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LBMC
Long Beach Media Collaborative

A Long Beach Community Foundation initiative
funded by the Knight Foundation

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Focus On Women's Health

This edition's Health Care Quarterly is entirely devoted to women's health. Writers spoke with a myriad of medical professionals to learn more about the various health issues that women are most likely to face, as well as how to prevent and recognize common conditions and diseases. Articles in this section cover the following topics: heart attacks, the number one killer of women; common cancers affecting women; and women's reproductive health care needs. Please go to Page 22

— Samantha Mehlinger, Assistant Editor



Karen Lappen, a genetic counselor, and Dr. Nilesh Vora, a hematologist-oncologist and the head of palliative care at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, agree that some of the most common cancers affecting women are breast, ovarian, colon and lung cancer. They are pictured in the Todd Cancer Pavilion, where thousands of paper cranes made by community members are on display. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)

Feeling Neglected By The City, Norse Way Business Owners Form An Association

By **ANNE ARTLEY**
Staff Writer

There are a number of issues that have been neglected by the city over a number of years," claimed James McCormick in announcing the for-

mation of a business association along Norse Way, near Carson Street and Lakewood Boulevard. "We have sidewalks that people have tripped over, trees that should be taken out and very poor lighting. Our goal is to achieve a better-looking business area. It is

somewhat embarrassing, the condition it's been in."

McCormick is owner of Sun-
(Please Continue To Page 16)

Natasha Mata Steps In To Lead Wells Fargo's Central L.A. Region

By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Assistant Editor

Natasha Mata became Wells Fargo's new region bank president for the greater Central Los Angeles area, which includes Long Beach as well as some North Orange County cities, on July 31. She started in the banking

industry 26 years ago as a teller, and a few years later joined Wells Fargo as a banking center manager. Over her 22-year career with Wells Fargo, she has risen through the ranks holding several positions, including branch manager and district manager.

Mata now oversees about 1,200
(Please Continue To Page 17)

Rent Control Measure May Be On 2018 Ballot

By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Assistant Editor

Rent control for Long Beach might appear on the November 2018 ballot if the initiative's backers can collect enough signatures from local residents. A minimum of 27,000 verified signatures of Long Beach voters is needed for the proposal to make it onto the ballot, according to City Attorney Charles Parkin. That figure accounts for 10% of all registered voters in the city.

Housing Long Beach, a local nonprofit dedicated to supporting affordable housing, is the main organization behind the push. Accompanied by other local activists and supporters, Executive Director Josh Butler delivered a notice of intent to circulate a petition for a rent control ballot initiative to City Clerk Monique DeLaGarza on November 8.

But once the notice was for-

warded to the city attorney, it became apparent that the submitted paperwork was incomplete, as it
(Please Continue To Page 15)

City Reduces Density In Revised Land Use Maps

By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

After a strong backlash from Long Beach residents and neighborhood associations in August, Long Beach Development Services released new Land Use Element maps on November 10, reducing 686 acres of potential density through decreased building heights citywide, as part of the city's General Plan.

Revised maps released in August had caused an uproar from residents, especially those living in the 4th and 5th City Council Districts, over proposed building heights. Councilmembers Stacy Mungo and Daryl Supernaw, as well as Mayor Robert Garcia,
(Please Continue To Page 12)

Focus On Bixby Knolls



This edition includes the Business Journal's annual focus on Bixby Knolls. Three of the people interviewed include, from left, Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association Executive Director Blair Cohn, and Councilmember Al Austin. They are pictured at SteelCraft on Long Beach Boulevard. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson) — See Story Page 30

MILLENNIAL PULSE The YIMBYs Are Coming

By Assistant Editor Samantha Mehlinger

I am in the camp of people who, upon driving past the increasingly large piles of rubble that were once portions of the Seaport Marina Hotel, feel an uplifting sense of relief that that eyesore is finally getting demolished.

Yeah, I said it. And I'm not taking it back, either. When a place is used in two seasons of a hit show about a serial killer who kills serial killers (that would be "Dexter," for you non-pop-culture-versed folk), what does that
(Please Continue To Page 4)



Police Officers Association Donates \$10,000 To Memorial Hospital's Todd Cancer Institute

The Long Beach Police Officers Association participated in the Pink Patch Project to raise funds for cancer treatment and research by donating \$10,000 to MemorialCare's Todd Cancer Institute, Long Beach Medical Center. The project began in 2013 when Seal Beach Police Department officers wore pink police patches on their uniforms in honor of breast cancer awareness month. To date, 200 public safety agencies around the country have participated, with each giving fundraising proceeds to a leading cancer charity. Pictured at the check presentation were, from left: Cathy Kopy, executive director, MemorialCare Todd Cancer Institute, Long Beach Medical Center; Judy Fix, chief nursing operator, Long Beach Medical Center; Mariusz Wirga, M.D., medical director, psychosocial oncology, Todd Cancer Institute, Long Beach Medical Center; Angela Sie, M.D., medical director, breast imaging, MemorialCare Breast Center, Long Beach Medical Center; Chief Robert Luna, Long Beach Police Department; John Bishop, CEO, Long Beach Medical Center; Jim Foster, president, Long Beach Police Officers Association (Photograph by MemorialCare)



Graham Tse has been named associate chief medical officer for MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach. He has worked at the hospital's Cherese Mari Laulhere Pediatric Intensive Care Unit for more than 17 years. He received his medical degree from the University of Ottawa. . . . **Robert Lorenzetti** has joined Long Beach-based Windes as principal to serve clients with tax and business advisory services. He is working in the accounting and advisory firm's Irvine office. Lorenzetti received a bachelor of science in accounting and finance from Loyola Marymount University. . . . **Robert McKenrick** is the new executive director of clinical care of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. Based in Long Beach, he will oversee delivery

of health care provided to veterans in the Greater Los Angeles Community Based Outpatient Clinics. He served for 28 years in the U.S. Army. . . . Longtime philanthropist **Lynne Pillsbury** has been named "2018 Woman of the Year" by the Rick Rackers Auxiliary of Assistance League of Long Beach. She will be recognized at the organization's Woman of the Year Luncheon on February 2. Pillsbury first volunteered with the American Cancer Society, Long Beach Cancer League in 1982. . . . c/a Architects in Long Beach announced that two of its project architects — **Tamara Sahagian** and **Rebecca Blake** — have earned their architecture licenses in the State of California. Sahagian joined the company in 2010 as a designer and advanced to project architect. Blake began her career in architecture and construction more than 15 years ago, with the past six focusing on healthcare architecture.



Local Seniors Publish A Collection Of Writings

A group of 10 retired seniors calling themselves the Gathering of Minds at Carmelitos Senior Center in Long Beach wrote and published a book titled "A Journey of Love, Hope and Faith." "We spent all of 2016 putting this book together under the guidance of Dr. Elijah Levy," resident and co-author Barbara Gower said. "It is an anthology of poetry and stories that are insightful and a reflection of life." Gower explained that Levy had been volunteering at the senior center and his work with the residents resulted in the writings that he later paid to have published. The book is currently on sale on Amazon.com and Gower said the group is personally buying copies from the publisher to host book signings, the first of which was at the Michelle Obama Library on June 3. "What we are trying to do is get it out there and maybe recover the money that he put up to help get us published," Gower added, "we just want to make sure that we do right by him." Pictured from left: Yvonne Jenkins; Norma Jean Sanford; Linda Banton; Karen D. Washington; Barbara Gower; Lodi Ann Gipson; and Betty Harkley. Not pictured: James Allen Ferguson; Perry A. Cole; and Juanita Cole. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)



Rotary International President Visits Long Beach

Rotary International President Ian Riseley was the keynote speaker earlier this month at a Rotary Club of Long Beach Centennial Celebration Dinner attended by over 300 guests, many from area Rotary Clubs that were sponsored by the Rotary Club of Long Beach. On one of his many stops while in the city, Riseley visited the Long Beach Day Nursery, a pre-school Long Beach Rotarians have supported during all of the Club's 100-year history. Here he captivated the attention of Long Beach Day Nursery children as he read a story about a creature from Riseley's native Australia, "One Woolly Wombat." (Photograph by Caught in the Moment)



Opera, ballet, painting, and photography — these art forms might at first glance seem out of place at an aquarium. But at the Aquarium of the Pacific, the visual and performing arts play an important role, helping visitors build their emotional connections to environmental issues and explore science concepts in a new way.

Pairing the arts with science is a growing practice. Science organizations are building the arts into their programs as a way to promote creative thinking and inspire new ideas through collaborations across disciplines.

The Aquarium has hosted live performances by such groups as Long Beach Opera, Long Beach Ballet, Long Beach Symphony, and the Long Beach Choral. Recently Divine Strings presented an evening of traditional Indian music at the Aquarium, and Musique Sur la Mer Orchestra performed a pops concert that included Pacific Visions, an original composition for a string orchestra commissioned by Dennis and Suzanne Poulsen to celebrate the Aquarium's expansion of the same name.

Weather on Steroids: The Art of Climate Change Science, currently on view at the Aquarium, is a project of the La Jolla Historical Society in which visual artists collaborate with climate scientists to create artwork reflecting on humanity's role in our changing environment.

To learn more about arts at the Aquarium, visit aquariumofpacific.org/news and click on Arts.



Aquarium President/CEO Jerry Schubel, Co-Screenwriter and Executive Producer Loung Ung; Director, Producer and Co-Screenwriter Angelina Jolie; and Aquarium Board Chairman John Molina attended the screening of Netflix's *First They Killed My Father*. (Andrew Reitsma photograph)

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EDITOR & PUBLISHER
George Economides
SALES & MARKETING EXECUTIVE
Heather Dann
SPECIAL ASSISTANT
Pat Flynn

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT
ASSISTANT EDITOR
Samantha Mehlinger
SENIOR WRITER
Brandon Richardson
STAFF WRITER
Anne Artley

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Office
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Signal Hill, CA 90755
Ph: 562/988-1222
Fx: 562/988-1239
www.lbbizjournal.com

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Millennial Pulse

(Continued From Page 1)

tell you? That it's the kind of place you put up your family members when they come to town? I don't think so.

When was the last time you saw the parking lot of that place full? When do you recall it looking like anything other than a desolate motel-turned-quasi-residence? I have no such recollections, with the exception of the days its parking lot served as the location for Christmas tree sales.

That essentially useless, huge plot of land could have been a bustling shopping center complete with residences and a hotel by now, had it not been for some folks concerned about migrating birds

smacking into windows, folks lamenting the good old days when Elvis Presley stayed there (newsflash, folks: the King has been dead for a while now, and so has this hotel) and local NIMBYs ("Not In My Backyard"-ers) who don't want more people, and therefore more traffic, near their homes. The owner got stuck in this mire for years and finally conceded to a reduced height/density development with no residences and no hotel, yet people are STILL complaining.

Meanwhile, many Long Beach residents are absolutely freaking out over proposed changes in density and allowed building heights as outlined in the Land Use Element update, even though city

staff listened to their outrage and ended up reducing a lot of the original proposal. Despite efforts to placate, people are still so incensed that they've now even launched a Change.org campaign to fire City Manager Pat West and Long Beach Development Services Director Amy Bodek, who have endured endless hollering as they just try to do their jobs.

This is all happening at a time when the state is in a housing crisis because we are annually underbuilding by 100,000 residential units, which are needed to accommodate population growth, as California Association of Realtors President Geoff McIntosh has told me with some urgency on several occasions. This crisis has resulted in a short supply of homes and, thus, rising rents and home prices.

It should come as no surprise that, in addition to low-income individuals, this seriously impacts the Millennial generation, now at an age where they should be forming their own households (i.e., moving out of mom and dad's place).

As a result, our generation seems to be leading a counter-movement appropriately dubbed YIMBY – Yes, In My Backyard.

In San Francisco, where real estate is incredibly expensive, the politically active nonprofit YIMBY Action was formed in January this year to advocate for housing policy changes that would encourage infill developments. The four-person staff are all Millennials, as are about two-thirds of the organization's membership, according to Executive Director Laura Foote Clark.

Clark said that there are more than

100 cities and towns in the Bay Area, each with their own set of regulations, taxes and incentives around housing development. Clark said that many communities welcome the jobs afforded by the area's booming tech industry, but do not wish to create new housing to accommodate them.

"It's a very traditional American thing, to move to where there are jobs," Clark said. "It sort of doesn't get more traditional than that. And I think Millennials are the first generation that are being treated like scum for wanting to move to where there are jobs, and [are] being told that they are acting entitled for the idea that they want shelter near where there's work."

Resistance to new housing often boils down to the fact that some people just don't like change, Clark said. "They're like, 'If you add more people I'll just be stuck in traffic,'" she said. "And we're like, 'No, we'll have buses and transit and we'll just like think differently about society.' And they're like, 'That's impossible, we can't do that. Everything is terrible and it's only going to get worse!'" Clark's perspective? "We went to the moon one time and, like, we're capable of doing things."

OK, so she shares the Californian Millennial penchant for overusing the word "like," but that doesn't make her point any less valid. In fact, the back-and-forth she's describing often takes place in Long Beach when new developments come up for approval.

"People, especially Millennials, are trying to choose urban lifestyles," Clark said. "They are trying to not own cars. They want to be able to walk to the grocery store. They want to live near their job." In support of such desires, YIMBY Action advocates for more infill developments and density via zoning and entitlement process reform.

With a dash of early-Tim Burton suburban macabre, Clark reflected: "Imagine if you could just get everything you need in town instead of being locked into a horrific sprawling suburb where you have to get into your two-ton motor vehicle to get a gallon of milk." (The horror!) Dramatic flourishes aside, again, she has a point.

YIMBY Millennial activism has even crept into my own family. My brother, Richard, who lives in Sunnyvale – a Bay Area city – has gotten so fed up with the housing crisis and astronomical cost of living that he has taken to speaking at city council meetings in support of more housing. A councilmember even recently asked him to meet to discuss his concerns.

Please excuse this bit of nepotism for quoting my brother, but the dude is spot on: "The wealth that the tech industry is creating could be a pathway into the middle class for thousands. Instead, it's displacing communities and impoverishing families, for the simple reason that we don't have enough housing."

And that, folks, is why, according to the Public Policy Institute of California, 66% of Millennials support more housing in the state. Let's hope the crisis never gets as bad in Long Beach as it is in the Bay. Perhaps a little injection of Millennial YIMBYism wouldn't hurt. ■



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Anchor Place

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
 Senior Writer

Development News

Housing Project For Homeless Families And Veterans Opens

On November 6, Century Housing Corporation, along with the City of Long Beach and the Long Beach Community Investment Company (LBCIC), celebrated the grand opening of Anchor Place. The 120-unit project is a supportive housing development for homeless families and veterans.

“Long Beach remains dedicated to ensuring that all veterans who have served our country have access to quality housing,” Mayor Robert Garcia said in a press release. “Anchor Place is a testament to our commitment to ending homelessness and supporting our veterans.”

The five-story project includes 75 units for veterans experiencing homelessness and 45 units for extremely low-income residents. Located within the Century Villages at Cabrillo community, the development features one-, two- and three-bedroom units, open space and recreational areas.

Residents of the complex also have access to on-site support services, such as case management, physical and mental health services, employment services, life skills training and counseling. Anchor Place rent is subsidized by Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing vouchers for \$720,000 annually, a subsidy that is ensured for an initial 15-year period.

“Century is very proud of Anchor Place and what has been created in the larger Century Villages at Cabrillo community,

Ronald Griffith, president and CEO of Century Housing said. “We are grateful for the investment and contributions of our many partners that have created this special community where lives are being transformed.”

Funding for Anchor place was provided through a loan from the LBCIC; construction financing from Wells Fargo Bank; an Affordable Housing Program loan, a Mental Health Services Act loan; financing from the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program; grants from the County of Los Angeles Community Development Commission, the Ahmanson Foundation, the Home Depot Foundation and the 11th Hour Foundation; a permanent loan from the California Community Reinvestment Corporation and an equity investment by Wells Fargo through the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee.

“It gives us great pride as a company to invest in an affordable housing project that supports so much of what we value,” Lesley Milovich, head of community lending and investment at Wells Fargo, said. “Anchor Place will provide safe, affordable housing for those who have sacrificed for our country and we’re thrilled that it will benefit veterans and their families for generations to come.”

For more information on Century Villages at Cabrillo, visit www.centuryvillages.org.

Updating The Streets

The redevelopment and rebranding of City Place as The Streets continues as new businesses open and are announced. The 350,000-square-foot mixed-use district has already seen new businesses open, including King Buffet, Romeo Chocolates, The

Plant Junkie and Creative Crepes along Pine Avenue. Additionally, Retail Design Collaborative and Studio One Eleven opened their creative office space headquarters at 3rd Street and Promenade North. Burgerim and Table

301 should be opening soon on 3rd Street and a new distillery called Portuguese Bend by Luis Navarro, owner of Lola’s Mexican Cuisine, has also been announced. Lease agreements have also been signed with Habibeh, Loose Leaf Boba Company, Party Monkey, Pinot’s Palette and Poki Cat. Two projects moving forward include a parklet dining area in front of Milana’s New York Pizzeria, Mitaki Japanese Restaurant and Fresh Kabobs on 4th Street, and another parklet on Pine Avenue in front of The Pie Bar and several surrounding retail locations. Earlier this year, a partnership was formed between The Streets’ developer Shooshani Developers LLC and California State University, Long Beach, to develop “CSULB Village,” a student and faculty housing project to include retail and gallery space on 4th and 5th streets between Promenade North and Long Beach Boulevard. Construction on the project is estimated to begin fall 2018.

Five-Story Development Approved For Midtown

During its October 19 meeting, the Long Beach Planning Commission approved a mixed-use development that includes 95 affordable housing units in Midtown at 1900-1940 Long Beach Blvd, dubbed The Spark at Midtown.

“Long Beach is committed to expanding quality, affordable housing for communities of all incomes who want to call this great city home,” Mayor Robert Garcia said in a press release. “The Spark will provide greater housing access for families and promote the revitalization of the Long Beach Boulevard corridor.”



The Spark
 In Midtown

The development is adjacent to the Metro Blue Line and will consist of a one-, two- and three-bedroom units. The units are reserved for individuals or families earning between 30% and 60% of the area’s median income. Forty-seven of the units are to be reserved for those experiencing homelessness.

The ground floor of the project will include 12,388 square feet of commercial retail space, a new YMCA office and support services. On October 18, the Long Beach Community Investment Company (LBCIC) approved a \$3 million loan to LINC Housing Corporation for the construction of the project.

“The Long Beach Community Investment Company is working to bring forward high quality residential projects along transit corridors, offering greater mobility and access to job centers,” LBCIC Chair John Thomas said. “It is essential to support every segment of our community by providing increased housing opportunities in thriving neighborhoods.”

6.8-Acre Carson Site Sold

Illinois-based CenterPoint Properties announced its purchase of the 6.8-acre site at 16627 S. Avalon Blvd. in Carson earlier this month. “This site is a strategic asset, located in the heart of the South Bay submarket,” Ryan Dunlap, senior vice president of investments at CenterPoint, said. “Given its proximity to Los Angeles’ dense population, we are excited to acquire this property in a thriving e-commerce region.” The purchase includes 84,620 square feet of building space fully leased, as well as 121 car parking stalls and 150 bus and trailer parking stalls. Daniel Reaume and Rustin Mork

Realty Views

FHA Losing Customers Over Fees, Equity



By **TERRY ROSS**

During the most trying days of the financial crisis that hit American banks and lenders over the past decade, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) home loan program stood out as one of the few remaining home mortgages still available for very low down payment purchases of single family homes.

With as little as 3.5% down, consumers with qualifying credit and income could get into a home and finance virtually the entire amount. Because traditional lenders mostly discontinued these types of programs after the 2008 economic meltdown, these government loans insured by the FHA became the financing of choice for buyers looking to leverage their purchase.

But with its popularity, the FHA also got hit with a greater percentage of the problems with the real estate market. In 2011, nearly 10 percent of their loans were over 90 days past due, which is considered seriously delinquent. In 2013 it altered its policy on the cancellation of the FHA insurance fee, which can be costly compared with conventional Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac loans that do not have the insurance premium. Private mortgage insurance on conventional mortgages can be canceled once the homeowner reaches the 20% equity mark. But since the FHA’s policy change, the only way homeowners can cancel their FHA mortgage insurance is to refinance into a Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac conventional loan.

Financially, the FHA is now benefiting from this change since some loans were going off their books, but mostly it is the revival of the housing market and the increase in values that has helped homeowners get back on their feet and get current on their mortgage payments. For instance, the “serious” delinquency rate (90 days or more past due) on FHA-insured home loans dropped to 4.28% in the third quarter of fiscal year 2017, according to an FHA quarterly report

delivered to Congress late last month. That was down from 5% a year earlier. The FHA is seeing a nice decline in total claim and loss mitigation expenses. It paid \$2.3 billion in total claims expenses in the third quarter, compared with \$4.5 billion a year ago.

With conventional financing getting more and more back to what it was in the pre-recession days, especially with the conventional 20% down on a purchase or 20% equity for a refinance, the FHA option has priced itself out of the running with some consumers who can qualify for a cheaper option.

Last year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development decided to cut the FHA’s mortgage insurance annual premium, but the administration is still debating this issue with no reduction imminent so, as of right now, FHA fees remain high compared to conventional loans. In fiscal year 2017, which ended September 30, a total of 761,100 FHA borrowers had refinanced out of their FHA mortgages in the first three quarters (as of June 30). That is 125% above what FHA auditors had predicted for the entire fiscal year in last year’s FHA actuarial report.

Also, in the four years since the FHA im-

plemented it so-called life-of-loan policy that would not let borrowers shed the insurance premium when their equity got to 20%, the number of FHA borrowers who have refinanced into another FHA loan has dropped by 14%.

In addition to the financing markets stabilizing, the increase in equity across many parts of the country – especially in California – has made refinancing out of an FHA loan even easier.

The national median home price rose to \$260,000 in the third quarter, up from \$256,000 in the second quarter of 2017, according to the National Association of Home Builders. Homes across the board are predicted to go up 6% this year. Meanwhile, average mortgage rates inched up two basis points in the third quarter, to 4.1% from 4.08% in the second quarter.

With rates going up, it is easy to see why borrowers would opt out of FHA mortgages that carry an additional insurance premium – if they can.

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

of Realty Advisory Group Inc. represented CenterPoint in the transaction.

Marcus & Millichap Completes Multi-Family Building Sale

Kevin King, senior managing director of investments in Marcus & Millichap's Long Beach office represented King and Ryan Gonzalez LCC in the sale of the Heights Apartments located at 500 Ximeno Ave. "As a larger asset on the east side, located within a historically strong rental market with virtually no new development, the property presents new ownership with a great opportunity to enhance value and increase revenue through common area upgrades," King said. "Approximately half of the units have been upgraded with new kitchens, baths, flooring and lighting." The 1965 building includes 74 units with a mix of studios and one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. The property also features a swimming pool, a barbecue area, an elevator, storage units, on-site laundry and a gym.

Stepp Commercial Completes Multimillion Dollar Sale

Stepp Commercial Principal Robert Stepp represented Redempta Catolica Trust in the \$3.05 million sale of East 7th Street Apartments located at 2307 E. 7th St. The buyer, Tam Trust, was represented by Buckingham Investments. "This property is extremely walkable and is situated on a highly visible corner location at Raymond Avenue and East 7th Street," Stepp said. "We marketed this asset as a value-add opportunity for the new ownership to renovate and bring rates up to market rates as leases expire. This property is within the Rose Park Historic District, which is a rapidly

improving area due in large part to the newly renovated neighborhood shopping center across the street from the property." Built in 1922, the property includes 12 residential units, including six one-bedroom apartments and six studios. The location also includes 10 retail spaces.

New Korean BBQ In Lakewood Village

The Cup, a new Korean barbecue joint opened its doors on November 13, with dishes served in a cup. Located at 4501 E. Carson St. just off of Norse Way, The Cup is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5-9 p.m. For more information, call 562/420-1772.



Baskin-Robbins Reopens

The Baskin-Robbins located at 510 Long Beach Blvd. celebrated its grand re-opening November 11, featuring a DJ, a prize wheel and live entertainment. Store hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. For more information, call 562/901-3330. ■



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Land Use Maps Updated By City Staff

(Continued From Page 1)

agreed with the dissenting concerns, and the mayor asked the Long Beach Development Services Department to host four community meetings. At those meetings, residents voiced vehement opposition to the August maps. The new Land Use Element maps address some of the residents' objections (refer to the adjacent list of major modifications).

"I hope that there is a recognition and an understanding that we heard what everybody was concerned about," Director of Development Services Amy Bodek told the Business Journal. "But we also heard, over the last 18 months, a whole bunch of other people who wanted change. So, we had to balance that, and we also had to balance that with what we know are our needs for the future."

Under the new maps, the 44% of Long Beach that is comprised of single-family neighborhoods will see no change. Another 19% of land includes the Long Beach Airport, the Port of Long Beach and other infrastructure, while 6% of the city is planned for mixed-use projects, including office, retail and residential. Five percent of land consists of existing multi-family residential buildings, and 5% of the city includes industrial or neo-industrial areas. The re-

maining 1% of the city is planned for traditional commercial or retail centers.

During the community meetings, some residents asked if additional meetings would be held once the newly revised maps were released. Bodek said her department would respectfully decline requests for meetings at this point, saying the department carried out the recommendations of the Long Beach Planning Commission in holding additional outreach, and further direction would be needed before city staff proceeded.

The State of California requires cities to maintain updated General Plans, and Long Beach has not revamped its policy since the 1980s. The updates are based on population growth estimates provided to cities by the state to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization.

"I don't think we will ever meet our needs but this is really a good step forward without creating downtowns everywhere, which is not what we want to do," Bodek said. "Population growth, the projections that we are relying on, do show some incremental growth; but more importantly it is the accommodation of the people who are already here, who are overcrowded."

Bodek explained that 12.2% of the Long Beach population is severely overcrowded. She said this number is "huge" and unacceptable on many levels. Between the 15,000 new residents who have

settled in the city since 1989, as well as future projects, the city would need to build 28,000 new residential units, a number this plan does not accommodate.

The future projections by SCAG are based on census information and trends in population relocation; however, Bodek said the city contested the allocation of housing units requested of Long Beach. She explained that other cities received larger reductions in projections than Long Beach, partly due to inaccurate 2010 census data resulting from undercounting.

Between the state's concerns about dealing with the current housing crisis and the concerns of Long Beach residents, Bodek said she thinks her department did its best to find a balance, which requires compromise on all sides. However, some residents in largely residential districts voiced the opinion that density and increased population belongs in the downtown area and that their communities should not be affected in any way.

"The downtown makes up approximately 2% of the city. As much as we would like to concentrate development in the downtown, that's not really feasible," Bodek explained. "There are huge chunks of land that we're really not touching throughout the whole city and there are smaller areas where we feel we can effectuate change to deal with some of the population and housing and job growth that we expect to see in the next 20 to 30 years."

Despite some resident pushback to any population growth in the city, Advance Planning Officer Christopher Koontz explained that the city must attempt to also accommodate for job growth as it continues working to attract business. He added that, while the Land Use Element maps are the "main event" that drew resident attention, a companion proposal is also up for approval.

"The companion piece to this is the Urban Design Element, which is having actual design standards for new development, which we currently do not have," Koontz said. "We are trying to move away from just regulating how tall or how many units, but what is it actually going to look like, and is it going to work with the street and have a consistent distance from the sidewalk?"

A feel-good story being overlooked is the new possibility for new investments in portions of Council Districts 8 and 9, according to Koontz. He explained that current zoning does not promote investment in what are currently underserved and marginalized areas. He said the new Land Use Element would be an incentive for developers to enter these areas, making them cleaner and safer for residents.

The updated maps, along with reports of resident feedback are scheduled to be presented to the planning commission during its December 11 meeting, according to City Manager Patrick West.

"We went through the experience. The

(Please Continue To Top Of Next Page)

City Staff Makes Many Changes To Land Use Element Plan – Here Are The Key Ones

**Revised Land Use Element (LUE) and Urban Design Element (UDE)
Summary of Changes by Council District
(August 2017 Maps and November 2017 Revised Maps Comparison)**

Council District 1

- Reduced intensity for the Linden Historic District (from TOD- 5 stories to Single-Family 2 stories).
- Reduced height and intensity on 7th Street from 5 to 3 stories east of Cerritos.

Council District 2

- Reduced height and intensity along 7th Street from Cerritos to Walnut - from 5 stories to 3 stories.
- Reduced height in Alamitos Beach (south of Broadway) from 7 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height in the existing multifamily neighborhood between 4th and 7th Streets - from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height in the Convention Center/Shoreline area from 250 feet to 60 feet.

Council District 3

- Increased height along Redondo and Belmont Pier area to match existing conditions.
- Decreased height and intensity along PCH at the Los Altos Plaza entrance - from 5 stories to 3 stories.
- Decreased height and intensity along PCH at the Iron Triangle - from 5 stories to 3 stories.
- Decreased height along 7th Street and within multi-family neighborhoods to the north - from 4 stories to 3 stories.
- Decreased height on The Toledo from 3 stories to 2 stories.
- Made various correction to the map to reflect existing development along Bayshore and Studebaker.

Council District 4

- Reduced height along Redondo south of Anaheim; from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height within multi-family neighborhoods south of Anaheim from 4 stories to 3 stories.
- Reduced height along Anaheim - from 5 stories to 4 stories from Redondo to Ximeno; and to 3 stories from Ximeno to Clark.
- Reduced height within multi-family neighborhoods north of Anaheim from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height around the eastern portion of the traffic circle from 6 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height and intensity around Whaley Park from 5 stories mixed-use to 2 stories retail-only.
- Reduced height and intensity at Bellflower/Stearns from 5 stories to 3 stories (Sears site).
- Reduced height and intensity north and west of Bellflower/Stearns from 5 stories mixed-use to 2-stories retail only.
- Reduced height along Palo Verde from 3 stories to 2 stories.

Council District 5

- Reduced height and intensity at Bellflower/Carson from 4 stories mixed-use to 2 stories retail-only.
- Reduced height at the Long Beach Towne Center from 6 stories to 5 stories.
- Reduced height at Wardlow/Los Coyotes Diagonal - properties south of Wardlow changed from 3 stories mixed-use to 2 stories retail-only.
- Reduced height at Spring/Palo Verde from 3-stories to 2-stories.
- Reduced height at Los Coyotes Diagonal/Spring from 4 stories to 3 stories.
- Reduced height at Spring/Bellflower from 5 stories to 3 stories (Kmart/Lowes site).
- Reduced height north of Spring/Bellflower from 5 stories of mixed-use to 2-stories of retail-only.
- Reduced height and intensity at Spring/Clark from 3 stories of mixed-use to 2-stories of retail-only.

Council District 6

- Decreased height between Pacific and Earl (Willow to 28th) from 10 stories to 5 stories.
- Reduced height along Pacific from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height along PCH west of Magnolia - from 4 stories to 3 stories.

Council District 7

- Reduced height in the Springdale (West Long Beach) multi-family area from 5 stories to 3 stories.
- Adjusted the area at 33rd/Cherry adjacent to California Heights from Industrial to cleaner Neo-Industrial.
- Adjusted industrial designation near Willow Springs Park to Neo-Industrial.

Council District 8

- Adjusted the former driving range off Pacific Place to Neo-Industrial.
- Reduced height along Long Beach Boulevard (south of San Antonio) from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height along Atlantic (north of 56th) from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Modified designation at Paramount/South Street from multi-family to mixed-use to match existing conditions.

Council District 9

- Reduced height and intensity along Long Beach Boulevard from 4 stories to 3 stories.
- Reduced height along Atlantic at South Street from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Reduced height along Atlantic at Artesia from 5 stories to 4 stories.
- Increased height along Atlantic north of SR-91 from 4 stories to 5 stories.
- Reduced height and intensity along Cherry Ave from 4 stories to 3 stories.
- Reduced height along Artesia (east of Paramount) from 6 stories to 5 stories.
- Increased height along South Street at Cherry (Food 4 Less site) from 4 stories to 5 stories.
- Decreased height along South Street at Downey from 6 stories to 4 stories.

(Note: This list was prepared by city staff at the request of the Long Beach Business Journal.)

Council Votes To Move Forward With Recreational Marijuana Legalization

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

With the forthcoming legalization of adult-use marijuana coming to California on January 1, the Long Beach City Council voted 5-3 on November 14 to move forward with the process of legalizing the sale of recreational marijuana in the city.

The passage of Proposition 64 in the November 2016 election legalized the sale of recreational marijuana in the State of California but allows for local governments to determine its legality within their city limits. During the election, statewide, 57% of voters approved of recreational marijuana, while more than 63% of Long Beach voters cast for legalization, according to city staff.

“So, City of Long Beach voters were higher than the county and higher than the State of California on this issue. This is one that is really clear that the voter's intent is there,” Vice Mayor Rex Richardson said. “If we don’t take decisive action and begin to own this issue and create public policy that is right for our city now, we could very well be in a position where folks will go to the ballot next year. We need to move forward.”

Richardson’s substitute-substitute motion to develop an ordinance to allow, license and regulate the sale of recreational marijuana, with special care to include language regarding jobs, labor peace, and equity was passed. Councilmembers Suzie Price, Daryl Supernaw and Stacy Mungo voted against the motion.

During the meeting Price voiced her concern over the impacts of legalizing recreational marijuana sales, particularly the amount of resources necessary to enforce the ordinance and how that would affect the quality of life for residents. Instead, Price suggested the council vote to ban recreational marijuana until such time that all medicinal dispensaries were operating and the city had more data to inform its decision.

“We have yet to see what the practical application of our regulations and what the resources will be once these facilities are operating, and we have a market that might be illegal in nature established in Long Beach,” Price said. “We’ve only started to implement the medical marijuana voter-approved initiative here in the City of Long Beach.”

Last November, Long Beach voters also approved the sales, cultivation, distribution, manufacture and testing of medical marijuana. Measure MA placed an 8% to 12% sales tax on recreational marijuana, while Measure MM allows for 32 dispensaries in the city, two of which are currently operating. Staff recommended that the recreational marijuana sale ordinance include a provision to maintain the 32-dispensary cap in the city, with the already-approved medicinal dispensaries serving as recreational sales locations.

To avoid legal complications while the city manager’s office drafts an ordinance related to recreational marijuana

(Please Continue To Top Of Next Page)

Proposition 64 Vote By Long Beach City Council District

(November 2016 Vote On Recreational Marijuana Sales)

California Proposition 64, the California Marijuana Legalization Initiative, was on the November 8, 2016, ballot in California. Supporters referred to the initiative as the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. It was approved. A “yes” vote supported legalizing recreational marijuana for persons aged 21 years or older under state law and establishing certain sales and cultivation taxes. On January 1, 2018, Proposition 64 will allow for the sale and taxation of recreational marijuana. Counties and municipalities were empowered to restrict where marijuana businesses could be located. Local governments were also allowed to completely ban the sale of marijuana from their jurisdictions. As the adjacent article by Senior Writer Brandon Richardson indicates, the Long Beach City Council voted 5-3 to move forward with legalizing the sale of recreational marijuana. In Long Beach, 60% of the city’s registered voters cast a ballot on Proposition 64 and 63.7% of them voted to support the measure. Following is the breakdown by city council district. As shown, every part of the city overwhelmingly voted “yes.”

Council District	Voter Registration	Ballots Cast	Voter Turnout	Ballots Cast On Prop 64	Yes Votes	% Yes	No Votes	% No
1	23,007	10,735	46.7%	10,097	6,826	67.6%	3,271	32.4%
2	31,280	19,607	62.7%	18,695	13,985	74.8%	4,710	25.2%
3	39,320	30,356	77.2%	29,081	18,947	65.2%	10,134	34.8%
4	28,000	18,224	65.1%	17,307	11,365	65.7%	5,942	34.3%
5	35,015	27,304	78.0%	26,096	15,011	57.5%	11,085	42.5%
6	22,932	10,708	46.7%	9,885	6,328	64.0%	3,557	36.0%
7	31,684	20,251	63.9%	18,966	11,390	60.1%	7,576	39.9%
8	28,906	16,988	58.8%	16,022	9,732	60.7%	6,290	39.3%
9	26,819	15,018	56.0%	14,106	8,461	60.0%	5,645	40.0%
Totals	266,963	172,191	64.5%	160,255	102,045	63.7%	58,210	36.3%

Source: Prepared by the Long Beach Business Journal from data on the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters website.

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Traffic Cones, Barricades and Flares	ITB LB18-018	11/30/2017
Three Stage Mast Forklift 8,000 LB-Qty. 2	ITB F518-049	11/30/2017
Dir. Drilling, Sewer Locating/Clearing, & Potholing	ITB GO18-036	12/05/2017
Purchase & Installation of Hand Dryers	ITB PR17-113	12/05/2017
S-1 Sewer Lift Station Rehab Project (SC-0275)	WD-05-18	12/07/2017
Citywide Printing Paper	ITB LB18-016	12/08/2017
Citywide Printed Envelopes	ITB LB18-031	12/08/2017
Traffic Signal Work at Four (4) Locations	R-7066	12/13/2017
Comm. Rehab Program Anaheim St & Cherry Ave	ITB DV18-040	12/20/2017
Houghton Park Community Center	R-7113	12/21/2017
Develop & Implement Traffic Calming Measures for	R-7053/R-7056	01/10/2018
Traffic Exiting the I-710 into Long Beach		
Qualification and Selection of Peer Reviewers	RFQ DV17-112	Continuous

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

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sales, an ordinance enacting a 180-day temporary hold on recreational business licenses is expected to return to the city council in December. The ordinance to legalize recreational sales is expected to return to council by June 2018, according to city staff.

"I've been on this issue probably longer than anyone on [the council]. It's been up and down, up and down, but . . . the voters have made their choice," 6th District Councilmember Dee Andrews said. "The longer we wait, the more it's going to encourage illegal behavior. If we're going to do it, we better do it now. The voters have chosen, they told us what they want to do." ■

Long Beach Settles Lawsuit Regarding Water Pipeline Fees

The City's Water Customers Expected To See About \$3 In Monthly Savings, But General Fund To Take A Huge Hit

■ By **ANNE ARTLEY**
Staff Writer

On November 8, Long Beach resident Diana Lejins and the City of Long Beach settled a lawsuit Lejins had filed in September 2016, claiming the water department was illegally charging customers inflated pipeline permit fees, then pouring the funds into the city's General Fund. The settlement will result in lower fees for customers.

The fees in question amounted to about \$11 million per year that the city charged the water department. Lejins, a 32-year Long Beach resident, stated in a press release that they had "no legitimate purpose and were blatantly designed to bolster General Fund revenues on the backs of taxpayers."

State Proposition 218 bans local governments from overcharging customers for utility services and then using the extra funds for non-utility purposes.

The settlement agreement required the city to eliminate the pipeline permit fees from its water and sewer rates in 60 days. It also mandated a transfer of \$12 million from the General Fund to the water department over the next four years. The water department will still pay about \$4.5 million into the General Fund every year for the use and upkeep of the pipelines, but the \$7 million annual loss is "not insignificant," city Financial Management Director John Gross told the Business Journal.

"That \$7 million per year has been used to provide services for the library, parks and public safety," Gross said. "We have to look as if there's going to be new revenue and find other ways to reduce costs. None of that has been decided yet. It's not the end of the world, but it is a significant loss."

While the city has not yet formally started the process of establishing the budget for the next fiscal year, there is already a projected shortfall of \$10.4 million, Gross said. The \$7 million will widen that gap.

Chris Garner, general manager of the Long Beach Water Department, said the settlement should not have too much of an impact on his department and that the customers will benefit.

"The pipeline transfer fee that was being litigated was a pass-through in the rates to our customers," he said. "With that being reduced or eliminated, the costs that we incur do go down quite a bit, and savings will be passed through to the customers through a rate reduction." The average water and sewer bill will decrease by about \$3 per month, according to the city manager's office.

In a press release sent to the Business Journal, Lejins called the pipeline permit fees "bogus from the start. . . . Hard-working citizens don't appreciate it when their government plays games. Hopefully,

this lawsuit serves as a warning to those money-is-no-object politicians who so fervently attempt to extract and spend every last dime they can from hard-working taxpayers. This victory transcends the exploitation, validates the people's vigilance and is truly of the people, by the people and for the people."

The city must also pay Lejins' attorney fees of \$480,000. She was represented by Long Beach lawyer Gerrie Schipske and Eric J. Benink, Esq. of Krause Kalfayan Benink & Slavens, LLP, a San Diego law firm with extensive experience in cases regarding Proposition 218. Schipske served as a 5th District councilmember for eight years and also ran for the directorship of the water replenishment district covering Long Beach. The Water Replenishment District of

Southern California oversees and protects the local groundwater resources. She is currently a candidate for the 34th California State Senate seat, which includes West Orange County and a small part of East Long Beach.

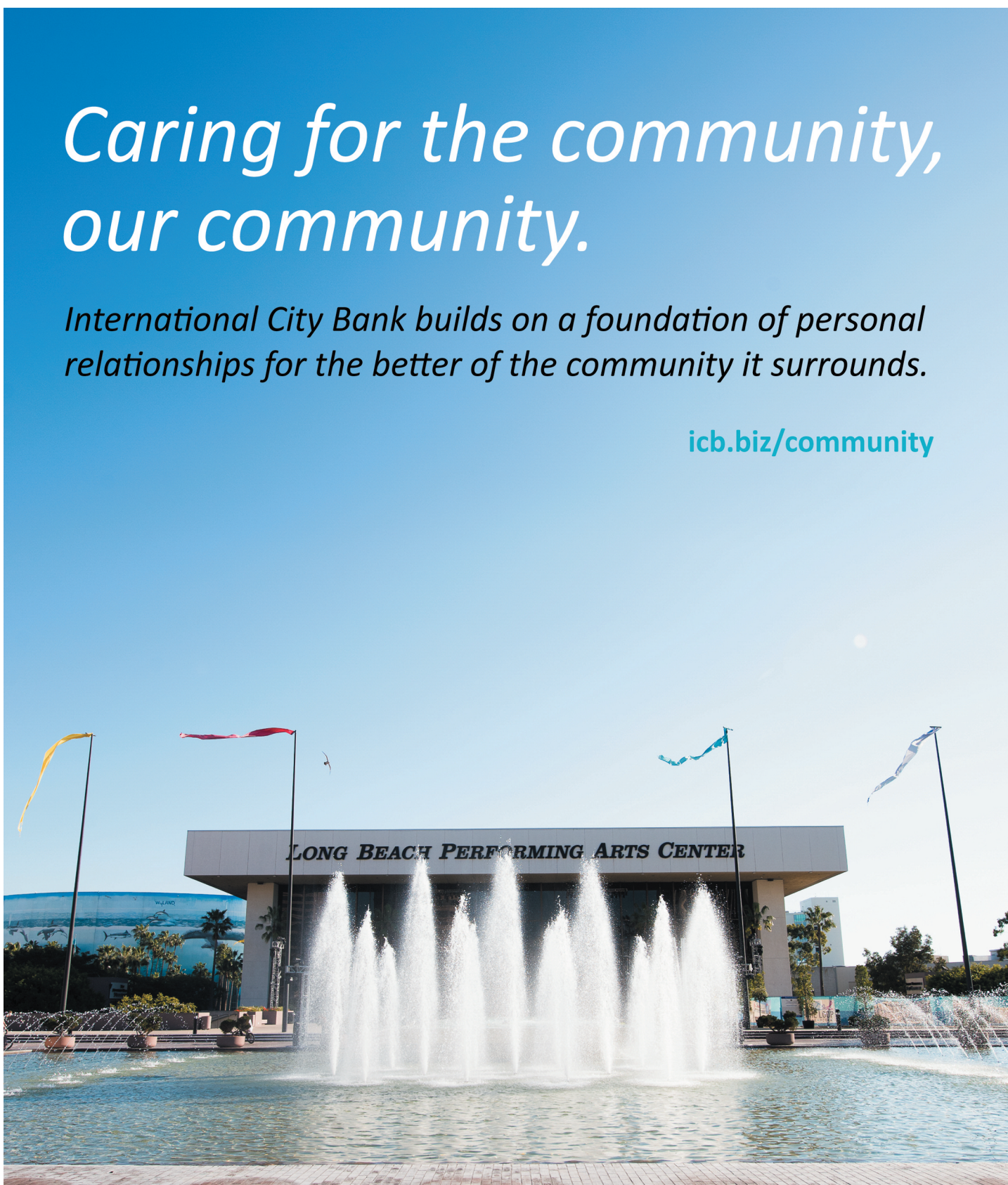
In a prepared statement, Schipske said: "This settlement is not only a tremendous win for the water and sewer customers in the City of Long Beach but also for the voters of California who approved Proposition 218, requiring voter and taxpayer control over local fees and taxes. The law is clear: cities, like Long Beach, cannot assess fees merely because they want to raise revenue."

The Business Journal had several questions for Schipske about the settlement but she did not return phone calls or e-mail requests for an interview. ■

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development services team has been doing this for quite some time,” West said. “And then we had the four meetings and they were painful, but we listened and paid attention at those meetings.”

In response to the new maps, Councilmember Mungo is hosting three community meetings: Tonight, November 21, in Cirivello’s Barrel Room, 4115 N. Viking Way, from 6:30-8 p.m.; Monday, November 27, in the Millikan High School cafeteria, 2800 Snowden Ave., from 6:30-8 p.m.; and Wednesday, November 29, in the El Dorado Senior Center Bridge Room, 2800 N. Studebaker Rd., from 6:30-8 p.m. ■

Updated Land Use Element Maps Draw Mixed Reactions From Residents And Representatives

■ By **ANNE ARTLEY**
 Staff Writer

After a strong negative reaction from both residents and some city representatives regarding the proposed Land Use Element, the Long Beach Development Services Department updated the maps based on the feedback. But the revised maps are still eliciting mixed reactions, with some arguing that increasing development will overcrowd the city.

“I’m in opposition to the 4th District map,” Councilmember Daryl Supernaw, who represents that district, said. “Some of the land use heights were removed from the eastern side of the district, east of Clark Avenue. But much of the density remains on the west side of the district.”

The Land Use Element is a city’s blueprint for its goals and policies regarding land use and future development. Based on state projections, the proposal must account for the construction of 7,048 residential units by 2021 to accommodate an estimated population growth of 18,230 in Long Beach by 2040.

Third District Councilmember Suzie Price said she noticed changes made in her district that aligned with recommendations she had made to city staff. She “fully expects” to propose more revisions after examining a few areas more closely.

“Staff was recommending increases for the pier [area] that were about two stories higher than what we currently have,” Price said. “We already have some large apartment buildings there, so I asked them [city staff] to break down specifically what the height limits are right now for each parcel so I can decide what height makes sense. They just weren’t able to get that done before the maps were released.”

Price is conducting a walking tour with her constituents to address concerns. She would like to remind residents that updating the Land Use Element is an ongoing process and nothing is final at this point.

“If there’s something you’d like to change, give me an opportunity to drive it, walk it, go there with you,” she said.

Real estate broker Robert Fox, who represents the Council of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO), expressed strong opposition to the revised maps. CONO is a community group intended to provide a forum for the presidents of the city’s neighborhood associations.

“People told them [city representatives] specifically, ‘We don’t want five-story buildings on the corridors of Long Beach,’” Fox said.

On October 26, Mayor Robert Garcia met with CONO and other community representatives to discuss the proposed Land Use Element. Fox claimed the mayor told them he would like to see development concentrated in the downtown area.

Price reminded city residents to maintain a realistic perspective regarding population growth and the necessary accommodations. “We’re looking at a population growth in L.A. County of one million people by 2045,” she said. “We’re going to have to plan for that; we can’t pretend it’s not happening.”

Price also wanted to clarify some misconceptions regarding parking.

“People will say, over and over again, ‘We have a parking problem, the Land Use Element doesn’t address parking.’ That’s factually true, but disingenuous,” she said. “We have development laws already in place that require any additional units or uses to come with parking. You cannot add another unit or use without parking [accommodations].”

Fifth District Councilmember Stacy Mungo could not be reached for comment after numerous attempts by the Business Journal. The mayor did not wish to comment. ■

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Community Medical Center Must Cease Acute Care By Mid-2019

Active Fault Line
Clouds Site's Future

■ By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Assistant Editor

MemorialCare Community Medical Center, a Long Beach hospital operated at a historic site owned by the City of Long Beach, will cease acute care operations by June 2019 due to the location's noncompliance with state seismic regulations, MemorialCare Health System announced in early November. A geological survey of the site at 1720 Termino Ave. has revealed that the hospital sits on a larger fault line than previously thought, and under state law the facility will no longer be able to house acute care services.

This determination makes MemorialCare's future presence at the site uncertain, based on feedback from John Bishop, CEO of Community Medical Center, Long Memorial Medical Center and Miller Children's & Women's Hospital.

According to Bishop, it is up to the City of Long Beach, the property owner, to determine the best future use of the site. "We would like to find a use that supports the community's needs. If it's a use that isn't consistent with acute care, though, it's challenging for us to expect to be the operators," he said. "We did a community needs assessment that we provided to the city to assist them with that decision."

If the city decides to designate the site for another health care use involving MemorialCare, then the health system would begin that transition before the state-mandated acute care closure date of June 30, 2019, Bishop said.

The Long Beach City Council discussed the lease for the site in closed session on



September 2014 Business Journal photograph of MemorialCare Community Medical Center

November 7, and held a study session about the hospital a week later.

During that meeting, councilmembers expressed a unified desire to keep the hospital open as an acute care facility as long as possible, and to investigate ways it might be able to remain open beyond 2019. Assistant City Manager Tom Modica explained that the city could issue a request for proposals to solicit other potential hospital operators who might be able to come up with a plan to keep acute care services open, or who could perhaps identify other medical uses for it.

Fifth District Councilmember Stacy Mungo suggested that the council might be able to work with state regulators and local legislative representatives to get an exten-

sion for the hospital to operate beyond the June 30, 2019 deadline.

MemorialCare Health System retained a third party to conduct a community needs assessment that revealed that there are seven acute care hospitals "within a short distance" from Community, and that they all have "a large number of available patient care beds and excess capacity." In a press release, MemorialCare concluded that these hospitals could absorb the acute care patients served by Community.

At the council study session, 3rd District Councilmember Suzie Price took issue with this determination, explaining that she feels the community in the area believes the hospital's acute care services are necessary. She pointed out that the two nearest acute care hospitals are five and 15 minutes away, additional travel time that would be detrimental in emergent situations.

MemorialCare has invested \$22 million, including programmatic support, into the hospital since it acquired the lease for the site in 2011, according to Bishop. "When we acquired the facility back in 2011, we knew that there was an earthquake fault,"

he said. He noted that while a seismic study had been completed, MemorialCare felt it had not been in-depth enough, and thus proceeded with further analysis.

"At the time, we were very hopeful that we would be able to do the necessary retrofits to be able to continue long into the future," Bishop said. "But as we continued to investigate and plan, we realized that the earthquake fault was both larger than we thought and that it was an active fault. As a result, we looked at options to potentially retrofit and maintain an acute care presence. But it became clear that that was not going to be possible under the law."

Bishop added, "We wouldn't be able to retrofit and have a hospital that would be of a scale that would support an emergency department and a physician population, et cetera. So, it's not an issue of money. It's on an active fault."

Four hundred full-time equivalent employees work at Community Medical Center, according to Bishop. "We are trying to transfer as many employees as we can, based upon our needs at our other Long Beach hospitals as well as throughout the system," he said. "And we are also giving a generous retention bonus to all employees to incentivize them to stay during this transition period."

Long Beach Memorial Medical Center is undergoing seismic retrofitting for its main tower, which should be completed in 2018, Bishop said. After 2030, that tower must be rebuilt to comply with seismic regulations, he noted. "We are planning for it. It is in our 10-year capital plan," he said of the project. "We will likely fundraise for it as well, because we obviously think it is a very important asset for the community."

Miller Children's & Women's Hospital's new pavilion is in compliance with 2030 guidelines, but older areas of the hospital will require seismic retrofitting, Bishop said. "We will be fundraising for that as well," he noted.

"I would just like to say that we are saddened by the fact that we weren't able to make Community Medical Center seismically compliant for acute care services," Bishop said. "And we are committed to working with the city and other community stakeholders to find the types of services that best support the community's needs." ■

Groundwater Treatment Plant Celebrates 20th Year

On November 9, Long Beach Water celebrated the 20th anniversary of its groundwater treatment plant located at 2950 Redondo Ave. "This plant enables Long Beach Water to continue to live its core values of innovation, reliability, resiliency, responsible stewardship and collaboration," Water Commissioner Harry Saltzgaver said during the ceremony. "Producing high-quality water in this high-tech facility allows us to provide our community with the most basic of needs for a healthy, thriving and vibrant city." The treatment plant was completed in 1997 as one of the most modern water treatment facilities in the world, including four of the most advanced water quality laboratories of the time, according to a press release. Today, the plant has the capacity to produce 62 million gallons per day of high quality drinking water, and the American Water Works Association and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently recognized it as one of the top 1% of water distribution systems in the country.

During the celebration, a representative from the office of Congressman Alan Lowenthal presented Long Beach Water Department General Manager Chris Garner (pictured) with a certificate of recognition. For "water saving hacks" and other information on water conservation in Long Beach, visit www.LiveH2OLB.com. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)



Port Of Long Beach Debuts Powerful New Fireboat

The Port of Long Beach dedicated the start of service of a new fireboat, "The Vigilance," on November 13. Another fireboat, the "Protector," was brought into service last year. The vessels replaced two older boats that had been in operation since the late 1980s, according to the Port of Long Beach. The new boats are outfitted with 10 water cannons that expel water at a rate of more than 41,000 gallons per minute as far as the length of two football fields and higher than a 20-story building. They both are equipped for medical treatment, containing water spills, and assisting with chemical, biological and nuclear threats. Each also has an onboard crane and "Command Information Center," according to the port. Former Harbor Commissioner Dr. John Kashiwabara, who passed away in 2010, was honored at the dedication of the "Vigilance." "These fireboats are technological marvels, able to turn on a dime, move sideways and throw water or foam anywhere on the world's largest container ships and oil tankers," Port Executive Director Mario Cordero said in a prepared statement. "They are vital to ensure the flow of commerce, and important parts of the best-in-nation services we provide our customers." (Photograph courtesy of the Port of Long Beach)

Activists Pushing Rent Control Ballot Measure

(Continued From Page 1)

did not include the proposed language of the rent control initiative. Parkin told the Business Journal that this is required under the city elections code. DeLaGarza sent Butler a letter explaining this the following day, and her office also called him, Parkin said.

Once the correct paperwork is filed with the city clerk's office, it will be passed off to Parkin. "Then we write the ballot title and summary. And then we return it," Parkin said. Housing Long Beach would then submit the petition to be used for collecting signatures, and the city clerk would certify the document if it meets certain requirements under the municipal code, he explained.

After that, "the clock starts" – the group has 180 days to collect signatures following certification of the petition. "The only thing would be [that] if they wait too long they may not have enough time to collect [signatures] to meet the November ballot. But right now, that's not an issue," Parkin said.

As of November 17, Butler had not resubmitted the notice to circulate a petition with the attached ordinance language, according to Parkin.

Butler told the Business Journal that his organization is working with the Long Beach Gray Panthers, an education and advocacy group for seniors that advocates for affordable housing, and two groups from California State University, Long Beach: the Black Student Union and Students for Quality Education.

"We'll be doing a lot of grassroots fundraising. We're going to try to do our best to raise money to support the effort," Butler said, adding that the initiative will also rely on volunteers.

Asked if the rent control initiative had any city or city council support, Butler said, "I don't know. That's a good question." Mayor Robert Garcia was unavailable for comment on the matter.

"Over 60% of Long Beach rents, and our renter population here in Long Beach deserves stability," Butler said. "Families deserve stability and our seniors deserve stability as well. It's long overdue for Long Beach. We are the largest population of renters on the West Coast, from San Diego to Seattle, without any basic renter protections."

Joani Weir, president of Better Housing for Long Beach, a grassroots organization of property owners and community members, argued that rent control actually causes rental rates to increase. She explained that locking in rental rates makes it difficult for owners to keep up with the costs associated with their properties, and can either drive them out of business or cause them to raise rents "as high as possible" when a tenant moves out.

"Housing Long Beach is actually increasing rents in Long Beach right now by putting this fear in property owners," Weir said. "Myself, I haven't raised rents in years. But now the fear of it [rent control] has caused me to start increasing my rents because you don't want to get caught, if rent control does go through, in rent [rates] where you can't stay in business."

Weir said that property owners did not create the housing crisis, and that, as providers of housing, they should not be penalized for a crisis they did not create. She said she has been expecting Butler to come forward with a rent control initiative for some time. ■

City Of Carson Voters Approve Oil Industry Tax; Expected To Generate \$24 Million

■ BY BRANDON RICHARDSON
Senior Writer

On November 7, as part of a special election, voters in the City of Carson approved a tax on oil producers' gross receipts, which will bring in an estimated \$24 million annually for the city's general fund.

The special election cost the city nearly \$400,000 but paid off with 72% of the ballots cast in favor of approving the initiative, Measure C. Of the 57,669 registered voters in Carson, 11.2% cast a ballot, with final vote counts taking place now and result certification expected at the city council's meeting today (November 21), according to City Manager Ken Farfsing.

"City staff is beginning to outline the tax implementation process and has recently

been contacted by individual petroleum industry companies," Farfsing said. "We will be reaching out to the petroleum industry in the upcoming weeks to work on the implementation of the tax."

Prior to the vote, the proposed measure caused a rift between city hall and the business community, causing a brief verbal spat between Mayor Albert Robles and Carson Chamber of Commerce President John Wogan, as reported in an October 19 story published by the Daily Breeze.

Wogan and others in the business community cited other taxes added in recent years and the city's current moratorium on certain development projects as signs of the business-friendly atmosphere declining in Carson. However, Robles

pointed to tax revenue in surrounding cities from the oil industry and said the new tax would help level the playing field and stop Carson companies from taking advantage of the city. According to the city data, Torrance generates nearly \$11 million in tax revenue and El Segundo brings in \$11.6 million in tax revenue, each with one refinery. With two refineries, Carson was generating just over \$5 million.

The city's general fund, including the estimated \$24 million addition, is used for city needs such as public safety, parks and recreation programs, youth and senior programs, and infrastructure. A citizens' oversight committee is to be formed to oversee the usage of the new funds. ■



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Norse Way Businesses

(Continued From Page 1)

belt Properties and is serving as president of the newly formed Lakewood Village Partners of Norse Way. So far, the association is made up of 30 of the 65 businesses in the area, and is gaining momentum.

Cindy Matranga, the owner of Yesterday's Memories, Today's Treasures Boutique, spearheaded the effort to create the association last summer. Matranga and about 30 business owners from Norse Way and nearby Viking Way met with 5th District Councilmember Stacy Mungo to discuss the desired improvements. According to Matranga, Mungo said she could not help them until they all formed a cohesive set of goals and formed a business association.

"She asked for all of our emails, and then six weeks went by and none of us heard from her," Matranga said. "I thought she would do it for us, [set up a business association] but then I realized, it's not her job."

Matranga took it upon herself to invite all of the area business owners to a meeting. Although only 12 people showed up, Matranga said the second

meeting gained more traction, as Mungo attended and the group voted to establish a board. They decided not to form the association with the Viking Way business

owners since their problems were not the same.

In addition to promoting unity and economic development, the association will also serve as a neighborhood watch to prevent crime. Matranga said that one of the group's priorities is to hire a security guard for nights, and possibly 24 hours if affordable. The association plans to fund its operations with donations. Participating businesses are requested, but not required, to contribute \$25 per month.

"Someone broke a window recently," Matranga said. "A lot of people think if you own a business, you're well off, but we're not. A lot of us here are women by ourselves. Sometimes we have problems with drug addicts who give us a hard time. They'll come in and want to use our phones."

Matranga said the association would also like to hire a gardener. In fact, it was the state of the flowerbeds that pushed her over the edge to take action.

"[Norse Way] is neglected. Nobody does anything to the flowerbeds. That's what started it all. They're just a mess," Matranga said. "I drove downtown and it's just beautiful by city hall. They have beautiful flower beds. I feel like a poor stepchild in our neighborhood."

McCormick said an eventual goal of the association is to become an official business improvement district (BID), in which businesses agree to assess themselves and pay a fee to fund improvements within the district's boundaries. But, since he estimated the cost to become a BID at \$60,000 to \$70,000, the association's short-term objective is to create accord among the business owners.

"It seems the best way of getting the attention of the city is approaching as a group rather than as an individual," said Lakewood Village Chiropractic's Dr. Thomas J. Thomas, an associate boardmember of the Lakewood Village Partners. "Many of us have approached the city on an individual basis and nothing seems to have been resolved or has gotten done."

Mungo has been working with the group to create a framework and set goals. So far, the association is in the process of defining their membership structure and recruiting more participants, Mungo wrote in an e-mail to the Business Journal.

The organization has four associate boardmembers, a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, Thomas said. It has held three board meetings and a couple of public meetings to inform business owners of its plans. The city council has also voted to set aside \$450,000 for business corridors throughout the city, with Carson Street identified as a priority, Mungo stated.

"Today, businesses face more challenges than ever to be successful, and the value of the Norse Way business association is having everyone working together to take what's there and make it even better," Mungo commented. "We are working hard to make sure the money will be spent in the most effective way. We want to make a big impact." ■



James McCormick is the owner of Sunbelt Properties and president of the Lakewood Village Partners of Norse Way, a newly formed business association near Carson Street and Lakewood Boulevard. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson.)

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Wells Fargo Names Natasha Mata Region President

(Continued From Page 1)

Wells Fargo team members among seven districts and 75 branches – 11 of which are in Long Beach and Signal Hill. She most recently served as area president for the Four Rivers Market area in Northern California.

“Long Beach is an area that is center to my territory and certainly a very important and instrumental piece to our particular region,” Mata said. “I am going to put a lot of attention into really being a part of all the different organizations that are within Long Beach so we can continue to help our customers and our communities thrive.”

Mata’s initial priority is to get to know the communities within her region as well as the Wells Fargo team members serving those areas. “Spending time out in the branches and visiting with the customers [and] really getting to know our community leaders is very important to the success of us being able to establish certain protocols . . . to help our customers in the best way that we possibly can,” she said.

Mata’s move comes at a time of change for Wells Fargo as the bank works to “Change for the Better,” as its improvement campaign is called. The bank launched the initiative following revelations that it had created fake accounts and enrolled customers in online bill pay without their consent.

“Our vision and values have always been



center to what we do,” Mata said, adding that the Change for the Better initiative is about “reshaping the Wells Fargo experience overall.” Wells Fargo took feedback from employees and customers into consideration when planning its Change for the Better initiative, she noted.

“What I appreciate about the changes we have been able to make with our processes and the protocols that we have put in place . . . [is that] this really allowed us to be much more genuine and authentic in our conversations and interactions . . . with our customers,” Mata said. “It’s a consistent and a very uniform experience that they are receiving.”

Wells Fargo has changed up its format for morning team meetings within its branches, which previously followed a set schedule of topics of discussion. “We had pretty prescriptive types of topics that we had pretty much designed for them to discuss every single day, and we found that every branch is going to be in a different community that’s going to service different types of customer needs,” Mata said. Now, each branch’s leadership is able to decide upon topics that best suit their needs, she explained.

Various enhancements have also been made to the bank’s systems processes, according to Mata. “We have also provided a very consistent process in terms of being more transparent with all of our Wells Fargo business lines across our organization to ensure that they are helping to support our ef-

forts,” she noted. “Putting our customers first and creating a level of support and partnership across the organization is part of the Change for the Better initiative, allowing us to continue to work towards reshaping that Wells Fargo experience.”

Mata reflected, “For as long as I can remember, even when I first started with the

bank, the vision and values of our organization have always been center and important to what we do and why we do it.” Wells Fargo is focused on making changes that promote the goal of providing the best services and products for customers to succeed financially, she noted. “We continue to look for ways . . . to be more efficient.” ■



During the annual Long Beach Veterans’ Day Parade on November 11, Wells Fargo Central Los Angeles Region President Natasha Mata (far right) presented former U.S. Marine Corps Corporal Harvey Calderon, his wife Maggie and their daughter Abigail, with the deed to a mortgage-free home. Calderon, a native of Long Beach, and his family rode in the Wells Fargo stagecoach during the parade. Calderon was a participant in the nonprofit Military Warriors Support Foundation’s program, which awards mortgage free homes to veterans after three years of family and financial mentoring. Calderon served in Iraq as a squad automatic weapon gunner and in Afghanistan as a team leader and vehicle commander. He was shot in Afghanistan and awarded the Purple Heart. “We are proud to collaborate with Military Warriors Support Foundation to provide mortgage free homes to veterans,” Mata said. “Well Fargo has donated more than 350 homes, valued at over \$55 million to veterans in all 50 states,” according to a statement from the bank. (Photograph courtesy of Wells Fargo)

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Understanding The Recently Enacted 2017 State Legislative Housing Package

(The following article was prepared in October by Sara Kimberlin, senior policy analyst with the California Budget & Policy Center – calbudgetcenter.org – based in Sacramento. It is presented by the Business Journal in an effort to ensure its readers have a better understanding of the 15 bills related to housing signed into law last month. The article is reprinted with permission of the author.)

California's housing affordability crisis was a primary focus of the California Legislature in 2017, culminating with Governor Brown signing into law a historic "housing package" of 15 bills, passed on the last day before the legislative session adjourned. This new set of bills represents the most significant state-level action addressing housing since the elimination of redevelopment agencies in 2011. Though in recent years state policymakers have frequently discussed the urgent problem of rising housing costs, they had previously failed to reach agreement on how the state should respond, making this year's success noteworthy.

All of the bills in the housing package are designed to increase the supply of housing in California, including the number of affordable homes. The bills fall into five groupings based on how they aim to address the state's housing shortfall – whether by:

- directly financing affordable housing production,
- facilitating private-market housing production by streamlining local review processes,
- increasing local accountability for accommodating a fair share of new housing development,
- harnessing private funding to pay for affordable housing development through inclusionary zoning, or
- preserving the affordability of existing subsidized housing.

This blog post summarizes the new policies put in place by each of the 15 bills in the housing package and follows our earlier analysis of key strategies included in the package, as well as our analyses of housing costs and housing cost-burden throughout California.

Directly Financing Affordable Housing Production

Two of the bills in the housing package are designed to provide new sources of state funding to directly invest in the production or rehabilitation of homes that are affordable to households with low incomes. This public funding is important to encourage production of housing with particularly low rents or purchase prices, accessible to households with very limited incomes – housing that the private market is unlikely to produce because it is not profitable.

• **Senate Bill 2 (Atkins), the Building Homes and Jobs Act**, establishes a new \$75 recording fee on real estate transactions (excluding new home purchases) to create a permanent source of state funding for affordable housing, a long-time goal of California housing advocates. The fee is projected to generate roughly \$200 million to \$300 million per year. Over the long-term most funds will be distributed to local governments to fund affordable housing development, while the first year of funding will primarily support homelessness services and capacity building in local government to improve housing planning.

• **Senate Bill 3 (Beall), the Affordable Housing Bond Act of 2018**, places a measure on the November 2018 statewide ballot to raise \$4 billion in bonds, with \$3 billion going to fund affordable housing development through existing state programs and \$1 billion to support affordable homeownership opportunities for veterans (with these funds paid back to the state through veterans' mortgage payments).

The number of affordable homes ultimately created or preserved through this new direct state funding will depend on many factors, including where projects are developed; what other federal, state, and private funding they are able to leverage; what specific populations they serve (e.g. families, single adults, older adults, formerly homeless individuals, or individuals with significant need for supportive services); and whether they involve new construction, rehabilitation, or preservation of homes in danger of losing affordability protections. The California Housing Partnership calculates that state-supported new housing construction projects have received roughly \$70,000 in state subsidies per unit on average in recent years, while the Legislative Analyst's Office has estimated that \$165,000 is a typical per-unit public subsidy in California's coastal urban areas. Veterans' home loans issued through the existing CalVet program have averaged about \$300,000 per loan in recent years. These estimates suggest that the housing bond might support production of roughly 18,000 to 43,000 homes in total, along with providing home loans for more than 3,300 veterans, and that revenues from the recording fee might support production of roughly 1,200 to 4,300 homes per year.

A third bill included in the housing package is designed to improve the utilization of an existing state funding source for affordable housing developers, the state Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). Specifically, this bill applies to the portion of state tax credits set aside for farmworker housing.

• **Assembly Bill 571 (Garcia)** modifies the criteria for projects eligible for the state LIHTC set-aside for farmworker housing, which has been under-utilized in prior years (and has approximately \$5.5 million currently available for qualified projects). AB 571 allows individual farmworker housing projects to qualify for more public funding and allows projects with 50 percent of units for farmworkers (instead of 100 percent) to qualify, making these types of projects more financially viable.

Facilitating Private-Market Housing Production By Streamlining Local Review Processes

Other bills in the housing package take a different approach to increasing the supply of housing, by facilitating privately-funded housing development rather than directly funding housing production with public dollars. Involving private-market housing developers in addressing the state's housing crisis is important. The state faces such a large shortfall of housing affordable at all income levels that public funds cannot directly support development of enough units to fill the gap.

Complex and lengthy review and permitting processes at the local level can block or delay proposed housing developments or result in projects with fewer units overall or with fewer affordable units. The housing package includes three bills that require or facilitate streamlining of local environmental and planning reviews for certain types of high-priority proposed housing developments, in order to increase the number and speed of these types of projects that move forward.

• **Senate Bill 35 (Wiener) requires cities and counties to follow a streamlined local review process** for some types of proposed housing projects if the city or county has failed to meet certain of its established goals for accommodating a fair share of new housing development. Proposed projects are eligible for streamlined review if they are multi-family developments, located in already-developed areas and not in especially environmentally sensitive areas, pay prevailing wages to construction workers, and include a certain percentage of affordable units.

• **Senate Bill 540 (Roth) allows local governments to create Workforce Housing Opportunity Zones**, or areas within the city or county that are designated for expedited housing development, with at least half of the homes required to be affordable to households with low or moderate incomes. Within the zones, local governments complete environmental and planning reviews in advance so that individual housing projects subsequently proposed within the zones are not subject to lengthy project-specific reviews or environmental legal challenges. Qualified housing projects must also pay prevailing wages to construction workers. Local governments that create these zones may apply for state grants or zero-interest loans to cover the costs of completing the needed planning and environmental review processes.

• **Assembly Bill 73 (Chiu) allows cities and counties to create Housing Sustainability Districts**, which function similarly to SB 540's housing zones. Local jurisdictions complete environmental and planning reviews for the land within the districts in advance so that housing projects proposed within the districts, which must include at least 20 percent affordable units overall, can be approved through a streamlined review process and are not subject to project-specific legal challenges under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As with SB 540, projects must pay prevailing wages to construction workers. Local governments that create these housing districts become eligible for incentive payments from the state.

All three of these bills require or facilitate faster and simpler local review processes, and fewer opportunities for project-specific legal challenges, for multi-unit housing projects that include affordable units and pay prevailing construction wages. SB 540 and AB 73 take a "carrot" approach, incentivizing local governments to streamline review through eligibility for additional state funding, while SB 35 takes a "stick" approach, requiring local governments to streamline review if they have failed to accommodate housing production in the past.

Increasing Local Accountability For Accommodating A Fair Share Of New Housing Development

A number of bills in the housing package are designed to improve the existing state process for ensuring that all local jurisdictions accommodate a fair share of the production of new housing that is needed to meet the increased statewide need for housing as California's population and economy grow. More housing in all parts of California is needed to maintain a healthy state economy and to ensure that current and future residents at all income levels are able to find homes they can afford. However, some local jurisdictions are reluctant to accept additional housing because they are concerned about increased congestion, school crowding, or changes to the character of their communities. While these local concerns are often deeply felt, the needs of the broader state community and economy also must be considered, so an existing process in state law is designed to allocate responsibility for accommodating needed new housing development across local jurisdictions throughout the state.

Currently, the Department of Housing and Community Development regularly produces a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) that identifies how much new housing at different income levels is projected to be needed in each region of the state, and then the regional councils of governments assign a specific number of units to each local jurisdiction as the fair share of housing development that needs to be accommodated within each city or county. At the local level, cities and counties are required to outline their plans for how they will meet these housing production goals through the "housing elements" of their General Plans. Historically, however, there were few mechanisms in place to ensure that the plans outlined in housing elements were actually adequate and implemented. The housing package includes several bills designed to ensure that local housing elements are realistic and that make it easier to hold jurisdictions accountable for achieving their assigned housing goals.

• **Assembly Bill 1397 (Low)** specifies that housing elements can only list land as a potential site to accommodate new housing if that land has a realistic capacity for housing development.

• **Senate Bill 166 (Skinner)** requires local jurisdictions to continually update their housing elements and General Plans, as new development permits are issued and land uses

change, to ensure that their housing elements always identify enough sites for potential development to meet their assigned goals for housing of different income categories.

- **Assembly Bill 879 (Grayson)** requires local jurisdictions to include in their housing elements an expanded analysis of constraints on housing development — specifically including requests to develop housing at lower densities than zoned, length of time to complete permitting, and local ordinances that impact the cost and supply of housing development — and to attempt to mitigate these constraints where possible.

- **Assembly Bill 72 (Santiago)** requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to review local jurisdictions' General Plans and housing actions to ensure that they comply with state law, with the possibility of reporting violations to the Attorney General.

Senate Bill 35 (Wiener), described earlier, also requires local jurisdictions to report more complete information about their progress in meeting housing goals to the Department of Housing and Community Development. All of these bills are designed to put teeth into the existing housing element law, so that it will better function to ensure that local jurisdictions in all parts of the state share the responsibility of accommodating new housing.

Two additional bills in the housing package place limits on the ability of local governments to reject or reduce the size of proposed housing developments that meet existing zoning requirements, particularly for developments that include affordable units. These bills build on the existing Housing Accountability Act and can be considered explicitly anti-NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) provisions.

- **Senate Bill 167 (Skinner) and the identical Assembly Bill 678 (Bocanegra)** increase the burden of proof required for a local government to reject or require downsizing of a housing project that includes affordable units. These bills also require written documentation to justify decisions to reject this type of housing project, and impose fines on jurisdictions that improperly reject or require downsizing of housing projects or fail to comply with required timelines for making approval decisions.

- **Assembly Bill 1515 (Daly)** requires courts to give less deference to evidence presented by local governments, and more consideration of alternative reasonable evidence, when a housing developer legally challenges a local jurisdiction's decision to reject a proposed housing project based on inconsistency with local plans or policies.

Harnessing Private Funding To Pay For Affordable Housing Development Through Inclusionary Zoning

Another bill included in the housing package reaffirms the authority of local governments to apply "inclusionary zoning" policies to proposed rental housing developments. These policies require developers of market-rate housing to include a set percentage of units of affordable housing within their projects, or support development of affordable housing units elsewhere through fees in lieu or other means.

- **Assembly Bill 1505 (Bloom)** was written to overrule a 2009 appellate court decision

(Palmer/Sixth Street Properties LP vs City of Los Angeles) that stipulated that inclusionary zoning policies could not be applied to rental housing developments. Many California jurisdictions have inclusionary zoning policies in place for ownership housing, and many applied these policies to rental housing prior to 2009, so the "Palmer Fix" restores this local planning mechanism as a tool to regulate the production of rental housing as well.

By requiring market-rate housing developers to incorporate or provide funding for affordable homes, inclusionary zoning policies harness a portion of the private revenues generated by market-rate housing production to fund production of homes affordable to lower-income households. Given that the need for affordable housing greatly exceeds the state's ability to directly fund construction of new affordable homes, inclusionary zoning can be a useful strategy to involve market-rate housing developers in addressing the affordable housing shortfall. Such policies need to be well-calibrated to the local housing market, however, so that their requirements do not discourage housing developers from building at all. AB 1505 allows the state to review local inclusionary policies when circumstances suggest the policies might be overly inhibiting housing development needed to meet a community's fair share housing goals.

Preserving Existing Subsidized Housing

A final bill in the housing package seeks to preserve the affordability of rental housing with below-market rents, specifically in housing developments that received state or federal funding for construction or rehabilitation and consequently are required to charge below-market rents for a certain number of years, after which the owners may increase rents up to market rates.

- **Assembly Bill 1521 (Bloom)** strengthens the existing **Preservation Notice Law** that applies to housing developments whose affordability requirements are set to expire (so that rents will no longer be required to be maintained at below-market rates). The bill requires longer advance notice to tenants in these units to let them know when rents are scheduled to increase. The bill also requires the owners to preferentially sell to qualified buyers who intend to maintain the properties as below-market rental housing and who make a fair-market-value purchase offer.

An Important Set Of First Steps

The 15 bills in the 2017 housing package tackle the problem of California's inadequate supply of housing, particularly affordable homes, from a variety of different angles. These bills will not solve the state's housing affordability crisis, but they represent an important set of first steps to stimulate increased housing production through direct state investment, regulatory reform, increased accountability, inclusionary tools, and preservation. More work will be needed, at both the state and local levels, to implement and build on these new policies in order to bring California's housing supply into better alignment with the needs of current and future residents for homes they can afford. ■

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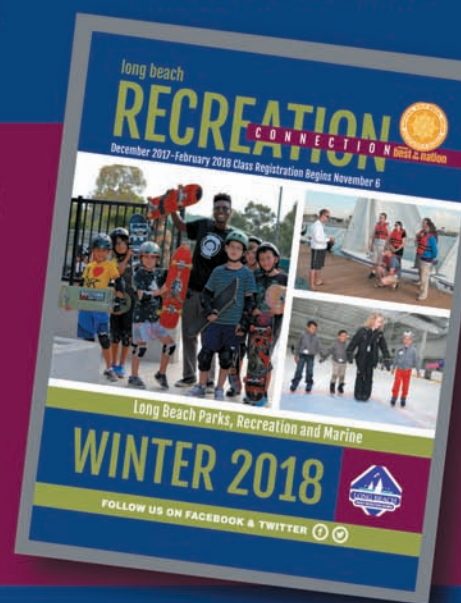
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Long Beach City Council Round-Up

■ By **ANNE ARTLEY**
Staff Writer

The following items summarize actions taken at the November 7 and November 14 Long Beach City Council meetings. Separate articles in this edition discuss council actions on Community Hospital and recreational marijuana.

Process Begins To Create Two Commissions To Promote Equity

On November 7, the council voted to take the first steps in creating two new

commissions – a City Ethics Commission and a Citizen Redistricting Commission – to promote public faith in local government. This requires a vote of the people to amend the city charter.

The redistricting commission would determine the city's district boundaries. Every 10 years, following the U.S. Census, boundaries are re-configured by the city based on population. Eighth District Councilmember Al Austin said that the last time, the process was "very, very dramatic" and politicized.

Austin gave a PowerPoint presentation on the need for the commissions in Long Beach. According to Austin, public surveys indicate that trust in the government is at a historic low, both at the national and local level.

He said that ethics commissions in other cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, handle issues concerning conflict of

interest, campaign finance, city campaign laws, lobbying and government ethics.

Councilmembers Stacy Mungo, Daryl Supernaw and Suzie Price expressed their support.

"I don't know if the [redistricting] process has always been fair, not just in Long Beach, but around the nation," Price said. "It seems to be one of the most politicized processes. To the extent that we can take politics out of the process, enhance transparency and strive for the concept of equity, I would be completely in support of that."

Councilmembers Discuss Best Recruiting Practices Based On A Workforce Report

The city council filed a staff report at its November 14 meeting on the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and 2017 Workforce Gender, Age and Ethnic Diversity Report.

The studies' results were compared to benchmarks outlined by labor market data based on U.S. Census information. The report found that the minority workforce exceeded the labor market data in all job categories except sworn protective services and skilled crafts. It also showed that the overall female representation in the city workforce met the labor market standard.

According to Alejandrina Basquez, the city's director of human resources, areas of improvement include representation of minorities in the fire and police departments and representation of women in maintenance, skilled crafts and sworn protective services.

To that end, 1st District Councilmember Lena Gonzalez said she would like to see more women in the fields of engineering, technology and public works.

To increase job applications, Basquez reported that she is encouraging city departments to utilize Internet-based job boards, increase their social media presence and migrate to an online-based application system.

But 7th District Councilmember Roberto Uranga called this "passive recruiting" and said it was more important to interact with potential applicants in person. He said his perspective stems from his 16-year experience as the recruitment officer for the city's civil service department.

"There's nothing that succeeds more in recruiting people than 'pressing the flesh,' going where the applicants are," he said. "This includes visiting classes, colleges and community-based organizations. It's important for people to be able to ask people in the job what it's like. They can say, 'I'd like to be a police officer,' but they don't know why. They don't know what the job entails." ■

Employers Must Start Electronic Filing And Payroll Tax Payment January 1, 2018

■ By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Assistant Editor

Starting January 1, all California employers must electronically submit employment-related tax returns, wage reports and payroll tax deposits to the Employment Development Department (EDD). Assembly Bill 1245, passed in 2015, also requires electronic submittal of unemployment insurance reports to the EDD, and electronic funds transfers for remission of contributions for unemployment insurance taxes, according to the California Chamber of Commerce (CalChamber).

These requirements have already been in place for employers with 10 or more employees. All remaining employers must adhere to the regulations beginning with their 2018 payroll, or as soon as they report having more than 10 employees – whichever occurs first, according to CalChamber.

Waivers are available for employers who are unable to electronically submit these items. Waiver requests can be submitted by fax to 916/255-1181 or by mail to: Employment Development Department, Document and Information Management Center, PO Box 989779, West Sacramento, CA 95798-9779

For more information about these mandates, visit www.edd.ca.gov/EfileMandate. ■

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Long Beach Business Journal

The Challenges Of Job Hunting Without The Internet



A Long Beach Community Foundation initiative
funded by the Knight Foundation

■ By **KAREN ROBES MEEKS**

Senior Writer
Long Beach Business Journal
Long Beach Media Collaborative

(Editor's Note: An experiment in journalism teamwork, the Long Beach Media Collaborative is made up of participants from the Press-Telegram, Long Beach Post, Grunion Gazette and Long Beach Business Journal. The goal: To combine forces for in-depth, multi-platform reporting on poignant issues gripping the community. Our first project, Strengthening the Signal, explores the dearth of Internet access in some corners of the city – and mines potential solutions for bridging the gap.)

Up until three months ago, Stelena Anderson and her family lived without Internet at home, relying on family members, libraries, an unemployment center and places such as McDonald's and Starbucks for Internet access.

Anderson could no longer afford Internet at home after her former employer mailed her a termination letter in 2014. She was on maternity leave with her second child at the time.

"I felt like it was hard to give up the Internet because, after that, there was no access to look for work," said the Long Beach mother of three, whose family depended on her husband's income to make ends meet after her former employer eliminated her position in 2014.

If Anderson went to McDonald's or Starbucks to access the Internet, she needed to make sure her laptop was fully charged because those places had few outlets for plugging in. If she headed to the computer stations at the Career Transition Center on Atlantic Avenue, she had to schedule a babysitter because the office doesn't allow children.

Most of the time, Anderson went to the Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library, bringing her children along while she searched online for jobs and submitted resumes and applications.

She once resorted to using her smartphone to submit a job application and résumé to a local fashion manufacturing company, which proved problematic because she wasn't sure if she was seeing the company's whole website on her phone. When she uploaded and sent her résumé, the format looked distorted. "I don't think they saw my whole résumé," she said. She didn't hear back from the company.

"This is the only time I've ever been off work, and it's been the hardest," Anderson said.

For many people like Anderson, Internet access is a vital component in the search for jobs, and prospects shrink for those without it.

In 2015, the Pew Research Center surveyed 2,001 U.S. adults ages 18 and older about their digital job search habits and found that the Internet is more important than ever in the search for work.



North Long Beach resident Stelena Anderson talks about her struggles of searching for a job without Internet access at home. (Photograph by Thomas Cordova, Press-Telegram)

The number of people who researched jobs online has doubled in the last decade. In 2005, only 26% of Americans went online to find job information, according to a Pew Research survey from that year. Ten years later, about 54% of Americans went online to learn about jobs, while 45% logged on to apply for one, according to the survey.

North Long Beach resident Maria Hernandez, 25, is looking for full-time work to support herself and her four-year-old daughter.

Hernandez, who is working part-time while taking classes at Long Beach City College, divides her time between Starbucks and the Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library because she can't afford to have Internet at home. She also doesn't have her own computer, so sometimes she borrows a friend's laptop.

If she heads to the library, Hernandez has to search and apply for jobs within the library's time limits. Sometimes she can reserve computer time for two hours, sometimes less.

"A lot of jobs are saying, 'Apply online, apply online,'" Hernandez, who has had to apply for jobs on her smartphone, said. "I need the Internet. Maybe there's one job where they'll tell me to go and fill out [a paper] application, but most of them tell me to apply online."

While Pacific Gateway, a public agency that provides workforce development services in the Greater Long Beach area, does not track whether clients have Internet at home, officials there see active, regular use of its computer stations, according to Erick Serrato, the agency's deputy director.

Many Pacific Gateway clients are those entering the workforce for the first time in more than 10 years and are not familiar with the idea of online applications or how online job search works, Serrato said. "They find it difficult, so we try to help them understand the [job] environment and access services to the Internet," he said.

The Internet's role in searching for jobs is a critical one as more and more businesses are moving hiring practices online and using a variety of technology tools, he said. For example, organizations such as the City of Long Beach are moving towards the use of video technology in which applicants record themselves answering questions and then send the video in for review.

Businesses are suggesting that applicants apply first online before showing up to job fairs in person, Serrato said. "It has changed the way folks search for jobs and the way they interview," he said. "It's frustrating for folks because they're used to selling themselves in person, but their identity really begins at a digital level, before they even meet someone in person."

At the Career Development Center at California State University, Long Beach, students are encouraged to go on social media and websites such as LinkedIn – a major recruiting tool for employers – for the latest job leads, according to Terri Armstrong,

communications coordinator and career advisor at the center.

"Recruiters try to use all the different avenues available to them to find good candidates," she said. "I think that, with the Internet, a lot of that can be a hidden job market because a lot of people don't think to look there. A lot of people wouldn't think to go on Twitter to look for a position in a company they would like to work for. They [companies] may post something that not everyone has access to but, because you're following them, you may see it first."

A lot of employers will post on social media in real time. That's the hidden [job] market, so to speak. I don't think a lot of people are savvy to that."

Having the Internet can also help in formulating a great first impression, Armstrong said.

"You want to do your homework and find out the company's mission and vision and figure out how you can contribute to that organization, and know what they're looking for," Armstrong said. "And you can't do your homework if you don't have access to the Internet. You can't get fully prepared to meet with an employer."

Anderson agrees. When she didn't have Internet at home for two years, she rushed from place to place for Internet access, prioritizing putting in applications over research.

Three months ago, Anderson was finally able to afford Internet at home for about \$50 a month, thanks to her husband's recent raise. Now she can research prospective employers. She doesn't have to worry about charging her laptop before she goes out or dragging her kids to the library and asking them to sit still while she types. She doesn't have to apply for jobs on her smartphone. Last month, she sent out nearly six job applications every week from the convenience of her home. She hasn't received any responses, but she's hopeful.

"For me, it was a game changer," she said. ■

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Specialists Examine Heart Disease, The Number One Killer Of American Women

■ By **ANNE ARTLEY**
Staff Writer

As an event planner who ran tradeshow around the world, Long Beach resident Lilly Rocha was no stranger to work stress. On a September day in 2008, she was sitting in her Long Beach office after just returning from a trip overseas. She began feeling pain in her arm, jaw and chest. She had also been feeling exhausted, which a doctor's visit in June had determined was related to stress.

A co-worker suggested she was having a heart attack, but she didn't believe him. A heart attack survivor himself, he insisted on driving her to the hospital. It turned out he was right, and she was shocked to discover the seriousness of her condition, according to her profile on the American Heart Association's (AHA) Go Red For Women website.

"Looking back, all the symptoms were there," Rocha told the Business Journal. "But you don't expect to have a heart attack at 37."

According to cardiologists and heart specialists, Rocha's story is all too common. Heart disease is the leading cause of death among American women, killing one in three every year, according to the AHA. The reasons stem from a lack of awareness, both among women and the medical com-

munity, as women can present different heart attack symptoms than men.

Dr. Gregory Thomas, medical director of MemorialCare's Heart & Vascular Institute, said there are two types of symptoms that indicate a heart attack. The victim may exhibit the classic symptom of sudden pain in the chest. But other, more subtle, changes in the body are more often experienced by women, including milder pain that lasts from one to five minutes anywhere from the bellybutton to forehead.

"The brain can interpret pain as coming from a nearby part of the body when it's really emanating from the heart," Thomas said. "We don't have many nerves to the heart so, when it's in trouble, our pain perception is very imprecise. There can be other symptoms that women have more than men: nausea, shortness of breath, sudden fatigue, sudden onset of weakness and an overall feeling of malaise."

Thomas said that a woman's risk for blocked arteries increases at a faster yearly rate than in men after reaching menopause, typically around age 52.

"Men will gradually get blockage throughout their life, and women will get little of it until menopause, but then the rate is faster than it is for men at that age," Thomas said. "Men get heart attacks earlier, but women catch up."



Long Beach Resident Lilly Rocha suffered a heart attack in 2008 that caused her to reexamine her lifestyle. Rocha has since stopped eating meat and started her own business, Space 67 Productions, which allows her more control over her time and stress levels. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson).

Omid Vahdat, medical director of Lakewood Regional Medical Center's Heart & Vascular Center, said the prevalence of heart disease is also a by-product of longer life expectancy for both men and women.

"One hundred or [even] 50 years ago

there were other leading causes of death, like infectious diseases," he said.

In Rocha's case, her heart condition was genetic. She knew that her grandfather had died of a heart attack, but she did not know it had happened when he was 37, the same age she was when she had her heart attack. Heart specialists said that knowing family history is important for prevention, as well as maintaining a healthy body weight, exercising and managing stress.

According to Dr. Janki Shah, a cardiologist at UCLA Health and a member of the AHA Board of Directors, a sedentary lifestyle has become more common in recent decades, which increases risk of heart disease.

"Obesity is becoming a bigger epidemic in the U.S.," she said. "Two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese. With general poor health overall, the risk factors are magnified." Shah said these factors include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, aging and smoking. "The most important thing young people can do is not smoke," she said.

Dr. Mark Lee, the director of the Electrophysiology Lab at St. Mary Medical Center, said that smoking cessation, even for just one year, decreases the risk of heart disease by about 50%. Also, walk-

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ing daily for 30 minutes reduces heart attack and stroke risk by about 30%.

Thomas agreed, clarifying a misperception that one must exercise vigorously to reap the full benefits. “We tend to think of this ‘no pain, no gain,’ old-time perception that’s not accurate,” he said. “If you want to exercise mildly, you get a significant benefit. Parking further away from where we’re driving to and walking short distances can be helpful.” Thomas recommended that adult Americans maintain a body weight closer to that of their high school or college days.

Rocha had always kept a healthy body weight, but after her heart attack she decided to cut meat from her diet. She also started her own business so she could have more control over her work and make time for hobbies such as yoga, rock climbing and kayaking. Instead of organizing 150 events worldwide every year, Rocha now runs about 10 or 12 in California and the U.S.

“I had always been on an upward trajectory in regard to my job,” Rocha said. “I felt like my body betrayed me and it took me a few years to get over it. Now, my perspective has changed. I’m not a workaholic like I used to be.”

Rocha is now serving as an ambassador



A nurse at St. Mary Medical Center gives a woman an electrocardiogram (EKG) in this staged photograph for the Business Journal. An EKG tests and records the speed of a patient’s heartbeat, whether the rhythm is irregular and the strength of the electrical impulses passing through the heart. This test can detect signs of heart disease, which kills one in three American women every year. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Anne Artley.)

for the AHA’s Go Red For Women heart disease awareness and prevention campaign. AHA’s goal is to “improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent by 2020.”

“The most remarkable thing about heart

disease is that 80% of it is preventable,” Rocha said. “A lot of times women take care of others before they take care of themselves.”

Hispanic and African-American women are at an increased risk, according to Lee. They are more likely to develop heart dis-



Dr. Mark Lee is the director of the Electrophysiology lab at St. Mary Medical Center. Lee said that smoking cessation, even for just one year, decreases the risk of heart disease by about 50%. Also, walking daily for 30 minutes reduces heart attack and stroke risk by about 30%. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Anne Artley.)

ease about 10 years younger than other populations, and only one-third are aware that a heart condition is the biggest risk to their health.

According to the AHA, African Americans may possess a gene that makes them more susceptible to the effects of salt, which then increases their chances of developing high blood pressure.

The risk factors, such as diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, are also prevalent in the African

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Heart Disease

(Continued From Page 23)

American and Hispanic communities, according to information from the AHA and from Scripps Health, a nonprofit health system in San Diego. Hispanic women are also three times more likely than Caucasian women to lack health insurance.

“Women of low socioeconomic status who perhaps don’t have access to high-quality preventative care, may heighten their risk of developing a heart condition,” SCAN Health Plan Chief Medical Officer Romilla Batra said.

Since SCAN serves senior citizens, Batra said heart disease is a “big deal” to the organization. SCAN is participating in Million Hearts, a national initiative co-led by the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-

vention and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to combat cardiovascular disease. The ultimate goal is to prevent at least one million heart attacks or strokes by the year 2022.

Batra said that, although women are aware of the risk of heart disease, they think of it as more of a male condition, when in fact men and women develop it at the same rate.

According to an AHA survey, only half the female respondents recognized that heart disease was their greatest health risk, UCLA Health’s Shah said.

“I think the breast cancer advocacy groups have done such a great job getting women to go in for mammograms every year, but [women are] so much more likely to die of heart disease,” Shah said. “Heart disease kills more women than all forms of

cancer combined. I still don’t think they’re hearing it enough, how prevalent and preventable it is.”

Thomas remarked that women may express more concern about cancer since heart disease is more likely to occur later in life. But, he said, the preventative tips for heart attacks are the same for cancer as well. These include eating a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet, and exercising.

AHA statistics show that one out of 31 women die from breast cancer compared to the one out of three killed by heart disease. In addition to lack of awareness, Shah said gender bias can also play a role in late diagnoses of heart conditions. “Women are less likely to be offered aspirin or aggressive therapy or given a stent when they come in with a heart attack than men [are], statistically,” she

said. “They get diagnosed with reflux and anxiety rather than a heart problem.”

From Vahdat’s perspective, awareness has improved from 20 years ago, in part due to the media as well as a new generation of doctors who are more vigilant in detecting symptoms. Lee expressed agreement. “I’m glad we’re talking about it more,” he said. “I still think we’re not there yet, but it’s better than 20 years ago.” ■

Recognizing And Preventing Common Cancers In Women

■ By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER Assistant Editor

Breast, ovarian, cervical, lung and colon cancers are some of the most common cancers among women in the United States, according to local health experts. Some of these have proven screening processes to help catch early progression, but others are harder to spot until they are more advanced. In cases where someone has a family history of a certain type of cancer, genetic testing may be an option to screen for the presence of mutations linked to the disease.

“The women’s cancers specifically that we think about, the two big ones are breast cancer and cervical cancer,” Dr. Felix Nuñez, medical director of family medicine for Molina Healthcare of California, said. “The other one that we talk about that’s not specific to women is colon cancer. That’s actually the third most common cancer in the United States for men and women.”

Dr. Niles Vora, a hematologist-oncologist and program director of palliative care at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, said that, in addition to these, ovarian and lung cancers are also common in women. “Lung cancer has the highest fatality rate followed by ovarian, then breast cancer,” he said.

Breast and ovarian cancers are both often linked to family histories of the disease, according to Vora.

Vora suggested that women conduct monthly self-breast exams to check for abnormalities. “I think it’s really important for women to do monthly breast exams, because that is one of the most common ways that we find breast cancer, is on self-palpation of the breast mass,” he explained.

There are different schools of thought on whether or not this is an effective tool to detect breast cancer. “No one will argue against people doing that on their own. But as far as recommending it or giving it a strong recommendation, there isn’t 100 percent clarity on that, unfortunately,” Nuñez said. “In my practice, I have taught

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the self-breast exam in part because I think it's always great for people to get involved in their health and become part of the solution to maintaining their good health. But the evidence isn't clear that that is actually going to prevent . . . a great number of breast cancers."

There is also some debate over when women should begin having mammograms. The United States Preventive Services Task Force, an organization that makes evidence-based recommendations for clinical testing, recommends regular mammograms for women ages 50 to 74. The American Cancer Society, however, suggests the screenings should begin at age 45. "The problem is, if we start during universal testing on people, even at 40, we are going to pick up a lot of people who have what we call false positives," Nuñez said. "That means the test is positive when in fact they don't have cancer. That often will lead you down the line of going and having a biopsy. Anything invasive on your body has a risk, and a biopsy is not without risk."

Statistically, women aged 60 to 69 are the most likely to benefit from mammograms, Nuñez said. "That is, in that age group we are going to save the greatest number of lives from death if we get regular screenings in that age range," he explained.

More than 252,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in the U.S. each year, and there are about 40,600 deaths from

the disease annually, according to the American Cancer Society.

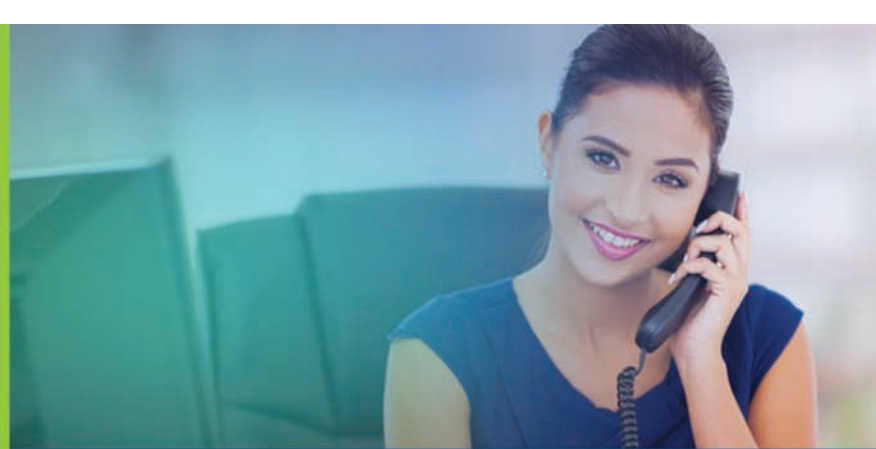
Cervical cancer is another common cancer in women that can be caught by regular screening. Women between the ages of 21 to 30 should receive pap tests – a test that can detect pre-cancerous or cancerous cells in the cervix – every three years, Nuñez said. "From 30 to 65, a pap smear with the HPV [human papillomavirus] test can be [done] every five years," he said. HPV is known to cause cervical cancer.

A vaccine is available for the most common strains of HPV, which cause about 50% of cervical cancers, according to Nuñez. That vaccine is recommended for ages 9 to 26 for females, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC also recommends the vaccine for males ages 9 to 21, to reduce the risk of genital, rectal, mouth and other cancers.

"We are at the point where we are thinking about a future with the vaccine where we won't be seeing cervical cancer anymore, where it's possible that we could prevent this cancer altogether," Nuñez said. "It's pretty significant for us. Right now, what we're looking at statistics-wise is that over 12,000 women a year are diagnosed with cervical cancer. And on an annual basis, for cervical cancer in the United States, we are looking at about 4,200 deaths."

Ovarian cancer, another cancer specific to women, is harder to catch. "There is no

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Karen Lappen, a genetic counselor, and Dr. Niles Vora, a hematologist-oncologist and the head of palliative care at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, often work together to help female patients who have cancer or suspect they may be at risk for cancer. They are pictured under cancer awareness ribbons at the hospital's Todd Cancer Pavilion. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)

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Common Cancers

(Continued From Page 25)

really good test for ovarian cancer,” Vora said. “It has never been proven to be cost effective to do CT scans or ultrasounds or even blood tests routinely looking for ovarian cancer. Therefore, when it’s found, oftentimes it’s presenting itself because of symptoms. And oftentimes, it presents itself at a higher [more advanced] stage.”

Women who have a family history of ovarian cancer may wish to undergo genetic testing to see if they have a mutation linked to the cancer, Vora said. “If the known mutation is found, then it can often be recommended to have an oophorectomy – removal of your ovaries – to prevent the possibility of ovarian cancer,” he said.

There are also genetic tests for mutations linked to breast cancer, according to Karen Lappen, a licensed certified genetic counselor at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. Mutations of the BRCA1 and 2 genes, for instance, are known to increase the risk of both breast and ovarian cancer, Lappen said. According to Cancer.gov, these genes produce proteins to suppress tumors, and mutations can interfere with the suppression process.

Genetic counselors meet with patients to discuss their personal and family histories of cancer to determine if they are at risk of a genetic abnormality. If the counselor feels that is the case, insurance may cover genetic testing to determine if the patient carries the mutation, Lappen explained. After a test is conducted, the counselor will advise the patient on how to proceed.

Women who have BRCA1 or 2 mutation may choose to have a preventive mastectomy to reduce their risk of cancer, according to Lappen. There are also two medications – tamoxifen and raloxifene – which have been proven to reduce a woman’s risk of getting breast cancer by about 50%, she said.

Everyone, both men and women, over the age of 50 should be screened for colon cancer, according to Vora. “We have proven that colonoscopies can find polyps, which are sort of precancerous lesions, early, and can be life-saving,” he said. More than 90% of colon cancer cases occur in persons over age 50, he noted. If someone has a family history of the disease, there are certain genetic mutations that can be tested for to assess their risk, he added.

Colon cancer is also linked to inflammatory conditions such as ulcerative colitis (a chronic bowel disease) and chronic constipation, Vora said. Alcohol consumption has been linked to colon cancer as well as breast cancer, he added.

Lung cancer is also common in women, but it is often asymptomatic, Vora said. “Eventually, when you have symptoms, they include cough or coughing up blood. Sometimes nonspecific symptoms like weight loss and pain can signal advanced disease.” Smoking is one of the most common known causes of lung cancer, but it has also been linked to many other cancers, Vora noted.

In general, a healthy lifestyle may help prevent these cancers, according to Vora. “I just think that the idea of being healthy is such an important thing across the board,” he said. ■

Reproductive Care Is Key For Women, But Access Is Difficult For Some

Ethnic And Income Disparities, Plus Politics, Pose Challenges

■ By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
 Assistant Editor

Although a woman’s reproductive health care needs depend upon her age and other health factors, locally based Obstetrician-gynecologists (OB-GYNs) agree that annual checkups are necessary to monitor overall health and catch problems early.

The United States Preventive Services Task Force, an independent group of volunteer experts that issues evidence-based

recommendations for clinical testing, recommends that women between the ages of 21 to 65 go in for pap smears (which test for cervical cancer) every three years. Women between the ages of 30 to 65 can opt to go in every five years if in addition to a pap smear they get tested for the presence of the human papillomavirus, which causes cervical cancer.

Unfortunately, these recommendations lead some women to believe they only need to visit their OB-GYN every three years,

which experts say isn’t often enough to monitor overall reproductive health.

“For many women, reproductive health is actually the only kind of health care they access on a regular basis,” Sue Dunlap, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, told the Business Journal via e-mail. “Nine out of 10 women of reproductive age will use birth control, whether for preventing pregnancy or treating medical conditions like endometriosis or irregular

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Reproductive Care

(Continued From Page 27)

periods. Women need routine pap tests and exams to screen for cervical cancer – because early detection is critical to successful treatment.”

Chlamydia screening alone is enough to warrant an annual screening, according to Dr. Lisa Agustines, chief of OB-GYN at Kaiser Permanente South Bay Medical Center. “A lot of women really underestimate the importance of having regular exams, especially for screening for sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia,” she said. “Chlamydia screening is actually needed every year.”

Chlamydia, bacteria that is sexually transmitted, often presents no symptoms

until the infection causes serious complications, according to Agustines. “It can lie dormant for a long time, and you might not notice that you have any symptoms until it’s in very advanced stages by getting pelvic inflammatory disease,” she explained. “The incidence of infertility, ectopic pregnancy, problems getting pregnant [and] damage to your pelvic organs after having untreated chlamydia is very, very high.”

Rates of chlamydia and syphilis infections are increasing in California and in other areas of the country, according to Dr. Jennifer McNulty, a physician specializing in maternal and fetal medicine who trains residents in OB-GYN at Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital Long Beach through a University of California, Irvine program.

Dr. Kathy Wilson, a Long Beach-based

OB-GYN with HealthCare Partners, also concurred that women should have yearly checkups. “We recommend that from the time they are of reproductive age they should see an OB-GYN at least once a year,” she said, adding that reproductive age is marked by the start of menstruation.

“Depending on their age, they have different needs,” Wilson said. “Like between 13 to 18 years of age, we really address leading a healthy lifestyle [and] making sure we’re trying to be as preventative as possible to avoid problems later in life. Also, making sure they understand what it is to have a regular cycle [and] that skipping periods is not OK.”

Women who skip periods may have irregular endocrine levels, a hormone released by the thyroid, which could indicate hyper- or hypothyroidism, Wilson explained. Checking endocrine levels should be part of reproductive health check-ups for women between the ages of 20 and 30, she said.

Missed or irregular periods can also be caused by a number of health problems such as metabolic syndrome, weight gain, or polycystic ovarian syndrome. The latter condition causes cysts to grow on the ovaries and could lead to hormonal imbalances and infertility issues, among other complications, according to the Mayo Clinic.

McNulty said that medical care providers like OB-GYNs should regularly discuss their patients’ reproductive life plans with them. “That plan might be [that they have] no desire to be pregnant in the next year. Or it might be, yes . . . I am thinking about conceiving in the next year. And that really then should guide the conversation,” she said. “For women whose short-term plans are that they wish to get pregnant, they should have pre-conception counseling with that focus prior to conceiving.”

This is a topic of concern for McNulty because in Los Angeles County, chronic medical conditions that can cause pregnancy complications are on the rise. The Los Angeles County Public Health Department released a report in January that analyzed the health indicators of women in the county by ethnicity and poverty level. It found that only about 20% of all women receive pre-conception counseling before they become pregnant, McNulty noted.

“Part of the problem is that almost half of pregnancies in L.A. County and in California are unintended,” McNulty said. The biggest risk factor for unintended pregnancy is poverty, she added. “Those women have significant barriers to accessing good

reproductive planning services. And those are women who may have transportation difficulties, who may have frequent changes in insurance status, who may have a partner who is not supportive of getting such services. And there may be cultural and language barriers as well.” She added, “Women may not be able to take time off of work to go to an appointment.”

Dunlap highlighted some of the ethnic disparities when it comes to reproductive health indicators and access. “Planned Parenthood’s new national survey shows that too many women aren’t getting their recommended cancer screenings – especially Black and Latina women,” Dunlap said. “Women of color in the U.S. face more barriers to accessing health care than white women, and so are less likely to get preventive screenings, more likely to have their cancer discovered at later stages, and more likely to experience worse health outcomes when it comes to breast and cervical cancer because of these barriers.”

Preconception appointments allow doctors to discuss lifestyle choices, such as frequency of drinking and smoking, and give advice on what supplements to take for a healthy pregnancy, McNulty said. “Folic acid is a supplement that’s recommended by the Centers for Disease Control for all women of reproductive age who could get pregnant, intentionally or unintentionally, because consumption of folic acid . . . reduces the risk of a type of birth defect called a neural tube defect, which is often spina bifida,” she explained, referring to a condition that causes incomplete closure of the fetus’s spinal column.

During pregnancy, women without health complications should schedule monthly visits with their OB-GYN, according to Kaiser’s Agustines. Ideally, they should begin these appointments by their tenth week of pregnancy, she said. “We really want to start prenatal care early, because there are a lot of time-sensitive tests that we do to screen for aneuploidy conditions like Down syndrome and to screen for things like neural tube defects,” she explained. Aneuploidy is a condition in which human cells have excess chromosomes.

Even if a woman is unsure as to whether or not she will keep her pregnancy, she should still seek early care, according to Agustines. “If you were unsure and then you decide that you are going to keep the pregnancy but now you’re like 11 weeks, it gets much harder to get all the testing done that we would want

HealthWise

Mako Robotic Technology Is Changing The Way Joint Replacement Surgeries Are Performed



By Andrew Wassef, M.D.

Joints are involved in almost every activity. Movements such as walking, bending and turning require the use of your hip and knee joints. When the knee becomes diseased or injured, the resulting pain can severely limit your ability to move and work.

Each person’s body is unique and can experience joint pain for different reasons. Common issues include:

- **Congenital disorders:** A condition existing at or before birth.
- **Excess weight.**
- **Injury:** Including fractures and ligament tears.
- **Osteoarthritis:** A “wearing out” condition involving the breakdown of cartilage in the joints. When cartilage wears away, the bones rub against each other, causing pain and stiffness.

• **Rheumatoid arthritis (RA):** RA produces chemical changes in the lining of the joints, or synovium, which causes it to become thickened and inflamed. In turn, the synovial fluid destroys cartilage. The end result is cartilage loss, pain and stiffness.

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Advancements in joint replacement technology, like Mako Technology, are allowing a growing number of people in their 40’s and 50’s to become potential candidates for joint replacement surgery.

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(Andrew Wassef, M.D., is the medical director for the MemorialCare Joint Replacement Center, Long Beach Medical Center)



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had you decided earlier,” she explained. After pregnancy, women should schedule an appointment to screen for post-partum depression, urinary incontinence and pelvic floor disorders, Agustines noted. “Also, it’s important to address if there were any issues that came up during pregnancy, for example, gestational diabetes or high blood pressure,” she added.

Wilson noted that more women are waiting until later in life, beyond the age of 35, to have children. “The older you are, the harder it is going to be for you to get pregnant. I don’t think people really realize that,” she said.

Wilson pointed out that it is still important for women to have annual checkups during and after menopause. “One of the big misconceptions that is actually important to get across is that women who are starting to have irregular periods between 47 and usually 52 years of age are going through menopause even though they still get periods,” she said. Symptoms of menopause such as irritability and trouble sleeping sometimes make women feel as though something is wrong with them, even though it is a normal process, she explained. For women whose quality of life is affected by these symptoms, hormone replacement therapy is an option to help them get through it, she said.

“I think sexual function needs to be addressed. I think that’s a huge gap in women’s health care because I don’t think people feel comfortable talking about that necessarily,” Wilson said of menopausal women. “Unless you have a good rapport with your patient, they won’t open up



Dr. Kathy Wilson, an obstetrician-gynecologist with HealthCare Partners in Long Beach, said that yearly checkups to monitor various aspects of reproductive health care are important for women of all ages. Some women think they only need to schedule appointments every three years for a pap test, but other factors that influence reproductive health, like endocrine levels and STDs, should also be monitored and tested for annually, she explained. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson)

to you about that. And that’s unfortunate.”

Most reproductive health care services are covered by insurance. “Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, women’s preventive services like breast and cervical cancer screenings, STI screenings, and well-woman visits are required to be covered by insurance without a copay,” Dunlap said.

However, actions by the government can change insurance coverage and access to these services. “Insurance plans were also required to cover birth control without charging a copay, but President Trump recently signed an executive order that eliminates this guarantee. This means that employers can decide whether or not a woman can have birth control covered by

her health insurance. Thankfully, California has legislation in place to protect most women in our state from this new rule,” Dunlap said.

Dunlap explained that nearly nine in 10 women of reproductive age will use contraception, “whether it’s for family planning or treating endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome (which is prevalent among women of color), fibroids, and menstrual regulation.” She added that, prior to the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, one in three women “struggled to afford prescription birth control.”

McNulty noted that contraception has been politicized. “For a woman between the ages of let’s say 20 to 40, asking and re-

specting her choice about whether to use contraception or not and what form of contraception is best for her and best fits her needs and preferences, is probably one of the most fundamentally important medical decisions that she will make in those years,” she said.

Still, Californians are less impacted by the political pressures that are brought to bear on women’s reproductive health issues, McNulty observed. This pressure is often driven by debate over abortion services.

“I would say that abortion care is a very important part of women’s reproductive health, insofar as almost one in four women in the United States will have an abortion in her lifetime before she becomes 45 years of age,” McNulty said. About one in 20 women will have an abortion before they reach the age of 20, while one in five will have an abortion by their mid-20s, she said. “Abortion care is a very important part of women’s reproductive health in terms of it being safe and available. And so that is an area that, as you know, in 2017 continues to be a big challenge.”

Dunlap reflected, “Recent political rhetoric has distracted some people from what’s really important: getting those in need the health care they need and deserve. Patients don’t come to us to make political statements, they come for help.” She added, “And they often come in their most vulnerable moments – whether they are scared they may have an STD, or that the lump they felt in their breast is cancerous, or that they are unexpectedly pregnant. We may be the only health care professionals they feel comfortable talking to.” ■



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The Business Environment In Bixby Knolls Continues 'Strong' As Neighborhood Evolves



Councilmember Al Austin, Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association (BKBIA) Executive Director Blair Cohn and Councilmember Roberto Uranga (pictured from left at SteelCraft) have been described as champions of the Bixby Knolls community by business owners in the area. The BKBIA covers the area from roughly just below Wardlow Road on the south to below Del Amo Boulevard to the north, and from Atlantic Avenue to the east to Long Beach Boulevard on the west. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)

■ By **BRANDON RICHARDSON**
Senior Writer

The sleepy bedroom community of Bixby Knolls continues an era of growth, becoming a "hipper" neighborhood for breweries and restaurants, according to business owners in the area and Blair Cohn, executive director of the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association (BKBIA).

"The great thing about right now is that we are at another little crossroads, but in a good way. We're just about to have new businesses open, so we are excited about that," Cohn said. "Things are good. Things are steady. I think the challenge is retail. And that's national. The big boxes doing what they do but failing because of Amazon. Then, it's a trickle-down to mom and pops."

To combat the retail challenge and create an atmosphere that challenges the notion that Bixby Knolls is as sleepy as people say, Cohn said his association tells every new business coming to the area of these challenges and that they must work twice as hard to create a unique destination and promote to bring in Bixby Knolls residents, as well as those from surrounding areas, to patronize and support the small businesses.

Cohn explained that the neighborhood is not nearly as sleepy as some think but that, due to mass amounts of sprawling single-family housing, it lacks the density of other neighborhoods such as Belmont Shore and downtown, which brings less foot traffic. Nonetheless, he said the word is getting out about the up-and-coming neighborhood.

"It's exciting that people are hearing about Bixby and they want to come up here. I mean, Liberation Brewing is building out. And these guys from the Anaheim-Buena Park area who want to open Ambitious Ales, taking over the Tuttle Cameras space," Cohn said. "We're going to change our name to 'Brewery Knolls' by the end of summer, we hope. I'd like to set up some Saturday trolley rides to take people from place to place to place."

New investment in development is a sign of the neighborhood's growing popularity, Cohn explained. He said the former Nino's Italian Restaurant location, which closed last year after 58 years in business, will be under construction soon to make way for a compounding pharmacy and several small retail and restaurant spaces. The former Hof's Hut location is also going to be broken up into a dental office and three small fast-casual dining joints.

With the Hof's Hut location, Cohn said he just hopes the food options aren't the likes of Burger King or Taco Bell, but he said the owner would like to opt for national brands rather than local businesses. Cohn said he would prefer smaller, local eateries, as he knows the neighborhood and sees the direction it is headed.

In addition to new developments, Cohn said existing business owners have been making investments in facade improvements to make sure their businesses, as well as the neighborhood, are as appealing as possible. The BKBIA also is working on improvements to the area.

"We're still trying to light up every dark spot by installing safety lights so everything is safe, painting buildings, new signage for businesses, planting and trimming trees," Cohn explained. "We want to do some more decorative crosswalks and utility boxes, and there are some more murals we want to do. Just keep changing the face of things. We keep trying to sell optimism and pride in the neighborhood."

Other improvements to the area include being integrated into the Daisy Avenue bike boulevard on Linden Avenue, a roundabout at Bixby Road and Linden Avenue and the potential for additional stop signs, traffic lights and crosswalks with flashing alerts, all meant to keep pedestrians safer along the neighborhood's major corridors. As far as a road diet, Cohn said it is not feasible, as both Atlantic Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard are heavy public transit corridors, with the Blue Line and dozens of buses running daily.

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Angela Roman assumed the general manager role at the Long Beach Petroleum Club in Bixby Knolls on November 13. The Long Beach native previously worked as a creator, planner and director of tours, as well as special events in the private and public sector. Roman is pictured in the Petroleum Club's Red Room, which she said is her favorite area of the facility. The Club is planning a New Year's Eve Party. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)



Focus On Bixby Knolls

(Continued From Page 30)

Even without a road diet, large portions of Bixby Knolls along Atlantic Avenue have wide sidewalks, which will begin to see an increase in outdoor dining. Dutch's Brew-house owner Jason Van Fleet is in the process of permitting outdoor seating, as is Cheese Addiction, which is not yet open. Cohn noted that some of the existing patios are underused but a little promotion by business owners should see more customers enjoying the outdoors while they dine.

According to Cohn, the true sense of community is the greatest appeal when it comes to bringing new residents and businesses to the area. This, coupled with investment, creates an atmosphere of hope and optimism, which makes the area one worth investigating Cohn explained.

"I can't point everything to SteelCraft, but it's a game changer, not only for the boulevard, but for a new era, new tastes, flavors, a different crowd. And it's the direction we want to go," Cohn said. "Trying to be a forward-thinking district is appealing."

Servando Orozco, owner of Orozco's Auto Service and president of the BKBIA, said he lives three blocks from SteelCraft and that often times the lines are so long that he cannot go there. He said the greatest impact of those crowds is that many are not Bixby Knolls residents. Rather, SteelCraft has become a destination for people throughout the region, which helps bring new customers to other Bixby Knolls businesses.

When he took over as director of the association 10 years ago, Cohn implemented several recurring events to jumpstart the



Realtor Eileen Rivera, owner of the Rivera Group, said Bixby Knolls is a diverse community in terms of race, culture, age, politics and architecture. A 22-year resident of Bixby Knolls, she noted that home prices have increased year-over-year and that buyers are getting younger. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)

community and get residents out onto the streets and into businesses. The walking club is celebrating its 10-year anniversary in January and the book club's 10-year anniversary is in February. The First Fridays event, which started with one business, has grown to include more than 50 between those on Atlantic Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard. Cohn said he is proud of the longevity of these events, as they have only strengthened the sense of community and

established lasting friendships between community members.

"Over the last seven years or more, I've seen big changes in our neighborhood. The one person I have to give a lot of credit to is Blair Cohn," Orozco said. "That guy really hustles and knows how to make things happen, and pushes us to do the things we need to do and not give up."

Orozco said 8th District Councilmember Al Austin and 7th District Councilmember

Roberto Uranga are both strong and vocal supporters of the BKBIA and the neighborhood. He said if requests are made, the councilmembers always follow through for the betterment of Bixby Knolls.

Austin said his office has been working on improvements along the community's corridors to make them more bike and pedestrian friendly, as well as improving cleanliness. His office also is making improvements to the Expo Arts Center, where

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Laura Martin opened Flirt Lash Bar one year ago and will celebrate the anniversary during the First Fridays event on December 1. Martin said business has been incredible and that she has already doubled her staff since opening. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)

his field office is located. Austin explained that his office often collaborates with the BKBIA to improve the area and that his office remains involved in all aspects of the neighborhood; from working with residents, business owners and developers, to programming community events.

"It's a diverse and thriving community with great neighborhoods that feed into our small business corridors. The future is bright," Austin said. "Bixby Knolls is a community that embraces arts, culture and innovation. As long as we continue to do that, we will evolve as a place where people want to come with their families and have a good time."

While his office partners with the

BKBIA, Uranga praised the work the association does to ensure its corridors are inviting to residents, visitors and investors. He said he continues to meet with interested business owners to bring new and exciting opportunities to the community.

"The entire area of Bixby Knolls gets a tremendous boost from the leadership of the BKBIA," Uranga said. "There is continually an investment and interest in bringing quality small- to medium-sized businesses to the area."

Real Estate

Close proximity to restaurants and retail shops have become a key selling point for real estate agents when it comes to selling



Michael Becker, owner of Massage Envy, said Bixby Knolls is a good blend of village charm and the modern world. (Photograph by the Business Journal's Brandon Richardson)

a potential buyer on the area. Cohn said that he and his wife attend open houses in the neighborhood to hear how agents are selling the neighborhood to potential buyers. He explained that, in the past, the focus would be solely on the home and the size of the lot. Now, however, he said he often hears agents describing various events, restaurants and retail stores within walking distance.

"My buyers and my sellers' buyers also say that what brings them as first-time home buyers to the area is of course the wonderfully high-rated schools and also the hip environment, including the new restaurants, breweries, and shops, First Fridays and Beach Streets," Andrea Testa, a realtor at Keller Williams Realty, said.

Testa said that the median sales price for single-family homes in the 90807 zip code is \$614,500, a 5.6% increase over last year,

according to the Pacific West Association of Realtors. She added that sellers are typically getting 99.1% of their original list price, with the number of days on market down 42% from 43 to 25 days. The average sales price for condominiums has increased 20.5% to \$317,625, with time on market shrinking from 69 days last year to 14 days currently. Testa also noted a rising trend of owners renting their properties, as rental rates continue to increase to more than the mortgage of the home.

Realtor Eileen Rivera, owner of the Rivera Group, said that, while politicians throw around the word "diversity" frequently, Bixby Knolls really embodies that ideal. She explained that the neighborhood is diverse in terms of race, culture, age, politics and architecture.

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Focus On Bixby Knolls

(Continued From Page 33)

“The greatest change I’ve observed in the 22 years that I’ve lived here is that Bixby has gotten younger. Bixby today is filled with 40-somethings, 30-somethings and even 20-somethings,” Rivera said. “They are buying houses, having babies and opening businesses right here in the neighborhood. The walkability is fabulous, our choices in eateries and specialty shops has risen tremendously and the energy is palpable.”

Commercial real estate in the area is on fire, according to Hoyt Hochman, president of Hoyt Realty and Investments. He notes a steady increase in rental and sales prices as inventory continues to decrease. Some deals are closing at well over \$300 per square foot on the smaller owner-user properties, he explained.

“I feel [Bixby Knolls] always been strong, but new places like SteelCraft, Lola’s, Liberation Brewery, just to name a few, have increased the buzz,” he said.

Crime & Safety

Safety is a primary focus of the BKBIA, which is why it has partnered with C.S.I. Patrol Services Inc., itself located in Bixby Knolls, to provide round-the-clock surveillance. C.S.I. President Dennis Cook said his company has two vehicles on patrol in the community at all times, with additional bicycle and Segway patrols during daylight hours. Cook said the Segway runs so often that the battery, which the manufacturer says lasts 10 years, had to be replaced after three.

Cook said that, as a resident, business



Husband and wife Jacquie Ferneau and Jonathan Hall are co-owners of Deep Blue Swim School. They said they chose to open their second location in Bixby Knolls because of the tight-knit community and positive growth in the area. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson)

owner and security provider of Bixby Knolls, he has noticed a decline in crime and sensing more residents feeling safe when walking the streets of the neighborhood. He noted that there will always be the sporadic crime elements, such as counterfeit money, suspicious characters, vandalism and the rare break-in, but that overall the area’s safety is only improving.

The funding for the Bixby Knolls patrol is around a 50-50 split, according to Cook. He explained that the BKBIA and several other partners that have bought into the program provide about 50% of the funding, while the other 50% is do-

nated by his company. Company contracts outside of the Bixby Knolls area offset the donated services being provided to the community.

“We’re just trying to get more businesses to buy into the program so we can keep everything going as much as possible,” Cook said. “We get a lot of people who call – businesses, as well as residents – about suspicious people looking into windows. We would like to expand into the residential communities to service them much like the business owners here in the district.”

When his company receives a call for

service, Cook noted that they do not have the authority to transport suspects to the police station. Instead, C.S.I. de-escalates the situation and detains suspects in their vehicle to separate all parties until officers of the Long Beach Police Department arrive. The police department’s North Division Station is located nearby, on the northern tip of Bixby Knolls at 4891 Atlantic Ave.

Conducting Business

Business in Bixby Knolls has been steady, according to owners and managers in the area, including Corrie Matthews,

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general manager of E.J. Malloy's. Matthews said that in the restaurant's 16 years in the community it has experienced ups and downs but is currently in the midst of an upswing, which is being felt throughout the area.

"This community has been very good to us. I see the future of Bixby Knolls as an entertainment destination. It has always been a sleepy community, but I see the desire in our customers for a little more," Matthews said. "We have great restaurants. Now the future of the area needs a movie theater and a concert venue. Wake this area up a bit."

E.J.'s is in the process of rebranding to E.J.'s Pub, according to Matthews. She explained that the restaurant closed for renovations on August 19 and worked for two months with designer Davis Ink to bring the space up to date, including all new kitchen and bar equipment. Restaurant updates are also evident on the menu, which now features a pepper-crusted prime center-cut sirloin with creamy Jameson gravy and marrow-fat peas.

Michael Becker, owner of Massage Envy, said his business has been able to help address residents' stress due to the political and economic uncertainty in the country. He added that business has been strong and that Bixby Knolls continues to grow.

"While there are still many long-standing members of the community, we are also seeing a lot of new families establish in the area, or even new generations of existing families returning to their roots," Becker said. "I think the community does a good

job of blending village charm with the needs of the modern world."

Jacque Ferneau & Jonathan Hall, owners of Deep Blue Swim School, said they chose to open their second location in Bixby Knolls because of the strength of the community and the positive growth in the area. Ferneau said the location has not yet reached its full potential but that the husband and wife business partners are looking to market within the community, as well as surrounding neighborhoods to bring in more business.

"Bixby Knolls is transforming and is anything but sleepy. It has maintained the small town feel with community events where everyone knows everyone, to big city attractions such as Beach Streets and First Fridays," Ferneau said. "Bixby Knolls has seen amazing growth and development over the last few years. It has all the building blocks to be one of the best work-live-play communities in all of California."

Deep Blue Swim School strives to educate the community by teaching life-saving skills to children, Ferneau explained. She added that the business will continue to expand its mission to reach families and prevent drowning accidents.

Sandra Cason, owner of Furniture Consignment & More, celebrated her business's six-year anniversary on November 1. She said she has had an amazing journey in that time, providing a location for Bixby Knolls and surrounding residents to sell their home furnishings.

"Foot traffic has increased with the addition of Long Beach Creamery and The

Merchant. Although most folks walking by do not purchase on their first visit, they do keep us in mind for future purchases and consignments," Cason said. "I had always felt that Long Beach Boulevard was the Bixby Knolls stepchild because Atlantic Avenue had the very successful First Fridays, and the new addition of Beach Streets. But now, with the addition of SteelCraft, we have some movement on Long Beach Boulevard."

The last several months have been some of the slowest Cason has experienced, she explained. However, she said Bixby Knolls is still her favorite community to do business.

Baja Sonora Owner Mary Sophia said she and the other business owners in the

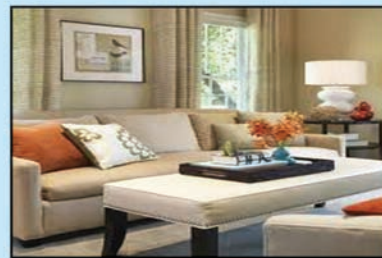
area are lucky to have the support of Cohn and the BKBIA. Sophia's restaurant has been located in Bixby Knolls for almost 11 years and she said she has only ever seen improvements.

"I would love to see some high-end restaurants come in. I know that sounds funny because that's competition, but I would really like to see it," Sophia said. "A mixed retail area is always the best thing for a community. And I would certainly love to see more coming down our way. The same thing happened on Pine Avenue, it took forever to fill up but now look what's happening down there."

Sophia added that, though her restaurant has fallen victim to several break-ins,

(Please Continue To Page 37)

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(Continued From Page 35)

she has noticed a reduction in crime and fast police response times. However, she said she would like to see more lighting and surveillance cameras in the area to further the public safety and continue the decline in crime.

Laura Martin is celebrating the one-year anniversary of Flirt Lash Bar during the First Fridays event on December 1. Since, opening, Martin said business has been incredible.

“We have more than doubled in the number of staff. We are often booked for weeks at a time and have to turn away clients. You can’t ask for anything better than that,” Martin said. “All the neighboring businesses are super friendly and willing to offer any recommendations. We get referrals from businesses down the street who send people over to see us. So, we are so thrilled and fortunate.”

Flirt Lash Bar offers its clients eyelash extensions applied by specially trained artists. She said the painless process takes between one and two hours and that clients return every two weeks or so, similar to getting one’s nails done.

Martin said the neighborhood is appealing because it is quiet and cozy, which feels like home. She added that people in the area are accepting, which helps bring in new residents and businesses that are different, which in turn brings in new clientele to the area.

First Bank Branch Manager Kris Allen said business has steadily picked up over the year and continues trending upward. Allen noted the BKBIA’s efforts to keep streets and alleyways clean and businesses



Servando Orozco, owner of Orozco’s Auto Service and president of the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association, said he and the majority of the association’s board are also residents of Bixby Knolls. He explained the association has been working hard to improve the area and has made great strides under the leadership of Executive Director Blair Cohn over the last 10 years. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson)

safe with additional outdoor lighting and information related to crime patterns.

“The community has strong families and business owners who care about each other, look out for each other and want to see this area continue on with its prestigious history and heritage,” Allen said. “Bixby Knolls is the blueprint and standard bearer on how transformation and economic development can keep a neigh-

borhood relevant during changing times.”


Norm Cauntay, a financial advisor at Edward Jones Investments, said business as a whole has been great in the area. The surge of new investment and new dining, retail and services are pushing the community to continue to grow year after year.

“I see the neighborhood raising its profile as a destination spot for wonderful food and beverage choices. I see it also

branded as a family-friendly, safe neighborhood and, as a result of the growing businesses, property values will continue to increase,” Cauntay said. “There is an evolution, a renaissance going on here. I love the buzz that is happening. I think Bixby Knolls is unique and a hidden gem in the Greater Long Beach area and arguably Los Angeles County.” ■


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Sweet and Saucy Shop

After pursuing a career as a teacher, Melody Brandon decided to change paths and began baking. Sweet and Saucy Shop started out of her apartment kitchen about 10 years ago, moved to a rented kitchen space in Los Angeles for a couple years, relocated near Long Beach State University and then ultimately took up permanent residence at 3722 Atlantic Ave. in Bixby Knolls. "I always loved watching the cooking shows but I didn't think of cooking as a job. I didn't think about it at all," Brandon said. "I would just throw lots of little parties and events nonstop and I really enjoyed it but still never really thought of it as a job or career. Then, one time, I catered my husband's college event. I was cooking for 12 hours straight and I loved it. That was sort of a lightbulb moment." Today, the bakery has more than 30 employees and specializes in custom parties and events, including being dialed into the wedding scene. Brandon's parents are co-owners of the business, and her mother, Eileen Francabandera, oversees much of the day-to-day business nowadays. "I've chosen to homeschool my kids. I do a lot of the social media, I check in with employees to make sure things are running smoothly, and make sure the customers are happy," Brandon said. "I actually bake way more at home with my kids because I'm with them. I'll teach them the ropes of the business at home." For more information, call 562/595-1100 or visit www.sweetandsaucyshop.com.

Giltcomplex Antiques

Growing up in rural Nebraska, Brent Baden said he has always loved antiques and going with his mother to farm auctions, sales and watching her refinish furniture. On February 2, 2010, Baden opened Giltcomplex Antiques at 4270 Atlantic Ave. "This is my second profession. I was a high school principal at a private school in South Gate," Baden said. "It was a very positive shift for me. I asked myself one day what I would really love to do and there were a few options that were not practical. But this one was, so I started my own business." He explained that most of his merchandise comes from private sellers who contact him, while small amounts come from estate sales and auctions. He said he is quite particular about what he purchases for the store, saying he would rather have one \$500 item to sell than 10 \$50 items. The store carries everything from jewelry to Persian rugs to fine art to furniture. Recently, Baden started overseeing estate sales, where he staffs, prices items and sells them for the owners. "We do free appraisals and we try to be helpful in recommending other people who might be interested in buying something if we don't want it," Baden said. "We're always looking for stuff to buy. Finding treasures is better than selling." For more information, call 562/427-2299 or visit www.giltcomplexantiques.com.



FreeSpirit Yoga

FreeSpirit Yoga has been a Bixby Knolls staple for the last 16 years, when Andrea Testa, a local realtor, opened the space. A second owner operated the space for about five years before Cassandra Vitale took over the business in February. "I was an anthropology major at Cal State Long Beach and I was really excited about and interested in Eastern philosophy and Eastern religions, and somebody suggested that I try yoga," Vitale said. "A friend of mine actually told me to try a class at FreeSpirit Yoga, so the first class I ever took was here 10 years ago. I just love it." Located at 3910 Atlantic Ave., currently about 10 instructors work out of the space. Vitale said she is not a fan of the pretensions that can sometimes surround yoga, and promotes the fact that the practice is for literally anyone and everyone. FreeSpirit is family oriented, according to Vitale, and offers both prenatal and mommy-and-me classes. "Yoga promotes wellness in all aspects of a person's life. I think it's important for communities because it's something that one does for themselves on an individual level but that creates a ripple effect. They are bringing that goodness out into the world. So it really is an inside-out practice and experience." For more information, call 562/989-9959 or visit www.freespiritryoga.com.

Dutch's Brewhouse.

Just over one year ago, Jason "Dutch" Van Fleet opened Dutch's Brewhouse at 4244 Atlantic Ave. Originally from the Dallas area, Van Fleet moved to Southern California in the early 1990s and then to Long Beach around 1997. He was in and out of home-brewing beer for more than 20 years, eventually frequenting Brewbakers in Huntington Beach where he made his own beer until he decided he could open a similar spot closer to home. "We provide a brewing experience. You come in, you pick a recipe and we'll walk you through making that beer," Van Fleet said. The mini-lesson runs between \$255 and \$285 and includes all time, ingredients and culminates in about seventy-two 22-ounce bombers of beer. Van Fleet said the business will eventually offer a craft soda-making experience for kids. The small brewery and bar has eight employees and recently applied to extend its hours and for an outdoor seating area for customers to enjoy its food, such as its popular pizzas, in addition to its beer selection. "Shiner Bock is a consistent tap always because we stay tried and true to Texas. Our own house beers we're always going to try and keep four taps on and then the rest we're going to be constantly rotating guest taps because there are just so many great beers out there and I don't want to drink the same stuff all the time." For more information, call 562/336-1326 or visit www.dutchsbrewhouse.com.



Support Local Small Businesses

Lucy's Boudoir

Lingerie & Bra Boutique

Crystal Rogers took over ownership of Lucy's Boudoir Lingerie & Bra Boutique in January, a specialty store originally opened by Michelle Jouvence in 2012 at 3925 Long Beach Blvd. "A bra itself, I think, takes on this very odd connotation in this country. We view it as a sexualized item. But what a bra really is, is a supportive tool that women need," Rogers said. "Every woman wants to feel good about herself, and when you walk into a place and you see that there is something there for you in the exact size that you are, it sends a very positive message that there is nothing abnormal about you or your size." Aside from stocking bra sizes from AAA to O, the shop specializes in bra fittings to get women into the proper bra size, which Rogers says is critical, despite the fact that many women have worn the wrong size for years without knowing it. The store also addresses needs for women who have undergone mastectomies, have physical deformities and breast asymmetry, by offering an on-call alteration specialist. "When I was in college I could never figure out what I wanted to do in life. I always remember mentioning that, whatever I do, I want to work with women and I want to be in a place where I can encourage them and lift them up," Rogers said. "Ironically, we're in the business of bras where I'm encouraging them and lifting them up literally." For more information, call 562/997-8786 or visit www.lucysboudoir.com.



Long Beach Clothing Co.

In 2004, KROQ personality Jay Tilles opened Long Beach Clothing Co. at The Pike during grand prix weekend. Tilles said the location was good to get eyes on his shop at first but that its success was actually in spite of the then-underutilized downtown location. In 2010, Tilles had to choose between relocating to Belmont Shore or Bixby Knolls. Ultimately, the shop found a new home at 4218 Atlantic Ave. in Bixby Knolls. "We wanted a smaller feel. We wanted to do business with other owner-operator businesses. We didn't want to be next to big-box retailers," Tilles said. "It's a small-town feel that we really enjoy and is key to our business because we're not making clothing for tourists, although some perceive it that way. That was never the business plan. The plan was to create something like Joe Jost's. If locals want something, do it for locals. Tourists were never a factor." The store currently has four employees and, though it started as a West Coast clothing hub, featuring Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker's Famous Stars and Straps, now only carries its in-store brand. "It's not fair to call it a side project or a hobby; it's a passion project and it remains that way today," Tilles said. "It's designed to do what it does, which is cater to locals and have credibility among the community." For more information, call 562/988-5900 or visit www.longbeachclothing.com.



Small Business Dollars & Sense

Three Tips To Help Small Businesses Manage Seasonal Cash Flow



By NATASHA
MATA

For many small businesses, the holiday shopping season is the busiest and most profitable time of year. In fact, according to a recent Wells Fargo/Gallup survey, 56 percent of business owners say the fall months are busier than other times of the year and another 38 percent say November and December are busiest. While some seasonality is to be expected in most businesses, managing cash flow through the ebb and flow of the seasons can be a particular challenge. In fact, the same survey found that four in 10 business owners said that seasonal differences in their business make it more difficult to manage cash flow.

So how can business owners optimize seasonal sales to last all year long? A lot of it comes down to strategically managing cash flow. Here are three ideas to help small businesses make the most of the busy season to prepare for the year ahead.

Update Cash Flow Forecasts

Cash flow forecasts are important for helping you plan ahead to avoid financial pitfalls. While business owners should update their cash flow projections and sales goals on a regular basis, it's especially important for seasonal businesses to make sure everything is current in advance of a busy season. By creating cash flow forecasts, you can

anticipate cash shortages and take advantage of higher-revenue periods. As part of your cash flow forecasts, you also should account for higher expenses that may come with the busy season, including seasonal staffing and added inventory costs. Once you have a solid understanding of your anticipated revenue and expenses, you'll be prepared to strategically manage your cash flow to take full advantage of busier times.

Plan for Cash Shortages in Advance

Cash flow shortages sometimes occur, particularly for seasonal businesses. If your business revenue fluctuates throughout the year, there are several steps you can take during the busy season so you don't come up short when business is slower. If you have any debt, focus on paying that first and then turn your attention to beefing up business savings and your emergency fund. Also consider setting aside cash for your variable business expenses, such as quarterly taxes, while you can. Businesses often can run into unexpected expenses or large bills at some point, so setting cash aside when you have it will only help you in the long-term.

Make Improvements

When your debt is at a comfortable level and perhaps paid off, consider using additional business revenue to invest in your business. Technology or equipment upgrades can be prioritized when you can pay for them in full. If your business has been on a growth trajectory, for example, it might be time to upgrade your computer or software systems to keep up with the increased traffic. Or perhaps there are improvements to your retail space that you've been putting off. Some contractors and vendors will offer discounts for upfront payment in full, so taking advantage of those options when available will save you money. Finally, if it makes sense for your business, consider stocking up on extra inventory if you know you'll end up needing in the near-future.

(Natasha Mata, a 22-year veteran of Wells Fargo, is region bank president of the greater Central Los Angeles Area, which includes Long Beach and some North Orange County cities.)



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