Danielle Curtiss, exhausted and angry, was consumed with a question: why should it be so hard for a mother to help her son?

At 18, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia. During the next two years, he was either hospitalized or placed on involuntary psychiatric holds some 20 times. He repeatedly threatened to kill himself. “I don’t want to live anymore,” he would say.

Over the years, Curtiss says she filed at least a dozen missing person reports after he ran away from home or bolted from treatment programs, often taking shelter in homeless encampments. After leaving one program in Downey, he walked 50 miles to Glendora, where he was hospitalized for a week due to renal failure from extreme dehydration.

Curtiss says her son has been arrested multiple times for non-violent offenses, with the exception of two. Once as a juvenile and then as an adult, he was taken into custody for battery against her. She told police he had, among other acts of violence, slapped and choked her.

Dating back to middle school, he’d been prescribed an array of psychopharmaceuticals but mostly stuck to weed, which he started smoking at 12, eventually moving on to meth and ketamine as he got older.

For these reasons and dozens of others, Curtiss, who is a nurse, says she became convinced that the only way her son could be saved was if he was placed under an involuntary mental health conservatorship, giving her access to his records and control of his care. She believed he surely met the requirements because he was gravely disabled, a potential danger to himself and others.

But as if her son’s troubles weren’t painful enough to face, she would now be forced to confront a mental health system that left no statutory pathway for a despondent mother or other loved one to obtain the kind of highly restrictive court-ordered conservatorship she was seeking.

Currently, under state law, only a physician in a hospital can initiate that process, which requires strong communication between public and private medical providers and a willingness by hospitals, insurers and doctors to take action—all of which are in short supply.

As homelessness rises among severely mentally ill individuals, she found herself at ground zero in a growing debate in California over whether restrictions for such measures should be loosened to confront the new realities on the street or kept strict to guard against potential violations of an individual’s rights.

A clash of rights and realities

Despite wide acknowledgement of the conservatorship system’s shortcomings in addressing rising
Health Care .................. 3
The system is designed for people to give up .......... Cover

CSULB expert says long COVID research is limited for now. What we know .............. 3

Medi-Cal patients may have to fill out renewal forms to keep coverage .......... 3

Long Beach could look to improve access to mental health services .......... 5

Newswatch ................. 9
City in talks to buy Long Beach Rescue Mission property .......... 9

Was your trash pickup day skipped? Long Beach says it’s due to staffing shortages .......... 10

Belmont Brewing Company, Legend’s get permanent parklet approval—but residents say they will appeal ........ 11
1st Long Beach commercial space station to Launch as early as 2025 .......... 11

For maximum profit in selling your house, hire a stager to ‘hip it up’ .......... 12

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CSULB expert says long COVID research is limited for now. What we know

Some 27% have reported significant symptoms that hinder their day-to-day activities, but much remains unknown about chronic COVID.

By Tess Kozloff

Even as policies have shifted back toward a pre-pandemic sense of normalcy, much is still unknown about the long-term effects of the coronavirus. For those suffering from chronic COVID in particular, research is still developing, and many questions, such as why only some people suffer from long-term symptoms and how they can navigate a diagnosis and treatment, remain unanswered. Initially, COVID-19 was seen as an acute disease, with a rapid

CSULB expert says long COVID research is limited for now. What we know

By Alicia Robinson

While COVID-19 is still around, most of the emergency declarations and special provisions that attended the last three years are winding down—and for anyone whose health insurance comes from Medi-Cal, that means filing paperwork to keep your coverage.

Before the pandemic, people covered by Medi-Cal, which insures low-income families, normally had to provide information every year to ensure they were still eligible. But federal legislation in 2020 allowed states to put that annual process on hold to keep people from losing their insurance during widespread public health emergencies.

Now it’s starting again, and it will likely affect thousands of Long Beach residents, who need to make sure the county social services office has their current address—and if they get a health insurance renewal form in a yellow envelope, to complete it and turn it in.

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Los Angeles County started processing renewals April 1, but Katala Lee Romers, who is director of Medi-Cal product management for L.A. Care, said everyone’s renewal date is different, and it could take 14 months to get through all members.

(L.A. Care covers about 106,000 Medi-Cal eligible residents of the county.)

“We are trying to raise awareness and not panic,” said Phinney Ahn, a spokeswoman for the health plan.

L.A. Care covers about 106,000 people in Long Beach, according to a spokeswoman for the health plan. A small number Medi-Cal recipients will get automatically re-enrolled, but L.A. Care is estimating up to 15% of its members could face disenrollment.

Staff at L.A. Care have been trying to get word out to people since before April 1, and Ahn said they’re stressing four points:

• Make sure the county social services department has up-to-date contact information so you’ll get any

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Rocket Lab puts 2 storm-tracking satellites into orbit for NASA

Beer and wine sales expected to fill out renewal forms

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Long Covid
as of January 2023, 11% of people Alaei said. Malaise and fatigue. Typically patients report feeling or memory-related brain issues, different parts of the body, such the immune system, Alaei said. It can be an overreaction of the until they activate later. Sometimes after four weeks. Some people may that they have different contributing details beyond that are still relatively unclear, Alaei said.

For some, infection continues by two years later, the proportion of this population learned . . . how we could prevent the long run, the same amount of research will be dedicated to the long COVID, how many times they may have had it and the severity of the cases, along with what medications were taken, but some people experienced asymptomatic cases and did not test, while others may have attributed their symptoms to a cold or the flu, making meeting a diagnosis even more difficult, Alaei said. “But I’m optimistic,” said Alaei. Within six months to a year, he hopes that more information—and more funding, will be available, he said. “This is a kind of chicken and egg—how can we get those solutions when there is no clinical trial,” Alaei said. “This is a lesson learned . . . how we could prevent the proportion of this population not to be exposed or infected.” At the start of the pandemic, countries had to juggle which approach to take, and many governments, including within the United States, politicized non-political health concerns, Alaei said. Alaei, who has focused his research on how outcomes have differed in Democrat- versus Republican-led states. After a year and a half of research, Alaei and a team of researchers have learned . . . how we can get those solutions when there is no clinical trial, Alaei said. “We are missing most of those who are struggling,” Alaei said. In February 2021, the National Institutes of Health announced a $3.3 billion initiative over four years to study chronic COVID, providing a promising avenue to learning more about who long COVID impacts and how to treat it. But more than two years later, the funding has yet to result in a clinical trial, Alaei said. “The money was allocated, still, we don’t know what is the main contributing factor, and we know there are lots of people who are struggling with chronic COVID,” Alaei said. Without a clinical trial, it is impossible to make evidence-based decisions regarding treatments, Alaei said. Currently, health care providers are able to make recommendations to manage symptoms, hopefully reducing the severity of the disease, and encouraging vaccination, did make a difference in outcomes. Rates of infection as well as deaths due to COVID-19 were higher in Republican-led states, he said. “This is a lesson for the future occasions when we have some outbreaks or pandemics,” Alaei said. “We should be unbiased and apolitical and rely on evidence. And I think that’s the big lesson we learned and how we should allocate our budgets.”

While these years later, there is a sense of pandemic fatigue, health literacy for the general population is necessary, and it is still important to take preventive measures, Alaei said. During the first year or two of the pandemic, more people dedicated themselves to studying COVID-19, but it is unclear if on the long run, the same amount of research will be dedicated to studying coronavirus, Alaei said. “COVID is not over . . . We get new mutations, new variants of COVID,” said Alaei. “So we have to be prepared and try to do some of the research that we used to make it part of our habits . . . particularly if we will travel to other countries.”

Alaei urged anyone who experiences symptoms to wear a mask, and for everyone, especially those age 65 and over, to get vaccinated and boosted, which includes protection against newer variants. 

Health Services Director Kelly Crispy speaks at a press conference during which officials announced the results of the 2023 homeless point-in-time count.

Navigating the labyrinth of mental health services providers can be frustrating, if not impossible, for those seeking help. To try to bridge that gap, Long Beach, which is currently limited by state laws on what services it can provide, could look to boost connect between providers, according to a new report. The report, “Developing a Robust Mental Health System in Long Beach,” was authorized by the City Council in November 2021, when it asked the city to look at ways of improving mental health service capacity in Long Beach. It details the challenges of navigating the current system, which is full of acronyms for various county departments and providers as well as limitations depending on age, gender and whether or not a person has insurance. The roadblocks and gaps within the system exist as the prevalence of mental health conditions continues to increase in the region. A 2018 survey found that 44% of adults reported having anxiety or depression, according to the report. A survey of Long Beach residents found that nearly 16% of 18-year-olds reported not having a mental health provider for 14 days or more, with the highest rates being in Central Long Beach. However, actually bringing mental health services under the roof of the city’s Health Department would be costly and could require legislative changes, which is why the city could instead focus on being a better facilitator that connects people with other service providers, according to the report. The City Council discussed the report at a meeting on May 2, but Kelly Colopy, the director of Health and Human Services, said that it’s not likely that the city will pursue creating its own mental health system or even become a lender that works through the county’s Department of Mental Health.

“To open a system would be quite costly for the city to recreate what
mental illness among the unhoused. Recent legislative efforts to reform the 50-year-old law that is the basis for LPS conservatorships have been stymied. Health conservatives have a few allies.

Strong pushback over the years has come from those who fear the state could regress to the era before 1967, when tens of thousands of people were locked away in state psychiatric hospitals—poorly staffed, subjected to experiments and suffering.

“Conservatorship is the most extreme form of deprivation of basic rights, aside from the death penalty,” Susan Mirman, director of legal advocacy for the American Civil Liberties Union, said recently.

Reforms advocates, meanwhile, say that homelessness has reached critical mass and the public needs to face reality.

"Conservatorship is an unavoidable component of our response to the current crisis in mental health care," said Lauren Grunberg, executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, which supports reforming conservatorship requirements to make them less restrictive.

The kind of conservatorship Curtis was seeking was created by the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, or LPS, which was passed in 1950 and is in place for people with developmental disabilities, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. The law allows courts to appoint conservators to make decisions on behalf of adults who are unable to make decisions for themselves.

Although about 120,000 people in Los Angeles County suffer from severe mental illness during the year, only the county’s largest hospitals—Long Beach Memorial Medical Center, St. Mary Medical Center, Metro Health Care Network hospitals and the VA Hospital in West Los Angeles—have full-time psychiatrists. The others don’t have psychiatrists on staff. The only psychiatrist on staff at the VA Hospital in West Los Angeles is just 15 minutes away by car.
information you need or forms to fill out; 
- You can make changes, get information and fill out renewal forms online at www.beneficials.com.
- Check the mail for a renewal notice in an envelope encrypted with a unique code.
- And if you receive a packet, fill it out.

They’re also heard of people being asked by a phone call to renew their coverage, which Medi-Cal providers don’t do. “Watch out for scammers – there is no cost to renew your Medi-Cal,” Ahn said.

• You can make changes, get information and fill out renewal forms online at www.beneficials.com.

Ahn said if people miss their renewal deadline, it’s especially challenging for people who may have had their coverage for several years and are not actively monitoring their health care.

Continued from page 3

Medi-Cal

Continued from page 3

the county already has,” Colopy said. It could also require a change to state law, which currently directs state funding to counties, which then pass it along to service providers like nonprofits that county Health Department employees try to connect people with when they’re seeking help.

Becoming a vendor is possible but it would require the county to apply for direct Medi-Cal funding to offer some services directly, and it would likely require general fund dollars to be put up as a match to receive that funding. The department is now entirely grant-funded, and got $105.5 million (of its $148 million budget this year) from the general fund.

“It would be far more than that for us to run our own system going forward,” Colopy said.

Colopy said the city wants to focus instead on creating connections between people and providers and also improve how local providers are able to access funding, something that is difficult and can be confusing, the report said.

“Organizations need to leverage what exists,” Colopy said, adding that the city also would like to find a way to access additional funding to boost its delivery. “The thing that slowed us up is that there is no coordination at the LA County level for the city of Long Beach.”

Providing technical assistance for those providers interested in applying for funding or grants is among the short-term solutions the report lists along with developing a decision tree for connecting people to services, hiring more people with lived experiences and partnering with Chance to Change’s Rapp’s “My State of Mind” project to be the West Coast partner city.

The rapper’s nonprofit “SocialWorks” operates the My State of Mind project in Cook County, Illinois. One of the program’s initiatives is a guidebook to help connect people to mental health services near the rapper’s hometown of Chicago.

Colopy said that making it easier to access mental health is almost as important as increasing the amount of services that are available for people who need it.

“When people speak about increasing access to mental health, you think you just need to open new spaces, but there’s so much more involved,” she said. “The reason why we see so many folks that don’t have treatment is trying to access housing, so they feel they can’t get the support they need. But it’s also about having a better system of care.”

Continued on page 15

Jeff Levine, executive director of the Long Beach Rescue Mission, stands in front of a building that could be used to the city.

Jeff Levine, the executive director of Long Beach Rescue Mission, says there are currently three offers on the table for the property, including one from the city of Long Beach. Although none are close to the asking price of $15 million.

Negotiations are underway, so neither Levine nor representatives for the city would speak about the specifics of a potential sale. But a deal could be beneficial to both sides.

Long Beach tries to secure shelter space under its state of emergency on homelessness and the Rescue Mission looks to expand its services.

Current negotiations on the city’s sale, the benefits of purchasing the property are clear. Long Beach’s homeless population grew 6.5% this year, according to the annual homeless count. City officials touted the single-digit rise as a sign of significant progress after last year’s count found the homeless population soared 16% from 2020 to 2021.

Still, Mayor Richardson acknowledged more work has ahead. “While the slowdown in growth reflected in the point-in-time count is encouraging, we must remain focused on the urgent need to address the systemic issues of homelessness,” he said when addressing the annual count.

The city’s current lease on the Rescue Mission’s former thrift store is a small way to add more capacity to Long Beach’s homeless services network.

Levine, for his part, said he could not discuss the three bids on the table to buy the property, but the Mission finalized a short-term lease with the city in negotiations have continued.

The city is now paying about $3,000 per month for the site, with Long Beach also providing funding for onsite security and transportation. Based on the cost of this year’s winter shelter, it might appear that Long Beach is getting a bargain – it’s less than half the roughly $45,000 it would have previously spent to operate a homeless shelter program.

Levine said he hopes the sale will be finalized by the end of the short-term lease but if not, he said, the city will continue to rent it on a month-to-month basis until the property sells.

Rescue Mission’s future

Regardless of who ends up buying the property, Levine said there are several ideas on the table for how to spend the proceeds — as long as noted, the organization’s board will have the final say.

First, the money could be used for the development of Hosanna House, a proposed 35-bed facility for unhoused men with disabilities, in a strip mall on Anaheim Street. Unlike the organization’s Samantha House, which also houses men, Hosanna House will be wheelchair-accessible.

Progress to develop Hosanna House is already in the works, and the Mission says it has enough funding to nors to three years of operating expenses. Construction costs are estimated at $16 million, with $6 million
Was your trash pickup day skipped? Long Beach says it’s due to staffing shortages

**The shortage is pronounced, with an average of about 12 routes unfilled per day. That means that on Monday through Thursday, roughly one-quarter of the city’s 40-45 routes are unfilled. On Fridays, that number shifts to about one-third of about 30 routes.**

By Jason Ritz

Trash pickup could be delayed for some parts of Long Beach as the city’s Public Works Department tries to fill staffing holes that have been caused by illness, injuries and vacancies, according to the department.

The city issued a notice last week that certain areas of the city could expect their trash not to be picked up on its regularly scheduled day because of the ongoing shortage. Recycling, a service the city has contracted out, is not affected by the current staffing issues.

Diko Melkonian, deputy director for the department who oversees its environmental services bureau, said he’s currently using overtime to help fill the gaps, but pulling employees from one route means that other routes are left vacant.

“It’s like dominoes,” Melkonian said. The shortage is pronounced, with an average of about 12 routes unfilled per day. That means that on Monday through Thursday, roughly one-quarter of the city’s 40-45 routes are unfilled. On Fridays, that number shifts to about one-third of about 30 routes.

The pickup dates typically start in North Long Beach on Mondays, then move to East Long Beach and then to Downtown by the end of the week. But the routes are not equally distributed throughout the city. The department assigns specific routes to certain drivers, and if those drivers are out with an injury or illness, they’re unstaffed.

The city issued a notice last week that the affected area were in Central Long Beach, near Downtown and in Alamitos Beach.

Why certain parts of the city are being affected is as much about staffing as it is about the type of trucks being used, which is dictated by the size of the alleys that they must drive down. Tighter streets and alleys, like those near Downtown or in Naples, can’t handle the self-loading trucks that need clearance for the mechanical arms on the side of the truck to hook onto the bins and raise them over the truck to empty them.

Those areas require back-loaded trucks, Melkonian said, which need two people per truck, one driving and the other leading the bins into the back of the truck. Those routes have been hit harder because the routes serviced by self-loaders only require one person per route, Melkonian said.

Friday routes virtually all require back-loaded trucks, he said. The department is trying to ensure that the same routes are not consistently being skipped, but the limited staffing is requiring that some routes be skipped daily. That means other areas of the city could experience delays or missed pickup days, something that has already been reported by users on social media.

While the city completes the hiring process, current employees are working overtime, but Melkonian said that the city is also looking at short-term solutions like hiring for other department employees to help with the two-person trash routes.

“We’ve got to hand it to the team, they’re working very hard to get it done on time, on the day it’s scheduled to be picked up,” Melkonian said. The city isn’t short of ideas of when the staffing issue will be resolved.

For now, the city is asking people to leave their cans out at the street if they noticed they’re not picked up the day they expected it to be picked up, with the hopes that it will be picked up the next day. The department is asking residents not to fill them up and schedule a pickup until it’s been a few days past when the original pickup date of their trash is not picked up.

If you need to schedule a trash pickup, you can reach the Environmental Services Bureau at 562-570-2876.
For maximum profit in selling your house, hire a stager to ‘hip it up’.

A Real Estate designer located in Collin’s Estates, staged by Housebird designs.

Take a look at your house right now. I’m gonna be generous and say that it probably looks OK. You’re not an animal; you keep things up.

If you want to be picky about it, though, there’s always a possibility that there’s a spot that needs to be touched up with a half-dilled glass of tea—or maybe it’s brown.

There’s a dog bed in front of the fireplace and a dining room table with a home-office with a few notebooks and various work-related paper and pens along with a coffee cup with “I Hate Mondays” and a cartoon picture of a dog.

Would you list it for sale the way it looks right now? It’s acceptable to you; you’re comfortable with it, but what would a prospective home-buyer think if they visited it or even looked at pictures of it? On any number of real estate websites?

That’s why real estate agents will tell you to have your house professionally staged by experts who can both imagine what would be its best look and can see the house’s potential.

That’s why stagers tend to prefer working with homeowners who pay for the staging, which can run from contemporary and traditional styles, says, “When I see an unstaged house for sale it pains me,” says Realtor Kristi Faber Vento, who works with her mother, Carolyn Faber, listing prestige homes.

Explaining the process of staging, South says that her crew of three measures the spaces in the house and then, keeping in mind the home’s architecture and the demographic of likely buyers they go to their warehouse of furnishings in Signal Hill and come up with a design plan and then load up and load everything from art and pillows and sofas and dining room sets into trucks and drive back to the home, where they take about two days to stage the property.

The process of staging

South began specializing in the style, not only in pieces from her mother’s home on the Peninsula, “Wow what a great idea to take these ranchos and embrace them and make them look cool,” South added.

But what would a prospective home-buyer think if they visited it or even looked at pictures of it? On any number of real estate websites?

At the time, the Kramer family members were selling the Ranchos, but also in a similar Mid-Century modern style, too.

Aside from Mid-Mod staging, South also does other styles, including farmhouse, modern, and drive-back to the home, where they take about two days to stage the property.

Surprised at how often they work with people who specialize in coastal properties as well as contemporary and traditional styles, says, “When I ask agents how much staging increases the sales amount, they tell me they get about $30,000 to $75,000 more for small and medium-size houses and $200,000 to $300,000 more for large houses. It’s pretty consistent.”

There’s a much smaller issue than how many more parking spaces would be needed for additional customers, their families, and their communities.

The loss of the parking spaces will likely result in more walking, which is a much smaller issue than how many more parking spaces would be needed for additional customers, their families, and their communities.

The city Council voted in January to amend the language in its permanent parklet ordinance to remove the ability of the public to petition the commission to ban or lift parking space usage from the project. The commission had approved the use of the project in January.

The city Council voted in January to amend the language in its permanent parklet ordinance to remove the ability of the public to petition the commission to ban or lift parking space usage from the project. Once the project was approved, the city Council voted in January to amend the language in its permanent parklet ordinance to remove the ability of the public to petition the commission to ban or lift parking space usage from the project.

While Yohualitztli Ticitl, a Belmont Shore resident who has been opposed to both projects, who also need to park,” said Dean.

Participatory budgeting, known as PB, is a democratic process that empowers residents to decide how to spend public dollars, and in this case, youth who have the most to lose.

Youth shared concerns about the loss of the parklet in front of the 11th Street Office of Women’s Services and the loss of the parklet on the corner of 11th Street and Feather.

The nonprofit organizations submitted ideas for potential projects, and more than 65 ideas were proposed. Since then, selected ideas were refined and further developed in preparation for a day-long period, which officially began at 4 p.m. on May 4, with a voting event at Long Beach City College.

During the May 2 fair, youth and their families were given money with real estate representatives from each organization to talk with all segments of the youth about each project—which ran from a community health awareness and wellness program with Success in Challenges, to a program focused on suicide prevention and bullying through exploring entrepreneurship with Birthworkers of Color and California Families in Focus.

While Yohualitztli Ticitl, a Belmont Shore resident who has been opposed to both projects, who also need to park,” said Dean.

Youth shared concerns about the loss of the parklet in front of the 11th Street Office of Women’s Services and the loss of the parklet on the corner of 11th Street and Feather.

The nonprofit organizations submitted ideas for potential projects, and more than 65 ideas were proposed. Since then, selected ideas were refined and further developed in preparation for a day-long period, which officially began at 4 p.m. on May 4, with a voting event at Long Beach City College.

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The Space Station

The space station provides science, research and in-space manufacturing opportunities, the company stated. It provides 1,000 watts of power, 24/7 communications and up to 5,000 kilometers of pro-loaded cargo mass, according to the announcement. Other features include a large window dome for viewing and photography and internet via onboard Wi-Fi.

SpaceX will provide crew training for both missions.

Haven’s will act as an independent crewed space station before Vast realizes its ultimate goal of developing a crew-ready multi-module spinning artificial gravity space station. At that time, the Haven-1 module would become part of the larger station, which will be able to accommodate more than 40 people.

The larger space station is expected to launch aboard SpaceX’s Starship, the largest and most powerful rocket ever flown.

A heavy lift space vehicle has been in development since 2005. Despite Starship erupting in a ball of fire during its first test flight, SpaceX and other industry experts believe the mission has spurred progress because the rocket (flew it 2.4 miles up in four minutes) and because the purpose of the mission was data collection to know what does and does not work.

Due to some of the failures, including concrete being blasted up to 6.4 miles away and a park being set on fire, the historic mission was not warmly received by all. In fact, environmental groups saw the mission’s certification as an approval, the organization can lease and sell that property.

The company previously announced plans to grow its Long Beach workforce to 700 employees by the end of 2027, growth that will result in 675 people lose their jobs.

In fact, environmental groups hailed it as a success because the company was able to take a billion dollars in Congress and launch the satellites.

The company also secured an option with SpaceX for a second mission, VAST 2, in 2026.

Expected customers include “domestic and international space agencies and private individuals involved in science and philanthropic projects,” according to Vast.

A SpaceX Dragon spacecraft will transport the four-person crew to Haven-1. Vast is not publicly disclosing pricing information, which will be made available to clients only under nondisclosure agreements, spokesperson Karen Levine said. “Just exciting for us thinking about what we will that property we will be able to do in terms of development of our own programs.”

The Greek Bakery

The Greek Bakery is a fast-casual chain restaurant Nick the Greek will take over Pietris Bakery on Second Street in Belmont Shore, which he is opening this summer.

Nick the Greek replaces Pietris Bakery in Belmont Shore, opening set for June

The remaining projects would roll out over the next five years. Levine hopes that with the board’s approval, the organization can lease a medical building near the Mission. This facility would allow for physical therapy, later this year to house both men and women, and serve as a place to address people’s immediate needs.

Leasing the medical facility, Levine said, would allow the organization to better serve women experiencing homelessness by bringing the gap between living on the streets and renting into Lydia House, which is the Rescue Mission’s 50-bed facility for women. He noted that currently, the majority of the women the outreach team meets on the street are not ready for a space like Lydia House, but creating a high-tolerance program would allow for women in transition under the influence and work their way to sobriety and housing.

If approved, the Mission would also like to expand Lydia House. This project would level the small house that currently sits between the administrative offices and Lydia House on Pacific Avenue, just north of Anaheim. In its place, the Mission would build a three-story building with a total of 64 beds.

While negotiations are ongoing, it’s clear that the sale of the former thrift store at 702 W. Anaheim St. will open a new chapter for the Rescue Mission.

“This high revisit rate aims to provide more rapid updates on storm intensity and providing advance warning to those in storm paths, so it’s an immense privilege to have deployed these spacecraft to their precise orbits before the upcoming storm season,” Rocket Lab founder and CEO Peter Beck said in a statement.

The mission was the first of two for the constellation, which will be composed of four satellites. The May 7 launch delivered the satellites to a unique orbit 550 kilometers above the Earth’s surface.

Two more satellites are orbiting this orbit right now. In fact, this time over the tropics, non-storm about once an hour compared to twice an hour.

The TROPICS constellation has the real potential to save lives by providing more timely data about storm intensity and providing advance warning to those in storm paths, so it’s an immense privilege to have deployed these spacecraft to their precise orbits before the upcoming storm season.”

Rocket Lab’s first mission to orbit was in August 2018.

The May 7 launch was Rocket Lab’s fourth of the year and 36th since the first in May 2017. Since then, the company has delivered 161 satellites to orbit.

“Just with our outreach in the first quarter, we gave away 1,257 meals, provided 1,060カー and hypogae packages, 732 people living in tents received clothing,” Levine said. “It’s just exciting for us thinking about what we will that property we will be able to do in terms of development of our own programs.”

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**Beer and wine sales coming to two beach concession stands**

By Jason Ruiz

Two more beachside concession stands have gotten permission to sell beer and wine once they open in the coming months at Alamitos Beach and Bayshore Beach.

The two stands are among the five concession areas Long Beach has worked to open along its coastline in recent years. The latest step came on May 4 when the Planning Commission voted to approve conditional use permits for the Granada and Bayshore sites.

As a result, the Alhambra-based, metal-themed Grill ’em All burger joint will be able to offer beer at its Bayshore location, and Monty’s, a Mediterranean concept with two other locations in Croppa, will be able to sell beer and wine.

The Bayshore location, which will be near Honey Corner, is undergoing various cosmetic upgrades to the existing two-story concession stand. Diners will only be able to buy alcohol if they also purchase food, and they’ll have to consume their beverages on-site, either inside the stand or on one of its two patio areas on the first and second floors.

Grill ’em All owner Matt Chertok told the commission that he hopes to be open by Aug. 1, after an underground plumbing issue was fixed.

The Monty’s Beach stand at Granada Beach was also granted a permit to sell alcohol at its unique dog-friendly location. Igor Montanari-Knez, the founder of Monty’s Beach, showed commissioners the success of his locations in Croppa, which include lounge areas for humans and a dog agility course for their pets.

Monty’s location near Rosie’s Dog Beach will be allowed to sell beer and wine with its Mediterranean menu, which includes dog-friendly foods like pizza and specially formulated beer for canines, according to Montanari-Knez.

The fifth and largest stand has not yet opened at Alamitos Beach. The $9 million, two-story structure has been hampered by construction delays. When it does open, the operator for that location, Gaucho Grill, already has a license to sell beer, wine and spirits.

“We’re not looking to open a bar but rather enrich the experience of customers who are dog owners,” he said.

The city said that allowing these stands to sell alcohol with food could help keep people at the beach who want to have a drink instead of requiring them to leave and come back, something that can be difficult during summer months when parking is scarce.

Both Monty’s and Grill ’em All will have to allow alcohol service an hour before their shop close each day, and patrons will be required to stay within marked areas while drinking.

The last time the commission approved alcohol sales, which it did in July for the Jumpers Beach concession stand, some residents appealed the decision due to its proximity to a playground and its location on the beach.

The City Council denied that appeal in October, and Saltwater Deck began selling alcohol alongside its food offerings.

A fourth stand opened at Mother’s Beach last month with Louisiana Charlie’s selling its well-known Cajun food.

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**Aldi is coming to Central Long Beach**

By Jason Ruiz

An Aldi grocery store is under construction at a shopping center on Anaheim Street in Central Long Beach at the site of a former Jack-in-the Box, which was destroyed by a fire in December that destroyed multiple businesses.

The Albis is being built at the corner of Anaheim and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, and was part of an originally planned overhaul of the shopping center, which included the construction of the grocery store and renovation of other business facades in the strip mall.

However, a major fire in December destroyed those other businesses, displacing operators who were open through the renovations. Crews have already started work on the foundation for the new 18,500-square-foot Aldi, but it’s unclear when the store will actually open.

In a statement, Tim Cindel, a district vice president for Aldi, said that they had no additional information to share about the new store. When it does open, it will become the second Aldi location in Long Beach.

Plans for the store, as well as a conditional use permit that will allow it to sell beer and wine to go, were approved by the Planning Commission in August 2020.

Aldi is the German parent company of Trader Joe’s, but its branding is significantly different from those stores, which employ playful branding and Hawaiian-shirt-clad crew members.

Aldi, which now has over 2,000 locations in 36 states, is known for being a low-cost leader and uses cost-saving methods like having fewer employees per shift, charging rental fees for shopping carts, requiring shoppers to bring their own bags and avoiding brand-name items in stores.

The new location is being constructed just a few blocks west of a new affordable housing development at Anaheim and Walnut Avenue. The 88-unit development, which will also house formerly homeless seniors, is expected to be completed late this year.

**‘We let a lot of people down’: Southwest CEO pledges company-wide improvements during Long Beach visit**

Executives said the airline is now in the midst of a company-wide campaign to modernize and correct the issues that led to the cancellation of thousands of flights during peak holiday travel, leaving millions stranded.

By Brandon Richardson

Following the unraveling of Southwest Airlines’ latest aircraft at Long Beach airport, company executives made an appearance at a luncheon on April 28 for local businesses to hear from the city’s largest employer.

President and CEO Bob Jordan, along with Chief Financial Officer Andrew Watterson, addressed the crowd, outlining the path Southwest is on in terms of its service in Long Beach and across the country. At the forefront of the company’s decision-making is the meltdown it suffered in December, Jordan said.

“We let a lot of people down. We let 2 million people down,” Jordan said. “There’s no way to skip past that like it didn’t happen. And at the same time, it’s not going to define the company.”

Jordan said that when he first took the lead role at Southwest in February 2022, he spent the first six months traveling the system, with visits to 20 airports, to see operations and meet employees.

“It was apparent we have work to do,” Jordan said. “There are a lot of things out there that it hard to do business with Southwest.”

The two executives said the airline is focusing on the midst of a company-wide campaign to modernize and correct the issues that led to the cancellation of thousands of flights during peak holiday travel, leaving millions stranded.

Behind the scenes, the company will update its infrastructure, Watterson said, which will update its infrastructure, especially during extreme weather events. Southwest is also in investing in the tools and staffing needed throughout its network.

“You have my personal commitment,” Jordan said, “to fix the things that went wrong so it never happens to you and your
New zoning in West Long Beach to attract more commercial development

By Jason Ruiz

Two major corridors in West Long Beach are officially getting green lights to allow for more commercial and residential development after the City Council voted unanimously on May 2 to approve changes that will update building rules in the area that were decades old.

The Planning Commission forwarded the proposed zoning rules to the city council last month, which require commercial development in future projects on some streets of the Santa Fe Avenue and Willow Street corridors.

A nearly two-year-old building moratorium was set to expire in June, which the council had adopted to allow city planning officials time to meet with residents and new building rules in the area to better serve the community by requiring commercial space along them, and to create incentives for things like grocery stores and banks.

The new zoning will create two new zones along the corridor. One (MU-A) will allow for more residential projects, while the other (MU-B) will have a mandate that any commercial use be part of all future projects.

The MU-A zones will be at intersections along Santa Fe Avenue at Pacific Coast Highway, Hill Street, Willow Street, Spring Street and Wardlow Road.

Councilmember Roberto Uranga, who represents West Long Beach, said that the vote was a “milestone moment” for the area that had been limited by existing zoning for decades.

“One of the reasons we’re not able to develop Santa Fe and Willow there is no reasonable Land Use Element in place,” Uranga said on May 2, referring to the guiding document for development in the city that was updated in 2018.

While the Land Use Element was approved by the council in 2018, it will take time to formally implement those changes across the city. Long Beach planners are in the process of updating zoning in Central Long Beach and recently completed a similar program in North Long Beach called “UPLAN.”

Councilmember Joni Rice-Odell, who was a neighborhood leader and member of the Planning Commission before being elected as a North Long Beach councilmember, agreed with Uranga that those plans take time to complete.

She noted the UPLAN process was started when she was hard at work on the city’s moratorium that was set to expire in June.

Residents will get to vote on four design options for new Second Street signage through a survey that’s being distributed through the city’s Public Works Department.

The four renditions were revealed at the Belmont Shore Parking and Business Commission meeting on April 27.

When Bob Senske first saw the proposed replacement signs that could greet visitors to Belmont Shore on Second Street, he was “bewildered.”

The red flag atop the black-and-blue lettering was something that people who grew up around the water would recognize as an oncologists’ smoking signal, he said, and the overall design was more fitting for a strip mall than a beachside neighborhood corridor that’s home to local restaurants, shops and bars.

“It looked like it belonged in Santa Monica, instead of Belmont Shore,” Senske said.

Replacing the gateway signage in Belmont Shore—a necessary task, as the old signs were oiled with inamates, and one was hit by a car—has been an ongoing process for the Belmont Shore Parking and Business Improvement Area Advisory Commission, which has been discussing the issue since early last year.

Now, residents will get to vote on four design options for new signage through a survey that’s being distributed through the city’s Public Works Department.

The four renditions were revealed at the Belmont Shore Parking and Business Commission meeting on April 27.

The options

When Senske showed up to a neighborhood group last June and the design was under consideration, he knew he had to contribute.

Senske, a local artist whose family owns a local restaurant in Long Beach, made a name for himself capturing the city’s beach scenes on canvas, and his work has been shown at the Belmont Shore Art Festival, which goes back four generations in Belmont Shore.

Hard said the approved designs were inspired by the work Senske and other Belmont Shore residents.

The commission had hoped of piloting one of the signs through the community survey so that it could get feedback on the design before voting on the final product.

By Jason Ruiz

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The words are laid on top of a beach scene. That’s going to look so tacky,” Senske said.

After attending a meeting at Belmont Shore’s Fine Arts Center, Senske volunteered to design a sign that had more of an ocean feel to it with waves, wind or surf. He eventually worked with the old welcome signs that featured a sailboat and an anchor.

“You’ve got to go out to a point in the ocean, only then might you get to Bakersfield with it,” he said.

Senske added that he feels strongly that the wording should be the same as the old sign: “Belmont Shore Welcomes You.”

Senske’s contribution includes his preferred “Belmont Shore Welcomes You” message with Belmont Shore in a banner, similar to the original sign.

The words are laid on top of a beach scene with a starfish and an anchor above the banner.

Two other design options look similar to the originally proposed sign, which the commission appeared likely to approve before opening up the process to new designs late last year.

One has red backlit lettering, and the other has white Art Deco lettering sitting atop a pole, but both have the red storm flag removed. Both read “Welcome to Belmont Shore.”

The last design looks the most similar to the old Belmont Shore sign, down to the coloring and font. However, the oval-shaped sign is also elevated on its pole, like the others.

While the old Belmont Shore welcome sign sat at a few feet above ground level on medians at either ends of the Second Street corridor, the new signs are being elevated so that they are more noticeable and to allow large delivery trucks and other tall vehicles to safely drive under them.

Residents’ feedback

When the designs were revealed on April 22, commissioners and residents alike shared their thoughts.

From one sign for a shopping center pole—and one that could double as a streetlight—a不由自主地认为社区的问卷调查应该会由每一个长滩的新鲜生活报的读者来填写。
The City Council voted to approve up to $90 million in bonds that the city will use to pay for the purchase of a building that’s being converted into a crime lab, office space and a new senior center, along with repairs to city streets, parks and other facilities.

Long Beach released maps last week of where it will make its $5 million in residential street improvements and where it will spend $21.5 million more on large-scale projects and pedestrian safety enhancements over the next five years.

City officials released the maps after explaining there’s a deadline for the repairs, which are being funded out of a $52 million Measure A bond, approved by the City Council authorized earlier this year. The money is being borrowed through tax-exempt bonds, the city will have to spend 85% of the funds over the next three years and it all before the end of five years to avoid a potential $22.5 million penalty from the federal government.

The bonds were issued against the city’s future Measure A sales tax revenue, which the city’s voters adopted in 2016 and made permanent in 2020. The 8.2% sales tax increase was supposed to fund public facility improvements, street repairs as well as public safety but the majority of the funds had not gone to street and fire departments.

City officials said that issuing the bonds was a way to address infrastructure improvements like street repairs immediately—when they’re cheaper to fix—rather than letting them continue to deteriorate. Last year, key parts of the bonds were up for discussion last year, over half of the city’s streets were classified as “very poor” or “poor,” according to city data.

Some streets will get a sluery seal, which is a water-sealphalt emulsion that is applied to a street surface to fill in cracks and prevent moisture from entering the pavement. The sluery seal process could extend pavement life by five to seven years, according to the city.

Other streets could be resurfaced, which would extend their life by about 10 years. The worst rated streets, which will be the most expensive to fix, would have to be fully resealed or have other pedestrian safety elements added over the next few years.

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The city’s general fund.
could amount to a $22 million hit to
on the bonds ($73.3 million), which
equal to 30% of the total interest paid
spending the funds fast enough
penalties for not doing so. Not
up to the city to figure out if projects
the funding sources will have to be
over budget.
Contreras said, but that could
change if the cost of construction
on the list are fully funded,
plan for Measure A.
is comparable to what the city
of projects outlined in the plan
bond-financed ones are completed.
Currently have a list of projects that
financed with bond money is
deferred to ensure that the list
projects could be skipped over or
Southwest’s newest aircraft, the Imua
will get done, but
Where the rest of bond money will be
spent
Some of the bond revenue will
go toward paying the city back for
the over $22 million it fronted for
the acquisition of the old Southern
California Edison building at the
corner of First Street and Elm
Avenue in Downtown.
That building is going to be
converted into office space for
the city’s Energy Resources
Department, and it will also be
home to a new crime lab for the
Long Beach Police Department, as
well as a new senior center.
The rest will go to Public Works
projects, which includes the $58
million toward street improvements.
About $7.5 million has already
been allocated by the council for the
Davenport Park, Studebaker Road
and Artesia Corridor projects, but
are underfunded,” she said.

Southwest
Continued from page 1

customers again.”
For customers, Watterstrom said the company is introducing
onboard power. Will that “finally
works after a decade” and larger
corridor bus. Jordan added that
the Southwest app is in desperate
need of an update, including being
able to track flights and bags, and
modify travel plans.
The moves are a win-win-win,
they said, noting it should make
employees’ daily work easier and
enhance the customer experience,
while saving the company money
in the long run.
“Southwest is not broken,” Jordan
said. “It’s a great company. But
we’ve got to get better. There’s an
incredible amount of work to do.”
Southwest is the leading carrier at
Long Beach Airport, now holding 45
of the airfield’s 58 daily flight slots.
The company is likely to be awarded up to
three more slots following American
Airlines’ exit from the airport.
The company has expanded
down quickly since coming to Long
Beach in 2016 with only four slots.
It has since grown to include 34
destinations (some seasonal),
including their latest additions:
Portland and Boise.
Senior Network Planning Advisor
Kelli Morgan noted that 10

A city memo said that some
projects could be skipped over or
delivered to ensure that the list
financed with bond money is
completed in time.
Contreras, a spokesperson for Public Works,
said that the department does not
currently have a list of projects that
could be skipped over to ensure the
bond-financed ones are completed.
Contreras said the number of
projects outlined in the plan is
comparable to what the city
decided during the first five-year plan for Measure A.
For the most part, the projects on
the list are fully funded,
Contreras said, but that could
change if the cost of construction
and materials goes up over the
next few years or if the bids the
city receives for the projects are
over budget.
“These projects will get done, but
the funding sources will have to be
up to the city to figure out if projects
the rest of the $52.7 million will go
toward other projects.
Other things like eight gateway
stations, entry points into the city
($560,000), swimming pool repairs
at Martin Luther King Jr. Park ($1
million) and funding for Latino,
LGBTQ and African American
cultural centers ($6.6 million) are
included in the plan.
The city is also allocating $1.5
million toward a project that will
put the first Blue Line train car to
operate in the city in the middle of a
pedestrian safety project along First
Street. The project would stretch
from the East Village to Lincoln
Park and install new landscaping,
sitting areas, shorter pedestrian
crossing distances and develop the
rail car into a museum or cafe.
County officials have already
allocated $5.5 million in funding for
the project to Long Beach.
It takes a village.

Charly suffered a fall while biking — a severe brain trauma that threatened his life. Until Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital helped his brain heal. Our therapists helped him walk and talk again and our highly specialized pediatric team dedicated themselves to his recovery. Because we knew, to lift Charly back up again, it would take a village. So when we watched Charly walk the stage at high school graduation — supported by his physical therapist — we knew he’d only keep going.

Learn more.
millerchildrens.org/care

Charly, Age 17

from brain trauma to triumph