” he said. “They were written after prohibition and they’ve literally sat for decades.”

In the 1960s and ’70s, the California wine movement began to pick up steam, which led to the formation of a group that was able to lobby and chip away at restrictive laws, Navarro explained. Today, he said the same is happening with craft spirits and beer, making it easier for smaller brands to open craft alcohol production facilities in urban areas such as Downtown Long Beach. Numerous laws over the last six years have aided entrepreneurs in opening up shop, including Senate Bill 1283, which allowed for brewpub-restaurant licensee’s to sell product brewed onsite for offsite consumption.

Waters Edge Winery opened its doors in October, offering guests 50 different wines made from grapes sourced from around the world, all produced onsite. The winery sources grapes from Chile, Argentina, Spain, France, Italy and several U.S. states,

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(Continued from Page 25)
to name a few locales.

“We wanted to offer something very unique from what people are used to when it comes to wineries, wine bars or the food and wine pairing scene,” owner Collin Mitzenmacher said. “We make everything on site so we can do some fun, different things such as blending countries or blending states, showing that we can be more versatile as an urban winery than having a vineyard out in wine country.”

Waters Edge is a corporate company with 11 franchises – and seven more opening before summer 2020 – in 10 states. However, like Rock Bottom, each franchise has the freedom to experiment and create their own wines, which must then be approved by the corporate office. Mitzenmacher’s father, Mark, is the director of operations for the corporation. He said the Long Beach site is going to become the flagship location, where new franchise owners can learn the wine-making process and see Waters Edge in action in the real world.

Ficklewood, the city’s first cidery, is set to open in mid-January in the East Village Arts District, according to owners Farrier and Stefan Enjem. The pair also formed the Long Beach Craft Beverage Guild, a group of craft beverage makers who get together to sample each other’s work, share best practices, collaborate and create.

“We’re planning to do 10,000 gallons a year but our capacity is about double that. The reason for that is in subsequent years we’re looking for growth and distribution out of this location,” Enjem said. “We’re doing a lot of small batch stuff that we’ll have for a limited time.”

The cidery is going to open with around six ciders on tap, including the Ficklewood Original that will become a permanent staple. But the site is equipped with 14 taps to accommodate anticipated production growth, Enjem said, noting that the watering hole will have ciders that are enjoyable for beer and wine drinkers, as

well as traditional cider enthusiasts. Ficklewood ciders are not artificially sweetened and are gluten free due to the owners’ own dietary restrictions – Enjem is a diabetic and Farrier has celiac disease.

“We spent about a year looking at spots all over Long Beach and almost signed a lease in another area. And then we walked into this building and we were both just floored,” Farrier said. “The location, the new apartments opening up, the foot traffic and the energy are amazing.”

Over the last eight years, Beachwood BBQ and Brewing on the Promenade has become a staple in the Long Beach beer scene, pumping out 68,200 gallons of the frothy beverage annually, according to co-owner Gabriel Gordon. The company expanded its Downtown Long Beach craft beer presence in 2014 with the Beachwood Blendery on Long Beach Boulevard, though the Blendery’s first beer wasn’t released until 2016 due to the longer brewing process at that facility.

“[Craft beer] is just a better product than the mass-produced garbage that Big Beer makes. It shows when it is done well and it’s done right, and when it’s done with love,” Gordon said. Out of the restaurant space, Beachwood produces anywhere from 150 to 200 different beers every year, while the Blendery pumps out about 40. “Making beer with great ingredients and interesting flavors – of course people would rather drink that,” he added.

“Long Beach is just a cool city that people are really engaged in and quite proud of. Beer has always been about community, so it was a natural fit for us,” Gordon said. City staff was instrumental in getting Beachwood up and running, Gordon added, noting that staff met with him and his architects to make sure the team avoided pitfalls that could delay the permitting and opening of the business.

Two future additions to Downtown Long Beach’s craft beverage landscape are Altar Society Brewing



Ficklewood Ciderworks, Long Beach’s first cidery, is expected to open in mid-January, according to owners Stefan Enjem, left, and Joe Farrier. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

Company and Whale Face Beer. Altar Society is the vision of local real estate agent Jon Sweeney and his partner Chris Evans (not to be confused with the movie star). The brewery will be on the ground floor of The Masonic Temple building at 230 Pine Ave., the home of popular wedding venue The Loft on Pine. Built in 1903, it is the oldest original building in Long Beach, according to Sweeney.

At full capacity, Sweeney said the brewpub will be able to produce 2,500 barrels of beer annually. He said the space will have a full liquor license to accommodate weddings and other events. Sweeney added that Altar Society will not be a full-service eatery, but rather will have counter service with a communal open pizza kitchen, sandwiches and fried foods.

“I am a beer guy. I am not going to settle for any crap,” Sweeney said. “We have been around Long Beach; we know what’s out there. We know what [Beachwood] produces and we’re going to make sure that we’re on that same level, because I refuse to open something that’s just not going to be good.”

Altar Society will have about 20 to

25 taps, through which 15 to 17 of its own beers will flow. The remaining taps will be used to showcase other local brewers and for collaborations, Sweeney noted. Operation of the brewpub will be overseen by Eric Johnson and David Copley of Auld Dubliner.

The vision for Whale Face Beer is to have a tap room located on the ground floor of The Linden, a residential development by Sares-Regis Group that opened this year. However, Whale Face owner Brendan Megowan said he is still putting together a plan and funding for the tap room, which will not have a brewing facility on site. Currently, Megowan co-ops brewing space with Strand Brewing Company in Torrance.

“People just want to experience something that’s theirs. So when you put something in town that is geared toward the local population, they just enjoy being able to have their own thing,” Collin Mitzenmacher said. “Whether they have their own distillery, their own brewery or now their own winery, they can really take pride in it because it’s made right here in town. I think that’s what gets people excited about [craft beverages].” ■



Opening in 1997, Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery is Downtown Long Beach’s oldest brewery. Though Rock Bottom is a corporate chain, Long Beach General Manager Johnny Diaz, pictured, said each location brews beer specific to that restaurant. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

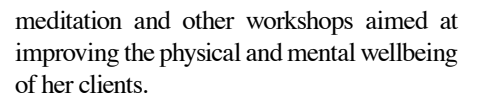


Collin, left, and Mark Mitzenmacher opened Long Beach’s first winery in October. The urban-wine model does not require a vineyard, but rather sources grapes from around the world the create up to 50 wines in house. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

To promote local businesses, the group started an Instagram account with the handle @EastVillageArtsDistrict. On the account, Stock and her team share photos of storefronts as well as information on events, such as the Local Ladies Holiday Market fea-

When asked why this particular area might be especially popular with female en-



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As the neighborhood grows economically, so do opportunities for individual businesses to connect, Epps explained. “These systems are being created. More and more people are desiring that, and more things are being put into place where we can all share our voice or have a part in growing the East Village,” she said. “I think we’re just moving into that adolescent phase.” A denser business network in the area, she argued, will be a positive force for the city’s economic progress. “By growing that, all of Long Beach benefits,” Epps said.

At the moment, there’s still some room for improvement, according to Maral Malikyar, owner of Maral Designs, who has worked individually to connect with businesses and organizations in the area. Malikyar said she enjoys working with fellow female business owners like Orsa Modica of Modica’s Deli next door. “As women, we have a different relationship. We’re more comfortable with one another,” she noted.

Her recent move to the East Village from San Pedro has brought upon mixed emotions. “Unfortunately, the foot traffic is not what I was expecting,” Malikyar said. While many of the customers at her San Pedro store came from Long Beach, her new location is mostly frequented by tourists and business travelers on their way between the downtown hotels and the convention center. “I would love to see more locals,” she noted.

Because of her online retail business and appointment-based services, Janet Schriever’s skin care store and spa, Code of Harmony, doesn’t depend entirely on foot traffic. But she agrees that there’s room for growth. Still, the neighborhood’s comparably affordable retail spaces are what attracted her to the East Village. “It’s cool, it’s hip, it’s interesting. But it’s [still] up-and-coming, which makes it affordable,” she explained of her decision to set up shop in this part of Downtown Long Beach. “I like what’s happening downtown,” she added. “It’s really starting to turn the corner as far as having more upscale businesses.”

Schriever moved around L.A. County for the better part of three years before settling on her first retail location on Linden Avenue and 4th Street. “I was looking for a space that I could make my products in, sell my



Not content with just putting new colors in her clients’ manes, Envy Beauty Studio owner Stephanie Stomp wanted her salon to be a place where local artists could showcase their work as well. The tassels floating above the salon’s ground level were chosen and arranged by event and interior designer Ingrid Willis. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

products in, [somewhere] I could do facials,” Schriever explained.

Because her products, which are sold through her company’s website and by national luxury retailer Neiman Marcus, contain the cannabis extract cannabidiol (CBD), Schriever faced significant obstacles in establishing her business prior to the 2018 Farm Bill, which legalized the use of CBD on a federal level. “We had problems with everything, from trademarks to banking and payment processing – you name it,” she remembered. “It’s been a challenge.”

With the issue of legality out of the way, Schriever was finally able to focus on establishing a storefront location, a journey that led her to the East Village in 2018. She said she would be interested in becoming part of a more formalized network of women-owned

businesses in the East Village, which could devise strategies for pulling more customers into the neighborhood. Overall, Schriever said so far she has felt welcomed by her fellow entrepreneurs. “Ever since we’ve moved in, the community has been extremely supportive,” Schriever noted.

Josy Johnson, owner of A Beautiful California Florist, said she would love to see a more tight-knit business network in the neighborhood as well. “That’s what I hope. That everybody can come together,” she said.

When Johnson came to the U.S. from Brazil a little less than two decades ago, she didn’t speak much English. “The only things I knew how to say when I came here were, ‘Hi,’ ‘Good Morning,’ ‘Goodbye.’” she remembered. But determined to make her mark in the world of event planning, Johnson began taking classes at California State University, Dominguez Hills in 2005 and eventually developed a list of clients that allowed her to grow her business and add a retail flower shop.

“I love flowers,” Johnson said. “My house has flowers everywhere you go.” After noticing that the flowers she saw at events she planned for her clients were lacking in quality, she started her own retail flower business on Atlantic Avenue and 5th Street. Running a business hasn’t always been easy, but her love for Long Beach has helped Johnson keep her chin up. “I feel at home here,” she said.

Angela Mesna, owner of District Wine, said she too feels a personal connection to Long Beach and the East Village. When the restaurant and hospitality design firm she was working for closed its California offices in 2008, it was the push Mesna said she needed to strike out on her own. After dreaming of opening her own business for a while and eyeing a space in the East Village for two years, she decided to give it a shot.

“It just started with a love for wine, love for the community and for this neighborhood,” Mesna remembered. In 2009, sensing that the area was ripe for the business she envisioned, she began the process of making her dream a reality. “It just seemed like it was growing to [the point] where it would support a wine bar,” Mesna said. In April, District Wine will celebrate its 10-year anniversary.

Over the past decade, Mesna noted, the neighborhood has become safer. “A lot of times it’s just women working the floor, and we feel safe,” she said. The work of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance as well as the sense of camaraderie and community among businesses in the area have contributed to that sense of safety, she noted. “The community really supports each other,” Mesna said. “People know you and they watch out for you.”

Being part of the community and connecting with the businesses around her is an important mission to Stephanie Stomp, owner of Envy Beauty Studio, and she makes a point of checking in on her fellow East Village entrepreneurs regularly. “I stop by and talk to all of my neighbors on the way home,” she said.

Located in a cream and mint-colored Art Deco building on Elm Avenue, Stomp’s salon is located just a few doors down from Epps’ Shine Your Heart Healing, and is one of five women-owned businesses on the short block.

The number of women leading businesses in the area adds to the neighborhood’s charm, Stomp explained. “It’s really inspiring to me,” she said. “Whenever I feel like I want to give up, I pop by one of my [neighboring] businesses.” The women often share words of encouragement, a quick ‘Hang in there!’ or a hug to keep each other motivated. “We’re just a band of sisters here who are trying to support each other,” Stomp noted. ■



Before settling in at her retail location in the East Village, Code of Harmony owner Janet Schriever ran her business from offices in Belmont Shore and Pasadena. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

Sustainable Practices Become Part Of Downtown Playbook

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

When Long Beach-based architecture firm Environ Architecture was founded in 1992, the memory of the 1990 spike in oil prices caused by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait was still fresh on American minds. Back then, Environ Vice President Willetta McCulloh remembered, sustainable practices were all about conserving energy to help the U.S. become less dependent on foreign oil.

Today, the objective behind sustainable business practices is much broader, but the seed was planted then. Since the 1990s, the company has focused on sustainability, both in its own practices and in the spaces it designs for clients. "All of our design work has a sustainability, wellness and climate change aspect to it," President and Director of Architecture Alan Burks pointed out. Most of Environ Architecture's employees are certified through the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

One of the companies in Downtown Long Beach that has long had an explicit focus on sustainability, Environ

encourages staff to attend workshops and meetings on sustainable practices to help them stay up to date on the newest techniques and technologies. "Being architects, we're always exposed to better ways of doing things," Burks noted, highlighting workshops offered by the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects as an example.

In addition to creating sustainable spaces for clients, the company has taken steps to make its own offices more environmentally friendly. Carpets have been removed to reduce dust, thereby reducing the amount of energy necessary to clean the office space. Incandescent bulbs have been replaced by energy-efficient LED lights. "As a company, it has definitely improved our bottom line," McCulloh pointed out. The new-and-improved office space has benefited employees as well, she noted. "It's just a happier space and it reduces downtime from being sick."

Jay Dysart, principal of East Village-based JLOOP, said the needs and preferences of his employees have played a role in the firm's transition toward more sustainable business practices. Staff often work from home, cutting down on car use. "We try to



Under the leadership of Operations Manager Tracee Schmidt and owner Dina Amadri, Long Beach Creamery received both the Long Beach Water Department's Blue Certified badge and the city's Green Business certification. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

keep people working where it's most efficient," Dysart explained. The office of JLOOP, a web and app development firm, is located in a LEED Gold-certified building on 4th Street. Dysart noted that he strives to go paperless whenever possible.

Like Environ Architecture, Dys-

art's company is part of the Long Beach Sustainable Business Network. The group meets monthly and aims to be a resource for businesses hoping to improve their practices as they relate to sustainability. "It really is about raising the [level] of dialogue in our

(Please Continue to Page 30)

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Implementing water-saving measures at his two Downtown establishments, Pier 76 Fish Grill and The Harbor, was a no-brainer for owner Chris Krajacic: “Why not continue to support the community and what the community is looking for from a sustainability [standpoint]?” (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

(Continued from Page 29)

community about sustainable business on all fronts,” he noted. “Our city is just exploding all around us, and it feels super important for entities like this to exist and for these conversations to happen.”

One way to drum up interest in sustainability is by directly involving customers in a company’s efforts to conserve and protect environmental resources. Long Beach Creamery, a local ice cream manufacturer with three retail locations, including one near the Promenade in downtown, has done just that. Going beyond the city’s ban on Styrofoam food packaging and regulations on single-use plastic, leadership at Long Beach Creamery decided to replace plastic spoons with wooden ones and encourage customers to bring their own bowls to hold the company’s creamy scoops.

“As a business, it’s one of our core values, respecting the earth,” owner Dina Amadril told the Business Journal. “People think it’s kind of fun too,” she noted. One day, Amadril and her team hope to offer customers the option of taking home ice cream in their own reusable containers as well. “There are health department challenges, but we’re trying to see if there are ways to work around them or work with them in the future,” Amadril explained.

Tracee Schmidt, Long Beach Creamery’s operations manager, said her role with the company presented a welcome opportunity to put her concern for the environment to good use by implementing eco-conscious business practices. “Being higher up in a company like this one, it gave me the opportunity to try to move forward with that stuff,” Schmidt said. “And if you have multiple businesses in the same city, you want to think about what you’re doing, what you’re using, what you’re putting into your products.”

Clients in Downtown Long Beach have been particularly engaged with the Bring Your Own Bowl program, Amadril noted. “The population here is

a little bit different,” she said. “They’re really thinking about sustainability.” Some customers even bring their own straws and utensils, she recounted.

Alternatively, Long Beach Creamery offers paper straws, the quality of which has improved dramatically, Amadril pointed out. “The first paper straws we introduced, they broke down before somebody had even gotten halfway through their milkshake,” Amadril said. “Now they’re getting better and better.” The novelty of bringing your own bowl or using utensils made from alternative materials is appealing to some customers. “People are really appreciative of us being one of the first [businesses] taking that kind of step,” Amadril explained.

It will probably be a while until customers can have their favorite bowl filled with nearby Pier 76 Fish Grill’s creamy clam chowder, but owner Chris Krajacic said he strives to be as sustainable as possible. Within the past year, Krajacic received the Long Beach Water Department’s Blue Certified badge for both his seafood restaurant and downtown bar.

Getting his newer establishment, a bar and restaurant dubbed The Harbor, certified and up to snuff on environmental standards was a challenge, especially because it’s located in a historic building. “We took over a building that had been seriously neglected,” Krajacic explained. “So it took us a little more time to get there.”

The effort was worth it. “From the business side, it makes sense,” Krajacic said. “It makes sense from a financial standpoint; it makes sense from an efficiency standpoint.” While he’s not sure if individual customers are aware of the city’s certification program and specifically seek out businesses that have been certified, he sees a reputational benefit in being a good neighbor and an economic benefit in protecting the marine habitats Pier 76 relies on, Krajacic noted. “We’re a seafood restaurant and we depend highly on those resources,” he explained.

Faces of Downtown: Jon Peterson



When P3 Theatre Company founder and Executive Artistic Director Jon Peterson first moved to Long Beach in the 1990, while a student at the University of California, Irvine, he never ventured downtown. But last year, he started his first theater company at the Scottish Rite Event Center in the area’s arts district, where he hopes to serve as a cultural resource for the community. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

In the world of theater, Jon Peterson is a bit of a self-described anomaly. A trained actor, Peterson also completed a master’s degree in business administration, and he spent the last decade working in the trade show industry.

That’s until one day, his passion for the stage got the best of him. In 2018, he quit his job and moved to Taiwan for a temporary, six-week assignment as a musical theater teacher. “I loved the [other] job, it was great, but I was ready to get back into theater,” he said of his decision.

When Peterson returned to Southern California that same year, he decided it was the right time to start his own theater company, something he had long dreamed of doing. He began to research regulations and best practices for setting up a nonprofit theater company, and a friend told him to get in touch with The Nonprofit Partnership. “It’s probably the best choice I made in this whole process,” Peterson noted.

In March 2019, Peterson’s P3 Theatre Company announced its

inaugural lineup, featuring Andrew Lloyd Webber’s classic “Evita” as well as “Steel Magnolias,” “Sordid Lives,” “Gypsy” and “A Chorus Line,” to be performed at the Ernest Borgnine Theater housed in Downtown Long Beach’s Scottish Rite Event Center.

In addition to providing paid opportunities for professional actors to perform, Peterson said he’s eager to play a role in the community, providing access to the arts to a broad spectrum of people. P3 regularly invites volunteers of other nonprofits, many of whom are seniors, to attend dressed rehearsals, where they can see the play’s final version free of charge. “It’s my philosophy that I will never deny anyone admission to the theater because they don’t have the money,” he explained. The company also provides professional actors to other nonprofits for musical theater workshops.

The dramatic life change has been worth it, Peterson concluded. “It’s challenging as heck, but the fact that I get to spend my days connecting with people who are doing what they do because they love [it]; it just means a lot,” he said. ■

Entrepreneurs like Krajacic, who see a connection between the success of their business and the protection of natural resources, underline a point made by Burks: sustainable business practices have progressed far beyond the objective of energy conservation alone. “Our offices, our homes, busi-

nesses, industries – they’re really micro-environments. And the larger environment feeds into that,” Burks noted. “[Sustainability] has gone from simply conserving energy to saving the world.” ■

Car Alternatives Grow And Improve In Downtown Long Beach

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

There's lots of movement when it comes to transportation and infrastructure in Downtown Long Beach, including the renovation of the newly minted Metro A Line, a growing e-scooter program and the planned addition of 17 new battery-electric buses to the Long Beach Transit (LBT) fleet. As a result, the area's transit options continue to grow and improve, according to Kraig Kojian, president and CEO of the Downtown Long Beach Alliance.

"Even though there's always room to improve, I think Long Beach is doing a great job," Kojian told the Business Journal. "Still, in Southern California, a lot of folks are married to their cars." But, he added, "that is one thing we're overcoming on a step by step basis."

For Long Beach Transit, the move toward a lower-emission fleet has been front and center this year. The agency's board of directors recently approved the purchase of 14 new battery-electric buses from Chinese manufacturer BYD, adding to an existing fleet of 10 such buses. The agency is also planning to replace three of its traditionally fueled buses with BYD buses, bringing its electric bus fleet to 27 vehicles, once all units have been delivered.

"That's rolling toward our goal of having a zero-emission fleet, and it gives us the opportunity to continue phasing out the older buses – especially the diesel buses," Michael Gold, LBT's executive director/vice president of customer relations and communications, explained. Formerly used exclusively on the complimentary Passport shuttle route, the buses have recently been deployed on the agency's 45/46 line between Westside Long Beach and Park Estates.

The agency also plans to continue and possibly expand its commuter services to the West L.A. campus of the University of California, Los Angeles. Gold said the service was so successful, LBT began utilizing larger buses than initially planned. If the service's popularity continues, he noted, the agency is considering a switch to coach-style buses to accommodate demand.

"As downtown continues to grow and more housing units are coming online, we continue to work with the city and other partners to make sure that we're connecting," Gold said.

A potential collaboration with the Downtown Long Beach Alliance is on the horizon, according to Gold and Kojian, but details won't be released until early next year. Gold said LBT is interested in pursuing any programs that would allow new and existing downtown residents to rely more heavily on public transit options instead of cars. "We're looking into that and hoping to expand some partnerships there," he noted.

For those who want to forgo cars and other emission-producing vehicles entirely, the City of Long Beach is creating an ever-expanding network of bike lanes and bike paths. "I think we had a fantastic year, with a lot of big projects that got done," Craig Beck, director of Long Beach Public Works, said of his department's work in 2019.

The Daisy/Myrtle Bike Boulevard,

which connects Downtown Long Beach with Uptown, entered its first full year of operations in 2019. For those biking north, the 9.5-mile bike path starts at Daisy Avenue and 3rd Street in downtown and leads up all the way to Myrtle Avenue and 70th Street in North Long Beach. "It allows people to enjoy so many exciting neighborhoods in our city, so we [were] excited to finish that," Beck noted. The bike path was completed in December 2018.

The city further expanded its bike infrastructure by making temporary bike lanes on Broadway and 3rd Street permanent, as part of a street resurfacing project. Bus islands, allowing passengers to step onto a bus from elevated curbs couched between the new bike lanes and the road, were also added to both streets. "Adding the bus islands provides good throughput on the bike lanes," Beck explained.

Don't have a bike? No problem. The city's bike share program continues to grow. In November, 150 more bikes were added to bikeshare system, according to Beck, allowing the program to expand to Bixby Knolls. And there's more. "Our next bike share expansion will include e-bikes as well," Beck foreshadowed.

E-bikes are also allowed as part of the city's micro-mobility program, which governs the implementation of small mobility devices deployed by private companies in the city. Currently, that market is dominated by e-scooters, with four e-scooter providers currently offering their company's devices in a number of Long Beach neighborhoods, including downtown.

"All [the pieces are] integrated into overall mobility in Long Beach," Beck said. "We have to recognize that we can't keep adding [residential] units in downtown and expect everyone to drive around in single-occupancy vehicles, because we can't build more streets. We're a built-out city."

Micro-mobility and other short-distance transit options help residents connect to mass transit, taking them across the region without ever setting foot on the gas pedal, Beck explained. In that lane, the renovation and renaming of the Metro Blue Line constituted the biggest change for Long Beach this year.

"The changes made through the project will extend the service line, improve reliability, enhance safety systems, and improve frequencies," Metro Los Angeles Communications Manager Jose Ubaldo said. For example, Ubaldo noted, A Line trains now travel all the way through Downtown Long Beach during rush hour, instead of turning back toward Los Angeles at Willow Station, as they did prior to the completion of the project. Additionally, the transit agency worked with the City of Long Beach to update traffic signals along the line, reducing the overall travel time of trains between Downtown Long Beach and Los Angeles, according to Beck.

And the name change? "Our current naming convention is inconsistent and not scalable to the needs of L.A. County's expanding transit system," Ubaldo said. "While we have employed both color names and regular names such as 'Expo Line' to date, we would soon need to choose shades of colors



The recent improvements to the oldest line in the Metro Los Angeles system, now dubbed the A Line, are not the end of the road for the agency's efforts to improve the ridership experience, Communications Manager Jose Ubaldo said. "We are always working with the City of Long Beach to improve the time savings on the Blue Line," he noted, referring to the line by its previous name. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

rather than basic colors for new lines." Using a variety of hues or complex naming conventions would potentially create language and visual barriers for passengers, he pointed out.

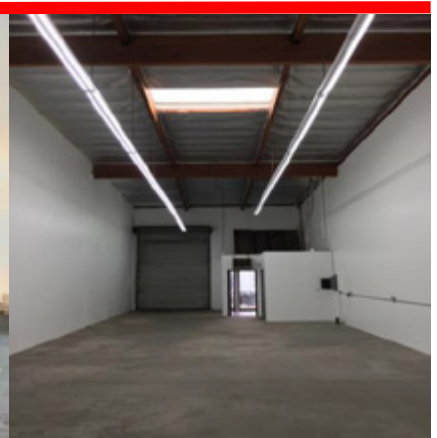
Upgrades to mass transit, expanding micro-mobility options and a modernized fleet for local connections all add value to the downtown area, making it more attractive to businesses and visitors alike, Kojian

noted, adding that the successes other cities have seen in embracing multi-modal transit options was a testament to that. "The easier it is to access those destinations, the more welcoming those communities become," he noted, highlighting the importance of offering alternatives to cars. "It's really just a matter of changing our lifestyle, our culture." ■



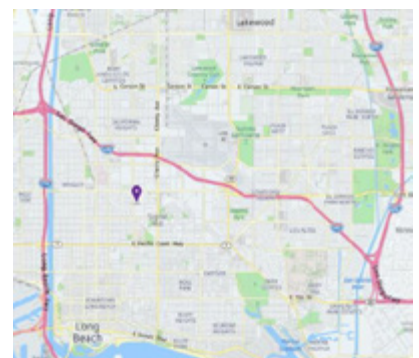
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Iconic Bridge To Debut In 2020

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Editor

In mid-2020, the new cable-stayed bridge spanning the Long Beach harbor will open to vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The \$1.467 billion replacement for the existing Gerald Desmond Bridge will create a new icon for Long Beach’s skyline, improve the transit experience for port truckers and commuters alike, and provide a new vantage point for cyclists and pedestrians seeking views of the San Pedro Bay ports.

The massive project spearheaded by the Port of Long Beach has been nearly two decades in the making, according to Duane Kenagy, capital programs executive for the Port of Long Beach. “This was a major undertaking, and obviously there are a lot of people who have been involved,” Kenagy said, noting that the project created thousands of construction jobs. “There will be appropriate dedication efforts to recognize the contributions of all of the folks who worked hard to get this thing built and added to the community,” he said, adding that he expects the bridge to open next summer.

“We had several objectives in designing a replacement bridge, and one of the

major things is simply roadway safety,” Kenagy said of the new structure. “The new bridge will have three continuous lanes all the way across [in each direction] with safety shoulders on both sides. So if there is an incident on the bridge, it’ll be a lot easier for emergency response to address that.”

Additionally, the new bridge is less steep than the existing structure, which makes the roadway safer for the many truckers carrying goods to and from the ports, as well as the vehicles around them, Kenagy explained. “You won’t see the tremendous speed difference that we see today between loaded trucks trying to go up those 6% [steep] grades with cars that are [often] racing to get across the bridge.”

In addition to improving the transit experience for motorists, the bridge will feature an added benefit for the community: the Mark Bixby Memorial Bicycle Pedestrian Path. “The project includes a full Class 1 bike lane, which means it’s fully separated from roadway traffic for the entire length of the bridge,” Kenagy said. “It will have a four-foot [wide] bike lane in each direction and a four-foot [wide] separate area for pedestrians.” The highest point of the bridge will feature a



The replacement for the existing Gerald Desmond Bridge, pictured with a bluish-green arch in the background, is expected to be complete in mid-2020. As depicted here, the new bridge is cable-stayed, featuring 515-foot towers and three lanes of traffic in each direction, as well as a path for cyclists and pedestrians. (Photograph courtesy of the Port of Long Beach)

lookout point for travelers along the path.

Kenagy noted that the City of Long Beach is working to ensure that downtown’s network of bicycle lanes is connected to the bridge’s path.

The towers of the bridge are 515 feet tall – the highest structures in the city. “It’s a beautiful bridge by any standard for bridge architecture. The graceful lines of the bridge I think complement the skyline in the area, [and] that certainly tow-

ers above everything down in the port,” Kenagy observed. He speculated that the bridge will become a new mainstay in artistic renderings of the city skyline.

“We’re building a facility that will well serve Long Beach and the community for decades and decades to come,” Kenagy said of the bridge. “It’s got a 100-year design life, and I think it’s just going to be a tremendous addition to the City of Long Beach.” ■



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Carnival Panorama Arrives In Long Beach



The Carnival Panorama is one of the cruise line's three largest ships to date, with a total of 15 passenger decks and 2,004 staterooms. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

■ By **ALENA MASCHKE**
Senior Writer

Carnival Cruise Line's new ship has arrived in Long Beach. Built at the Fincantieri's Marghera shipyard in Italy, the 4,008-passenger Panorama was welcomed to its new home port with a christening and ribbon cutting ceremony on December 10. From Carnival's cruise terminal in Long Beach, the ship will take passengers on week-long voyages to the Mexican Riviera of Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlán and Cabo San Lucas every Saturday.

The Panorama is the cruise line's first new ship on the West Coast in 20 years, and was brought in to replace Carnival Cruise's Splendor, which could host up to 3,012 passengers. With the new ship, the company is increasing its capacity on trips departing from Long Beach by 33%.

"Bookings have remained constant over the years as we sail at capacity regardless of ship or cruise duration," Fred Stein, Carnival Cruise Line's vice president of revenue planning and deployment, told the Business Journal in December 2018. According to

Stein, Carnival expects to carry 650,000 passengers a year from Long Beach going forward, "the most of any cruise operator on the West Coast."

Carnival began taking reservations for trips on the 133,500-ton ship in March 2018. Passengers will board the company's newest ship inside the Long Beach Cruise Terminal, a geodesic dome adjacent to Queen Mary Island that once housed Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose seaplane. The Panorama will depart for its first full-length voyage on December 14, following a one-time, three-day trip to Catalina Island and Ensenada.

Considered a "Vista-class ship," the Panorama is the third ship in that category, which is comprised of the largest ships ever constructed for the Miami-based cruise line, according to a press release. "Carnival Panorama is the perfect name to reflect the design inspiration of our Vista-class ships providing more venues and opportunities to connect with the sea," Carnival President Christine Duffy said.

The ship will be supervised by three Carnival veterans: Captain Carlo Queirolo of Rapallo, Italy; Chief Engineer Nunzio Priolo, a fellow Italian from Catania, Sicily; and Hotel Director Damir Mrcic of Zadar, Croatia. The three will lead a team of 1,450 crew members.

That's the manpower required to maintain and operate a vessel with the plethora of dining and entertainment options offered on the Panorama, from a Cuban-themed bar to the first ever Sky Zone trampoline park at sea. The ship also features two restaurants by celebrity chef and TV-personality Guy Fieri, Burger Joint and Smokehouse



In the ship's lobby, guests are welcomed with a view of the Panorama Atrium and Bar, which features a staircase leading to the various shops and restaurants located on the fourth and fifth deck. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)



Carnival's newest ship features the first ever Sky Zone at sea, a two-level, 3,000-square foot trampoline adventure park. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)



The Panorama features one of Carnival's signature WaterWorks water parks and Twister Waterslide, located on the ship's highest full-sized passenger deck, Deck 12. (Photograph by Brandon Richardson)

Brewhouse. "One of the things we are most proud of is the delicious food we offer across our fleet," Duffy noted.

The ship's christening ceremony was hosted by its godmother, Wheel of Fortune's Vanna White. "I'm incredibly flattered and honored to be the godmother of this ship," White said, before revealing the ship's name letter by letter, Wheel-of-Fortune-style, and shattering a champagne

bottle on the bow of the ship. "Naming Carnival Panorama was truly a special moment, and one I will never forget," she added. "I look forward to sailing on her in the future."

The festivities included a return of the Carnival AirShip, a 128-foot-long blimp emblazoned with the line's "Choose Fun" tag line and concluded with a fireworks display. ■

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Electing A New 2nd District Representative

■ By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Editor

After having just secured a new 1st District leader in transit advocate Mary Zendejas in November, Downtown Long Beach has another city council election coming up on March 3, 2020, when residents in the 2nd District have the opportunity to vote for a new councilmember. The district spans the downtown waterfront, including the Port of Long Beach, as well as much of the downtown core and East Village Arts District.

The 2nd District is a hub for businesses of all kinds, with a heavy concentration of restaurants and bars, retailers, and tourism-oriented enterprises, as well as service businesses like hair salons and tattoo parlors. It is also home to many nonprofits, venues and art centers, including the Long Beach Museum of Art, the Museum of Latin American Art, the Queen Mary, the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center and many other institutions.

The following candidates have completed their registration with the city clerk's office. Brief descriptions of their platforms were culled from information on their websites and from campaign materials.



Cindy Allen: A former Long Beach Police officer who ran the successful Long Beach-based advertising firm Agency ETA until earlier this year, Allen is running on a platform focused on community safety, access to affordable housing and addressing homelessness. Learn more at cindyallen.com



Jeanette Barrera: A mental health provider in the field of social work, Barrera also has experience as an auditor in higher education. Her platform is focused on addressing issues associated with homelessness, affordable housing and mass transit. Learn more at jeanettebarrera4lbcitycouncil.com



Jesus Cisneros: A school safety officer and construction contractor, Cisneros is running on a platform focused on tackling the issues of high rents, homelessness and parking, as well as busing to Long Beach schools. Learn more on Instagram @lbcisneros2020.



Robert Fox: A local businessman and property owner, Fox's campaign is centered on "restoring the voice of the people" by fighting conflicts of interest on the city council. He is a vocal opponent of the Broadway Road Diet, and pledges to support small businesses. Learn more at Foxforcouncil.com.



Dr. Eduardo Lara: A professor and faculty union member at California State University, Long Beach, Lara's platform focuses on district beautification and issues related to economic inclusion, access, climate change and housing. Learn more at doctoreduardolara.com.



Nigel Lifesey: A portfolio accountant, Lifesey also cofounded the Urban Society of Long Beach, a community events firm that provides DJ services. He is focused on improving parks and pedestrian/cycling mobility, addressing the high cost of housing and supporting small business. Learn more at lifsey4longbeach.us



Ryan Lum: A professional Youtuber, music producer and web programmer, Lum's campaign focuses on affordable housing, renters' rights, Medicare for all, improving and implementing city-wide sustainability policies, and "keeping Long Beach local." Learn more at Ryanlum.net. ■

Resources For Downtown Business Owners & Entrepreneurs

The following organizations and city departments provide services to assist local business owners and entrepreneurs. Details about these services and programs, which range from workshops to microloan opportunities and everything in between, are available at the listed websites.

Downtown Long Beach Alliance
Downtownlongbeach.org
Contact: Austin Metoyer, Economic Development & Policy Manager
Austinm@dlba.org
562-506-2960

Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, CSULB
csulb.edu/institute-innovation-entrepreneurship
CSULB-IIE@csulb.edu
562-985-5076

Long Beach Area Chamber Of Commerce
lbchamber.com
Contact: Jeremy Harris, Senior Vice President
jharris@lbchamber.com
562-983-1241

Long Beach Development Services
longbeach.gov/lbds
Planning Bureau: 562-570-6194
Building & Safety Bureau:

562-570-7648
Code Enforcement: 562-570-2633

Long Beach Economic Development Department
longbeach.gov/economicdevelopment
Contact: Seyed Jalali, Economic Development Officer
Seyed.Jalali@longbeach.gov

Small Business Development Center
longbeachsbdc.org
562-938-5100 ■



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