Long Beach Harbor Commission President Tracy Egoscue Focused On Major Port Milestones, Public Service

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Editor

In her fourth year on the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners, environmental lawyer and Long Beach resident Tracy Egoscue has taken up the reins as board president during one of the harbor department’s most pivotal periods. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Port of Long Beach is expected to close out construction of the replacement for the Gerald Desmond Bridge, the third phase of redevelopment of its middle harbor, and its new headquarters at the Long Beach Civic Center. The port is also gearing up to move forward with its Pier B on-dock rail expansion and an update to its master plan.

While some harbor commission presidents—(Please Continue To Page 12)

Elected Officials, Police, Businesses Weigh In On 4 A.M. Bar Bill; Legislature May Vote This Week

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Editor

When the state assembly votes this week on a bill that would allow nine cities in California, including Long Beach, to extend alcohol sales until 4 a.m., Long Beach Assemblymember Patrick O’Donnell plans to vote no. While proponents of the bill argue it would allow the city to further boost its downtown “entertainment district,” O’Donnell believes it would make the city an “alcohol island,” attracting trouble from surrounding cities that aren’t a part of the legislation.

O’Donnell expects Senate Bill (SB) 905 to come to a vote in the assembly sometime before the state legislature’s session ends this Friday, August 31. It has already been approved by the state senate. The legislation would allow the nine cities to extend commercial alcohol service hours until 4 a.m. beginning January 1, 2021. The pilot program’s expiration would be January 2, 2026.

“I am voting no for a variety of reasons – mainly an interest in public safety.”

Patrick O’Donnell
Long Beach Assemblymember

Focus On Signal Hill

City Remains Financially ‘Solid’ As Public And Private Investment Continues

By BRANDON RICHARDSON
Senior Writer

Signal Hill is 2.2 square miles carved out of the heart of Long Beach. The city was incorporated in 1924, several years after oil was discovered. Today, a balanced budget and numerous public and private developments are positioning Signal Hill for continued success, according to City Manager Charlie Honeycutt.

“The city continues to be very stable. Our financial condition is solid, and we’re projecting an increase in revenues,” Honeycutt said. “We continue to have a sound reserve, and we just adopted our two-year budget – fiscal years 2018-2019 and 2019-

(Please Continue To Page 20)

Assistance For Minority-Owned Businesses

Long Beach Agencies Expanding Education And Outreach Efforts To Help Firms Succeed

By ANNE ARTLEY
Staff Writer

Decid Norville opened Our Essence Beauty Supply, a shop geared toward African Americans, almost two years ago to fill a need in her community. According to Norville, Black women like herself account for a large portion of beauty product consumers, but represent only about 3-4% of the ownership.

Norville is one of several business

(Please Continue To Page 18)

ILLENIAL PULSE

A Different Kind Of Entitlement

By Editor Samantha Mehlinger

In high school, a boy with a crush on me grew surly when I rejected his advances – if you could call them advances. He had made the mistake of attempting to woo me with a self-made mixed CD of songs by The Smashing Pumpkins, and, unbeknownst to him, Billy Corgan’s voice made me want to throw my Walkman out the window.

At home that night, I couldn’t even get through the first song before giving up on it. My would-be wooer asked me about

(Please Continue To Page 4)
As the manager of security operations for the Port of Long Beach, Bridgett Lewis is responsible for maintaining a safe environment within the port complex. This includes overseeing the Central California Maritime Coordination Center (MCC), a Department of Homeland Security Interagency Operations Center located at the port. Lewis coordinates with local, state and federal maritime law enforcement agencies to prevent criminal activity. “The port has one of the most technologically advanced command centers, so we can assist our partners. If anything illicit is happening on our waterways, the MCC will get the information first,” she said. Lewis starts her days by checking in with the firefighters and police officers assigned to the port, the port management team and the harbor patrol officers about any incidents that occurred over the previous 24 hours and what they anticipate happening that day. “Most of the things we focus on are driven by the intelligence we receive at the opening meeting of the day,” Lewis said. “Most of the day is very fluid.” Lewis started her career in law enforcement when she was 19 years old, at the suggestion of a friend who worked as a police officer in her native West Virginia. Lewis described her position at the port as a “dream-come-true job,” and the security division like a family. “If there’s something we need to figure out, we have a joke, ‘let’s go about it,’” she said. “We’ll have potlucks, chili cook-offs and barbecues. It’s great work in an environment that encourages that.”

Harbor Commission Expected To Appoint Co-Deputy Executive Directors For Port Of Long Beach

The Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners was expected yesterday (August 27) to name two long-time Port of Long Beach employees, Richard D. Cameron and Dr. Noel Hacegaba, as co-deputy executive directors. Cameron was selected for the position of deputy executive director of planning and development, and Hacegaba was selected as deputy executive director of administration and operations. This is the first time the port has had co-deputy executive directors.

Cameron has held a variety of positions since joining the port staff as an environmental specialist in 1996. He was selected as acting managing director of planning and environmental affairs in 2013, and was promoted to the position permanently in 2014. Cameron has overseen the port’s environmental programs, such as the Green Port Policy, Clean Air Action Plan, water quality programs and others.

Hacegaba joined the port in 2010 as a senior executive overseeing business development strategies for revenue and cargo volume growth. In 2013, Hacegaba stepped into an acting deputy executive director and chief operating officer. The board of harbor commissioners appointed him to the role of managing director of commercial operations and chief commercial officer in 2014. In this position, he managed the port’s commercial activities during a period of major industry shifts, including changes in shipping alliances and the bankruptcy of the port’s largest industry shifts, including changes in shipping activities during a period of major

cial operations and chief commercial officer in 1996. He was selected as acting managing director of planning and environmental affairs in 2013, and was promoted to the position permanently in 2014. Cameron has overseen the port’s environmental programs, such as the Green Port Policy, Clean Air Action Plan, water quality programs and others.

Hacegaba joined the port in 2010 as a senior executive overseeing business development strategies for revenue and cargo volume growth. In 2013, Hacegaba stepped into an acting deputy executive director and chief operating officer. The board of harbor commissioners appointed him to the role of managing director of commercial operations and chief commercial officer in 2014. In this position, he managed the port’s commercial activities during a period of major industry shifts, including changes in shipping alliances and the bankruptcy of the port’s largest

Long Beach Fire Chief Michael DuRee To Retire

Long Beach Fire Chief Michael DuRee is retiring October 5 after leading the fire department for six years, the city announced on August 21. DuRee began his career with the department as a firefighter in 1994. During his career in Long Beach, DuRee helped expand the fire department’s community outreach efforts, including the creation of a team to help those experiencing homelessness and the addition of Spanish-language and teen programs, according to the city’s human resources department. DuRee also improved the connection between the fire prevention bureau and the business community.

DuRee has served as president of the California Fire Chiefs Association and of the Los Angeles Area Fire Chiefs Association, and is a boardmember for the International Fire Chiefs Association.

The Long Beach Business Journal is a publication of South Coast Publishing, Inc., incorporated in the State of California in July 1985. It is published every Tuesday (except between Christmas and mid-January) – 25 copies annually. The Business Journal premiers March 1987 as the Long Beach Airport Business Journal. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited unless otherwise stated. Opinions expressed by perspective writers and guest columnists are their views and not necessarily those of the Long Beach Business Journal. Send press releases to the address shown here.

Office 2599 E 28th Street, Suite 217, Signal Hill, CA 90755
Ph: 562-988-1222
Fx: 562-988-1239
www.lbbj.com

Advertising/Editorial Deadlines

Wednesday prior to publication date. Note: Press releases should be faxed, mailed or e-mailed to: info@lbbj.com. No follow up calls, please. For a copy of the 2018 advertising and editorial calendar, please e-mail or fax request to 562/988-1239. Include your name, company and address and a copy will be sent to you. Distribution: Minimum 22,000.

Regular Office Hours
Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Subscriptions:
25 issues – 1 year
1st Class: $70.00
Inland at S&N Rate: $30.00
Inland at S&N Rate: $30.00

FREE: Sign up at lbbjjournal.com for Monday Morning Coffee & BizBrief (e-mail sent out at 6 a.m. every Monday about issues, events, meetings for the week; BizBrief is news of the day, sent out around 4 p.m., Monday-Friday) Find us on Facebook • Follow us on Twitter: @LBBizJourn
Councilmember Suzie Price

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER, EDITOR

**LBBJ:** Do you feel that business owners in your district are happy with the direction the city is going?

**Price:** In general they are. Our district is unique because we have a position on staff that no one else has: we have a specific business liaison, Lisa West. Lisa works directly with businesses from the time they apply for their permit . . . . In that sense, for our specific district, we are a little more business friendly. [Businesses know] that we will advocate for them [and] that we’ll make sure we’re responding to people in a timely manner. Generally speaking, they love the direction the city is headed. There are some policy decisions that frustrate them as business owners. . . . Some of the concerns and frustrations they have aren’t necessarily with our district per se, but might be the direction of state policy or even consumer trends. But again, in terms of our district, we’re very responsive. If ever any issues are identified, we immediately try to make it right with our business leaders. I’m very proud of the relationships that we’ve built.

When we work with businesses who have businesses throughout the country . . . [they] tell us how business-friendly Long Beach really is. Sometimes with the local folks who might only have one shop, a small business, they don’t have the context from other cities. They might get frustrated. We do our very best to address their needs, even though we know that compared to cities around us we’re doing pretty well.

**LBBJ:** In your four years on the council, how have you worked to build relationships with businesses in your district?

**Price:** In the beginning, we sent out a newsletter to businesses with information they might find helpful. . . . Basic information for our business community to get them up to speed. We also do a small business forum once a year where we have a featured speaker come and talk about a specific aspect of running a small business.

Lisa attends every single business association meeting, including [for] the chamber of commerce. She is the only councilmember representative who consistently attends that chamber meeting. That’s good because it gives us a citywide perspective. She also attends the COBA [Council of Business Associations] meetings, and most of the BID [business improvement district] meetings in the 3rd District. We have our field deputy who has in the past attended the Zaferia [Business Association] meetings. . . . I meet regularly with business leaders. Aroma di Roma is kind of my office away from my office. I know everyone in here. In fact, the guys sitting by the front door there I call my “old white guy focus group.” I have meetings here every Sunday morning and they have a lot to share. They read the paper and they have a lot of opinions. Most of them are business owners as well as residents. I try to have a lot of business meetings here or wherever anybody wants to meet with me. . . . Also, when there is a hot issue that involves businesses like the minimum wage or the Styrofoam ban, I will meet with businesses. We’ll do roundtable meetings in my field office, or I’ll go to their business because a lot of times small business owners can’t really get away.

**LBBJ:** What are businesses in your district telling you are their biggest challenges?

**Price:** My husband and I are actually opening a business on 2nd Street, so we now are part of that business community. We will be part of the Belmont Shore Business Association in a short while. The biggest concerns for small business owners are increases in wages. Minimum wage was a major issue for a lot of small businesses. [Also] changes in environmental policy that might impact the materials they use, like banning Styrofoam or straws. Again, [the challenge] for them is trying to figure out how to not raise their prices in responding to those changes, because when they raise their prices they become less competitive. Also [a priority is] streamlining the process for permitting, whether it’s building permits or additions permits, or even liquor licenses. We’ve really listened to them and have brought forth many changes through the council that allow for a more streamlined process. For example . . . in the budget they are adding another person [to the fire department] to do permit checks. People can get their building permits faster because they have an additional body to go out and do the checks. . . . If we really were to look at every department that touches businesses and think about what improvements they have made over the last four or five years, the theme has been supporting our businesses in every way that we can to incentivize growth and allow them to stay afloat.

We have a small business incentive program that Councilmember [Stacy] Mungo and I initiated in 2014. When our businesses have concerns about not being able to stay as competitive, we will offer them small business incentive packages. We’re now doing a lot with small business loans. . . . When our businesses express concerns, we’re trying to come back with solutions to help them stay competitive.

**LBBJ:** As the elected representative for businesses in your district, what have you done to make Long Beach more business friendly?

**Price:** The theme of our administration has been incentivizing business establishment, business retention and business growth in the city and specifically in the district. Our sales tax revenues in my district from our BIDs remains high. A large part of that has to do with the fact that the economy is doing well . . . .

The other thing we do is we take a very active role whenever we see vacancies. In the 3rd District, when we had the Ralph’s close in the iron triangle . . . we met with the property owners and expressed some concern. They were going to bring an Orchard Supply Hardware in there, and I said, ‘We don’t need a hardware store right here. . . . We need a store that people can run in quickly to get things they need.’ And now we have the mini-Target, which is great. We had similar discussions with the shopping center where Whole Foods is currently located. Whole Foods is moving. We talked to [the property owners] and gave them ideas about what would do well in that shopping center. So we bring a very human consumer touch to our businesses, and that has made a really big difference.

Best Buy is about to close, but that’s the thing. Consumer trends are changing. This is going to present an ongoing challenge for us. People like to go into the actual store to look at the different options, and then they want to go buy it online because it’s free delivery. We had the same issue with a [now closed] sex shop, The Rubber Tree, on 2nd Street . . . . They’d come in, they’d see what she has, and they’d order it online. That’s just the reality.

**LBBJ:** What businesses do you feel your district has a need for, and do you have a plan to attract such businesses?

**Price:** Men’s clothing. 2nd & PCH will hopefully have a men’s clothing retailer. . . . Other than the Banana Republic and Gap on 2nd Street, there are no boutiques dedicated to men’s clothing.

**LBBJ:** Is there anything you would like to add?

**Price:** One of the things our office prides ourselves on is we’re always willing to listen to suggestions. If we have business leaders who have done business in another city and there is something they like about the other city, they bring it to our attention. Usually within a week or two, we have an agenda item that asks the city manager to look at implementing that in Long Beach. . . . And Lisa is really great at that because she goes to every meeting, she hears what every business owner is thinking and saying. So she’ll often come forward with ideas for policy changes based on what she’s heard.
the recession they caused. You know, the knee-jerk response is to tell whoever's engendered some tragic, violent incidents.

Potential Pulse readers? Well, while I personify myself, I don't mean that every single Millennial experienced this, but more of us were of paramount importance. Obviously, I don't mean that every single Millennial experienced this, but more of us did than children raised in prior decades.

But there is another form of entitlement I've noticed among my fellow Millennials, and even, at times, myself. I'm talking about emotional entitlement. When I was growing up — both in Catholic school and later, public school — our teachers were very perceptive of the emotional kid stuff we were all going through. They encouraged us to talk out our feelings and, in the event of a co-kid dispute, to relent to whoever was more upset. They were so attuned to these instances, and took such care to call attention to them, that now as an adult I wonder if by doing so they might have bred some unrealistic expectations about the value and validity of our emotions.

I am not faulting teachers, don't get me wrong. I'd argue that the issue is rooted in the value and validity of our emotions. For instance, and took such care to call attention to the detached style of parenting they experienced as kids (picture the Drapers in “Mad Men,” if you don’t get the gist).

We were the generation subjected to helicopter parenting, and — as has been observed by publications such as Time, Huffington Post, the Los Angeles Times, Forbes, and on and on — we were coddled more than prior generations. Our feelings were of paramount importance. Obviously, I don't mean that every single Millennial experienced this, but more of us did than children raised in prior decades. But here's the thing about feelings. Sometimes they're not valid. Sometimes they don't make sense. Sometimes they are hormone-fueled, or immature, or exaggerated and complicated by mental illness. Most of us who are adults now know this. But when we were going through the growing pains of our teenage years, maybe not so much.

When you tell a whole generation they're entitled to their feelings, and that, essentially, so is everyone else, you're not preparing them for reality. And when you give kids a mythical perception of the validity and power of their own emotions, guess what happens when those emotions are rejected? Entitlement rears its head. This can come in the form of something as innocuous as a kid publicly insulting another kid for not liking him, as Mr. Smashing Pumpkins did to me my junior year. But when you throw in complicating factors — say that person is bullied him/herself, or has an untreated mental illness — more dangerous reactions can occur. And they are occurring, it would seem, increasingly.

If we think about school shooters, the thing they typically have in common (other than being white and male) is that they feel they have been victimized and are misunderstood. And they want revenge. A 2002 study by the U.S. Secret Service found that about 70% of school shooters perceived themselves in some way as victims, either because they have been slighted, persecuted or bullied in some way.

In addition to a host of complicating factors, one of the things these incidents have in common is that they were fueled in varying degrees by emotional entitlement.

The problem continues today with older members of Generation Z. In May, a teenager murdered 10 people at a Texas high school. The mother of 16-year-old victim Shana Fisher told several media outlets that her daughter had rejected the shooter's advances, which persisted over the course of months and became increasingly aggressive after each rejection. Why was he so angry? Why did he feel entitled to her affection, and to respond so violently when spurned?

A young woman in Iowa was recently murdered by a 24-year-old man after she demanded he stop following her while she jogged. Some politicians argue that it wouldn't have happened if he hadn't immigrated illegally. But is where he came from the problem? Or is the root of the issue that he felt entitled to follow her and, likely, entitled to her body? Isn't the issue that this young man was so enraged by her rejection that he responded by murdering her?

Emotional entitlement isn't the only reason for violence among young people. It is one of many complicating factors. But it is an important one, and one, I'd wager, that deserves serious contemplation. How can we better teach future generations to deal with their emotions, and the emotions of others? How can we teach them to recognize when emotions are unhealthy, unwarranted, and entitled? How can we recognize and put an end to unhealthy emotional entitlement patterns before they get out of hand?
Leading physicians choose MemorialCare, shouldn’t you?

When it comes to your healthcare, sometimes it’s hard to know what’s best for you. Should you choose convenient care that’s close to home or quality care with award-winning doctors? When you choose MemorialCare, you get both.

By choosing MemorialCare, you will have access to leading hospitals, specialists and primary care providers from more than 200 locations across the Southland.

We are dedicated to one thing: what’s best for you.

MemorialCare™

1-800-MEMORIAL
memorialcare.org
“The Salvation Army sold its 12-story, 199,156-square-foot office building at 180 E. Ocean Blvd. to an affiliate of Thrifty Oil Co. (Photograph provided by Cushman & Wakefield)
Start Small, Build Big

interested in working with the Port of Long Beach? The Port’s Small Business Enterprise and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise programs are here to help you do it. Join us to build the Green Port of the Future.

www.polb.com/sbe
New Signal Hill Restaurant Coming To Former Delius Site

Big E Pizza owner Jimmy Eleopoulos is opening a second concept in January at the site of the now-defunct Delius Restaurant in Signal Hill, he told the Business Journal. The new eatery at 2951 Cherry Ave., dubbed “Jimmy E’s Sports Bar & Grill,” will be a sports lounge with a family-friendly environment, Eleopoulos said.

“I believe family dining is the new trend. It’ll be a more open feel. I’ll get away from the bar feeling,” Eleopoulos said. “Even though we’ll have a bar, we’re focusing on more seating.”

The menu will include steaks, seafood and gourmet burgers, as well as pastas, sandwiches, salads and calamari. Eleopoulos said he is involved with the new Port Town Brewing Co. in San Pedro and plans to feature the brewery’s craft beers on tap.

Delius Restaurant, which operated at the location for 11 years before closing its doors in June, focused on the dinner crowd with a prix fixe menu. Eleopoulos said the location is not ideal for upscale dining, and that his new joint will be better suited to serve the surrounding community — from workers on their lunch break to families at dinner time.

“The City is very happy that Jimmy Eleopoulos will be opening a new restaurant at the former Delius location. His Big E restaurant is well known for its pizza and Italian food — my favorite is the lasagna,” Signal Hill City Manager Charlie Honeycutt stated in an e-mail to the Business Journal. “Jimmy has a successful track record, has always been a stellar member of the Signal Hill community, and his new...
restaurant continues the trend of Signal Hill being the place to open new and cool places to eat and hang out."

Sports is an important part of Eleopoulos’ concept, and TVs will be mounted throughout the restaurant, including on the outdoor patio, he said. Despite having a bar, Eleopoulos said the restaurant will close at a “decent hour.” He has owned and operated Big E in Signal Hill for 32 years.

Recent Transactions

Following is a list of real estate transactions that were closed in the last month by local agents:

- Outlook Resources Clark Avenue Holdings LLC purchased the Marco Plaza retail property located at 1710-1772 Clark Ave. from Parker Family Trust for more than $6 million. Lee & Associates’ Shaun McCullough, Jeff Coburn and Jeff Bischberger represented the buyer.
- R.O.A.D.S. Community Care Clinic renewed its lease for 11,762 square feet of office space at 6621 E. Pacific Coast Hwy. The lease is valued at $1.835 million. Lee Associates’ Shaun McCullough, Jeff Coburn and Scott Romick represented the tenant, while George Thomson of Newmark Knight Frank represented the landlord.
- Keller Williams Coastal Properties renewed its lease for 11,762 square feet of office space at 6621 E. Pacific Coast Hwy. The lease is valued at $1.835 million. Lee Associates’ Shaun McCullough, Jeff Coburn and Scott Romick represented the tenant.

Information about local transactions is welcomed and may be e-mailed to: brandon_richardson@lbbj.com. Please provide complete information, including names of buyer/seller, lessor/lessee, square footage, cost, names of agents handling transaction, etc.
Grand Prix Seeks New Title Sponsor After Toyota's Exit

By LOUIS CASIANO JR. CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Toyo ta ended its title sponsorship with the Grand Prix of Long Beach, race officials announced last week, closing out a 44-year relationship that produced the city’s biggest event.

The exit of Toyota Motor North America now leaves race officials with the task of finding a new title sponsor after the Japanese automaker’s North America division opted to not renew its contract, Jim Michaelian, president and CEO of the Grand Prix Association of Long Beach, told the Business Journal.

“It was an extraordinary relationship,” Michaelian said. “It’s unheard of to maintain that kind of partnership for that many years. In sports especially.”

Laura Pierce, general manager of motorsports for Toyota Motor North America, said the decision to pull its sponsorship after four decades was a difficult one.

“Toyota has had an incredibly successful 44-year run as the entitlement sponsor of the Grand Prix of Long Beach,” Pierce said in an e-mail. “We value the relationship we’ve built over those years. Toyota evaluates our sponsorships on a regular basis, and although it was a difficult decision, it was a strategic decision based on those evaluations not to re-new our entitlement sponsorship.”

Mayor Robert Garcia said he wasn’t surprised, given that Toyota had already moved its North American headquarters from Torrance to Texas. He added that he doesn’t believe the Grand Prix will be negatively impacted.

“A lot of us suspected that possibly Toyota would move on,” Garcia said. “Title sponsors come and go. We know that the Grand Prix is looking for a new major sponsor . . . and we’re looking forward to a good race next year.”

Pierce said the relocation of company headquarters did not play a role in its decision, noting that Toyota still sponsors the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series at the Sonoma Raceway and the company’s partnership with the Auto Club Speedway in Fontana. In addition, the carmaker also sponsors the Olympics.

“Toyo ta operates globally and, when it comes to the United States, Southern California is and will continue to be an extremely important market,” she said. “We have many customers and dealerships in California and will continue to sponsor events and actively engage with our customers there.”

Michaelian said the association has met with mostly non-vehicle manufacturers – and some automakers – about filling the major sponsorship role. “That whole market, we have not had a chance to explore,” Michaelian said of his talks with companies outside of the vehicle industry.

“It’s a lot easier for us to be doing this with the backdrop of the success that we’ve had,” Michaelian said. “Ever since coming out of the recession, the event continues to grow.” The 2018 Grand Prix drew 185,000 people, he noted.

Excluding Toyota, the annual three-day race has 34 sponsors, he said. Michaelian and Toyota each declined to say how much the automaker paid for its sponsorship.

It is not known how much the association paid to put on the 2018 race. However, the city charges the Grand Prix Association a $91,757 permit fee and $47,524 for reimbursements for administrative costs, and services such as police, fire, traffic, refuse, sweeping, sewer and inspections, according to a December staff report presented when the city council approved an agreement with the association through 2023.

In the name of transparency, Michaelian said the association sent notices to other sponsors about Toyota’s move and will send out ticket renewal letters to customers.

The Grand Prix’s attraction to potential sponsors stems from its popularity and geography, Michaelian said.

“The Southern California market is hard to reach with a singular event and we’re one of the events that afford that opportunity,” he said, adding that the race has become a generational affair.

The 2019 Grand Prix will be held April 12-14.
New City Tax To Fund Homeless Services May Appear On 2020 Ballot

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
EDITOR

In 2020, Long Beach residents may find themselves voting on a new bond or tax to fund homeless services and affordable housing.

On August 21, the Long Beach City Council forwarded a recommendation to its budget oversight committee to allocate $50,000 in Fiscal Year 2019 to go toward examining potential revenue sources for homeless initiatives and affordable housing opportunities.

Prior to the vote, the council received a presentation from Assistant City Manager Tom Modica outlining several potential revenue sources that would eventually need to be placed on a ballot. Assuming that analysis moves forward in a timely fashion, the soonest the council could place a proposal on a ballot would be March or November 2020.

Suggested sources of funding included a general obligation bond, a new parcel tax, or increasing existing taxes such as the utility user tax or transient occupancy tax. Modica provided projected revenues for each suggestion. For example, a new residential parcel fee of $50 would generate $13.8 million, and a $150 fee would generate $41.4 million. Alternatively, a 1% increase to the existing 5% utility user tax would generate $7.7 million annually, according to Modica’s presentation.

City Crafting Smoking Ban On Long Beach Restaurant Patios

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
EDITOR

At the direction of the Long Beach City Council, the city attorney is drafting an ordinance that would ban smoking on public and private eateries’ outdoor patios. The proposal put forward by 3rd District Councilmember Suzie Price and co-sponsored by Councilmembers Lena Gonzalez and Rex Richardson would exempt businesses in which smoking is the primary purpose, such as cigar or hookah lounges.

The council voted 8-0, with Councilmember Al Austin absent, during its August 21 meeting to direct the city attorney draft the ordinance. During the meeting, Richardson requested that the attorney look at an option to allow smoking during “adult” hours when children would not be present and affected by secondhand smoke, for example, after 11 p.m. Price requested exemptions for special events if a special permit is obtained, and for establishments that have designated smoking patios where no food is served.

“The gist of the item is to provide healthier spaces at food or eating establishments,” Price said. “We did do extensive outreach to the business community and have received extensive support from the business community in favor of this.”

The Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce has not yet taken a stance on the proposed policy, according to Jeremy Harris, the organization’s senior vice president. “As the issue moves forward and they try to craft this ordinance, we’re happy to have a seat at the table, if so invited, to help understand the issue a little bit better and then reach out to our members to see how they feel,” he told the Business Journal.

Eric Johnson, who is the co-owner of several restaurants and bars in Long Beach with outdoor patios, said no one had reached out to him on the proposal, but that he was supportive.

“More and more of our customers are not smokers and, if they are, they are definitely responsible in stepping outside and moving away from the entrances, anyway,” he said. “I don’t think that’s really going to affect our business model at all.”

In Long Beach, Johnson co-owns Legends Sports Bar, K.C. Branaghan’s Irish Pub & Restaurant, Auld Dubliner, Boathouse on the Bay and the yet-to-open The Ordinarie.

Long Beach restaurants are already required by city ordinance to restrict smoking to one-third of outdoor seating space. City Attorney Charles Parkin hopes to return with the ordinance to the city council within one to two months. He plans to meet this week with the health department, which he said has already conducted thorough research on the subject, to discuss next steps.

Because councilmembers asked for provisions outside of their original agendized proposal – such as Richardson’s “adult hours” exemption – Parkin noted that he may have to send a memo to the mayor and council for further direction as the drafting process moves forward.

Business Owners Should Consider the Benefits of Purchasing Versus Leasing Commercial Real Estate

FRANK TAIPA
Vice President
Business Banking
(424) 282-2660
Frank.Tapia@fbon.com

Often, savvy business owners need to evaluate if the existing property they’re located in is right for their long-term business needs. This can certainly be the case if the business has recently experienced growth or needs additional locations in order to do so. Since all situations vary, each business owner must determine if renting or owning a commercial property makes sense for them.

Although many may realize it’s preferred to purchase a home rather than rent, many may not realize that paying a commercial mortgage can also be more reasonable than renting. In fact, in a recent analysis, it was estimated that it could cost 86.8% more to lease vs. purchase a commercial real estate property over a 15-year occupancy period.

In fact, one of our valued clients, a retail store with the same location for the past seven years, consistently grew each year. Of course, with each passing year, they were outgrowing the space they needed. As this growth was occurring, the landlord was concurrently raising the rent each year. They were forced to take on an additional location, due to limited space. But, it wasn’t until the end of 2017, they had a reality check. Their landlord suddenly decided to put a shopping center where the store was located.

During this time, the business owner was already a First Bank client. As with all of our clients, we regularly reached out to see if we could be of assistance in any way. The store owner indicated their situation, and we suggested they consider owning their property versus paying over $140k a year or more in rent. Surprisingly, owning a building never crossed their mind as they weren’t familiar with the process and questioned if they would even qualify to purchase a commercial property. Fortunately, they found the ideal property to purchase, and First Bank was quickly able to assist in their financing needs.

While renting, they paid over $140k annually: however, their mortgage is now approximately $69,000 a year. The new, purchased space is more than enough to grow with them. Not only will this client enjoy the upside of building equity and the potential tax advantages, but also increasing their assets under the business.

If your business is poised for growth, and you’re ready to purchase the right property to help make that happen, consult your trusted advisory team. With First Bank, we’ll work to assess your specific long-term needs, your financing options, and help determine if purchasing instead of leasing makes sense for your business. After all, a good business starts with a great foundation. Let’s start building.

Frank Tapia, Vice President/Business Banking at First Bank, possesses over 13 years of experience in community and commercial banking. Contact Frank for your lending needs in the Southbay and Greater Los Angeles area.

Always consult a tax advisor. *Source: Fitch inability
Three years later, she became executive director of the Los Angeles Waterkeeper, known as the Los Angeles Waterkeeper, now part of the regional organization, the Waterkeeper Alliance. The Waterkeepers are public interest environmental groups. They focus on air and water quality, in environmental cases.

We have a lot on our plate. We have the civic center, we have the bridge and middle harbor that we’re finishing, and we’re getting ready to sort of roll out what we’re doing on Pier B. That’s enough,” she said.

Egoscue brings a breadth of experience in environmental litigation to the commission, which is often tasked with creating or updating policies meant to progress the port’s efforts toward greener operations. She studied law at George Washington University and took her first job shortly after graduating with the Connecticut nonprofit Save the Sound, in the Connecticut Sound area, which is adjacent to the port but is still impacted by its operations, she noted.

There was a perception for a while that the harbor commissioners were traveling all over the place,” Egoscue said. “[Customers] really appreciate seeing not just staff, but also the commissioners. It shows the importance of our efforts and that we take our business seriously.”

Tracy Egoscue, President, Long Beach Board Of Harbor Commissioners

“Aquatic Academy Fall 2018 How will we feed an additional 2-2.5 billion people by 2100?”

A new evening course at the Aquarium this fall will examine how we can feed an additional 2-2.5 billion people by 2100 and reduce our human impact on the environment. The course will also examine how climate change is impacting global agriculture and productivity. In this new normal, the Anthropocene, scientists and farmers will need to identify new crops that can withstand higher temperatures, drought, and, in coastal areas flooding as a result of sea level rise. Speakers will discuss how agriculture and food systems around the world need to change over time, what agricultural innovations are being developed, the role of genetically modified organisms and gene editing technologies like CRISPR, and how farming the sea will become an increasingly important source of animal protein. With limited class size, attenders will have the opportunity to interact with speakers and learn the latest science directly from scientists and researchers studying these topics.

When: October 19 & 27 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Where: Aquarium of the Pacific, 100 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, CA 90802
Parking: A valet parking is available for $20 per vehicle.
RSVP: To reserve your seat, call 562-930-3100 or visit aquariumofpacific.org/aquaticacademy

Aquatic Academy Fall 2018 How will we feed an additional 2-2.5 billion people by 2100?
through her work as a lawyer, she is accus-
tomed to working in such an environment.

“The mayor making the appointments that he has made has sent a message that one of the most important seaports in the world can change the dynamic, the cul-
ture and the impression of what this busi-
ness is,” Egoscue said, referring to
Garcia’s appointments of women to the
harbor commission. “I would say that
there are countless girls and women who
are right now thinking about their futures
and looking at the example of trade dif-
ferently because they’re seeing that exam-
ple that we’re providing.”

Egoscue noted that the culmination of
the new bridge and redevelopment of the
port’s middle harbor will be the result of
decisions made years ago by former har-
bor commissioners. “What I always like
to remind my colleagues, the public and
our staff is that we are enjoying the fruits
of the labor from 10 or 20 years ago, and
sometimes longer,” she said. “However,
we are now making decisions about the
next 20 years. . . . And that’s an immense
responsibility and a continuation of the
legacy of this port.”

A current challenge for the port is the
shifting of shipping alliances – partnerships
between shipping companies that share as-
sets to distribute goods – which has caused
changes in which ports and terminals cer-
tain shipping lines visit. “Instead of saying
it’s a challenge, I would say it’s an oppor-
tunity for the commission and the staff to
really consider what we think the future of
the port will look like,” Egoscue said of the
situation. “Will there always be six termi-
nals? Will they look like they do now? . . .
Would there be a benefit to having more
on-dock [rail] facilities in existing termi-
nals now if we had the opportunity? Those
are the kinds of opportunities that the [ship-
ing] alliances, and the shifting in how that
business is run, are providing for us.”

Egoscue continued, “We have some
competition. We have other ports on the
West Coast that have been hungry for
more business. So we also need to keep
an eye on what are the decisions that will
allow us to leverage what we have now. . .
What’s our 20-year plan, and what are
the decisions that we’re making now so
we can remain agile to keep the business
and grow the business?”

The most rewarding aspect of her role
on the commission is representing com-
munity members of Long Beach, Egoscue
said. “The idea is that you live in this
community, so hopefully you are making
decisions that are benefiting the commu-
nity you live in. And there is definitely a
responsibility to do that,” she said.

“I’m committed to the port, I’m commit-
ted to the city,” Egoscue reflected. “I live
here, I own a business here, I am raising
children here, and I own a home. I really
believe in the integrity of public service,
and I believe in that aspect of it [in regards
to] what am I bringing to the port, not what
the port is giving to me.”
4 A.M. Bar Bill Vote

(Continued From Page 1)

“I am voting no for a variety of reasons — mainly an interest in public safety. SB 905 to me is like chasing fool’s gold. I just don’t see much good coming out of it,” O’Donnell told the Business Journal.

“Remember, this is an Irish guy talking to you, too,” he quipped. “This is a threat to public safety and to the quality of life.”

No cities in the direct vicinity of Long Beach are included in the bill. As a result, O’Donnell believes people forced to stop their reveling in nearby cities at 2 a.m. would then come to Long Beach.

“What we would see after the 2 a.m. hour is a flood of people coming into our community desiring to drink till 4 a.m. That poses a lot of problems from the public safety perspective, [and] also a neighborhood perspective,” O’Donnell said. “Remember, we can control the bar hours, but we can’t control how a patron gets home after sitting in a bar till four in the morning. I drove a tow truck for many years in my college days. And in the post-2 a.m. hours, most of the calls were alcohol related in one way or another.”

O’Donnell said most feedback he has received from constituents related to SB 905 has been to cast a “no” vote. “I have personal relationships with many restaurant and bar owners, and none of them have called and said this is a good idea,” he said.

Other Long Beach elected officials support the bill.

Mayor Robert Garcia supports the concept of allowing alcohol sales until 4 a.m., but with certain restrictions.

“I don’t support 4 a.m. hours citywide,” Garcia said in a statement e-mailed to the Business Journal. “I don’t think that would work for us because we have many neighborhoods that are adjacent to bars across the city. However, I think giving the city local control to permit special events in the downtown entertainment district, for example on New Year’s Eve, could work as long as we worked with local law enforcement.”

“We are supportive of business opportuni- ties in the city and the mayor’s vision,” he said. “We do know that opening bars later into the night will bring more problems that will require more police officer staffing. We look forward to bal- ancing the needs between the business community and public safety to make sure everybody has a safe experience in Long Beach.”

The police department currently sees a spike in incidents when bars close at 2 a.m., according to Foster. “That’s why there is extra staffing in those places when that happens, to make sure we can keep the peace and have good public safety. So if we are extending it deeper into the night, we just want to make sure we have the resources and staffing available to handle anything that may happen.”

Foster noted, “We just caution that consumption of a lot of alcohol in the wee hours of the night is a public safety concern.”

Jeff Harris, senior vice president of the Long Beach Area Chamber of Com- merce, said the chamber was an early sup- porter of SB 905. “Let’s just put aside the actual content of the bill applying to 4 a.m. bars. We took it as a policy decision — in any time local control can be gained from Sacramento, i.e. the state, we think it’s typically a good piece of legis- lation,” Harris said. “As we understand it, even if this bill passes, it still needs to come back at the local level and have a discussion there to see where this would make sense, if at all, in the City of Long Beach. . . . Our support position is really rooted in the local control component of the bill.”

Ron Hodges, owner of Shannon’s On Pine and Shannon’s At The Top in downtown, and Shannon’s in Belmont Shore, supports 4 a.m. alcohol sales in downtown. “I think it would be good for this area, frankly,” he said. “We have a lot of people who come here because of the convention center and the hotels, and I think they would like that. Overall, it’s a good plan for the downtown entertain- ment district.”

Eric Johnson, co-owner of several restaurants and bars in the Greater Long Beach area — including downtown’s Auld Dubliner, Legends Sports Bar in Belmont Shore, Boathouse on the Bay at Alamitos Bay Landing and others — said that, if SB 905 passes, he would support 4 a.m. alco- hol service in downtown. In addition to operating the Auld Dubliner in downtown across from the convention center on Pine Avenue, Johnson and his business part- ners are preparing to open a new bar, restaurant and venue called The Ordinaire on The Promenade.

“I support it, but I think it has to be in the appropriate districts and corridors,” Johnson said. “For example, I think downtown is definitely worth looking into. I think that’s a great candidate. It’s an entertainment zone, number one. With hotels and ‘thriving and robust con- vention center,’ downtown is a hub for visitors, he added.

Although Johnson is a part of the busi- ness community in Belmont Shore as co- owner of long-time sports bar Legends, he doesn’t feel that area is the right fit for 4 a.m. service. “Second Street I don’t think is a good corridor for it,” he said, noting that the street is surrounded by res- idential on both sides.

If SB 905 passes the assembly without amendments this week, it will go to Gov. Jerry Brown’s desk for a signature or veto. Individual cities named in the bill may then move forward with crafting their own pilot programs.

The other cities are: Los Angeles, Sacramento, Oakland, San Francisco, West Hollywood, Palm Springs, Cathedral City and Coachella.

HEALTHWISE

Mako™ Partial Knee Provides A Solution For Chronic Joint Pain

By Peter R. Kurzweil, M.D.

With more than one million joint total knee replacement surgeries performed each year in the United States, the procedure has be- come one of the most common surgeries. A study by Mayo Clinic revealed that 7.2 million Americans are living success- fully with joint replacements.

Joint replacement surgery has allowed people to regain their quality of life by allowing for better mobility. Consider the word “replacement.” The knee is not actually “replaced” in surgery. It is actually a resurfacing operation, much like a dentist crowning a tooth. Very little tissue — and only the damaged, arthritic surfaces are removed and replaced (resurfaced) during the procedure. Many physicians prefer to call the procedure a total knee arthroplasty, which means “resurfacing.”

Each patient is unique and they can experience joint pain for different reasons, al- though the cause is often osteoarthritis. If you suffer from hip or knee pain and have not experienced adequate relief with conservative treatment options from pills or in- jections or alternative options, you may be a candidate for joint replacement surgery.

A thorough evaluation by an orthopedic surgeon can help explain the reasons for your joint pain. Once that is determined you can discuss the best treatment options for you with your surgeon.

One of the latest advancements in joint replacement technology is Mako™ Ro- botic-Arm Assisted Surgery and its applications, bringing a new level of precision to treating patients with knee and hip pain. Mako Technology provides a 3-D model of your unique anatomy to assist your surgeon in pre-planning and precise placement of knee and hip implants. Mako allows balancing of the soft tissue to provide the best range of motion and stability of the joint. This information is determined prior to the actual resurfacing.

For many patients, only half of the knee is arthritic and the rest is normal or near normal. The Mako Partial Knee procedure allows the surgeon to resurface only part of the knee damaged by osteoarthritis, sparing the healthy bone and ligaments surrounding it. Patients that may be considered candidates for Mako Partial Knee may experience these symptoms:

• Knee pain with activity, which can be typically pinpointed to just one side of the knee
• Startup knee pain or stiffness when activities are initiated from sitting position
• Failure to respond to non-surgical treatments such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication and injections

Mako Partial Knee is typically performed through an incision that is significantly shorter than the one used for a total knee. The preservation of the normal bone and car- tilage and the ligaments, along with precision positioning of an implant may also result in a more natural feeling knee. Later in life, since healthy bone is preserved, patients may then move forward with crafting their own pilot programs.

Other potential benefits of Mako include:

• Less implant wear and loosening
• Options of joint resurfacing
• Bone sparing
• Smaller incision
• Less scarring
• Reducing blood loss
• Minimal hospitalization

Advancements in joint replacement surgeries, such as the Mako Technology, are al- lowing more people to become candidates for joint replacement surgery. Speak with a physician to determine if Mako Partial Knee (resurfacing) surgical procedures are right for you.

(Peter R. Kurzweil, M.D., is with the MemorialCare Joint Replacement Center at Long Beach Medical Center.)

We Have a Lot of Competition, but our Ribs Don’t!

• Aslo Featuring: Steaks, Tri-Tips, Chicken, Prime Rib, fresh Fish, Sandwiches and Salads
• Family Owned & Operated
• joking, rustic atmosphere
• Cocktails Lounge w/ 3 TVs
• Live Music Sunday Nights
• Indoor Comfortable Booths
• Reservations accepted
• Open at 4pm Monday–Friday
• Closed Noon Saturday–Sunday
• Make reservations Other Times
• Buckets, Party Packs, and Trios!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!

Naples Rib Company
5900 East 2nd Street Long Beach
(562) 439-RIBS

We’re Your Summer BBQ Headquarters for Take-Out:
Party Packs, Bucket & More!
Limit On Use Of Settlement/Arbitration Agreements Passes

(Developer’s note: The following was written by Jennifer Barrera, senior vice president, policy, for the California Chamber of Commerce.)

A California Chamber of Commerce-opposed job killer bill to limit the use of settlement agreements and arbitration agreements for labor and employment claims passed the Senate this week on a vote of 26-12 and is on its way to the Governor.

The CalChamber has tagged AB 3080 (Gonzalez Fletcher; D-San Diego) as a job killer because it will create more litigation, significant delays in the resolution of disputes, and higher costs for employers and employees.

Besides interfering with and essentially eliminating settlement agreements for labor and employment claims, AB 3080 exposes employers to criminal liability regarding arbitration agreements and essentially prohibits arbitration of labor and employment claims as a condition of employment.

AB 3080 is likely preempted under the Federal Arbitration Act (FAA) and will only delay the resolution of claims. Banning such agreements benefits the trial attorneys, not the employer or employee.

Delays

AB 3080 interferes with and will essentially eliminate settlement agreements as it prohibits an employer from requiring an applicant or employee to waive any right, forum, or procedure, or the right to pursue any claim in court under the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) or the Labor Code as a condition of any “contractual agreement.”

Precluding the informal resolution of civil claims would simply overwhelm California’s judiciary system by forcing all claims to be tried by a jury or judge, creating significant delays that would harm individuals who have suffered a wrong.

Criminal Liability

Given where AB 3080 provisions have been placed in the Labor Code, any violation will be a misdemeanor. Accordingly, an employer will face not only civil liability for any violation of the various provisions of AB 3080, but can face criminal charges as well.

Pre-empted By Federal Law

AB 3080 prohibits arbitration agreements made as a condition of employment for any claims arising under the Labor Code or FEHA and/or including class action waivers. Arbitration is a less formal, less costly, and less time-consuming forum to resolve a dispute. The cost savings is not in the compensation paid to the employees; it is in the fees paid to attorneys.
Save 50% of a new worker’s wages while they learn on the job. Here’s an example:

You pay a new employee $15.00/hr x while they come up to speed, say: 300hrs / City of Long Beach reimburses you 50% = $2,250 back to your business!

We have a database of hundreds of local residents looking for work – or maybe you have a lead of your own. Call us.

Pacific Gateway
pacific-gateway.org/business
A free business service from the City of Long Beach.

CONTACT:
Cort Huckabee • (562) 570-4576 • cort.huckabone@pacific-gateway.org
Arbitration Limits
(Continued From Page 15)

Although studies demonstrate that employees generally win the same percentage of cases in arbitration, if not more, the trial attorneys may not recover as much money. The ultimate beneficiaries of an arbitration and class action waiver ban are trial attorneys, not the employers and not the employees.

AB 3080 is also likely preempted, and therefore will create significant litigation without actually providing any benefit to employees. AB 3080 is very similar to AB 2617 (Weber; D-San Diego), passed and signed into law in 2014, which prohibited as “a condition of entering into a contract for the provisions of goods or services” the waiver of a forum for the resolution of claims, i.e. an arbitration clause. On March 14, 2018, the Second District Court of Appeal held in Saheli v. White Memorial Medical Center that AB 2617 was preempted under the FAA. The court stated:

“The above legislative history clearly shows the motivating force behind the enactment of AB 2617 was a belief that arbitration is inherently inferior to the courts for the adjudication of Ralph Act and Bane Act claims. In accordance with this dim view of arbitration, the Legislature placed special restrictions on waivers of judicial forums and procedures in connection with such claims. In practice, such restrictions discourage arbitration by invalidating otherwise valid arbitration agreements. It is precisely this sort of hostility to arbitration that the FAA prohibits.”

Similar to AB 3080, the “special restrictions” at issue in AB 2617 was that arbitration clauses could not be created as a condition of the contract. The court in Saheli deemed such restrictions as preempted under FAA.

The decision in Saheli is consistent with a long history of cases on the issue of FAA preemption. To the extent that AB 3080 will undoubtedly be challenged as preempted under the FAA if passed and potentially invalidated, it will serve only to create additional litigation and not necessarily benefit employees as intended.

Business Journal’s BizBriefs
(Editor’s note: The following articles first appeared in the Long Beach Business Journal’s daily BizBriefs – a FREE e-mail blast sent to subscribers. BizBriefs is sent out around 4 p.m. every other Monday and every Tuesday through Friday, providing a quick glimpse of local news of the day. To sign up, visit: lb.journal@verizon.net and type your e-mail in the box provided on the right-hand side.)

Google Grant To CSULB To Encourage Women To Pursue Computer Science

California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is partnering with Google and three University of California (UC) campuses to offer a workshop aimed at encouraging women to pursue careers in computer science. Faculty from CSULB, UCLA, UC Irvine and UC San Diego were awarded a $35,000 grant from Google to implement a research-focused program to help young women interested in computer science learn about the field and its career opportunities. The program is meant to address a gender imbalance in the computer science sector, according to a CSULB press release.

Dwell Time Of Containers At Local Ports Reached High Point In July

The average dwell time of containers at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles reached 3.14 days in July, the longest average dwell time in more than a year, according to the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA). In June, the average dwell time was 2.7 days. Dwell time measures how long a container sits on a terminal after being unloaded from a vessel before it is picked up by a truck. Longer dwell times create inefficiencies at terminals, such as when several containers must be moved before a truck is able to pick up its cargo and leave the terminal, a statement released today by PMSA explained.

The average dwell time was at its highest point this year in July, a similar spike occurred in July 2017, PMSA noted.

Long Beach Medical Center Ranked No. 1 In Southern L.A. County By U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report has recognized MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center as one of the best hospitals in the nation and No. 1 among all hospitals in Southern Los Angeles County. The hospital was also identified as one of the top five hospitals in Los Angeles County, one of the top eight hospitals in Los Angeles and Orange counties, and among the top 14 hospitals in California. The magazine’s “Best Hospitals” ratings are issued annually to help patients “make informed decisions about where to receive care,” according to a statement from MemorialCare Health System, which operates the hospital. The hospital also received recognition for its orthopedics program and “high performance” designations in 11 areas of care, including coronary artery bypass surgery, congestive heart failure, colon cancer surgery, geriatrics, nephrology and other medical specialties.

City’s Unemployment Rate Up From May’s Low

Long Beach’s unemployment rate increased to 5.2% in July, according to the California Employment Development Department. The city’s unemployment rate hit a low of 4.1% in May, and increased to 4.9% in June. Countywide unemployment remained stable at 4.5% in July. A press release from the EDD indicated that between June and July, employment in local public education decreased by 37,500 jobs due to the summer break. This decrease accounted for nearly 90% of joblessness during this time period. Although no analysis specific to Long Beach was provided, a decrease in public education employment would have an impact on the city as its largest employer is the Long Beach Unified School District, with Long Beach City College and California State University, Long Beach serving as other large employers.

Business Journal's BizBriefs

Google Grant To CSULB To Encourage Women To Pursue Computer Science

California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is partnering with Google and three University of California (UC) campuses to offer a workshop aimed at encouraging women to pursue careers in computer science. Faculty from CSULB, UCLA, UC Irvine and UC San Diego were awarded a $35,000 grant from Google to implement a research-focused program to help young women interested in computer science learn about the field and its career opportunities. The program is meant to address a gender imbalance in the computer science sector, according to a CSULB press release.

Dwell Time Of Containers At Local Ports Reached High Point In July

The average dwell time of containers at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles reached 3.14 days in July, the longest average dwell time in more than a year, according to the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA). In June, the average dwell time was 2.7 days. Dwell time measures how long a container sits on a terminal after being unloaded from a vessel before it is picked up by a truck. Longer dwell times create inefficiencies at terminals, such as when several containers must be moved before a truck is able to pick up its cargo and leave the terminal, a statement released today by PMSA explained.

The average dwell time was at its highest point this year in July, a similar spike occurred in July 2017, PMSA noted.

Long Beach Medical Center Ranked No. 1 In Southern L.A. County By U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report has recognized MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center as one of the best hospitals in the nation and No. 1 among all hospitals in Southern Los Angeles County. The hospital was also identified as one of the top five hospitals in Los Angeles County, one of the top eight hospitals in Los Angeles and Orange counties, and among the top 14 hospitals in California. The magazine’s “Best Hospitals” ratings are issued annually to help patients “make informed decisions about where to receive care,” according to a statement from MemorialCare Health System, which operates the hospital. The hospital also received recognition for its orthopedics program and “high performance” designations in 11 areas of care, including coronary artery bypass surgery, congestive heart failure, colon cancer surgery, geriatrics, nephrology and other medical specialties.

City’s Unemployment Rate Up From May’s Low

Long Beach’s unemployment rate increased to 5.2% in July, according to the California Employment Development Department. The city’s unemployment rate hit a low of 4.1% in May, and increased to 4.9% in June. Countywide unemployment remained stable at 4.5% in July. A press release from the EDD indicated that between June and July, employment in local public education decreased by 37,500 jobs due to the summer break. This decrease accounted for nearly 90% of joblessness during this time period. Although no analysis specific to Long Beach was provided, a decrease in public education employment would have an impact on the city as its largest employer is the Long Beach Unified School District, with Long Beach City College and California State University, Long Beach serving as other large employers.

BizBriefs – a FREE e-mail blast sent to subscribers. BizBriefs is sent out around 4 p.m. daily.

BizBriefs

To Encourage Women To Pursue Computer Science

California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is partnering with Google and three University of California (UC) campuses to offer a workshop aimed at encouraging women to pursue careers in computer science. Faculty from CSULB, UCLA, UC Irvine and UC San Diego were awarded a $35,000 grant from Google to implement a research-focused program to help young women interested in computer science learn about the field and its career opportunities. The program is meant to address a gender imbalance in the computer science sector, according to a CSULB press release.

Dwell Time Of Containers At Local Ports Reached High Point In July

The average dwell time of containers at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles reached 3.14 days in July, the longest average dwell time in more than a year, according to the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association (PMSA). In June, the average dwell time was 2.7 days. Dwell time measures how long a container sits on a terminal after being unloaded from a vessel before it is picked up by a truck. Longer dwell times create inefficiencies at terminals, such as when several containers must be moved before a truck is able to pick up its cargo and leave the terminal, a statement released today by PMSA explained.

The average dwell time was at its highest point this year in July, a similar spike occurred in July 2017, PMSA noted.

Long Beach Medical Center Ranked No. 1 In Southern L.A. County By U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report has recognized MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center as one of the best hospitals in the nation and No. 1 among all hospitals in Southern Los Angeles County. The hospital was also identified as one of the top five hospitals in Los Angeles County, one of the top eight hospitals in Los Angeles and Orange counties, and among the top 14 hospitals in California. The magazine’s “Best Hospitals” ratings are issued annually to help patients “make informed decisions about where to receive care,” according to a statement from MemorialCare Health System, which operates the hospital. The hospital also received recognition for its orthopedics program and “high performance” designations in 11 areas of care, including coronary artery bypass surgery, congestive heart failure, colon cancer surgery, geriatrics, nephrology and other medical specialties.

City’s Unemployment Rate Up From May’s Low

Long Beach’s unemployment rate increased to 5.2% in July, according to the California Employment Development Department. The city’s unemployment rate hit a low of 4.1% in May, and increased to 4.9% in June. Countywide unemployment remained stable at 4.5% in July. A press release from the EDD indicated that between June and July, employment in local public education decreased by 37,500 jobs due to the summer break. This decrease accounted for nearly 90% of joblessness during this time period. Although no analysis specific to Long Beach was provided, a decrease in public education employment would have an impact on the city as its largest employer is the Long Beach Unified School District, with Long Beach City College and California State University, Long Beach serving as other large employers.

Printing with Permission
The population is,” Hunter said. “Even though the fundraising approval process. In June, the Uptown Business Improvement District (BID), helped guide Norville through the process of developing a business and marketing plan. By providing opportunities for funding and education, these local entities are striving to ensure that entrepreneurship is accessible for all.

In May, the city partnered with the Los Angeles Local Initiatives Support Corporation to offer the Kiva loan program. Through a microfinance lending platform, this initiative provides access to capital for small business owners who do not qualify for traditional, commercial loans. The program allows aspiring entrepreneurs to raise funds online, while the national nonprofit, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, matches the contributions up to $5,000. A few weeks ago, Norville, whose business is located in North Long Beach, was approved to start fundraising through Kiva. She plans to use the funds to purchase a new point-of-sale system for tracking inventory (the last one was stolen during a burglary), maintain her current staffing level, and expand her marketing and advertising.

“I’m one of the first to be able to access the loan,” Norville said. “That’s important because, as more people access it, the guidelines will get more stringent.” Norville’s eventual goal is to franchise her shop. “We want to help other low-income people own beauty supply stores,” she said.

Tasha Hunter, the executive director of the Uptown Business Improvement District (BID), helped guide Norville through the fundraising approval process. In June, the Uptown BID became a Kiva loan trustee, which means they work directly with the borrowers and vouch for them. The BID also connects business owners to city resources and provides free education classes.

“The majority of our businesses in North Long Beach are minority owned. That’s what the population is,” Hunter said. “Even though there’s nothing specifically targeted to them, that’s what my businesses are comprised of. The Uptown BID recently finished a workshop series called Business 101, taught by California State University, Fullerton professor Jeff Rowe and Urina Harrell, owner of marketing agency Vox Pop Branding in North Long Beach. Hunter said she is planning another series on financial literacy taught in both English and Spanish.

“We accept people where they are. Some are very knowledgeable in investments and how to manage money, and some need help with just budgeting,” she said. According to Hunter, many of the businesses in her district do not use social media, which makes outreach challenging.

“We still meet them where they are, which requires word of mouth and passing out flyers,” she said. “To have longevity, they’ll have to embrace social media marketing. We’re going to have a lot of big, new developments coming in, and we also have a lot of mom-and-pop shops. How do we project into the future what will help these businesses survive?”

Hunter provides one-on-one help to business owners and said that she is available at any hour on her cell phone. She is trilingual, able to provide services in English, Spanish and Portuguese. Hunter also makes a point to patronize the locally owned stores in her district.

The Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA), another business improvement association that recently became a Kiva trustee, also provides free programs and services to area businesses. The DLBA partnered with the Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship at California State University, Long Beach to produce a free business education series. The curriculum, which took place over six weeks, covered the process of developing a business and marketing plan, as well as the basics of accounting and human resources.

“The question came up as to why businesses are closing,” Adam Carrillo, the DLBA’s economic development manager, said. “When you start digging in and identifying what those elements are, it comes down to what they were doing before they signed a lease. As opposed to trying to plug holes in a sinking ship, we wanted to be proactive and put potential business owners through courses that provide the basic tools.”

Carrillo said that, when the series launched last year, more than half of the attendees were women, and, of those, most were ethnic minorities. Through its Woman-Owned Business Accelerator program, the DLBA offers up to a total of $10,000 to two women entrepreneurs based in the downtown area. This year’s recipients will be announced on September 13. Carrillo said another partnership is in the works with Shopify, an e-commerce platform, to launch sessions in expanding online sales. “When you look at who’s successful downtown, they’re successful online, and their retail aspect establishes the brand,” Carrillo said. “So how do we get business owners to utilize e-commerce in a greater capacity? It’s going to be to their benefit if they could sell product 24/7 rather than just when their doors are open.”

Radhika Chougule, the owner of Cuppa Cappuccino Artisan Coffee Bar in downtown, is a minority business owner who has taken advantage of the DLBA’s services. Through Carrillo, she was able to take part in the Taste of Downtown Series, where business owners convene to offer samples of their specialties. Chougule, who is Indian, also applied for the Woman-Owned Business Accelerator.

“It’s always a challenge getting started. Patience is key,” Chougule, who opened two years ago, said. “We faced challenges during the construction phase. The city helped us out because we’re in a historic building. There were additional restrictions that came up. [The city’s] historic team helped us get through the approvals, and answered questions.”

For Mai Le, the Vietnamese owner of Baguette De Paris, one of the biggest challenges she faced when setting up her shop was the fear that customers would not like her food. “We just do our best,” she said. “I love to cook.” Le immigrated from Saigon when she was 17. “It was hard because English is my second language,” she commented. But Le’s cuisine, which features a blend of Vietnamese and French food, received a positive reception. “I think this community is great,” she said. “It’s a good adventure. People are very friendly.” Le’s specialty is the banh mi, a Vietnamese-French sandwich made on a baguette with meat, pickled carrots, onion and daikon, a type of root. Le’s business is located on Anaheim Street in the midtown area, has not received any help from the city or a BID. Seoyed Jalali, an economic development officer for the city, said he has experienced challenges connecting with some immigrant communities about resources for businesses. “Immigrants have a difficult time asking for help,” Jalali said. “Maybe because of their background or mistrust of the government. It has always been a challenge for us to reach out to those communities. A lot of immigrants, whether they come from Asia or Central America, come from backgrounds where the government is not necessarily on the side of the people or business.”

Jalali has seen some immigrant business owners fall into predatory lending schemes, which he aims to help them avoid. “The biggest challenge businesses face, minority or otherwise, is being clear about their roadmap, and access to capital,” he said. “The main reason we lay down the fundamentals is that, once you have that, then you know how much cash you need. To see somebody start a business, and get that loan or government contract, is extremely satisfying. This of course results in the creation and retention of jobs.”

[Continued from Page 18]
Running a small business is a really big deal

Every small business needs help with the essentials — developing a business plan, marketing services, and managing cash flow. Visit wellsfargoworks.com to get the strategic insights and tools you need to run your business.

Let’s get started. Visit your local branch or find a time that works for you at wellsfargo.com/appointments.
2020. Those are structurally balanced budgets, meaning our ongoing expenses are paid for by ongoing revenues and we’re able to fund an extensive capital improvement program.”

The 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 fiscal year general fund budgets are balanced at roughly $22 million each. Sales tax accounts for more than $15 million, or about 68%, of the estimated revenue. Police is the largest general fund expenditure at about 43%, with public works being the second largest at 22%.

Honeycutt is part of the League of California Cities’ City Managers Sales Tax Working Group that is against Senate Constitutional Amendment (SCA) 20, which would alter current law to transfer online sales tax revenue to the point of delivery rather than the point of purchase. For example, if a person or company located in Long Beach purchased items online from Home Depot in Signal Hill, Long Beach would receive the tax revenue. SCA 20 is held in committee and is under submission at the state senate as of August 16.

“SCA 20 would reduce our sales tax revenue [by] 15% to 20%,” Honeycutt said. “The group of city managers is working with the League of California Cities to come up with an alternative, something that may be a little bit more fair.”

In the upcoming March election, the city council seats of Tina Hansen and Larry Forester will be open. The positions of city clerk and city treasurer, which are currently held by Keir Jones and Larry Blunden, respectively, will also be open. According to Honeycutt, Forester, who has been on the council for more than 20 years, has indicated he will not seek reelection.

“It hasn’t been formally announced yet, but Forester has been public about not seeking another term,” Honeycutt said. “He’s proud of his achievements and is ready to let the new generation come in – new energy to lead the city into the future.”

During fiscal years 2019 and 2020, more than $27 million in capital improvements are planned in Signal Hill, including development projects, water operations, street maintenance and repair, environmental mitigation and landscaping.

The city has a new $12 million library under construction adjacent to city hall on East Hill Street. Plans are in the works for a new park on Cherry Avenue south of Mother’s Market. Honeycutt said Signal Hill is working with the City of Long Beach, which owns a piece of property that is likely to become part of the new park. The space is planned as an extension of the city’s trail system and would feature an electronic reader board for residents to view city information and event details.

“All of this with no new taxes. When you come to Signal Hill, you have a built-in competitive advantage because we don’t
have utility users tax," Honeycutt said. "I mean, right off the bat, you’re going to save 5% just on your utility costs alone. Our sales tax is lower than everybody else and the business license fee is very low.”

Retailers in the city are continuing to perform well, with auto dealerships, Costco, Office Depot, Home Depot and In-N-Out Burger among the city’s top sales tax generators, Honeycutt said. He explained that there has been a noticeable shift away from material goods purchases to entertainment and experiences, including food. This shift has caused year-over-year revenue increases to slow, he added.

“I would suspect that our Best Buy will benefit from the closing of the Marina Pacifica store in Long Beach,” Honeycutt said. “We keep a close eye on Best Buy because for a while there we kept hearing about the demise of Best Buy, but our store is pretty consistent.”

Current Signal Hill business owners have indicated that the strong police presence and fast response times are a big draw for the city, Honeycutt said. Last year, Signal Hill recorded one homicide, up from zero in 2016, according to Signal Hill Police Department data. Reported rapes decreased from nine to four, robbery increased from 29 to 33 and aggravated assault increased from 33 to 39. Total property crimes, such as residential and commercial burglary, larceny and shoplifting, vehicle theft and arson, decreased by 85 instances in 2016 to 71 last year.

“Despite challenges, Signal Hill is experiencing a high level of development activity, with a number of projects already completed this year, others currently under construction and more in the pipeline. Projects include a new auto dealership, office and at least 320 single- and multi-family residential units. One of the most recently completed projects is Zinnia, which consists of 72 fully leased affordable residential units at 1500 E. Hill St. Under Senate Bill 35, which was signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in September of last year, the state determined how much affordable residential units are required for cities and counties. Projects include retail, new auto dealerships, office and at least 320 single- and multi-family residential units. The state that has met that allocation,” Charney said. “Even with all the constraints to development we have here in Signal Hill, we’re still following through with our commitment to actually do the best we can to ensure that residential development gets provided.”

Nearly 50 single-family residential homes are under construction or planned between several projects. The Crescent Square development on the northeast corner of Walnut Avenue and Crescent Heights Street consists of 25 three-story homes that are being sold for $1 million, according to Honeycutt.

The City of Signal Hill and the Business Journal prepared the following list of Signal Hill development projects recently completed, underway or planned:

Completed In 2018

• 1136 E. Willow St. – Ten-Mile Brewery is a 3,800-square-foot tap house where the beer is brewed on site. The brewery is owned by Dan and Jesse Sundstrom.
• 1500 E. Spring St. – A Long Beach Honda renovation added 802 square feet of showroom, 262 square feet of office space, 130 square feet of service space, and new facade and signage. The developer was The Garff Group.
• 1211 E. Willow St. – The Village Garff added 802 square feet of showroom, 262 square feet of office space, 130 square feet of service space, and new facade and signage. The developer was The Garff Group.
• 1136 E. Willow St. – Ten-Mile Brewery

In-N-Out Burger among the city’s top sales tax generators, Honeycutt said. He explained that there has been a noticeable shift away from material goods purchases to entertainment and experiences, including food. This shift has caused year-over-year revenue increases to slow, he added.

“I would suspect that our Best Buy will benefit from the closing of the Marina Pacifica store in Long Beach,” Honeycutt said. “We keep a close eye on Best Buy because for a while there we kept hearing about the demise of Best Buy, but our store is pretty consistent.”

Current Signal Hill business owners have indicated that the strong police presence and fast response times are a big draw for the city, Honeycutt said. Last year, Signal Hill recorded one homicide, up from zero in 2016, according to Signal Hill Police Department data. Reported rapes decreased from nine to four, robbery increased from 29 to 33 and aggravated assault increased from 33 to 39. Total property crimes, such as residential and commercial burglary, larceny and shoplifting, vehicle theft and arson, decreased by 85 instances in 2016 to 71 last year.

“Despite challenges, Signal Hill is experiencing a high level of development activity, with a number of projects already completed this year, others currently under construction and more in the pipeline. Projects include a new auto dealership, office and at least 320 single- and multi-family residential units. One of the most recently completed projects is Zinnia, which consists of 72 fully leased affordable residential units at 1500 E. Hill St. Under Senate Bill 35, which was signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in September of last year, the state determined how much affordable residential units are required for cities and counties. Projects include retail, new auto dealerships, office and at least 320 single- and multi-family residential units. The state that has met that allocation,” Charney said. “Even with all the constraints to development we have here in Signal Hill, we’re still following through with our commitment to actually do the best we can to ensure that residential development gets provided.”

Nearly 50 single-family residential homes are under construction or planned between several projects. The Crescent Square development on the northeast corner of Walnut Avenue and Crescent Heights Street consists of 25 three-story homes that are being sold for $1 million, according to Honeycutt.

The City of Signal Hill and the Business Journal prepared the following list of Signal Hill development projects recently completed, underway or planned:

Completed In 2018

• 1136 E. Willow St. – Ten-Mile Brewery is a 3,800-square-foot tap house where the beer is brewed on site. The brewery is owned by Dan and Jesse Sundstrom.
• 1500 E. Spring St. – A Long Beach Honda renovation added 802 square feet of showroom, 262 square feet of office space, 130 square feet of service space, and new facade and signage. The developer was The Garff Group.
• 1211 E. Willow St. – The Village Garff added 802 square feet of showroom, 262 square feet of office space, 130 square feet of service space, and new facade and signage. The developer was The Garff Group.
• 1136 E. Willow St. – Ten-Mile Brewery

In-N-Out Burger among the city’s top sales tax generators, Honeycutt said. He explained that there has been a noticeable shift away from material goods purchases to entertainment and experiences, including food. This shift has caused year-over-year revenue increases to slow, he added.

“I would suspect that our Best Buy will benefit from the closing of the Marina Pacifica store in Long Beach,” Honeycutt said. “We keep a close eye on Best Buy because for a while there we kept hearing about the demise of Best Buy, but our store is pretty consistent.”

Current Signal Hill business owners have indicated that the strong police presence and fast response times are a big draw for the city, Honeycutt said. Last year, Signal Hill recorded one homicide, up from zero in 2016, according to Signal Hill Police Department data. Reported rapes decreased from nine to four, robbery increased from 29 to 33 and aggravated assault increased from 33 to 39. Total property crimes, such as residential and commercial burglary, larceny and shoplifting, vehicle theft and arson, decreased by 85 instances in 2016 to 71 last year.

“Despite challenges, Signal Hill is experiencing a high level of development activity, with a number of projects already completed this year, others currently under construction and more in the pipeline. Projects include a new auto dealership, office and at least 320 single- and multi-family residential units. One of the most recently completed projects is Zinnia, which consists of 72 fully leased affordable residential units at 1500 E. Hill St. Under Senate Bill 35, which was signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in September of last year, the state determined how much affordable residential units are required for cities and counties. Projects include retail, new auto dealerships, office and at least 320 single- and multi-family residential units. The state that has met that allocation,” Charney said. “Even with all the constraints to development we have here in Signal Hill, we’re still following through with our commitment to actually do the best we can to ensure that residential development gets provided.”

Nearly 50 single-family residential homes are under construction or planned between several projects. The Crescent Square development on the northeast corner of Walnut Avenue and Crescent Heights Street consists of 25 three-story homes that are being sold for $1 million, according to Honeycutt.

The City of Signal Hill and the Business Journal prepared the following list of Signal Hill development projects recently completed, underway or planned:

Completed In 2018

• 1136 E. Willow St. – Ten-Mile Brewery is a 3,800-square-foot tap house where the beer is brewed on site. The brewery is owned by Dan and Jesse Sundstrom.
• 1500 E. Spring St. – A Long Beach Honda renovation added 802 square feet of showroom, 262 square feet of office space, 130 square feet of service space, and new facade and signage. The developer was The Garff Group.
• 1211 E. Willow St. – The Village Garff added 802 square feet of showroom, 262 square feet of office space, 130 square feet of service space, and new facade and signage. The developer was The Garff Group.
• 1136 E. Willow St. – Ten-Mile Brewery
Mayor Tina Hansen on Signal Hill’s Momentum, Business Focus

By Samantha Mehlinger

With municipal and commercial developments underway and in the pipeline, the 2.2-square-mile City of Signal Hill is proving it still has opportunity for growth. Mayor Tina Hansen, a member of the city council since 1994, is focusing her fifth, nonconsecutive, term as mayor on closing out the development of the Signal Hill Library, ensuring the city’s revenue sources and finances are stable and keeping the city business-friendly.

The new 14,000-square-foot library currently under construction next to Signal Hill City Hall is a municipal project many years in the making. The facility is replacing a 1931 structure originally built as a firehouse and eventually converted into a library. “My number one priority is for the library to be completed and to do the grand opening, because that’s been a pet project of mine pretty much since I got onto the council,” Hansen told the Business Journal. “We first started designing it back in 2000.” The mayor said that she has taken a hands-on approach to the library project, suggesting names for its rooms and ensuring that elements of the city’s history are incorporated in the design.

Also on Hansen’s priority list is ensuring the stability of city revenues. “We’re always concerned about our tax base — the fact that we’re 70% reliant on sales tax,” she said. “There’s constantly movement in the state to redistribute tax.”

For example, a hot topic among legislators, regulators and the business sector is whether or not to change California’s current origin-based sales tax structure to a destination-based structure. This change would mean that, if someone purchased an item from Office Depot to be shipped from its Signal Hill facility, Signal Hill would no longer receive sales tax for the transaction. Instead, the destination city would be the beneficiary. “If they change the tax structure from where the order takes place versus where it goes to, that will be an impact,” Hansen said.

“Every year we always put more into our reserves. But we are always aware of the fact that we’re so reliant on sales tax,” Hansen said. “We’re always aware of the fact that [the loss of] one large auto dealer, one large business, [or] any change in the redistribution of sales tax revenues will have a big impact on us.”

Because Signal Hill is a small municipality largely dependent on sales tax revenues, the city has worked to develop a reputation as a business-friendly destination. Hansen noted that Signal Hill has a low business license fee compared to surrounding municipalities. “We try to make people feel welcome here,” Hansen said. “Customer service is always a big deal with us. When businesses need help and they call in, they always feel like they get good customer service. And they love our police response, too.”

Signal Hill operates its own police department, a plus for businesses that are most concerned with security, according to Hansen.

Over her years as an elected representative of Signal Hill, Hansen said she has seen the city position itself as a destination for those seeking active lifestyles and high-end housing. “We have positioned ourselves as a city that grows but that grows carefully,” she said. “We have positioned ourselves as being business friendly, as being an active lifestyle city, as being high-end residential.”

Hansen noted that the city has also prioritized affordable housing with the development of Zinnia, a workforce housing project on Hill Street and consists of a six-acre parcel on the west side of Walnut Avenue and a two-acre parcel on the east side of Walnut Avenue.

Public Investment

• 1770 E. Hill St. – The development of a new, 12,000-square-foot public library is underway.

• Corner of Burnett Street and Cherry Avenue – View Park, which will take advantage of views of the Long Beach skyline, will include a new digital sign and reader board, as well as benches and a hilltop walking trail.

• 2650 Cherry Ave. – The city’s successor agency to its former redevelopment agency entered into an exclusive right to negotiate agreement with Signal Hill Properties LLC, also known as the Shelly Group, to develop the Cherry center for a new pre-owned automobile dealership facility. This 3.13-acre site would expand the Signal Hill Auto Center.

• Heritage Square – The proposed mixed-use development on 7.72 acres adjacent to Mother’s Market on Cherry Avenue would consist of retail, restaurant, single- and multi-family residential and open community space. The city’s successor agency entered into an exclusive right to negotiate agreement with Signal Hill Properties, Inc.

• Walnut Avenue Corridor – Xebec Realty, as the authorized agent for Signal Hill XC, LLC, is proposing the development of nine industrial buildings totaling 151,075 square feet on eight acres consisting of two vacant sites fronting on Walnut Avenue between Gaviota and Gundry avenues. The property previously housed the ChemOil refinery, and consists of a six-acre parcel on the west side of Walnut Avenue and a two-acre parcel on the east side of Walnut Avenue.

Signal Hill Mayor Tina Hansen is pictured outside city hall as construction continues on the city’s new library, a project she has been devoted to since she first joined the city council in 1994. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Pat Flynn)
Signal Hill Business Owners Are ‘Bullish’ On The City

Signal Hill is home to numerous corporate chains, including Best Buy, Costco, Office Depot, Home Depot and In-N-Out, and small, local businesses such as Curley’s Cafe, Marketink XL and LB Walker Automotive. Because much of the city’s budget relies on sales tax revenue, retail, food and service businesses are a backbone of the Signal Hill economy.

The city is known for its business-friendly environment, according to local business owner and Signal Hill Chamber of Commerce President Melissa Guy.

“The business climate in 2018 has continued to grow. Honestly, the attitude of the business owners is very optimistic,” Guy said. “They are receiving great results. We all generally have the consensus that doing business in the City of Signal Hill is one of the reasons that we’re all succeeding.”

Low crime, easy accessibility off the 405 Freeway and its location at the heart of Long Beach between Los Angeles and Orange counties are great advantages for businesses in the area, Guy said. Continued development in Long Beach and surrounding areas is also a boost for the Signal Hill business community, she added.

Within Signal Hill, numerous development projects were recently completed, are underway or are planned. These developments include retail, office and industrial space, as well as at least 320 residential units. These projects will bring new residents and workers to the city, which should increase business, Guy said.

“I’m finding that many people who are opening businesses here are looking to move here. Because the business experience is so great, they want to live here,” Guy said. “And vice versa – folks that are residents moving into the city who are [already] business owners are looking at the business opportunities within Signal Hill at future developments.”

As president of the chamber, Guy speaks with many business owners about their experiences working with other city governments. She said businesses that have relocated to Signal Hill from other cities note that the city has less red tape, allowing them to open up shop quicker, and thrive.

The Signal Hill Chamber of Commerce has nearly 300 members, and its mailing list has grown to 700 subscribers, Guy said. The city has in the neighborhood of 1,200 businesses, she noted, which equates to around an impressive 25% business participation rate for the chamber.

“I believe that one thing our business owners pride themselves on is active engagement in our community,” Guy said. “If you look at the percentage of active mem...
During the last 10 years, SHP has abandoned 140 inactive wells. However, inactive wells can be brought into production at any time. SHP has plans to drill two or three wells this year. We are working to bring one of our two drilling rigs out of mothballs and we anticipate drilling some new wells this year, according to SHP Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer David Slater. “Our oil and gas business has been very robust this year. When we have strong cash flow, we reinvest in the infrastructure for our business,” Slater said. “We’ve been busy primarily upgrading and replacing our surface facility equipment like pipelines and tanks. We are working to bring one of our two drilling rigs out of mothballs and we anticipate drilling some new wells in the fourth quarter.” At this time, Slater said the company has plans to drill two or three wells this year.

SHP is currently in the process of re-permitting all its water injection projects, which is required by a mandate from the California Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources. Slater described the process as “daunting.” However, he added that SHP’s primary need is to operate its injection wells to increase production. Once the re-permitting process is complete, Slater said the company could drill up to a dozen wells, primarily injection wells. Water injection is the process of introducing water into an oil field to increase pressure in order to stimulate production.

Currently, SHP has around 250 active wells and around 140 inactive wells. However, inactive wells can be brought online to replace another if mechanical issues arise. Slater explained. SHP operates 83% of the oil wells in Signal Hill. Within the last 10 years, the company has abandoned 100 wells and drilled or re-drilled 48 wells.

Due to the nature of the oil industry — namely its reliance upon an ever-declining resource — and a lack of drilling, production has decreased slightly. However, Slater said SHP has been successful in minimizing production decline by investing in its current wells through repairs and maintenance. He expects 2018 production to be similar to last year, which was around 1.1 million barrels. There’s plenty of oil here, it’s just keeping maintaining the wells because they degrade over time,” Slater said. “We’ve got 50 to 100 more years of oil here.”

Signal Hill Petroleum maintains a strict schedule of routine checks for its operations, particularly those in the district vicinity of homes and businesses. Slater said the company’s goal is for zero defects in all of its equipment at all times, which is why complete tear-down inspections of beam pumping units (pumps used to mechanically lift oil out of a well when pressure is low) are conducted every 18 months. These inspections are much more frequent than the industry standard, he added.

SHP tests its pipelines more frequently than required by state or federal law, Slater said. To test the lines, they are first flushed and cleared of all oil and gas. Then pressure above normal operating levels is applied using clean water to check for leaks. In the last 15 years, Slater said almost all instances of pipeline issues were caused by third-party damage, often during road work and construction.

The Southern California oil industry has experienced a wave of push-back from anti-oil groups claiming that living near oil operations is adverse to a person’s health. Slater said. The oil industry, including SHP, is collecting air quality data around its operations in an attempt to counter these claims. All of SHP’s systems are sealed to ensure little to no impacts on air quality, Slater added.

“We’re fighting innuendo with facts and also working closer with SCAQMD [South Coast Air Quality Management District],” Slater said. “In the last year, we’ve worked with research scientists who are working with new remote monitoring technologies. Our west unit facility has had virtually every technology in the world parked at our fence line beaming into the facility, as SCAQMD wants to get a track record of running these new technologies.”

SHP has tested real-time sensor technology in and around its facilities to identify leaks. On a quarterly basis, the firm tests 75,000 different components through a third-party technician to ensure there are no leaks and that all systems are functioning properly. Slater said the company will continue to experiment with new technologies to ensure as much data is being collected at its facilities as possible.

The latest technology introduced to SHP operations is called FLIR (short for Forward-Looking Infrared), Slater said. This thermal-imaging instrument allows operators to identify micro leaks. Slater said SHP has used the FLIR system to conduct a full audit of its facilities to scan for micro leaks. Several micro leaks were found, which Slater said were the equivalent of the small amount of gas expelled when a lighter fails to ignite.

“Now we’re doing an ongoing sweep of our facilities using this technology,” Slater said. “Our goal is to be 100% sealed and leak free – keeping all of our product where it should be, in the tanks and the pipeline so we can sell it.”

Higher Oil Prices Means More Investment And Drilling Coming To Signal Hill

BY BRANDON RICHARDSON
SENIOR WRITER

After oil prices plummeted in 2014, eventually falling below $30 per barrel, Signal Hill Petroleum (SHP) sidelined its two drilling rigs. The rigs have sat dormant for four years waiting for oil prices to recover and spur renewed investment. With oil prices rebounding – an average of around $70 per barrel for West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil during August – one of the company’s drilling rigs will likely begin drilling new wells this year, according to SHP Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer David Slater. “Our oil and gas business has been very robust this year. When we have strong cash flow, we reinvest in the infrastructure for our business,” Slater said. “We’ve been busy primarily upgrading and replacing our surface facility equipment like pipelines and tanks. We are working to bring one of our two drilling rigs out of mothballs and we anticipate drilling some new wells in the fourth quarter.” At this time, Slater said the company has plans to drill two or three wells this year.

After almost four years of inactive drilling rigs, Signal Hill Petroleum is preparing to remove one of its drilling rigs from mothballs to drill new wells in the fourth quarter of this year, according to Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer David Slater. Pictured from left: Richie Diaz, rig hand; Pat Hurley, drilling coordinator; Steve Clavijo, rig hand; and Slater. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson)

SHP is currently in the process of re-permitting all its drilling rigs to replace another if mechanical issues arise, Slater said. The company has plans to drill two or three wells this year. We are working to bring one of our two drilling rigs out of mothballs and we anticipate drilling some new wells this year, according to SHP Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer David Slater. “Our oil and gas business has been very robust this year. When we have strong cash flow, we reinvest in the infrastructure for our business,” Slater said. “We’ve been busy primarily upgrading and replacing our surface facility equipment like pipelines and tanks. We are working to bring one of our two drilling rigs out of mothballs and we anticipate drilling some new wells in the fourth quarter.” At this time, Slater said the company has plans to drill two or three wells this year.

SHP is currently in the process of re-permitting all its water injection projects, which is required by a mandate from the California Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources. Slater described the process as “daunting.” However, he added that SHP’s primary need is to operate its injection wells to increase efficiency. Once the re-permitting process is complete, Slater said the company could drill up to a dozen wells, primarily injection wells. Water injection is the process of introducing water into an oil field to increase pressure in order to stimulate production.

Currently, SHP has around 250 active wells and around 140 inactive wells. However, inactive wells can be brought online to replace another if mechanical issues arise, Slater explained. SHP operates 83% of the oil wells in Signal Hill. Within the last 10 years, the company has abandoned 100 wells and drilled or re-drilled 48 wells.

Due to the nature of the oil industry — namely its reliance upon an ever-declining resource — and a lack of drilling, production has decreased slightly. However, Slater said SHP has been successful in minimizing production decline by investing in its current wells through repairs and maintenance. He expects 2018 production to be similar to last year, which was around 1.1 million barrels. There’s plenty of oil here, it’s just keeping maintaining the wells because they degrade over time,” Slater said. “We’ve got 50 to 100 more years of oil here.”

Signal Hill Petroleum maintains a strict schedule of routine checks for its operations, particularly those in the district vicinity of homes and businesses. Slater said the company’s goal is for zero defects in all of its equipment at all times, which is why complete tear-down inspections of beam pumping units (pumps used to mechanically lift oil out of a well when pressure is low) are conducted every 18 months. These inspections are much more frequent than the industry standard, he added.

SHP tests its pipelines more frequently than required by state or federal law, Slater said. To test the lines, they are first flushed and cleared of all oil and gas. Then pressure above normal operating levels is applied using clean water to check for leaks. In the last 15 years, Slater said almost all instances of pipeline issues were caused by third-party damage, often during road work and construction.

The Southern California oil industry has experienced a wave of push-back from anti-oil groups claiming that living near oil operations is adverse to a person’s health. Slater said. The oil industry, including SHP, is collecting air quality data around its operations in an attempt to counter these claims. All of SHP’s systems are sealed to ensure little to no impacts on air quality, Slater added.

“We’re fighting innuendo with facts and also working closer with SCAQMD [South Coast Air Quality Management District],” Slater said. “In the last year, we’ve worked with research scientists who are working with new remote monitoring technologies. Our west unit facility has had virtually every technology in the world parked at our fence line beaming into the facility, as SCAQMD wants to get a track record of running these new technologies.”

SHP has tested real-time sensor technology in and around its facilities to identify leaks. On a quarterly basis, the firm tests 75,000 different components through a third-party technician to ensure there are no leaks and that all systems are functioning properly. Slater said the company will continue to experiment with new technologies to ensure as much data is being collected at its facilities as possible.

The latest technology introduced to SHP operations is called FLIR (short for Forward-Looking Infrared), Slater said. This thermal-imaging instrument allows operators to identify micro leaks. Slater said SHP has used the FLIR system to conduct a full audit of its facilities to scan for micro leaks. Several micro leaks were found, which Slater said were the equivalent of the small amount of gas expelled when a lighter fails to ignite.

“Now we’re doing an ongoing sweep of our facilities using this technology,” Slater said. “Our goal is to be 100% sealed and leak free – keeping all of our product where it should be, in the tanks and the pipeline so we can sell it.”
The auto shop recently added its third fleet service account, Emerald Metal Products Inc., which is joining C.S.I. Patrol Services Inc. and B&I Construction. Lombardi said he would like to open a second shop within the next year.

Business for PIRTEK Long Beach, a hydraulic hose maintenance company, has been up, according to owner and principal Paul Martin. The strong economy has led to increased infrastructure spending, development, and oil operations, all of which utilize hydraulic systems, Martin explained.

“The first six months this year [revenues] were up approximately 15% over last year. It’s been nice and steady, and things are looking up,” Martin said. “I don’t see any real problems arising in the next 12 to 18 months, but once you get that far out it gets a little hazy.”

Trade conflicts could have a negative impact on his business if operations slow down at the Port of Long Beach or if construction declines as material costs increase, Martin said. But for now, the business outlook is good, he said.

Much of Martin’s business is delivered to clients in the field, be it replacement hoses or maintenance on existing hoses. Signal Hill’s central location between L.A. and Orange counties, as well as its proximity to the 405 Freeway and the port, are extremely beneficial for business, Martin noted.

For Ship & Shore Environmental Inc., an industrial air pollution capture and control firm, Signal Hill’s central location between L.A. and Orange counties is beneficial as most of their business is delivered to clients in the field.

Signal Hill business owners have told Melissa Guy, president of the Signal Hill Chamber of Commerce, that they enjoy conducting business in the city because there is no red tape. Guy and her husband own Asset Media Group, a video production firm. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson)
system design firm, Signal Hill's proximity to the Long Beach Airport is convenient for clients flying to the area, President and CEO Anousheh Oskouian said. Recently, Ship & Shore diversified to include services related to groundwater and soil remediation. Despite ever-present concerns about the Trump administration’s stance on environmental issues, Oskouian said her business is likely to be unaffected.

“The states, as well as the local agencies, are still staying on top of the important [environmental] issues,” Oskouian said. “That gives us opportunities to constantly come up with new ways to handle these issues and increase our workforce as a result.”

Business growth has been between 10% and 15% for the last couple of years, Oskouian said, adding that she expects this year to be about the same. Oskouian is in the process of forming a joint venture under the Ship & Shore banner with a Chinese company. In the past, Ship & Shore has worked on projects in partnership with the Chinese firm, but a joint venture would give her business a permanent presence in China, Oskouian explained. The firm is also working to expand to serve the Middle East, she added.

(Continued From Page 25)

Ron Kleijn, owner of Rossmoor Pastries since April 2016, said business is up double digits over last year. Kleijn’s business comprises three divisions: a retail shop, a cake studio and a wholesale operation. The wholesale division serves A-list customers in L.A. and Orange counties, he said.

“From our perspective, the business is healthy, it’s vibrant, it’s growing. We’re investing heavily in it and will continue to do that,” Kleijn said. “Our wholesale business is accelerating at a faster pace, and that speaks to a couple of trends happening in the market: there are fewer suppliers producing fresh baked goods; there are fewer skilled people, making it harder for food service companies to make their own products; and the labor market is getting tighter and tighter.”

Rossmoor Pastries’ product portfolio is reevaluated and tweaked every year to keep it fresh and new. Recently, the company launched a new website for its wholesale business under its parent company name, Matt & Nat Bakery Group. The retail shop will continue operating as Rossmoor Pastries, while business-to-business sales will be conducted under the Matt & Nat name.

After completing a major expansion last year, Encore Welding Supply is pushing almost 30% growth year over year, according to President Ben Anderson. With growing business comes a growing staff, which now consists of 24 employees, Anderson said. In 2019, the company is expanding to additional cities and states, which Anderson said are to be announced at a later date. Encore produces and distributes around 18,000 products; and the labor market is getting tighter and tighter.

(Continued From Page 25)

Boulevard Dealership: Nearly 60 Years Of Car-Selling History

By BRANDON RICHARDSON

Senior Writer

After serving in the United States Navy, James “Jim” Willingham moved from Missouri to Long Beach in 1950, “chasing a girl, I think,” his son Brad said jokingly. Jim quickly found a job selling shoes. That same year, the owner of Ed James Studebaker visited the shoe store, told Jim he would be better off selling cars and offered him a job. Jim worked at several dealerships in the coming years, including C. Stanlee Martin Oldsmobile and Masters Pontiac. Eventually, he ended up at Campbell Buick on American Avenue, which would be renamed Long Beach Boulevard, and became business partners with owner Charlie Campbell in 1961.

“They started off thinking the dealership would be named Campbell Willingham, but they couldn’t afford that many neat letters at the time,” Brad said. “American Avenue had just changed to Long Beach Boulevard. So, they came up with the name ‘Boulevard,’” and it’s been Boulevard Buick ever since.”

Jim went on to buy out Campbell and continue operating the dealership with the help of Brad when he was old enough. The father-son team ran the business in Long Beach through the early 1990s. Brad said his dad loves Long Beach and was very dedicated to the city, in- including civic involvement as president and/or chairman of Rotary Club of Long Beach, the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, American Red Cross Greater Long Beach Chapter, the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners, Memorial Medical Center Foundation and the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The development of the Cerritos Auto Square began in the late 1980s and it quickly became one of the largest auto centers in the world. The center’s high visibility off the 605 Freeway made it a powerhouse – tough competition for Long Beach auto dealers on Long Beach Boulevard, Brad said. Around the same time, construction began on the Blue Line.

“We had done a lot of work with the local politicians. They had an option to use some existing tracks down by the Los Angeles River, and we lobbied hard for that,” Brad said. “The night of the city council meeting, we didn’t go to the welfare office, it was time. Boulevard was one of the last dealerships to vacate Long Beach Boulevard for the growing Signal Hill Auto Center.”

Jim partnered with Michael Salta, who owned as many as 24 dealerships throughout his career. Salta had built two side-by-side dealerships in Signal Hill, and, in 1993, Boulevard Buick Pontiac GMC opened. Brad oversaw day-to-day operations as general manager, while partners Jim and Salta oversaw the business end.

Ron Charron was brought in as general manager around 1998, while Brad was working at another Salta dealership. In 2000, Brad came back to Boulevard, where he and Ron bought out Jim and Salta. The new partners have run the dealership together ever since. In 2010, the company bought Coast Cadillac, which now occupies the space adjacent to Boulevard Buick/GMC as Boulevard Cadillac. Charron’s son Chad became the third partner at Boulevard earlier this year and continues to serve as general manager of the dealerships.

“That’s pretty much the story. Chad is running things, while Ron and I try not to be here quite as much as we used to be,” Brad said. “We’ve had two stores running side by side for years and they’ve been very successful. It’s been going really well.”

Boulevard Buick/GMC Cadillac has operated in Long Beach and Signal Hill since the early 1960s and is currently experiencing 15% and 5.4% year-over-year growth for its Buick/GMC auto sales and collision center, respectively. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson).
50,000 cylinders of welding and specialty gases annually, Anderson said. The total cubic feet of gas depends on the size of the cylinders, he noted. The Encore executives enjoy operating in Signal Hill, which is evidenced by the fact that they opened their second location just blocks away from the first.

"Signal Hill is just an extremely user-friendly place to operate. I recently prompted another company [Louisiana-based Specialty Welding and Turnarounds] to do a long-term lease of a building here because of that," Anderson said. "They wanted to open a West Coast office, so they asked me where, and I said, "100%, Signal Hill.""

Mitch Kron, CEO of Big Studio Custom Apparel, said business has increased about 8% over last year, which has been an ongoing trend for several years. Kron has of-
Avenue to get to the freeway, so even our local residents don’t always know that
the past year, Kron has hired several em-
ing services for apparel and accessories. In
pany offers screen printing and embroider-
Focus On The City Of Signal Hill
we’re here. So we’re always trying to get the word out.”

Boulevard has proven that notion wrong,
local dealerships, a strategy which could detract from the localized approaches dealer-
other vendors,” Davis said. “We have a lot of service customers and we have a lot of
real large department. We do a lot of wholesaling of parts to garages, body shops and
industry-wide trend, Davis said.

The Cadillac comeback started around 2009, Willingham said. With each passing
ness has been solid, with a strong breakfast,
unlike the Beech and Pontiac, Willingham said.
Since surviving the GM bankruptcy in 2008, Buick has become popular in China, which
saved the brand, he said. Buick’s momentum is also due to a push to appeal to Millen-
nials, Willingham added.

“When I was a kid growing up, there was nobody my age . . . who ever thought about
boulevard Buick/GMC Cadillac, said business has been great
Center East, said business has been great
these days with a market-specific emphasis.

Sales tax is the key economic driver for the City of Signal Hill, making up 68% of the
city’s general fund revenue – around $15 million annually. Each of the city’s six auto
dealerships appears on the list of Top 25 sales tax generators for the Signal Hill

“The city is business friendly; they want to help. They want to see [auto dealers] do
better, so they’re always reaching out and seeing what they can do to help us take care of
customers and support us for their tax base,” Bob Davis, president of Glenn
E. Thomas Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, said. “We’ve enjoyed our relationship with the
city, and the police department’s great. It’s about to do business.”

Compared to last year, Davis said the dealership has experienced a slight uptick in sales,
particular for the Jeep product. Used car business is also up, he said. The last several
eras, he added. If the market is not hot for an extended period of time, a plateau or even a decline in business is expected, he explained. For now, Davis said business is holding. With increasing interest rates and
gas prices, he said it will be interesting to see what 2019 has in store for the auto industry.
While it is not in the dealership’s immediate plan, Davis and other Signal Hill dealers would
be interested in expanding. A lack of space, however, makes expansion difficult, he said. Despite
the lack of space for existing dealers, the City of Signal Hill recently entered into an exclu-
sive right to negotiate agreement with Signal Hill Properties LLC, also known as the Shelly Group, to develop a 3.13-acre pre-owned auto dealership on a vacant Cherry Avenue site.
At Glenn E. Thomas, 80% of that inventory is sold which are Jeeps and Ram pickup trucks.
The remaining business is for cars, such as the Dodge Charger and Challenger, the
Chrysler 300, among other models. Increased sport utility vehicle and truck sales is an
industry-wide trend, Davis said.

“Our parts department is number one in California in Chrysler parts. So we have a
real large department. We do a lot of wholesaling of parts to garages, body shops and
other vendors,” Davis said. “We have a lot of service customers and we have a lot of
service business, which is probably 15% from last year.”
Boulevard Buick/GMC Cadillac has had a strong year, according to co-owner Brad
Willingham. While Cadillac sales have been flat year over year, Buick/GMC and the
dealership’s collision center are up 15% and 5.4%, respectively.
Over the past year, the Buick brand has continued its comeback over years of industry
concern that it would go out of business like Oldsmobile and Pontiac, Willingham said.

“Curley’s has great bones. No matter what
top competitors out there. Not only in L.A. County and Long
Beach, but Orange County as well,” Nguyen said.

“We’ve definitely had to continue to hustle and
in local business,” Kron said. “Our school
has always known that the
local business,” Kron said. “Our school
growing really fast.”

“Residents of Long Beach don’t typically come up Cherry Avenue to get to the freeway, so even our own local residents don’t always know that we’re here. So we’re always trying to get the word out.”

Signal Hill Auto Dealers Continue To Experience ‘Strong’ Sales

By BRANDON RICHARDSON
Senior Writer

Sales tax is the key economic driver for the City of Signal Hill, making up 68% of the city’s general fund revenue – around $15 million annually. Each of the city’s six auto dealerships appears on the list of Top 25 sales tax generators for the Signal Hill

The Boulevard Collision Center handles many insurance company claims, and the
body shop continues to do well, Willingham said. He explained that many dealers gave
up on their body shops because they thought they wouldn’t be able to compete with independent shops. However, Willingham said Boulevard has proven that notion wrong, as it successfully competes in the body shop arena.

Overall, Willingham said the city has always been helpful when the dealership has a
project, such as its 2011 remodel. He added that operating in Signal Hill is “terrific,” but not without its challenges.

“We continue to struggle to attract people to this auto mall. It’s a tough deal. There’s
no visibility from the freeway, except the beautiful freeway sign to let people know that we’re here,” Willingham said. “Residents of Long Beach don’t typically come up Cherry Avenue to get to the freeway, so even our own local residents don’t always know that we’re here. So we’re always trying to get the word out.”

Signal Hill’s Top 25 Sales Tax Generators

A & A Ready Mix Concrete Inc.
Allied Building Products
Altair Gases & Equipment
Bakersfield Pipe & Supply
Best Buy
Boulevard Buick/GMC Cadillac
Cathay Bank
Cherry Market & Gas Enterprises
Costco
Encore Welding and Industrial Supply
Farmers Insurance Group
Food 4 Less
Glen E. Thomas Dodge
In-N-Out Burgers
Long Beach Honda
Mercedes Benz of Long Beach
Nichols’ Great Uncle Moving Company
Office Depot
Power Trip Rentals
RENO Hardware and Supply Inc.
Target
United Oil

Source: City of Signal Hill
When the economy is strong, residents and business owners are more likely to undertake renovation projects at their homes or businesses, Goncalves explained. Signal Hill and surrounding areas are currently experiencing a high number of projects, which is boosting business for his Home Depot location and its sister store in northwest Signal Hill, he said. “We get a lot of repeat customers, a lot of homeowners who are here daily, and we know their faces. This a neighborhood store. I like to consider our store a mom-and-pop Home Depot,” Goncalves said.

“We help people with problems or issues that they’re having at home, and they come back to show us pictures, show us solutions, progress, their gardens — there are a lot of relationships that we created.”

Home Depot also receives a lot of business from local contractors and property management companies. The current development and renovation boom in Downtown Long Beach, specifically, has brought a lot of businesses to the store, Goncalves said.

Ryan White, retail manager of Liberty Coin in Signal Hill, said continued uncertainty in the financial markets has caused his business to perform well. He explained that gold and silver are traditionally “safe-haven commodities,” meaning that, even if the U.S. economy declines, metals retain their value.

“The physical location is great. We’re central to the South Bay, Orange County, Long Beach and Lakewood. People come here from as far away as Manhattan Beach and Costa Mesa,” White said. “In addition, there’s a large coin show three times a year that takes place in Long Beach, so we get a lot of customers coming through Signal Hill for that as well.”

White said most of his interaction with the City of Signal Hill is through the police department. He added that the department is always prompt, courteous and helpful, which is important to business owners.

Business growth for Batteries Plus Bulbs, which opened two years ago, has been in the single digits but is steady every month, owner Tim Quinlan said. Fifty-five percent of sales come from residents, with 45% coming from commercial contracts, according to Quinlan.

Word of mouth is important to business growth, Quinlan explained, because batteries and bulbs are the types of products no one thinks about until they need them. Much of the business Quinlan does is for batteries — from AAAs to batteries for cell phones, boats or cars, the store has batteries to power just about anything. Quinlan’s franchise location also does more cell phone screen repairs than any of the company’s other 750 locations nationwide, he said.

“Signal Hill is a very comfortable place. We have steady traffic, good neighbors and we’re conveniently off the 405 Freeway, which helps,” Quinlan said. “I’m very happy to be here in Signal Hill and I’m very bullish on it.”
For more information, call 562/599-0106 or visit petes-plumbing.com.

pete’s Plumbing owners Patty and Tony Hillis are continuing the legacy of the late Pete Hillis. Patty’s husband and Tony’s father. Pete Hillis started the business out of his Lakewood home in 1972 and ran the business until he passed away in 2014. A plumber by trade, Pete branched out on his own because he didn’t like the fact that most plumbers were paid by commission, Patty Hillis said. “He didn’t like that there’s a tendency to oversell a job, or just find more [to be repaired] than what the need is at that time,” Hillis said. “Pete wanted to establish a relationship so, if you needed a big job done, he would be the first person you would call because you have history with him. You would know that he wasn’t just trying to do one big job and move on.” Pete’s Plumbing specializes in both plumbing and heating. Hillis said she receives the most requests for gas, drain or water rephitting and water heater installation. “We’re not into air conditioning or forced air,” Hillis explained. “In Long Beach, there are lots of older homes with wall and floor heaters, so we work on those.” Hillis said her favorite part is helping her customers maintain a safe home environment. “I don’t think a lot of people get what a plumbing contractor is all about,” she said. “It’s really about safety for our customers. That gives me satisfaction.” Pete’s Plumbing is located at 3099 E. Pacific Coast Hwy. For more information, call 562/599-0106 or visit petes-plumbing.com.

Big E Pizza

Big E Pizza owner James Eleopoulos built and started running his own business when he was 19 years old, in 1986. Eleopoulos’s parents immigrated from Tripoli, Greece, and opened a few American restaurants and coffee shops in the area. “My family had been in the restaurant business since the 1950s. I had worked for another pizza store in Long Beach, and I decided it was a good time,” Eleopoulos said. “I built it myself with my own hands.” In the mid-1980s, Eleopoulos saw the popularity of pizza deliveries start to rise, so he decided to capitalize on the opportunity. Big E also delivers wine and beer, a rare service, according to Eleopoulos. In addition to pizza, menu options include calzones, salads, sandwiches and barbeque. Big E is open until 3 a.m., and Eleopoulos said the meat lovers’ pizza is the most popular late-night choice. “All of our recipes are from my mom and dad,” he said. “Our crust is my mom’s bread recipe.” Eleopoulos described his business as a “very family-run restaurant,” with employees who have been with him for 30 years. “Some of my employees now have grandkids who are working here,” he said. “I love coming to work every day.” Eleopoulos recently purchased the property of the former Delius Restaurant on Cherry Avenue, which he plans to turn into a sports lounge called Jimmy E’s. Big E Pizza is located at 3225 E. Pacific Coast Hwy. For more information, call 562/498-8788 or visit bigepizza.com.

Greenly Art Space

The guiding principles of nonprofit Greenly Art Space are “creativity, contemplation and community,” according to Director and Curator Kimberly Hocking. The nonprofit partners with both international and local organizations to produce art shows. For one exhibition, entitled “Home,” artists imagined their own conception of what that word means to them. The show raised funds for Rebuilding Together Long Beach, a nonprofit that provides free home repairs to those who cannot afford them. Hocking also featured the work of orphans from India in a show called “Everyday Joy,” for which they took photographs of the things that bring them pleasure. “I like to get people to look at life in a deeper way,” Hocking said. “So much of our daily lives is about running, running, running.” Hocking said the nonprofit also employs two art therapists who encourage patients to work through their issues by creating art. Hocking, whose background is in nursing, uses art as a form of therapy for those who struggle with addiction. “I take trips up to a local monastery. I take time to read, write and create work.” Greenly Art Space is located at 2698 Junipero Ave., Suite 113. For more information, call 562/533-4020 or visit greenlyartspace.com.

The Wine Country

The Wine Country owner Randy Kemner started out as a professional piano player in a variety of different bands. He became interested in wine when he saw it served in a lounge where he was performing in 1970. “To me, it was very sophisticated looking,” he said. “I wasn’t yet 21 [years old] and, as soon as I turned 21, I couldn’t wait to find out what that was all about.” Learning about wine became a hobby for Kemner, which he turned into a job when he was 34 years old. “I went to a wine store in Long Beach and told them I wanted to learn about the wine business, and they could pay me anything they wanted,” he recounted. “It was right before Christmas, and they guaranteed me two weeks of work.” Kemner stayed for almost a year before he received an offer to manage another wine store. He then went on to start a wholesale business with a partner in which they represented small wineries in California. At his partner’s suggestion, Kemner opened The Wine Country in 1995. In addition to both domestic and imported wines, the shop also offers a selection of beer and cider, as well as cheese, chocolate and gift baskets. “I love showing people how wine transforms with certain foods,” Kemner said. “It isn’t just flavored booze, it’s an agricultural product that’s alive.” The Wine Country is located at 2698 Junipero Ave. For more information, call 562/597-8303 or visit thewinecountry.com.
The Wood’N Carr

Husband and wife team Doug and Suzy Carr, co-owners of The Wood’N Carr, met in an art class during their senior year of high school. They started their business, which specializes in wooden auto parts, when they were 21 years old. “I originally worked for a man who owned a shop in Paramount called The Wood Guy,” Doug Carr explained. “He did woodwork on antique cars. He was in business for three years, and then he closed up shop. He put some of his equipment and patterns in a storage facility, and we ended up purchasing them. There was a need for this type of work, and we were trained.” Repairing or building new wood parts for cars of every make and model, the Carrs have customers from as far away as Sweden, Australia, New Zealand and London. “We might find customers who had a grandfather who owned the car, so there’s a sentimental attachment,” Suzy Carr said. The couple also runs a side business renting out their own wood-bodied station wagons for TV and movie appearances. Their cars have appeared in commercials for Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, Burger King and Cool Whip. One of them was also featured in the music video for The Beach Boys’ song, “Rock ‘n’ Roll to the Rescue,” released in 1986. They are pictured with finish foreman Brett Aso-
Why SIGNAL HILL!

Safe and Clean
No Utility Users Tax
Freeway Accessible
Personalized Development Review Services
Fast Track Permitting
Low Business License Fees

Find out more at www.cityofsignalhill.org