Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia stands outside City Hall. After five years on City Council followed by eight years as mayor, Garcia was elected to represent the 42nd Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives.
Mayor Q&A: Robert Garcia’s 8 years as mayor came to a close as he heads to Congress

RG: (To mayor) I'm really proud of that. We've seen a transformation of downtown as a key piece of what we wanted to accomplish, and we look back and we have developed or are in process of building nearly at our stations across the city, most of which are in the downtown core. Look at how the skyline has completely changed. There are new restaurants and retail and new offices and businesses, and downtown itself is bringing folks in to live and to enjoy the spaces as it has been transformed. We have also worked to ensure downtown is a place for everyone. We passed one of the few local inclusionary housing ordinances in the state of California to ensure new developments include affordable housing. That’s something that we really worked hard on.

We of course continue to work to continue to expand and support our tourism industry, which is really important. We’re in the process of recovering from the single largest hit to the economy that we’ve had in decades, and so we do have some challenges, and the next mayor and the next council are going to have to work on those—a recovery that is centered around ensuring there’s enough housing for folks and that people feel safe.

JFM: Speaking of COVID—as you said, that’s the biggest challenge the city and even the world has seen in our lifetime. You led the city through that, even as you were personally impacted by it. (Note: Garcia’s mother and stepfather died from COVID-19 in 2020.) What’s it like for you to look back on that time, and what are your thoughts on where the city’s recovery stands now?

RG: There’s never been a harder challenge that the city has faced, and certainly that I have faced in my life. It was so hard to see the struggles that people went through—people that lost family members, businesses that suffered immensely, folks that lost jobs, people that became homeless. There were impacts that we all faced everyday. But I’m really proud of the city for how we stepped up. If you look back, I think it’s important to uplift
Q&A
Continued from page 3

RG: I would have voted, certainly, that is 100% something I would have voted for in Congress. And as a member of Congress, especially, we have a new mayor who will be succeeding you—Rebecca Richardson, whom you endorsed, as well as a new City Council that will be sworn in soon. What are your thoughts on the results of those elections and what they mean for Long Beach?

HM: First, I’m really proud of Rex being elected mayor. He’s been just an excellent vice mayor for the city and a great leader and really just a great voice on issues around homelessness and building affordable housing.

RG: With more votes than anyone in the modern history of the city. He received more votes for mayor than me, than Bob Foster or Beverly O’Hall, and certainly that has partly to do with the election dates that have changed, so now we’re aligned with state elections. But that also tells me something, and it tells me when more people vote—when more folks from North Long Beach or West Long Beach or Central Long Beach are given an opportunity or encouraged to vote, they’re a community who comes together and elects the first Black person to serve as mayor, and that just gives me so much pride.

HM: We’ve spoken a bit about the challenges Long Beach is facing right now. How do you feel about Rex’s ability to confront those challenges?

RG: I think that Rex was prepared to take on the challenges. There’s no question what our biggest challenges are. The single largest issue in front of us is our homelessness crisis. It’s a crisis for the entire state of California, every single city in the state. But if anybody has the experience and drive to take this on, it’s absolutely Vice Mayor Rebecca Richardson, and I’m confident he’s going to do everything he can to solve this, with a great City Council as well.

HM: When it comes to addressing the challenges Long Beach faces, you’ve spoken about the need for the federal government to step in and provide those large sums of money to be able to implement those huge projects. But beyond the infrastructure projects or the grants, I’m also really focused on making sure that we are representing the people of our community and our district. This is a community that values progress, that upholds everyone, that is centered on a progressive view of uplifting civil rights and voting rights and supporting the ability of women to have autonomy over themselves and making sure that we are protecting our democracy. These things are important to Long Beach, and these are things I plan on fighting for in Congress.

RG: Along with the health impacts, the pandemic has left serious challenges as it relates to the economy and safety. We have certainly bounced back with much of the job loss that we had. Most folks are back at work, and the job market is much better than it was, but it’s also left behind some challenges, particularly around folks who were already really struggling with housing insecurity and work, and we saw more folks fall into homelessness. We saw folks that were not able to recover, and that’s a real challenge that we have today as we move forward.

HM: When it comes to addressing some of these challenges that Long Beach continues to face, I’m curious to know how you’re thinking about continuing to serve the city, but as a member of Congress rather than as mayor. Are there any particular issues, or tasks available, where you expect that you’ll be able to help Long Beach in a way that you couldn’t as mayor?

RG: Working at a federal level is a different opportunity to get big things done. There’s an enormous opportunity to bring home significant federal resources to improve our ports, our infrastructure, our airport, to make sure communities in Long Beach and southeast L.A. have the resources that are necessary, particularly around focusing on environmental justice issues, cleaning the air, converting trucks to electric (fleets)—those are things that only Congress has the resources to do. I’ve known this as mayor. We can only do so much as a city, with our resources and budget. But we often need the federal government to step in and provide those large sums of money to be able to implement those huge projects.

HM: As far as where we are today, the pandemic is not completely over yet. And that’s definitely something I’ll continue to advocate for workers and would have voted for the amendment in front of Congress to provide seven days of paid sick leave. I think that’s the bare minimum of what we should do to get our rail workers who are working so hard every single day.

RG: Absolutely, a shutdown or a strike is important, but we also have to center workers and labor—make sure that people are being treated fairly.

HM: Looking back to Long Beach specifically, we have a new mayor who will be succeeding you—Rebecca Richardson, whom you endorsed, as well as a new City Council that will be sworn in soon. What are your thoughts on the results of those elections and what they mean for Long Beach?

RG: First, I’m really proud of Rex being elected mayor. He’s been just an excellent vice mayor for the city and a great leader and really just a great voice on issues around homelessness and building affordable housing.

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The agreement averted a rail strike but failed to provide workers with paid sick leave.

By Brandon Richardson

President Joe Biden signed legislation earlier this month to avert a rail strike that would have cost the U.S. economy billions of dollars after the Senate passed the item on Dec. 1.

The agreement will provide tens of thousands of rail workers with $4,000 pay increases over five years from 2020 through 2024, immediate payouts averaging $11,000 upon ratification and more time for the railroad workers to deploy for future surges.

Both groups have agreed to a full media blackout, but no strikes or slowdowns.

For over two years, a backlog of as many as 10,000 container ships waited off the California coast for their turn to dock and unload in the San Pedro-Bay ports complex, slowing deliveries and polluting the air. But as of Nov. 22, the backlog is no more. Since October 2020, the Marine Exchange of Southern California has tracked the number of container ships waiting at anchor off the coast or slow steaming toward the twin ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. From mid-October to February 2022, the backlog rose to 42 ships.

By June of that year, the backlog dropped down to a promising nine ships. In late summer, however, the backlog began to grow steadily. By January 9, 2022, there were 19 container ships waiting to access the ports.

Since its peak, the vessel backlog fell steadily. It has mostly been in the single digits since mid-September, and it reached zero for the first time in 25 months on Nov. 22.

The union represents over 40,000 rail workers today. The Associated Press contributed to this report.

The agreement averted a rail strike but failed to provide workers with paid sick leave.

By Brandon Richardson

While the Senate voted 80 to 15 to join the tentative agreement, it failed to pass the sick leave resolution with a vote of 53 to 47—the resolution needed 60 votes to pass.

"It is shocking and appalling that any member of Congress would cast a vote against any sort of provision that raises the standard of living for hard-working Americans," said Cardwell. "In fact, such a vote is nothing less than anti-American, an abdication of their oath of office and you are, in my eyes, unworthy of holding office.

The Association of American Railroads trade group, meanwhile, praised the Senate vote to impose the compromise deal that includes the biggest raises in more than four decades. Still, CEO Ian Jefferies acknowledged that many workers remain unhappy with working conditions. "Without a doubt, there is more to be done to further address our employees' work-life balance concerns, but it is clear this agreement maintains rail's place among the best jobs in our nation," Jefferies said.

The vote was the result of Biden imploring Congress to intervene in the stalemated negotiations between railroad operators and several major unions. In September, the Biden administration brokered a tentative agreement that was ratified by two unions.

One of the most politically powerful rail unions, however, rejected the deal along with three others. Despite the majority of unions ratifying agreements, all are working to honor the price if any union were to strike, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen President Dennis Pierce previously said.

A series of short strikes were planned to begin as early as last week, which could cost the U.S. economy upward of $2 billion per day, according to the Association of American Railroads. A rail strike would not only impact cargo trains but also short line, passenger and commuter trains.

In Long Beach, meanwhile, from 10% to 25% of cargo is transported by rail, and a work stoppage would have "a huge impact" on the goods movement nationwide, said Long Beach Executive Director Mario Cordero.

"Railways goods movement and labor are an inextricable part of the supply chain," Cordero said.

West Coast dockworkers also are in the midst of grueling labor negotiations that began in May, two months before their contracts expired in July. Negotiations between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association continue amid a media blackout, but no strikes or slowdowns have been announced.

The union, however, has weighed in several times regarding the rail worker dispute. Now that Biden has signed the Senate-approved agreement to the benefit of rail workers, ignoring the ILWU and pro-union advocates claims Congress has undermined union rights nationwide.

"Congress talks about ‘saving democracy’ at the ballot box, but they not totally undermined workplace democracy by imposing a contract that workers voted to reject," ILWU President Willie Williams said in a statement following the votes.

"It is wrong to impose a rejected contract, period." Adams continued. "Congress had the option to allow more time for the railroad workers to negotiate better benefits with their highly profitable employers, and they had the option to add paid sick days. There’s no excuse for taking away workers’ collective bargaining rights. Congress failed America’s workers today."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

2-year backlog at San Pedro Bay ports comes to an end

By Brandon Richardson

For over two years, a backlog of as many as 10,000 container ships waited off the California coast for their turn to dock and unload in the San Pedro-Bay ports complex, slowing deliveries and polluting the air. But as of Nov. 22, the backlog is no more.

Since October 2020, the Marine Exchange of Southern California has tracked the number of container ships waiting at anchor off the coast or slow steaming toward the twin ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles.

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By January 9, 2022, there were 19 container ships waiting to access the ports.

Since its peak, the vessel backlog fell steadily. It has mostly been in the single digits since mid-September, and it reached zero for the first time in 25 months on Nov. 22.

"Whether at sea or on land, everyone working in the supply chain deserves credit for other containers, reducing the market share of the ports of LA and Long Beach, which have regularly ranked in the first and second busiest in the nation, respectively, for years."

The port of Los Angeles has had more market share than any other U.S. port.

The loss of market share is now threatening the twin ports’ positions. In October, for the third month in a row, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey moved more containers than either of the West Coast giants. November data was not available at press time.

The East Coast port moved 392,438 20-foot-equivalent units (the standard measure of a shipping container). LA and Long Beach, meanwhile, moved 865,448 and 875,249 TEUs, respectively.

Prior to the recent change in rankings, New York/New Jersey had only moved more cargo than the twin ports twice in the last four years—in February and March 2020, when Chinese ports closed amid the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We do everything in our power to get that cargo back," Port of LA Executive Director Gene Seroka said in an email. Seroka noted that transpacific trade is crucial for the U.S. economy.

More than 50% of imports into the twin ports come from China.

No barriers to the heights our can reach
Long Beach Tree Lighting Shatters Pre-Pandemic Attendance Record

Collaborative Publicity Efforts Attracted 6,000 People

In Mayor Robert Garcia’s words, the 8th Annual Tree Lighting was “the best one ever” with a record-breaking 6,000 people in attendance. Thousands of Long Beach residents, family, friends and visitors gathered to witness the Mayor light the four-story, 67-foot tall artificial Christmas tree – the tallest in the Los Angeles region – and enjoy a spectacular fireworks show set off from the roof of the iconic theater.

“This was the biggest crowd we’ve ever had. We heard from many of the attendees that this is going to become an annual holiday tradition for their families,” said Steve Goodling, President & CEO of the Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB). “At the end of that day, that’s why we put on this free event – to bring joy to our community.” The CVB and Long Beach Bureau (CVB). “At the end of that day, that’s why we put on this free event – to bring joy to our community.”

The exceptional attendance – beating the pre-pandemic best of 5,000 attendees – for this “Night at the North Pole” was the result of a collective effort by six entities dedicated to the City and Downtown Long Beach area. Leveraging its in-house media team of videographers, photographers, writers and social media experts, the CVB created original content promoting the tree lighting, posting and sharing content several times a week following Thanksgiving.

The organization shared its content with the City of Long Beach, Downtown Long Beach Alliance, Office of Mayor Robert Garcia, and Downtown-area Councilwomen Mary Zendejas and Cindy Allen for a collective day-of, final push across Instagram, Twitter and Facebook - reaching a combined audience of 437,000 accounts. Email newsletters were also sent to get the word out.

Falling snow capped off the official ceremony, which also included performances by Long Beach Ballet, So Cal Vocale, and other local groups, leaving attendees to roam a winter wonderland complete with train rides, Mr. and Mrs. Claus, selfie stations, food trucks and more.

“The goal was to get the word out to as many residents and visitors as possible,” said Goodling. “We certainly achieved that – but we also proved what we can do for the good of our community when we work together to share information and share the stories of Long Beach.”

In addition to robust organic content marketing, the CVB also relied upon its broadcast news connections to attract multiple news outlets to the event, with coverage by CBS 2/FOX 11, NBC 4, ABC 7 and KCAL 9, reaching a combined audience of more than 556,500 people. If this coverage had been purchased rather than earned, it would have cost about $277,300, according to the media analysis service, Critical Mention.

“Those news spots were a chance for people throughout the region to see the best Downtown Long Beach has to offer when we come together to celebrate community, joy, beauty, fun, and an incredible production - all in a safe environment,” said Goodling.

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Long Beach Airport to add 5 daily flights following annual noise budget review

By Brandon Richardson

Free more daily flights will be added at Long Beach Airport, for a total of 56, after it was determined noise levels were well below what is allowed under the facility’s strict noise ordinance, according to a city memo released earlier this month. The airport currently allows 55 daily flights, 24 of which are commercial and one that flies cargo. Of those 24, 14 are permanent—what is required by the ordinance—and 10 are supplemental, the latter of which can be adjusted up or down depending on annual noise budgets.

“The addition of five supplemental flight slots demonstrates compliance by our airlines to our noise ordinance, one of the strictest in the nation,” Airport Director Cynthia Guidry said in an email. “Because the carriers have significantly reduced late night operations, the noise budget analysis report allows us to add supplemental flight slots as an encouragement for them to operate at the lowest possible noise levels.”

Fewer late-night commercial operations are a leading factor for reduced noise, according to airport spokesperson Kate Koykendall. From Oct. 1, 2021, through Sept. 30, 2022, there were 5,786 late-night operations, compared to 6,683 during the same period in 2017—8% reduction.

JettBlue, formerly the leading carrier at the municipal airport, was notorious for late-night nonstop flights. The carrier departed Long Beach for good in October 2020.

The noise ordinance was first implemented in 1990 to limit air carrier flights to 15 per day, according to the city website. Two years later, airlines challenged the ordinance in federal court. A preliminary injunction making the minimum number of daily flights 18.

The city, wanting to avoid a task force, which recommended a daily flight limit of 48. In 1996, the City Council adopted a second noise control ordinance that limited flights to 12 per day.

The federal court once again stepped in, claiming the ordinance was too restrictive. The court ultimately ordered the city to allow a minimum of 48 flights per day.

In October 1999, the city and the airlines entered into a settlement, which was approved by the court seven months later. The settlement allowed the city to enact its current noise ordinance, which limits flights and prohibits operations between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. on penalty of fines.

The Dec. 1 memo notes that modifications to the noise ordinance always pose a risk that the entire ordinance could be rescinded. The city ordinance was created as an exemption from the Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1975, which prohibits airports from restricting noise generated by flights to less than 10,000. New flights to less than 300.

Long Beach is rated by the Federal Aviation Administration for far more flights than it currently allows, but it was grandfathered in due to its agreed-upon ordinance.

Under the noise ordinance, daily flight totals must be added or removed to ensure volumes don’t exceed the annual noise budget. An analysis of the 2021-22 noise year by Master Greene Associates, a division of Landrum & Brown, Inc., and Harris, Miller, Miller and Hanson, showed the airport operated below the noise budget at two remote monitoring terminals.

According to the analysis, one remote station used 53% of its budget, while the other used 67%.

Passenger traffic at LGB continues to follow the landscape of the pandemic, with numbers still far below pre-pandemic levels, the figure marks stable improvement.

In November, air traffic averaged 45% higher than 2021, 72% compared to 2019 and 94% higher than 2020. Pre-pandemic, the airport saw 1,000 flights a day, while today the city expects 600 to 700 per day. In November, 12% same period in 2019, according to data from the U.S. Transportation Department. Long Beach’s flights are among the highest in the nation.

The city, which has been working on an airport noise ordinance since 1975, would like to add supplemental flight slots as an encouragement for them to operate at the lowest possible noise levels.

“We wanted people to be able to order, sit down and be part of the community,” she said.

The dining process is unique because it is not only a source of revenue for the business, but also an opportunity to engage with the business’s staff. Customers can order online or at a row of tables situated in the first-floor retail space, where snacks and drinks can also be purchased.

You can place an order with any of the five current tenants, and when your order is ready, you’ll be notified by a screen next to the dining bell that alerts you to what locker your foods in.

Frisch said that there are plans for beer and wine to be sold for on-site consumption, but the applications for that permit is still being reviewed.

Additionally, the noise ordinance could be rescinded. The city memo notes the city’s noise ordinance has allowed the city to enact its current noise ordinance that limited flights to 41. In 1986, the city was rated by the Federal Aviation Administration for far more flights than it currently allows, but it was grandfathered in due to its agreed-upon ordinance.

In addition to the noise ordinance, Long Beach also has a master plan for noise reduction within 2.5% of pre-pandemic levels, its closest point since the industry came rolling in 2009.

During the noise year, air carriers operated an average of 48 flights per day, the city memo states. During the last quarter, carriers averaged 44 flights.

“If the average number of Air Carrier annual noise budget — and the noise budget at two remote monitoring terminals.”

During the last quarter, carriers averaged 44 flights. New flights to less than 300.

By Brandon Richardson

The Downtown Long Beach area has several new dining options—but their signage will be hard to find, since they will all be located inside a new ghost kitchen and food hall in the city’s East Village neighborhood.

Partake Collective opened last month downtown, on the corner of Fifth Street and Elm Avenue, and it already has five vendors occupying its nine commercial kitchen spaces—its nine food slots is a separate entity, and the other used 67%.

Vendors include a six-seat Asian-Japanese restaurant; a location a few blocks south on Elm Avenue, and one of the menus diners can order from. That District is joined by Mochi Dojo, a gourmet donut and dog food outfit, and Bubu Teriyaki, which offers Japanese-inspired Hawaiian food like pork Katsu bowls and beef teriyaki bulgogi sandwiches.

The Cave Prime Steak, another option at Partake, offers prime cuts like a 14-ounce New York strip and meaty sandwiches like its pulled pork nachos.

The commercial kitchen spaces, rates are hourly.

The commercial kitchen spaces, rates are hourly.

The Partake Collective, for example, has allowed Bubu Teriyaki, a small operator that started out as a food truck in Wilmingon, to broaden its reach in the region without having to secure a brick-and-mortar location in Long Beach. It also allows The Cave, which primarily works private catering events and the like, to use its nine commercial kitchen spaces and provide food to people in the neighborhood on their lunch breaks.

The rates can run from as little as $400 for six hours to as high as $15,000 for a month for the largest commercial kitchen, but the fees are also flexible to meet the needs of what a typical restaurant build-out might include.
We’re Golden.
Long Beach, California wins the gold, again.
The only city in the US to win “best” in their region for so many consecutive years.

We are excited to announce for the sixth consecutive year, Long Beach has received the prestigious Stella Award. Our Convention Center and CVB just won the top prize competing against the entire western region with major cities such as Las Vegas, Honolulu, Portland, San Francisco, San Diego and Los Angeles.

We thank our amazing partners: hotels, venues and city staff, for their dedication to providing award-winning hospitality. Day after day, year after year, they help make Long Beach and each visitor’s stay a success on every level. Congratulations to the team!

visitlongbeach.com  \(\text{VisitLB} \)
In our last edition, we kicked off an ongoing series looking at real estate in Long Beach’s different ZIP codes with a peek into the 90802, 90803 and 90804 areas. Today, we’ll continue the tour with 90805 and 90806.

90805

The 90805 ZIP code taking in North Long Beach, aka Northtown, J-Town or the Northside, is the last frontier for new home buyers in this city, with houses generally priced at least $400,000 lower than in most of the other ZIP this city, with houses generally priced at least $100,000 lower than in most of the other ZIPs.

This home on Daisy Avenue in the 90806 is priced at nearly $1 million. The curb appeal is excellent, showing off its suburban feel—even though it’s not far from the hum of the city.

The median house price in the 90805, according to Realtor.com, is about $650,000. While homes in the area tend to be less expensive than its neighbors in the southern and eastern parts of town, the prices have been increasing in value at a similar rate, just lagging behind on the high end.

Our first home, at 5470 Cerritos Ave. in the Lindbergh neighborhood, is best described as purple. It’s more purple than it is large, with two bedrooms and one bath taking up 924 square feet. The fact that it’s been on the market for more than two months might tell you something about homebuyers’ feelings about purple houses. And there’s little escape from the hue once inside, as one of the bedrooms is painted a relentless shade of purple.

Still, if you can get past that—and, remember, painting is a viable option—it’s a nice little house for a couple or small family. A dog, too, will have a blast in the fairly large backyard with lots of grass, broken up by a brick patio.

The house has some recent upgrades, including a newer roof and windows. Just off the kitchen is a dining nook, which would be described as a breakfast nook if the house included a dining room.

It’s listed by Lilliana Ramirez at $675,000. Next on the color spectrum, we have a blue house at 3410 E. Harding St. It’s a great location if you like recreation. This three-bedroom, one-bath home is just two houses from DeFord Park and the LA River, and only a couple of blocks from Houghton Park and its frequent neighborhood and citywide events. You’ll be able to hear the Uptown Jazz Festival from your large backyard that’s perfect for entertaining with a patio and large grassy area.

The curb appeal is excellent, showing off the home’s front porch that leads right into a handsome living room with oak hardwood floors. The kitchen is ample-size with lots of cabinets for storage.

The home has a rear detached two-car garage. The house is listed by Cindy Unlag of @364,300.

As you move to the eastern part of the 90805, close to the border of Lakewood, the homes get a little more, a little bigger, a little pricier.

A home at 350 Poppy St. is a quick stroll from the Lakewood city limits, and it’s big enough for a family, with three bedrooms and two baths and over 1,917 square feet on a quiet street.

The upgraded living room features a custom travertine fireplace and French doors leading to the family room, which also has a fireplace, then to the formal dining room and on into the kitchen with more labor-saving features: self-closing cabinets and drawers. Your working days are over with this place.

The house is listed by Stacy Schultz at a rather robust $800,000. Pretty picture for Northtown, but, then, it’s close to an In-N-Out.

90806

The 90806 ZIP code has, for years, been nearly 500 days.

The property is offered by Shannon Paul at $799,000.

“Endless possibilities” is the red-flag-raising phrase used to describe our third home at 340 E. Sunrise Blvd. “Nerds upgrades” is just one of the endless possibilities for this 1925 three-bedroom, one-bath house in the Sunrise Boulevard Historic District. It’s difficult to know where to begin other than just running around picking things up and doing a lot of scrapping. If you’re into a more country-rustic lifestyle, you might not need to do much more than that. Though the house itself is fastned at about 1,200 square feet, the lot is a largeish 5,041 square feet that will allow you to do ranching or farming or other agricultural hobbies out back while relaxing in a covered covered patio/barn.

The 1925 house is listed by Richard Rodriguez at $975,000. Is it a fair price? For far, there’ve been no takers, with the place on the market for nearly 500 days.

A home for fans of Prince, eggplant or the Minnesota Vikings on Cerritos Avenue.

A home in the Sunrise Boulevard Historic District.

This home at 340 E. Harding St. is close to North Long Beach’s major parks. The property is surrounded by a white picket fence. It’s a nice little house leading to a dining room.

Fully remodeled, the house has a large covered patio with a ceiling fan out back and a mature mango tree in the front yard. The bathrooms are finished with subway tile, and the front of the property is surrounded by a white picket fence. It’s a picture of the American dream.

The property is offered by Shannon Paul at $799,000.

A large home on Poppy Street near the Lakewood border is listed at $800,000.

A home in the Sunrise Boulevard Historic District.

This large home on Poppy Street near the lake border is listed at $800,000.

As you move to the eastern part of the 90805, close to the border of Lakewood, the homes get a little more, a little bigger, a little pricier.

A home near the Lakewood city limits, and it’s big enough for a family, with three bedrooms and two baths and over 1,917 square feet on a quiet street.

The upgraded living room features a custom travertine fireplace and French doors leading to the family room, which also has a fireplace, then to the formal dining room and on into the kitchen with more labor-saving features: self-closing cabinets and drawers. Your working days are over with this place.

The house is listed by Stacy Schultz at a rather robust $800,000. Pretty picture for Northtown, but, then, it’s close to an In-N-Out.

90806

The 90806 ZIP code has, for years, been nearly 500 days.

The property is offered by Shannon Paul at $799,000.

“Endless possibilities” is the red-flag-raising phrase used to describe our third home at 340 E. Sunrise Blvd. “Nerds upgrades” is just one of the endless possibilities for this 1925 three-bedroom, one-bath house in the Sunrise Boulevard Historic District. It’s difficult to know where to begin other than just running around picking things up and doing a lot of scrapping. If you’re into a more country-rustic lifestyle, you might not need to do much more than that. Though the house itself is fastned at about 1,200 square feet, the lot is a largeish 5,041 square feet that will allow you to do ranching or farming or other agricultural hobbies out back while relaxing in a covered covered patio/barn.

The 1925 house is listed by Richard Rodriguez at $975,000. Is it a fair price? For far, there’ve been no takers, with the place on the market for nearly 500 days.

A home for fans of Prince, eggplant or the Minnesota Vikings on Cerritos Avenue.

A home in the Sunrise Boulevard Historic District.

This home at 340 E. Harding St. is close to North Long Beach’s major parks. The property is surrounded by a white picket fence. It’s a nice little house leading to a dining room.

Fully remodeled, the house has a large covered patio with a ceiling fan out back and a mature mango tree in the front yard. The bathrooms are finished with subway tile, and the front of the property is surrounded by a white picket fence. It’s a picture of the American dream.

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The Pacific Ballroom generates $406 million economic impact over 10 years

$10 million investment creates sophisticated economic engine

A decade ago, the City of Long Beach invested $10 million to transform the iconic Long Beach Arena – once home to the likes of Elvis, Led Zeppelin and the NCAA basketball tournament – into a chic special event space. The investment helped attract extra conventions to the City of Long Beach and provide nonprofits with the opportunity to utilize unique venues to raise money for their causes.

The investment created the Pacific Ballroom, which has since generated more than $406 million in new business because of the special nature of this unique meeting space – and the cost savings it offers convention and event planners. Kleinhenz & Associates, a Long Beach-based economics firm, generated the impact analysis.

They have everything right there, so you don’t have to buy anything else,” Steen said. “They already have everything you need to create a unique space. We’d have to go out and contract for all of that at other locations. All of it is really what makes Long Beach stand out, because they have a real philosophy when it comes to meetings, unlike anywhere else. You know, in Long Beach, they get it.”

– Scott Steen, Executive Director of the American Physiological Society.

That transformation has not only proved attractive, but cost-effective to event planners, since the Convention Center’s wide supply of fixtures and furnishings as well as its extensive array of available lighting, sound system, etc. are available at no further costs. Numerous system, etc. are available at no further costs. Exceptional sound systems and signature, color-changing globes.

Most convention centers are big gray boxes,” said Scott Steen, executive director of the American Physiological Society. “Long Beach creates these spaces that not only welcome you but are where you want to stay. There’s great art on the walls, great lighting, soft seating, everything to facilitate human connection.”

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The ultimate renovation would include electronically operated curtains that descend to conceal upper seating, a sophisticated steel-tension grid that supports LED and stage lighting as well as exceptional sound systems and signature, color-changing globes.

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City Council, not community groups, could approve permanent parklets under revised rules

By Jason Ruiz

Long Beach could soon change its rules governing permanent parklets as the final step to the city Council if a proposed installation meets with community resistance.

The changes are coming after the council voted last week to revise a 2018 ordinance that, as written, put the onus on approving or denying permanent parklets—which are required for other city commissions. The council must get approval from “community businesses seeking to install parklets outside Legends sports bar on Second Street permanent.

process is ill-defined, it essentially gives veto power to groups like neighborhood associations, according to City Commissioner Stuart Price, who proposed changing the rule.

“I believe it leaves a big flaw because that wasn’t the intention,” Price said.

Council members and some members of the public said the current process has caused confusion about who qualifies as a “community group” because the process isn’t clearly defined in the ordinance.

“I love pugs. Say I get 10 of my favorite pugs into this day and age, knowing that people were having positive experiences, that people were having something different,” said Ken Price, president of the Belmont Shore Business Association. Older people, though, regarded the approval process should remain with residents instead of ultimately ending up in front of the City Council.

Julie Dean, president of the Belmont Shore Residents Association, one of the groups that could block a parklet under the current ordinance, pointed to a petition with 570 signatures during a public comment calling for the council to vote against changing the rules.

“They all oppose permanent parklets in our neighborhood. They signed because the issue matters deeply to all of us and our quality of life,” Dean said. “How many residents is enough to hear and heed their concern?”

Belmont Shore residents have been among the loudest opponents of parklets in recent months, saying that the installations that allow restaurants to extend their footprint into the street have created traffic and safety issues, taken away valuable parking spaces and led to quality-of-life issues for residents with live near parklets on Second Street.

There are currently over a dozen permanent parklets in the application process in the Belmont Shore area and another five across the entire city. The permanent installations have to meet a higher standard of design and safety than the temporary parklets the city allowed during the pandemic to prep up restaurants by allowing them more outdoor dining. At the height of the use, there were over 120 such parklets.

Under the ordinance changes, Price proposed, community input would still be weighed when a business applies for a permanent parklet, but it would be one of the factors considered by the city, not the factor that determines if an application can move forward.

“Because some are in the Coastal Zone, which is subject to additional regulations set by the California Coastal Commission, they would also require a local coastal permit, a process that the city would administer but would provide another platform for public input. Not all businesses will be eligible for a permanent installation, and the ones that are must be pre-approved by the city to ensure that they’re not blocking public utilities or causing other safety hazards.

While the proposed language has not been drafted, Vanessa Barra, a deputy city attorney, said that it could include more requirements for the public to see how they can have an opportunity to weigh in on the application. The Public Works Department would then make a recommendation to approve or deny an application with those receiving community pushback going to the City Council for final approval.

A revised ordinance is expected to return to the City Council in mid-January. Multiple meetings will be canceled in the coming weeks because of the holidays, and the annual state of the city, generally held in early January, could push the vote to Jan. 17.

Businesses that have already applied for a permanent installation will be able to keep their temporary structures through the end of January after the council’s vote last week.

How 2 new Long Beach commissions will be implemented

By Jason Ruiz

Two ballot measures that Long Beach voters approved in the Nov. 8 elections are slated to overhaul a pair of city commissions—the Board of Water Commissioners will oversee all public utilities, while a new Police Oversight Board will replace the current Police Complaint Commission. But it will be a year-long process for both to be implemented.

The first comes as a result of the approval of Measure BR. In addition to allowing for a public utility commission to oversee the management of water, sewer and gas services in the city, the ballot measure will also merge the city’s water and gas departments.

Combining the utilities under one commission and one department was promoted by city officials as a way to make their operations more efficient.

“It’s unclear what the new department will be called, but Lauren Howland, a spokesperson for the Water Department, said it’s likely to be something simple, like “Long Beach Utilities” rather than the WDWM. The board will be appointed by the charter amendment, which was the Public Utilities Department.

The current Board of Water Commissioners, meanwhile, will be renamed the Public Utilities Commission and will oversee the new Public Utilities Department, also created through the ballot measure.

Existing commissioners will be allowed to remain on place for the remainder of their existing terms. When those terms are up, the mayor and City Council will appoint and approve replacements, like they do for other city commissions.

The five members of the new utilities commission can serve up to two five-year terms, similar to the term limits needed for the current water commissioners. Time served by current members of the Board of Water Commissioners will still be counted, though they are term limits after the new commission is created.

Howland said the official meeting of the Public Utilities Commission would be held sometime in January.

The new Public Utilities Commission, for its part, will be in charge of Measure E.

This commission will take a little bit longer to be implemented. City officials estimate it could take upward of 14 months to hire a director and staff for the commission, appoint new commissioners, secure funding and work with the city police and employee unions on how the new panel will affect employees.

A police-member commission will replace the existing seven-member Police Complaint Commission. City Manager Tom Medica said existing commissioners will be replaced by new members and that complaints submitted by the end of 2022 will still be heard by new appointees once the seven-person panel is established.

The overhaul, though, will also have a significant impact on as well as people that can visit our city.”

While the new measures were a welcome upgrade, Studio One Eleven’s marketing director, Sean Fennerty-Pyne and veteran urban designer John Price found that the space was still missing a sense of community and an opportunity for daily activities.

Through $322,000 in funds from a Knight Foundation grant managed by the Long Beach Community Foundation, which was distributed to three organizations including Studio One Eleven, Fennerty-Pyne and Patel began to examine the park’s history, in order to determine the park’s future.

For some Long Beach residents, Lincoln Park has become associated with an uptick in crime and homeless—“the park was even vandalized within days of its grand reopening in February. But Fennerty-Pyne and Patel were undeterred by the challenges.

“How do you take some of the great history of the park and bring it into this day and age, knowing that...
Lincoln Park

Lincoln Park is a neighborhood in Long Beach, California. The park is located in the central area of the city and is known for its vibrant arts and cultural scene. It has a strong sense of community and is a popular destination for locals and visitors alike. The neighborhood is home to a variety of businesses, including art galleries, boutiques, and eateries, as well as several parks and recreational areas. Lincoln Park is a great place to live, work, and play, and is known for its diverse population and rich history. The park has some challenges, such as high temperatures during the summer months, but these are being addressed through a variety of initiatives, including improvements to the park's irrigation system and increased tree plantings to provide shade. Overall, Lincoln Park is a welcoming and dynamic community that is constantly evolving and growing.
Long Beach Airport adds to list of terminal improvements, costs increase by $12M

By Jason Ruiz

Long Beach Airport is expanding the scope of the improvements it’s making to its facilities, with plans to add a 30-foot-wide video board, upgraded restrooms and new infrastructure to allow skycaps to perform curbside check-in.

Additional improvements to the airport will include customised bench seating in the airport’s plaza and the installation of terrazzo flooring to match the flooring of the new ticketing lobby that opened in April.

The new anticipated cost of the Phase II Terminal Area Improvements project is $104 million, according to city documents. The City Council approved a $12 million increase to the project contract last week, but most of that funding will go toward increased costs from pandemic-induced postponements and inflation.

“The efficiencies of having [construction crews] do multiple things at once weren’t there, and when you draw it out, it gets more expensive,” said Kate Kuykendall, the airport’s spokesperson.

The Phase II project was approved in 2018, but before much of the work could begin, the COVID-19 pandemic cut into the project’s budget by dramatically reducing passenger activity, which is a major source of revenue for the airport.

The project has been buoyed by bonds issued by the airport, grants from the federal government and a rebound in passenger traffic.

Kuykendall said that the new video board being installed at the baggage claim would provide visuals to enhance the passenger experience while people wait in line for their luggage, and it could be used for the airport’s art programs.

The improvements to the historic terminal building’s bathrooms will help alleviate some of the issues the airport has been seeing with old pipes that need to be replaced, Kuykendall said.

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Thank you, Mayor Garcia, for your many years of support of the Port of Long Beach as we have built a landmark new bridge and the most advanced cargo terminal in the Western Hemisphere, seen record cargo growth and faced and overcome unprecedented challenges. We look forward to your leadership as you enter this new phase of your career and wish you the best in the years ahead.