Virgin Orbit sells $36M in assets, more layoffs coming

Rocket Lab, another Long Beach-based satellite launch provider, won its bid to take over Virgin Orbit’s 140,000-square-foot headquarters and manufacturing facility in Douglas Park, while Stratolaunch is getting the firm’s modified Boeing 747.

By Brandon Richardson

Billionaire Richard Branson’s small satellite launch company, Virgin Orbit, sold nearly $36 million in assets to a trio of space companies at auction on May 23, including its massive manufacturing facility in Douglas Park, which will be taken over by nearby Rocket Lab.

With the company being stripped and sold for parts, a spokesperson for Virgin Orbit told the Business Journal that more layoffs are expected.

Since Virgin Orbit announced it would lay off 85% of its nearly 800 workers at the end of March, the company had been operating with between 75 and 100 employees, according to the spokesperson. The number of employees was expected to drop to around 20 by the end of last week, they added.

The remaining employees will likely be laid off sometime in June, once the liquidation of company assets is finalized.

“Throughout its history, Virgin Orbit has been at the forefront of innovation and has made substantial contributions to the field of commercial rocket launch with its LauncherOne air launch system,” the spokesperson said.

Two new buildings are coming to historic C-17 site

By Brandon Richardson

Two light industrial buildings (and possibly two more) are coming to the historic former Boeing C-17 assembly site west of Long Beach Airport, with a project master plan for the Goodman Commerce Center unanimously approved on May 18 by the Long Beach Planning Commission.

The plan includes the construction of two buildings—505,043 square feet and 27,552 square feet—to be built on 28 acres at 2401 E. Wardlow Road for either manufacturing or warehousing/logistics uses. While the vote approved the master plan for the development, each building also will require Planning Commission approval.

Long Beach may ease parking mandates to draw new businesses into vacant storefronts

By Jake Gotta

The city is considering doing away with rules that sometimes block new businesses from opening in vacant storefronts until they can find more parking spaces.

Proposed changes to these rules will be submitted to the Planning Commission in July, which could eventually forward the issue to the City Council for final adoption, officials said at a Development Services meeting on May 24.

In Long Beach, when a commercial property owner wants to fill a vacancy with a new tenant that’s a different type of business than the previous occupant, additional parking spaces are sometimes required before getting a business license.

That’s because the city’s municipal code lists 48 different specific potential uses in commercially zoned areas.
LGB passenger volumes remain above pre-pandemic level for 2nd month in a row

While Long Beach Airport has recovered its passenger volume, air travel nationwide continues to trail behind pre-pandemic levels.

By Brandon Richardson

For the second month in a row, the passenger volume at Long Beach Airport was above its pre-pandemic level, according to data released on May 23. Throughout April, 303,008 people traveled through the small municipal airport, up 2.5% from the 295,941 passengers in April 2019. Air travel all but disappeared in April 2020, with the airfield seeing only 6,209 travelers the entire month. It has been a slow recovery for LGB. April’s volume marks a 10.5% increase from the same month last year, according to city data. March was the first month that airport staff reported the airport had surpassed pre-pandemic volumes.

Last month’s passenger figures came in strong once again, airport Director Cynthia Guidry said in an emailed statement. “We’re looking forward to a busy Memorial Day weekend, followed by robust demand for air travel this summer.” At the national level, however, passenger volumes continue to struggle to rebound. Last month, fewer than 9.3 million people traveled through U.S. airports, compared to over 70.1 million in April 2019, according to data from the U.S. Transportation Security Administration.

Back in Long Beach, passenger volumes are up 3.5% year-to-date compared to the same period in 2019. From January through April, 1,647,414 people flew into and out of Long Beach. Southwest Airlines, the city’s leading carrier, has been instrumental in the airport’s recovery. For the first four and a half months of the year, Southwest held 41% of the nonstop airfield’s 85 daily flight slots. Over the past year, the carrier has announced nonstop service to 10 new destinations.

Earlier this month, Southwest was awarded three more flight slots, which were relinquished by American Airlines earlier this year. At the same time, Delta Air Lines gave up two of its seven slots, which are likely to also be awarded to Southwest.

Southwest gets 3 more Long Beach flight slots

Southwest Airlines continues to solidify its dominance at Long Beach Airport, with the carrier being awarded another three flight slots at the non-controlled airfield, according to a city memo released on May 15. The news comes four months after American Airlines informed city staff it would leave Long Beach, relinquishing its three daily flight slots.

While Long Beach alerted all of the airlines on the airport’s waitlist of the newly available flight slots, the first three on the list—Canada-based Sunwing, startup Breeze Airways and Hawaiian Airlines—all passed on the opportunity. Southwest was next on the list and is more nonstop service that at any other time in the history of our airport.”

Southwest, for its part, declined to specify how it would use the new slots.

“We will increase our flying accordingly to best utilize these slots,” a spokesperson said in an email to the Business Journal on May 15. “We have been looking forward to a busy Memorial Day weekend, followed by robust demand for air travel this summer.”

While American Airlines informed city staff on May 1 that it would relinquish all of its seven daily flight slots.

As it stands, with the additions, Southwest is the city’s leading carrier, has been instrumental in the airport’s recovery. For the first four and a half months of the year, Southwest held 41% of the nonstop airfield’s 85 daily flight slots. Over the past year, the carrier has announced nonstop service to 10 new destinations.

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While American Airlines informed city staff on May 1 that it would relinquish all of its seven daily flight slots.

As it stands, with the additions, Southwest holds 48% or 85% of the airport’s 98 daily flight slots.

“We are pleased that Southwest Airlines continues to show strong interest in growing their presence at Long Beach Airport,” Director Cynthia Guidry told the Business Journal in an email on May 15. “Our three carriers now offer nonstop service to 24 destinations, which is more nonstop service than at any other time in the history of our airport.”

Southwest, for its part, declined to specify how it would use the new slots.

“We will increase our flying accordingly to best utilize these slots,” a spokesperson said in an email to the Business Journal on May 15. “More details will be shared at a later time.”

Other than the two unallocated slots, the remaining daily flights are held by Hawaiian (5) and UPS (1).

Delta said in a statement that it hopes to reclaim flight slots in the future.

“While Delta voluntarily yielded back two of seven daily flight slot pairs at Long Beach, we continue to face challenges amongst our regional partners from a staffing resources...
Longtime marketing VP to leave Convention, Visitors Bureau

By Jeremiah Dobruck

Jeff Forney—the Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau’s Economic Development Director, a well-known name in marketing circles for his work promoting Long Beach as a tourism destination and business hub, has decided to leave his post.

Executive Director Jeff Forney, who has been with the CVB since 2001, said that residents, businesses and other organizations would have a “different opportunity” to support the waterfront and development for Downtown, Waterfront and visitor entertainment area.

Forney has spent 22 years at the CVB, which includes serving as the city’s economic development director. He has helped to grow the CVB’s membership and special projects, and has been involved in the development of the area’s waterfront, called “Elephant Lot,” which is now considered a point of interest for visitors.

Forney’s departure follows the announcement that the City Council will vote on a redevelopment plan for the Elephant Lot this month.

The City Council has already approved a plan for a new convention center on the site, which is expected to be completed by 2024. The new center will be a part of the CVB’s efforts to develop the waterfront area as a tourist destination.

Forney has served on the board of directors for the California Convention and Visitors Bureau, the California Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and the California Hotel and Lodging Association, among other organizations.

He has also been involved in the development of the Elephant Lot, which is a key part of the CVB’s plan to create a new downtown area.

Forney said that he would like to focus on family and community in his next phase of life, and that he will continue to support the CVB and the city in any way he can.

He said that he is looking forward to continuing to work with the CVB and the city to support the area’s tourism and development efforts.

Forney has worked for the CVB for nearly 15 years, and has been involved in the development of the area’s convention center, which is expected to be completed in 2023. The new center will be a part of the CVB’s efforts to develop the waterfront area as a tourist destination.

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He said that he is looking forward to continuing to work with the CVB and the city to support the area’s tourism and development efforts.
2 more NASA weather satellites delivered to orbit by Rocket Lab

The storm tracking constellation will be able to view the formation of tropical cyclones, including hurricanes, with flyovers once every hour, compared to the six-hour cycle of other weather-tracking satellites.

By Brandon Richardson

Tracking tropical storms will be easier following a second successful Rocket Lab launch of NASA’s “Coming to a Storm Near You” mission Tuesday, May 23, 2023.

“Coming to a Storm Near You” blasted off from the Long Beach company’s new New Zealand complex at 8:46 p.m. Long Beach time. One hour later, Rocket Lab confirmed via Twitter the payload of two smallsats had been delivered.

The launch, taking place more than three weeks after Rocket Lab delivered the first two satellites for NASA’s TROPICS mission, resolved observations precipitation structure and storm intensity with a constellation of smallsats.

“We needed multiple launches for this mission,” Will Marshall, program scientist for NASA’s Earth Science Division, said in a statement. “Rocket Lab helped duplicating the ability to have the TROPICS satellites serve as that primary payload and thus define the orbit based on our scientific objectives.”

The four cubesats required a highly specific launch window made up of 500 kilometers and inclination of about 30 degrees. The satellites also had to be deployed to their operational orbit within a 60-day period in order to start tracking and be commissioned by the 2023 North American storm season, which begins in June.

To reach the low inclination from the company’s New Zealand complex, Rocket Lab used its Electron rocket’s second stage to place the kick stage and TROPICS satellites into orbit and stage them to perform a plane change maneuver before deploying the satellites.

“Electron was developed for exactly these kinds of missions—deploying high-value payloads to very specific orbits for rapid timelines to provide precise and timely observations, so we’re proud to have delivered that for NASA across both TROPICS launches and meet the deadline for getting Rocket Lab to orbit in time for the 2023 storm season,” said founder and CEO Peter Beck in a statement.

The new constellation will monitor the formation and evolution of tropical cyclones, including hurricanes, and provide more rapid updates on storm intensity than previously possible. The satellites are equally spaced in orbit to maximize the frequency an area can be viewed from the same angle—once about every hour compared to the six hours of other weather-tracking satellites.

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Events and Dinner Cruising

An Electron rocket sits on the launch pad of Rocket Lab’s New Zealand complex ahead of its “Coming to a Storm Near You” mission Tuesday, May 23, 2023. The May 23 mission was Rocket Lab’s fifth of 2023 and 37th since it first launched in 2015. To date, the company has delivered 135 satellites to orbit.
Parking Mandates
Continued from cover

There is an effort currently underway to change parking requirements so that when a new business wants to locate in an existing building that is more than 10 years old, additional on-site parking will not have to be created in order for a new business to secure a business license to operate in an existing storefront," Rick de la Torre, a spokesperson for Long Beach’s Development Services Department, said in an email.

Momentum started building for this proposal in 2019 when the City Council had asked staff for ways to cut down on the number of vacant storefronts across the city, saying in a memo that “...there are some commercial corridors where certain retail properties have remained vacant for years, resulting in high crime conditions and depressed neighborhood activity.”

After studying the problem, city staff said they found four common reasons buildings were staying vacant for long stretches. Some owners were unaware of new zoning requirements as part of a package of ideas that would incentivize filling storefronts and could penalize owners for vacant ones. Others were unable to fill a vacancy due to financial hardship or other constraints; some owners wanted to rent out their properties but couldn’t because of requirements such as zoning or environmental restrictions; others were simply waiting for something, like a zoning change or better market conditions, to fill their vacancies.

Zoning came up again when the Downtown Long Beach Alliance surveyed Downtown businesses and merchants about barriers they faced filling long-term vacancies. 14% of respondents mentioned parking, and another 12% said a potential tenant’s use wasn’t allowed under the current zoning.

Before the pandemic hit and stalled the process, city staff recommended easing some zoning requirements as part of a package of ideas that would incentivize filling storefronts and could penalize owners for vacant ones. With those changes on hold, though, vacancy rates have remained high.

The city could not provide exact numbers, but third-party data showed the problem was especially acute outside the Downtown area, with the suburban mall vacancy rate being “more than 50%” compared to just 8% in Los Angeles, according to de la Torre, the Development Services spokesperson.

Reporters Jason Bait contributed to this report.

By Brandon Richardson

Catalina Island is just about an hour away. With 3 convenient port locations in San Pedro, Long Beach & Dana Point and up to 30 departures daily, your voyage to paradise is now boarding.

A stretch of shops on Atlantic Avenue just south of South Street in North Long Beach has been fully vacant for years.

Parking spaces are required by law to have a certain number of parking spaces down to the number of courts, alleys and uses.

A restaurant serving dinner, for example, must allocate its parking spaces for every 1,000 square feet of floor area. Bars (“taverns” in the zoning code), however, are required to provide 20 parking spaces for every 1,000 square feet.

This means when a new business wants to move into an old storefront, it could be required to find additional parking spaces to meet the code. That’s what the city’s Development Services Department, a spokesperson for Long Beach’s Development Services Department, said in an email.

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Parking spaces down to the number of courts, alleys and uses.
A 2-bedroom California bungalow amid the mansions of Los Cerritos

A few weeks ago I wrote about the rise of multi-million-dollar two-bedroom, one-bath homes in the city and the fact, not surprisingly, that these relative rarities are found in Long Beach’s premier parts of town.

Last week, another two-plus-one million-dollar property was listed by Modern California House founder Nate Cole, who specializes in architecturally unique and historic homes (he lives in Long Beach in an early Ed Killingsworth House). The bright kitchen with its vintage O’Keefe and Merritt stove.

Aber Mahieu and his wife Mary Jane and daughter Juana moved to California from the family farm in Kansas to escape the Dust Bowl conditions in 1932. After a few years in El Monte, where their son Lew was born, the family of four moved to Long Beach in 1939 and Albert was contracted to landscape the nearby newly built Virginia Country Club.

Aber Mahieu and his wife Mary Jane and daughter Juana moved to California from the family farm in Kansas to escape the Dust Bowl conditions in 1932. After a few years in El Monte, where their son Lew was born, the family of four moved to Long Beach in 1939 and Albert was contracted to landscape the nearby newly built Virginia Country Club.

The inviting front patio, a hallmark of craftsman-style homes.
The Long Beach Business Journal makes every effort to verify the information included in the list above, but we also rely on the accuracy of the information provided by the employers and organizations represented.

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<td>Andrea Aubeck</td>
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<td>City Hall</td>
<td>100 N Flower St, 90802</td>
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<td>Steve Dunnegan</td>
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<td>Arleen Akeson</td>
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<td>Swissotel Los Angeles</td>
<td>316 E Ocean Blvd, 90802</td>
<td>562-216-4112</td>
<td>6,000</td>
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<td>Gary Barakat</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gary.barakat@swissotel.com">gary.barakat@swissotel.com</a></td>
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**Long Beach Business Journal**

TO OUR REACH IN CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

California State University, Long Beach

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By Brandon Richardson

Long Beach unemployment fell 0.4% in April

After a nearly full percentage point decrease at the beginning of the year, the unemployment rate in Long Beach fell 4.4% in April, according to state data released May 19.

In December, the number of unemployed residents dropped by 3.5% year-over-year. After falling to 3.5% in March and again in April to 4.4%, the rate fell to 5.2% in March and 4.6% in April, according to California Employment Development Department data.

Los Angeles County followed a similar trajectory. After falling to 4.4% in December, the countywide unemployment rate in April fell to 5.3% in February. But the county has experienced a sharper decline than Long Beach, with unemployment falling to 4.5% last month.

Both the city and county saw their labor force, number of employed residents and number of unemployed residents all decrease from March to April, data shows.

The city’s labor force declined by 1,125 to 256,270, while the number of employed residents dropped by 1,790 to 179,000. Los Angeles County saw a similar trend.

Private education and health services led the countywide job gains month-over-month, according to EDD data, adding 9,200 positions. Leisure and hospitality employment added 7,000 jobs. Trade, transportation and utilities, professional and business services, information, financial activities, construction, government, other services, and mining all also saw increased payroll.

The state’s big gains, adding 13,100 jobs. Leisure and hospitality also posted big gains, accounting for more than 1 in 4 (18,200) of the positions. According to analysis from Beacon, which was intended to help businesses — restaurants in particular — move dine-in services outside. Back then, the program was free to apply for, and it was all loosely regulated. Now, business owners are navigating an entirely different permitting process to bring back parklets after the pandemic-era structures were required to come down Jan. 31.

This time, the rules are strict and differ completely from the Open Streets program. For starters, it now comes with a price tag, a long bureaucratic to-do list and a set of stringent construction guidelines. To approve a permanent parklet, businesses will need to consider a laundry list of factors such as local speed limits, accessibility and obscured the view of the city, the rules are strict and differ completely from the Open Streets program. For starters, it now comes with a price tag, a long bureaucratic to-do list and a set of stringent construction guidelines. To approve a permanent parklet, businesses will need to consider a laundry list of factors such as local speed limits, accessibility and obscured the view of the city.

One could host a small gathering, gather with friends, read a book or even bring food from a business that is non-compliant. But if a business touches off the public parklet,” said Cheryl Vargas, executive director of the Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital.

“We are thrilled to welcome Cheryl Vargas as our new executive director,” said Fatima Otieno, University of San Francisco. “We are confident that this key appointment will be a significant step forward for our organization.”

Cheryl Vargas named executive director of Long Beach Ronald McDonald House

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Cheryl Vargas was appointed last week as the new executive director of the Long Beach Ronald McDonald House. Vargas has been executive director of the Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital in Long Beach since 2005.

The Long Beach Ronald McDonald House has been a community resource for more than 20 years, serving families who aren’t able to stay at the Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital. While staying at the Long Beach Ronald McDonald House, families receive not only care for their hospitalized children, but also connection and resources.

At its core is providing care for patients with more than 12,000 experience in the nonprofit sector.

“After graduating with a master’s degree from San Diego State University, Cheryl joined the leadership team of the Children’s Hospital of Orange County,” said Vargas. “She then followed the departure of Cheri Beasley, who resigned in January after just one year with the organization.

The Long Beach chapter hosts hundreds of families with critically ill children each year, and it’s one of 15 new Ronald McDonald House programs in the country.

The Long Beach Ronald McDonald House has been a community resource for more than 25 years, serving families with children being treated at the Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital. While staying at the Long Beach Ronald McDonald House, families receive free of charge.

What to know about the city’s permanent parklet program

The parklets that popped up across the city and the country at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic were a lifeline for restaurants. They also took up parking spots, hindered sidewalk accessibility and obstructed the view of traffic at some busy intersections.

Many believed the temporary loss of parking and other related issues were a worthwhile trade to help small businesses in the midst of a public health crisis. But as COVID-19 emergency orders have now expired, a new question is coming up in some neighborhoods — particularly those with sidewalk dining applications outside. Back then, the program was free to apply for, and it was all loosely regulated. Now, business owners are navigating an entirely different permitting process to bring back parklets after the pandemic-era structures were required to come down Jan. 31.

This time, the rules are strict and differ completely from the Open Streets program. For starters, it now comes with a price tag, a long bureaucratic to-do list and a set of stringent construction guidelines. To approve a permanent parklet, businesses will need to consider a laundry list of factors such as local speed limits, accessibility and obscured the view of the city.

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City Council affirms vote to block JP23’s business license

By Jason Ruiz

The Long Beach City Council on May 16 reaffirmed its denial of a business license for JP23, a Downtown bar that it blocked from operating last year after officials said it repeatedly violated city codes by hosting parties and opening without required permits.

The council voted in August to overturn a hearing officer’s determination that the bar should be granted a business license, vacate the decision, and impose an appeal and, and a Los Angeles Superior Court judge found the council would have to vote again and provide an “explanatory bridge” for its decision to deny the permit.

JP23’s primary location is in Fullerton, and the bar sought to open a second location at the corner of Pine Avenue and Broadway in Long Beach, about the 3/4 mile where the old Cohiba nightclub had been shuttered for years.

City officials said that JP23 opened without a business permit in September 2021 and continued to break city rules—even after being granted a temporary business license—by hosting live events and being granted a temporary business license for JP23, a Downtown bar, in 2021.

The alleged violations weren’t the first time JP23 found itself in hot water. Before JP23 was set to open in Long Beach, its Fullerton location was rocked by allegations that a woman was drugged at the bar and raped, something that was followed by protests outside the bar that received regional media coverage.

The bar’s owner, Jacob Poozikhala, planned the events on Fullerton for Long Beach’s decision to not issue business permit. “I wouldn’t have violations if I had a business license,” Poozikhala said in August. “This was on purpose, this was a setup because of what was happening in Fullerton.”

Poozikhala began renovating the restaurant in 2019, but construction delays and COVID-19 pushed the opening of the space that he says he invested $3 million into before its grand opening.

The bar faced pressure from community groups and residents, who seized on the headlines generated by the Fullerton location and called for the City Council to block its permits from being issued.

Despite the City Council reaffirming that decision on May 16, a new petition has begun to circulate this time calling on the city to block any new business operator associated with Poozikhala from assuming the lease. The petition cites an advertisement for a weekly “Club Tropez” VIP room booking May 19 located north of the 405 Freeway.

Poozikhala, though, denied he’s hosting the event, adding that the advertisement is fake and was put up by an opponent.

Last month, the Fullerton City Council discussed the bar’s future in its city, which is currently closed as it undergoes renovations. An April 18 Fullerton city memo said that Poozikhala notified the city that he was transferring ownership of the Fullerton location on October, about three months earlier, of continued violation of city rules that its City Council adopted in February regarding live music and operating hours.

Fullerton officials said that after meeting with the buyer, Luke Pathyli, they were able to verify that he was Poozikhala’s cousin and had no experience running a restaurant or bar, but had agreed to sublease the property from him with a purchase price of $0.

“When it was clear to all of us in the room with Mr. Pathyli that he was nothing more than a ‘straw man’ put up by Jacob Poozikhala to avoid responsibility and that Mr. Pathyli was not a bonafide purchaser,” the memo said.

During the April 18 meeting, Fullerton council members showed reluctance for issuing a new entertainment permit to Pathyli once the location reopens.

Fullerton Mayor Fred Jung pointed to the ongoing violations before the ban, saying that the city’s new Police Policy was announcing and said he would not support giving the bar a path forward for a new entertainment permit.

“Now he’s transferring it to a family member and stating, I suppose, unequivocally, that he’ll have nothing to do with this restaurant,” Jung said in April. “I find that hard to believe.”

More roads to be repaired in Long Beach next year

More road repairs are on the way for some Long Beach neighborhoods, as the City Council approved a list of 20 more street segments that could be worked on in 2024 with funds from the state’s gas tax.

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As Zach Benjamin prepares to exit his term as CEO of the Jewish Community Center, Deborah Goldfarb will take up that mantle for the second time beginning June 1. In 2020 she assumed the role of interim CEO of the Alpert Jewish Community Center and worked with Benjamin to integrate the Alpert Jewish Community Center and Jewish Long Beach before taking a year off. Stepping back in, it’s a familiar role for Goldfarb, who had passed the reins to Zach Benjamin in 2019. Since 2015, she has been a bracing of efforts under the Jewish Long Beach umbrella,” said Lobby Smith, a spokesperson for the organization.

Goldfarb shared many of her goals for her new two-year tenure with the Business Journal. One of her top priorities is to increase advocacy around countering antisemitism, she said. In Long Beach, 69% of Jewish adults are very concerned about antisemitism, according to a 2021 Long Beach Area Jewish Community Study, which was published on May 23.

“Currently, we’re looking to work more closely with the (Long Beach) school-based educational initiatives,” she said. “We’re also developing a series of interfaith educational programs to both education and build alliances as well.” The facility will also be tasked with implementing the organization’s new strategic plan. Much of that involves an effort to serve a broader community, build connections with other related community organizations and to engage more people Jewishly.

The recent study revealed that about 15% of Jewish adults are involved in some form of Jewish life for the community was in line with the public and they’re being clean.”

“Since 2019, there has been an increase in the number of people sitting in my parklet, it’s being, and they’re being respectful to me. It’s like they’re acting like a decent human being.”

The public is footing the bill for a public space, parklets will be assets for the community that want more access. According to Deans and Cochrane, local group Citizens Advocating Responsible Planning submitted a letter that May 18.

The parklet application, meanwhile, can cost restaurants anywhere from $1,000 to $4,000, depending on a number of factors such as square footage and design.

In Belmont Shore, owners will first be required to obtain a Coastal Zone Management Permit, which costs $6,000.

Once all approvals are done, the building costs remain.

Matt Peterson, co-owner of Legends, previously worked for the West in his professional opinion, this is a huge plus in the food business. They can make fresh pasta every morning, less than 10 minutes,” Encina said. “It’s the best fast service.”

For older customers who may not have access to their social media, Encina listed a number of businesses that could be turned into a food trailer, like ice cream, coffee, or even a mobile bar. They hope to open one day in a brick and mortar where they can create fusion dishes that mix different cultures. But until then, they set up Thursdays through Sundays, mainly along Ocean Boulevard, and open customers looking for where they’ve parked on their Instagram.

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“At Legends, we’re open to us in a brick and mortar where they can create fusion dishes that mix different cultures.”

“By slowing down traffic, which is to increase advocacy around countering antisemitism, she said. In Long Beach, 69% of Jewish adults are very concerned about antisemitism, according to a 2021 Long Beach Area Jewish Community Study, which was published on May 23.

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“If you’re looking at how to buy something and frequent your business,” he said. Still, if I owned a business, I wouldn’t be lazy inside or outside, and I had few opponents would reframe their a hearing before the City Council, but the council will have final say on whether a parklet will be approved. And while the permanent process is still new, work has already been filed against at least a handful of business owners with the county’s Health Department, for everything from non-compliance to insurance covering liability, including liquor liability if alcohol is served, must also be obtained.

If someone using the parklet becomes injured, the person who paid for it is responsible for liability, or liability insurance covering liability, including liquor liability if alcohol is served, must also be obtained.

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Breakfast Republic to open its boozy brunch hangout in Belmont Shore May 31

From shrimp and grits to vegan benefits, from an immunity shot to a “Big Boozy Brew Shot”—the Southern California chain has food and drink options for a wide variety of folks.

By Kat Schuster

Eunice Ace’s favorite Breakfast Republic cocktail is the Big Boozy Brew Shot: espresso vodka, espresso shot and Baileys. “Simple, but delicious,” she told the Business Journal. “And it’s a great way to start your morning.”

Ace, a lifelong Long Beach resident, has been working as the general manager at the Southern California chain’s Costa Mesa location for over a year, but she’s excited to eliminate her commute now that she’ll be managing the new location in Belmont Shore.

Breakfast Republic will open its doors for its first day of business in Long Beach on May 31. The ribbon-cutting ceremony will begin at 9 a.m., according to Eric Rosow, a spokesperson for the chain.

With eateries in West Hollywood, San Diego and soon Palm Desert, Long Beach marks the 16th location for Breakfast Republic, which is consistently lauded for its quirky albeit clearly palatable breakfast creations.

Ace named the shrimp and grits as her favorite.

Poke pioneer Sweetfin to open brick-and-mortar in Belmont Shore

By Kat Schuster

Belmont Shore will double its poke-bowl offerings when Sweetfin moves into its first Long Beach brick-and-mortar this summer.

Though the Hawaiian-inspired, fresh fish craze first arrived on Second Street in 2015, when Poke Pola opened, Sweetfin was among the first wave of poke-bowl eateries on the scene in Southern California. “We’re one of the first, if not the first, dedicated fast-casual poke concepts in the U.S.,” Seth Cohen, co-owner of Sweetfin, told the Business Journal. “Both myself and Brett are super into healthy eating and thought that poke could be a really interesting category that hadn’t been developed.

Sweetfin’s Poke Pola, beloved for its space-tiered marimades and massive portions, continues to draw long lines beside the post office. But when the Sweetfin chain opens up on the street within the old 2-Pizza location, it will bring an entirely different set of poke options to the corridor, such as vegan bowls, poke burritos and “health-goal bowls.”

The chain was also among the first to introduce invention plant-based recipes that offer a refreshing departure from the usual tofu substitute. Take for example, the miso eggplant and mushroom poke bowl, miso sesame shoyu sauce, Japanese eggplant, shiitake mushrooms, sundried tomato and market radishes.

As for raw fish, Sweetfin offers a roster of 16 chef-driven bowls such as the gochujang salmon poke bowl (which includes a Korean chili paste) and the mango albacore poke bowl, which Cohen says is his favorite at the moment.

Cohen said he has never intended to mimic traditional Hawaiian poke. Alternatively, Cohen and Nestadt set out to develop original and health-conscious recipes that would be specific to Sweetfin.

“Someone can come to Sweetfin and have kind of a healthy yet indulgent meal that’s craveable and not feel bad about eating with us,” Cohen said. “Whether they’re gluten free or vegan or paleo—whatever diet that they subscribe to—we have something for them.”

For starters, the “brain booster” includes “sustainable” salmon and tofu topped with homemade miso sesame shoyu sauce, avocado, chopped kale, bean sprouts, sundried tomatoes and macadamia nuts, which is served over a kelp noodle slaw.

Patrons can also look forward to new creations that come along as Sweetfin routinely partners with well-known chefs that develop their own short-run poke bowls. Recently, Cohen said chef H Woo Lee developed a Thai-inspired poke bowl, which will feature fresh herbs like mint and basil leaves. Cohen said this menu option will no longer be available by the time the Long Beach shop opens, but Long Beachers can look forward to trying more creative spins like this one.

The new shop won’t really be Sweetfin’s first foray in Long Beach. Just before signing the lease on Second Street, Cohen closed his first bare-bones poke shop in 2015. The chain has been operating in the to-go collective since May of 2021.

The new shop doesn’t have an opening date for Long Beach yet, but Cohen says he expects to open it at 2-Pizza location in the next two months. The shop will likely open daily from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
No-frills burgers and cheap bites are coming to Belmont Shore when The Win-Dow moves into the old Archibald’s site

Long Beach and San Pedro, but said they aim to keep their reputation for affordable fare.

Archibald’s, a Mexican-Greek-American-etc. fast-food joint, operated in the space for many years until it shuttered in 2021. It was the only spot in Belmont Shore that stayed open until 3 a.m. on weekends. But it wasn’t necessarily a cheap option. Archibald’s offered over 50 menu items including a $6 pastrami reuben, a $6.95 hot burger, a $2.25 gyro and a Denver omelette for $8.

Alternatively, The Win-Dow’s two open locations currently offer a flat top cheeseburger for $4.95 and vegetarian beauty burger with Impossible meat for $8.25 (somehow, it’s more affordable than the vegetarian burger even at Carl’s Jr.). The menu also offers an $8 grain bowl, a fried chicken sandwich for $7.25 and a simple weekend breakfast menu, which includes a cheeseburger with an egg on top for $5.25 and hot coffee. Even more inconceivable for the block—the menu’s $3.95 breakfast sandwich.

“That is definitely our goal to keep our prices as affordable and approachable for the neighborhood as possible,” Bylsma said.

She added that it was too early to know what kind of hours The Win-Dow could offer in Long Beach or San Pedro, which is further along in the process.

“The Win-Dow was first conceptualized as a simplified and more affordable extension of the food group’s steakhouse, American Beauty, on Rose Avenue. “We really just wanted an offering for the Venice community so everyone could come together on that corner for a meal that was just really affordable, and delicious and just really approachable for so many different people in the neighborhood,” Bylsma said.

The Win-Dow is expected to open at 4900 E. Second St. in Belmont Shore, but an opening date hasn’t been set. In San Pedro, its location at West Harbor Waterfront, 1190 Nagoya Way, is likely to open up later this year or in early 2024.

The street was dubbed “restaurant row” earlier this year by longtime local Heather Kern.

“For 15 blocks, we have more restaurants than any one-street corridor in the city,” Kern, executive director of the Belmont Shore Business Association, previously told the Business Journal.

Soon, Second Street will get a few more eateries, including Northern Cafe, Louie’s on 2nd, 4 Shore in Naples and nearby, A Restaurant. In San Pedro, its location at West Harbor Waterfront, 1190 Nagoya Way, is likely to open up later this year or in early 2024.

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