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of growing volume, reducing emissions*

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The old Gerald Desmond Bridge is officially gone. But where is its final resting place?

In all, 14,950 tons of steel from the massive span went to recyclers, but the Port of Long Beach is hanging on to some special artifacts.

By Alicia Robinson

Though demolition of the Gerald Desmond Bridge wrapped up in late July, the old span will live on through a number of artifacts salvaged by the Port of Long Beach.

The 54-year-old bridge was replaced in 2020 by the Long Beach International Gateway Bridge, an eye-catching, cable-stayed span that provides more clearance for ships to pass underneath and includes a bike and pedestrian path.

Dismantling of the Gerald Desmond began in July 2022 and just over a year later, all that's left to be done is paperwork to close out the demolition contract, according to information from Duane Kenagy, capital programs executive for the Long Beach port.

But what's left of the bridge is plenty more than paperwork.

About 14,950 tons of steel from the span went to recyclers—that's almost 99% of the steel used in the bridge.

Every bit of concrete and asphalt—all 53,000 tons—now resides at the port's rubble recycling site, where it awaits use in future projects.

Hazardous material such as lead paint, asbestos and electrical circuitry for lights was sent to a landfill approved for those kinds of waste.

Port officials also kept some pieces, either for sentimental or



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

A container ship navigates under the Long Beach International Gateway Bridge. No remnants of the old Gerald Desmond Bridge remain.

utilitarian value, including three steel truss elements, “in case the Port would want to use it for an art or design project” someday, Kenagy said in an email.

Six navigation lights, 250 structural bolts and the “golden bolt,” installed by Gerald Desmond's son at the bridge's 1968 opening ceremony, also were saved and are now in storage.

The man for whom the bridge was named served on the Long Beach City Council and as city attorney; he died in 1964 before the bridge opened. The replacement project cost about \$1.56 billion, and the new span is expected to last 100 years. ■

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Port of Long Beach looks to a future of growing volume, reducing emissions

By Brandon Richardson

After two years of unprecedented cargo volumes, goods movement through the San Pedro Bay ports has declined. But that isn't cause for alarm, officials say.

"We have got to keep it in perspective," Port of Long Beach CEO Mario Cordero said in an interview, noting the pandemic surge over the last two years was an anomaly and that operations have now "normalized."

Some of the decline, of course, is due to issues that have caused cargo to be diverted to other ports around the country. Historic congestion and a 1.5-year-long labor dispute were the primary sore spots.

In May of last year, dockworkers and their employers began negotiating a new contract, which expired two months later. Negotiations dragged on months, with workers staging various work actions that caused slowdowns and sometimes brief stoppages.

Finally, on Aug. 31, union workers

voted to ratify a six-year contract.

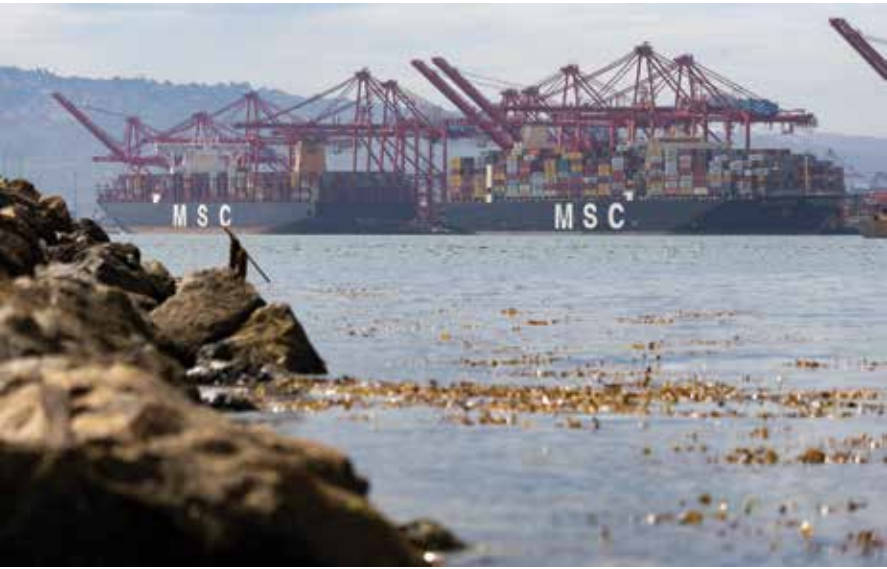
Even before the labor issues, the twin ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles faced a historic bottleneck that saw upward of 109 container ships waiting for their turn at berth. From October 2020 to November 2022 (with a peak in January of last year), the backlog plagued the ports.

With those two hurdles now behind it, where does the Port of Long Beach go from here?

"We are vastly improved that from that scenario," Cordero said, but those two issues caused harm that will take time to recoup from. Namely, the diverting of ships to other ports around the country.

Those diversions saw Long Beach, the second-busiest port in the nation for decades, moved down the podium to third behind the Port of New York and New Jersey last year. The two ports have been neck and neck this year, with the position changing regularly month to month.

Through July, the most recent month of data available for both ports, Long Beach trailed the East Coast port by about 150,000



Two MCS container ships are berthed at Pier T on Terminal Island in the Port of Long Beach complex.

20-foot-equivalent units, or TEUs—the standard measure of shipping containers.

"Even though we've had cargo decline, the West Coast ports have gained a small percentage back," Cordero said.

Together, the ports of Long Beach and LA moved about 1.43 million TEUs in May, which was the busiest month since October of last year when the port moved 1.45 million TEUs. In June, that figure dropped to 1.2 million, and in July it was 1.3 million.

Last month, however, the twin ports moved a combined 1.51 million TEUs, data shows, which indicates a small return of lost market share, Cordero said. East and Gulf Coast ports, including New York-New Jersey and Savannah, meanwhile, have lost volume, he added.

Cordero said it is going to be an ongoing challenge to regain the lost market share. But, while entirely speculative at this point, Cordero said he is confident that the San Pedro Bay will retake the "majority" of what was lost.

For years prior to the pandemic, the twin ports were experiencing fairly steady increases in cargo volumes. As the population grows, after all, more goods are needed to meet demands. Now that the ports have returned to pre-pandemic norms, Cordero said volumes will continue to grow in the coming years.

"[The San Pedro Bay ports] may not be moving 40 million containers in the year 2040, but we're certainly going to be moving a significant number above 20 million," Cordero said, noting the ports' busiest year ever was 2021 when they moved a combined 20 million TEUs—which caused the significant bottlenecks.

Regardless of the exact number, volumes are going to rise, which means the twin ports need to focus on

speeding up the movement of goods.

"Rather than talking about how to get more cargo today, let's figure out how we move 20 million TEUs without congestion and bottlenecks," Cordero said. "That should be the focus."

One way to ensure the ports can keep up with growing cargo volumes is transitioning terminal gate hours to a 24/7 model—operating hours that are common at Chinese ports but do not exist in the U.S. The ports, however, cannot make the transition in a vacuum; it requires the entire supply chain, from trucking to warehousing, to also operate 24 hours per day.

Cordero said it's the "Amazon state of mind": people want their goods now. They do not want to wait five to seven business days. Consumer expectations are higher and the ports need to rise to the challenge, he said.

The conversation around 24/7 port operations will likely gain more steam toward the end of the decade, he said.

Environmental issues

Cargo volumes, though, are not the only metric of success Cordero will be watching in the coming months and years.

"One of the issues that has played out at the San Pedro Bay gateway for over a decade is the whole question of the environmental impact that this economic engine has on neighborhoods and communities," Cordero said.

For years the ports have worked to reduce emissions and have had great success in many areas. But the historic cargo volumes and backlogs also meant a spike in emissions in 2021. Last year, however, levels came back down, according to a new report, and are expected to continue to decrease as the port invests more in green technology.

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CITY OF LONG BEACH Bid Opportunities

Title	Bid Number	Due Date
Kiteboarding Instruction Providers	PR-22-181	09/01/2023
Open Space & Recreation Element Update	DV-23-277	09/06/2023
Highway-Towable Air Compressor	WD-23-075	09/07/2023
Public Health Vaccines	HE-23-291	09/07/2023
Latinx Health Collaborative	HE-23-247	09/07/2023
Mobile High-Power Speakers Upgrade	DP-23-273	09/12/2023
CRS-Pool Heater	PR-23-259	09/14/2023
CNG Conversion System Light/Medium Trucks	FM-23-301	09/19/2023
Solid Waste Processing & Disposal	PW-23-209	09/20/2023
Health Equity Community Projects 2.0	HE-23-285	09/20/2023
Feasibility Study Business Improv. District	ED-23-276	09/20/2023
CMS for Bridge Crossings Project FY-21-22	UD-23-131	09/20/2023
Pension & Unfunded Liabilities Actuarial Svcs.	FM-23-280	09/21/2023
Airport Pre-Security Concession Opportunities	AP-23-287	09/27/2023

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Dockworkers finally ratify new six-year labor contract

The agreement will give workers a 32% pay raise over six years and reward workers with one-time bonuses.

By Alicia Robinson

The long-anticipated contract between dockworkers and their employers is expected to provide stability that may help the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles win back the market share they've lost in recent years.

The six-year agreement, ratified by three-fourths of International Longshore and Warehouse Union members late last month, will reportedly give workers a 32% raise over its term, as well as one-time bonuses to reward workers for



President Joe Biden speaks about inflation and supply chain issues at the Port of Los Angeles Friday, June 10, 2022.

helping get the pandemic-snarled supply chain back to normal.

In a statement when the vote was announced, ILWU officials said the agreement "protects good-paying jobs in 29 West Coast port

communities, maintains health benefits and improves wages, pensions and safety protections."

In a joint statement, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson called the contract a "win for the working people of our cities and for the ports" and said, "Labor stability is critical to the success of the San Pedro Bay Port Complex, which moves nearly 40% of the nation's containerized cargo."

The news drew praise from President Joe Biden, who pointed to it as an example that "collective bargaining works" in remarks he gave at the White House on Sept. 6.

The workers – ILWU represents about 20,000 longshore workers and clerks – had been without a contract for more than a year and the San Pedro Bay ports, the nation's busiest port complex, saw cargo shipments dwindle partly due to uncertainty during the sometimes contentious negotiations.

The Biden administration sent Acting Labor Secretary Julie Su to get the talks between the union and the Pacific Maritime Association (representing the terminal operators and shipping companies) back on track; she's credited with getting the two sides to a tentative agreement.

"It's a good deal for workers, it's a good deal for companies and it's a good deal for the United States of America," Biden said, adding that strengthening the supply chain helps hold down inflation.

And having a long-term contract in place should help the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports win back business, experts said.

"It matters significantly," said Brian Bourke, global chief commercial officer for SEKO Logistics. "The uncertainty

around the contract negotiations was exacerbated by the COVID congestion situation, so the two factors combined created a scenario where a lot of companies shifted their routing to the East Coast."

Matt Schrap of the Harbor Trucking Association, a trade group representing West Coast drayage companies, said some estimates of market share lost by Los Angeles/Long Beach were as high as 19%, and shippers were telling him, "I diverted (to another port) because we were concerned about the labor contract."

While they're optimistic, San Pedro port officials don't expect an upswing to happen overnight.

The Port of Long Beach released August cargo data on Sept. 13 that showed a decline of 15.4% in movement of 20-foot equivalent units (a standard container measurement) versus August 2022. But port Director Mario Cordero said in a news release that the numbers weren't unexpected, with area warehouses overstocked and people spending money on travel and other services instead of commercial goods.

"We anticipated a modest peak season as our cargo numbers continue to stabilize at pre-pandemic levels," Cordero said. "Over the long term we are strengthening our competitiveness by investing in digital and physical infrastructure projects that will keep goods moving efficiently for decades to come."

While year-to-date cargo movement through August was down more than 24% at the Long Beach port versus 2022, the news release noted that the nearly 5 million TEUs moved in that period are "on pace with pre-pandemic levels."

City News Service contributed to this report. ■



Construction is underway on West Harbor, the redevelopment of Port O' Call Village, in San Pedro.

Port of LA reveals draft connectivity plan for waterfront redevelopment

By Brandon Richardson

The reimagining of the Los Angeles Waterfront has been in the works since the turn of the century. With construction on the redevelopment well underway, the Port of Los Angeles last week

released the first draft of its plan to better connect the area to other San Pedro neighborhoods and the region at large.

The plan includes a host of recommendations to improve access to the waterfront as well as promote mobility once visitors are there. The report examined roadways and

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Port Future

Continued from page 4

"We've been on the cutting edge and reducing emissions more than any other port gateway in the country," Cordero said of the San Pedro Bay.

On a grander scale, beyond direct impacts on nearby communities, port emissions contribute to the larger issue of global warming, which, in recent years, has led to more extreme weather phenomena around the world, including hurricanes. In addition to the health and well-being of humanity, climate issues directly impact the shipping industry.

At the Panama Canal, for example, water levels did not recover enough as the end of the rainy season draws near. Due to the ongoing drought, limits on daily transit and vessel draft will remain in place the rest of this year and throughout 2024, the Panama Canal Authority announced earlier this month.

If the issue at the canal is prolonged, it could actually be a positive for the San Pedro Bay ports, Brian Bourke, global chief commercial officer for SEKO Logistics said in an interview, noting ships that cannot pass through the canal could be diverted to the West Coast ports.

"It's not adding a lot of pressure today, but it's adding risk that wasn't there before," Bourke said.

"People that run supply chains for companies, they don't like risk."

Another growing problem in the industry is the loss of containers at sea, John Konrad, the CEO of the shipping site gCaptain, told The Atlantic last year.

"The weather is getting more unpredictable, and these ships are getting bigger, so they're stacking higher," Konrad said. "When the ships get hit in a wave, you get a bigger lever that's pulling the containers over."

Moving forward, port staff needs to be laser focused on growing cargo volumes, while decreasing emissions, Cordero said. Ultimately, the port has the goal of zero-emission terminal and trucking operations by 2030 and 2035, respectively.

The port's largest active project to reduce emissions is the nearly \$1.6 billion Pier B On-Dock Rail Support Facility. Once completed early in the next decade, the port will be able to move significantly more cargo by rail, removing tens of thousands of truck trips per year (one double-stacked train eliminates 2,000 truck trips).

"Parallel to our endeavor is the BNSF [Railway] Barstow International Gateway," Cordero said. "The connectivity of that rail is huge, which means we're going to be able to move containerized cargo even faster."

Reporter Alicia Robinson contributed to this report. ■

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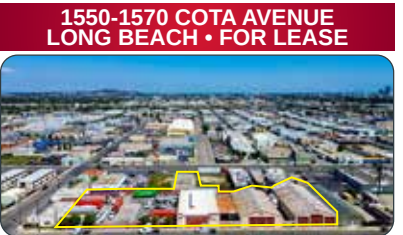
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A New Waterfront

Continued from page 7

traffic flow, public transit, pedestrian and bicycle access, and creating “points of interest” through space activation, art and more.

Connectivity is crucial to encourage tourism in the area after the more than \$1 billion overhaul is complete.

“The Port of Los Angeles has made significant investments over the last two decades focused on

deindustrializing the LA Waterfront and transforming it into a visitor and recreational destination,” Mike Galvin, director of waterfront and commercial real estate at the Port of Los Angeles, said in a statement. “Community input has been a critical component throughout the process.”

The port, in conjunction with landscape architecture, planning and urban design firm SWA Group, hosted six public workshops the first half of the year. Nearly 300 people attended the meetings to provide feedback on the connectivity plan,

according to the port.

The draft plan was presented to the LA Harbor Commission during its Sept. 7 meeting. Another public meeting is slated for Sept. 28, during which port staff will provide a more detailed presentation and accept additional public feedback.

During the commission meeting, SWA co-CEO Gerdo Aquino said nine comments “rose to the top”:

- Walkability and bikeability are important;
- Public transit improvements;
- Trolley and water taxis should be used to attract visitors;

- Visitors like a good view and historic landmarks;
- Improved signage;
- More amenities with better connection;
- More lighting, open space, seating and art;
- Sustainability and climate resiliency;
- Access to the waterfront is limited mostly to personal cars or walking.

“Now more than ever, people are seeking a reconnection with themselves, each other, and the natural environment around them,”



Courtesy of the Port of Los Angeles



Courtesy of the Port of Los Angeles

Aquino read from his presentation. “San Pedro’s Waterfront Connectivity Plan is the catalyst that will allow this to happen.”

Public transit will play a major role in the area’s connectivity, according to the report. The plan proposes a transit hub at Seventh Street and Pacific Avenue to link services to the waterfront as well as expanded rubber tire trolley service the return of the historic Waterfront Red Car trolley—modified from its last iteration that ran from 2003 to 2015.

The additions would connect to

existing transit, including Metro bus routes 205 and 246, PVTA Line 225, DASH San Pedro Route, Commuter Express 142 and the Metro J Line (Silver).

Other recommendations include connecting and extending the two existing promenades along the water to create a single, miles-long path with ample space for pedestrians and cyclists, open space, seating, lighting and more. The plan also calls for “smart parking” signage that would direct visitors to parking different parking lots and show how many available

spaces each has in real time.

The waterfront encompasses more than 400 acres, 15 marinas, and 3,736 recreational vessel slips and dry docks, and serves two million visitors per year. The redevelopment and connectivity plan will “take this waterfront to the next level,” Galvin said.

Fourteen projects have been completed as part of the waterfront redevelopment, including the 22nd Street Park, the Los Angeles cruise ship promenade and phase one of the waterfront promenade at the former Ports O’ Call Village among them.

Six other projects are “in progress” or under construction, including the 22-acre West Harbor site, which will fully revamp the Ports O’ Call area with new shops and dining.

Another 12 projects are listed as potential developments, including 67 acres of parking, the Cabrillo Beach Youth Waterfront Sports Center, a marina, a warehouse and a new cruise terminal.

The public comment period for the final connectivity plan closes on Nov. 6. The finalized project will then be presented to the harbor commission on Dec. 7. ■

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Kindergarten Teacher Anna Gines welcomes her class on the first day of school at Garfield Elementary in Long Beach.

LBUSD continues trend of
student enrollment decline

Officials said there is one silver lining: The district's transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs, both of which became full-day programs last year, have seen enrollment gains.

By Tess Kazenoff

Enrollment has been gradually decreasing at Long Beach Unified School District over the past two decades, and this year is no exception. As of Sept. 8, enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year is currently just below 64,400, although it could continue to fluctuate in either direction in coming weeks, according to LBUSD Chief Academic Officer, Brian Moskowitz. This is about 1,200 less students than last year—close to a 2% decrease. About 20 years ago, Long Beach Unified reached a peak of nearly 100,000 students, but since then, the district has typically seen a 1.5 to 2% decrease each year, apart from the first couple years of the pandemic when the trend was accelerated, with enrollment decreases nearing 2.5%. Moskowitz noted that this is not unique to Long Beach. In fact, other districts have seen even greater drops in enrollment, he said. “When we look at factors for declines across Southern California, across the state, a lot of it does have to do with cost of living and the implications from that,” Moskowitz said. As the district continues to monitor population fluctuations, housing and rental costs, and projected birth rates, Moskowitz pointed to one silver lining: the transitional kindergarten and

kindergarten programs, both of which became full-day programs last year. In conjunction with the district's expanded learning programs, which allow children to be supervised until 5 or 6 p.m., the district has seen an accelerated increase in transitional kindergarten enrollment. As of Sept. 6, about 300 more students are enrolled in transitional kindergarten than last year, said Moskowitz, and enrollment is expected to continue increasing over the next couple of months and even throughout the year. The shift to both full-day programs was partially an effort to encourage more families to enroll, who may have previously struggled with having to pick their child up at 11 a.m., Moskowitz said. Enrollment and attendance are directly linked to funding. “It's definitely the biggest challenge to maintaining funding levels,” Moskowitz said. Increased cost of employee benefits as well as heightening utility costs can also put pressure on school district budgets, Moskowitz said. “But the greatest factor would be the actual enrollment and attendance.” The district's state funding is based on attendance and varies for students in different grades, ranging from \$10,069 to \$12,327 per student. On average, LBUSD also receives an additional \$3,100 in supplemental funds for each student who is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, an English learner or a foster youth. “We gather information from each family regarding their home income levels to see if students may qualify for free reduced lunch,” Moskowitz said. “So that can also bring in the additional resources that we may need to support students and families that may be experiencing various challenges.” An estimated 64% of students meet the criteria for supplemental funding this school year, according to the district.

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This CSULB professor wants her students to
‘surprise themselves with their own success’

By Tess Kazenoff

Andrea Balbas still remembers her first big earthquake. Growing up in Hollister, California, she'd experienced earthquakes for as long as she can remember, and she was always more fascinated by them than scared. But when the 6.9 Loma Prieta earthquake struck while Balbas was in high school, her interest grew even more. “I was always really mesmerized by the fact that no one could tell me when another earthquake was gonna hit, or why don't we know when they're gonna happen?” said Balbas. Right out of high school, she signed up for a couple of geology classes at Sacramento City College. “Then I had a wisdom tooth that needed to be pulled, and when it was pulled, my body didn't rebound from it because I didn't have enough to eat,” she said. After getting sick, Balbas had to leave school. Although she didn't have the resources at that time to continue



Professor Andrea Balbas stands with her geology students as they hold globes at Cal State University Long Beach.

her education, she knew that a career in geology was in her future. “I always had it in my mind that one day, I'm gonna win the lottery and go to school for geology,” Balbas said. In her 20s, Balbas made the leap across the country, and began waiting tables in New York. By the time she

was 35, she had enough credit history to take out a loan for school. At the age of 39, Balbas had earned her bachelor's degree, and at 40, she started her graduate program. “I, of course, was the oldest person in every one of my classes. I would always joke that ‘the old lady

is here,” Balbas said. “Coming back as an adult gave me an advantage for sure.” Although her path didn't look like everybody else's, Balbas had gained confidence from paving her own way, she said. “You're like, ‘oh, yeah, I can plan a trip to the Galapagos to collect some rocks, I can go to Antarctica and sleep in an unheated tent for 30 days, I can get on a ship and sail on the Pacific Ocean and collect rocks from the seafloor,’” Balbas said. “Those are things I can do because I've probably done things that are more difficult in my personal life—moved somewhere by myself, waited tables for 12-hour shifts in New York City on Wall Street, paid all my own bills from when I graduated high school.” For Balbas, one of the larger challenges came from being one of the only women in a largely male-dominated field, she said. Although there were many women in her undergraduate program, the same could not be said of graduate school and beyond, Balbas said.

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‘Eternally grateful’: LBCC dance professor reflects on life onstage, in the classroom

By Tess Kazenoff

Before Stephanie Powell could even walk, she was tagging along to her cousin's dance classes in a Bakersfield garage.

The dance school's founder, Cindy Trueblood, would pull her car out of the garage, and as music played from a reel-to-reel tape recorder, Powell would sit on the floor and watch, until soon she began to stand and mimic what the older students did.

It wasn't long before she was enrolled as well, and performing "The Nutcracker" ballet to a 3,000-seat auditorium alongside a full-symphony orchestra. As the school eventually moved into an actual studio, and renamed itself as the Civic Dance Center, Powell fell in love with dance, and by her mid-teen years, Powell knew that dance would be a part of her future.

After high school, Powell enrolled at UC Berkeley as a sociology major with a minor in education, knowing in the back of her mind that after a career, she would likely end up as a professor.

But Powell's dance career started sooner rather than later. After signing up for some evening classes at the nearby Oakland Ballet, right away, she found herself employed. As she completed her degree, Powell performed in local shows—a rarity for dancers, who often have to leave behind their education in anticipation of a short-lived dance career, she said.

Her time at Oakland Ballet also marked a new experience in her dance life thus far—while Powell had grown used to being the only African American ballerina, Oakland felt like "the UN of ballet," a stark contrast to most companies that are mostly white women with a certain

body type, Powell said.

Powell also considered it the catapult to her career.

"To this day, I'm eternally grateful ... (artistic director Ronn Guidi) gave me principal roles, he gave me soloists roles, and really launched this sense of pride and sense of confidence in me that

is common in ballet, Black dancers don't always fit that, both in skin tone and body shape, Powell said.

But Arthur Mitchell proved to the world that African American people can do ballet—and well, Powell said.

After a while, Powell was ready for her next challenge—modern dance and musical theater were

an injury or something like that, and I nursed my injuries, but I made sure to see these places," she said.

Powell's trajectory shifted when her father underwent a major surgery, and she decided to complete her contract and move back to California. Although it was a difficult decision, for Powell, family came first, something she makes sure to now tell her students.

"Life is very precious, so I was happy to do it," Powell said. "I wanted to help my mom, I wanted to be sure I was there for my dad."

There, Powell earned a new position, and a final check off of her dancing bucket list: a role in "The Lion King."

For the next two years, she performed as not only a dancer, but as a singer and actress as well, in multiple roles—a gazelle, a lioness, a hyena, and more—she had 16 costume changes and makeup changes in the production.

Eventually, Powell started to feel like she wanted a night off.

"Working nights all my life since I was 19 doesn't leave for much personal life at all," Powell said. "Most people don't understand my life, most folks that are not in the arts."

"I knew eventually I would need to either find an artist or change my life and start to get into some kind of field or area within my field that happened during the day," Powell said. "So I decided to go back to school."

Ironically, as soon as she received her acceptance letter to UC Irvine, it was announced that "The Lion King" was closing.

"It was like a door opened for me and I ran through it and went straight to Orange County and got my degree," Powell said.

While at UC Irvine, Powell connected with Donald McKayle—an African American choreographer,

Continued on page 17



Professor Stephanie Powell leads the Dance 8 Stretch and Relaxation class at Long Beach Community College.

just because I don't look a certain way, doesn't mean I can't dance," Powell said.

Eventually, Powell decided to buy a plane ticket to New York, where she auditioned for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, founded by Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook at the height of the Civil Rights movement, predominantly for dancers of color.

"So I broke up with my boyfriend, I sold my laptop, and I moved to New York," Powell said.

For the first time, Powell found herself in a studio with 52 dancers of color.

Although a European aesthetic

still on her dance career bucket list, and she went on to dance for Donald Byrd/The Group where she performed in innovative pieces such as "The Harlem Nutcracker" set to Duke Ellington rather than Tchaikovsky, and then with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which brought Powell to Germany and across Europe.

Amid constant jetlag, rehearsing and performing, if she had a day off, Powell would make sure to explore.

"There were some dancers that it was much more important for them to sleep, or it was much more important for them to get to physical therapy because they were nursing



After a stint as a performer in "The Lion King," Stephanie Powell decided to attend UC Irvine where she would become a teaching assistant for Donald McKayle, an African American choreographer.



Stephanie Powell grew up dancing, ultimately performing with Donald Byrd/The Group in pieces such as "The Harlem Nutcracker." Her career even took her to Europe.

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CSULB Professor

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During her postdoctoral program, she was the only woman among 10 men. While on her trip to Antarctica with 16 people, only two of whom were women. In her graduate group team of five, Balbas was again the only woman. “It can be difficult being the only female,” Balbas said. “You still just move forward until you know, you get past that little speed bump.” As a woman, it can be harder finding a group of collaborators, or getting the same reception to a bold hypothesis as a man with the same hypothesis, she said. “Usually bold hypotheses and bold research are what gets scientists ahead. But that’s not always the case if you have to, kind of go against the stream of implicit bias,” Balbas said. Throughout her time in the field, Balbas has gravitated toward other female scientists to build partnerships, which has helped her navigate the difficulty of a male-dominated field. Now as a Cal State Long Beach professor, a role she began in 2020, she tries to guide her female students through the potential challenges of the geology field. “As women, we’re taught to be quiet or ... pay attention, or ask permission to ask a question, or not

trust your own instincts or all of this stuff, when really, there’s no reason why you shouldn’t just jump in,” Balbas said. Teaching, like geology, was always part of Balbas’ plan. “I always felt like the system really wasn’t in support of people like me,” Balbas said. When she was first trying to go to school, for instance, the system wasn’t built to assist students who didn’t have the resources, she said. “I always knew that I wanted to do what I’m doing now—help students that have dreams, help students self-actualize, help students surprise themselves with their own success,” Balbas said. “That’s always my goal. I want to help students surprise themselves with their own success, and that’s what I set out to do every day.” As a professor, Balbas encourages her students to not let go of their dreams just because somebody else thinks they’ve timed out, she said. Back when she was waiting tables at 33, she never would have guessed she was just a couple years away from traveling to Antarctica, and a few more years away from sailing the oceans and collecting volcanic rocks with a robotic ROV, she said. “There’s many times where I think I shocked myself with my own success,” Balbas said. “I guess that’s why that’s what I want for my students.”

Balbas recalled her time in Antarctica, drilling holes in the sea ice, and dropping an air gun down into the ocean. A shot would bounce energy off of the floor of the ocean to be measured, in order to tell what was below the layers of the sea floor, she explained. Before doing this, a flag would need to be placed every 100 meters. “I remember I was as cold as heck, and I was there looking through the scope, and I think I was saying some prayer for myself to try to stay warm and focus because I was freezing. ... I remember thinking, ‘Okay, I’m freezing because I’m perfectly still, but this planet is zooming around the sun and spinning at the same time ... it kind of gave me a whole new understanding of my place in the universe or in time,” she said. Balbas was shocked by her predicament—she was freezing because she was planting flags in Antarctica. “Who has a life like that, right?” Balbas said. “I had shocked myself that only three years after I started my undergrad—because I was an undergraduate at the time—I was already in Antarctica.” “When you decide what you want to do, and you go after it, it’s not going to be easy, but there will be times when you shock yourself with your own success,” Balbas said. “I think that’s a wonderful feeling.” ■

LBUSD Enrollment

Continued from page 10

To mitigate the impacts of a loss in funding, a key piece is projecting forward, Moskovitz said. Funding for each year is determined by the year prior, meaning the district has time to adjust staffing accordingly, from teachers to support staff. “That may look like reducing a teacher position at a school site that looks like they’re having declining enrollment,” Moskovitz said. “That happens every year, where we try to make as close as possible staffing allocations based on what we anticipate the student enrollment being.” If a third grade classroom at one school is closed, for instance, they could be moved over to another school where a transitional kindergarten classroom is being added. In recent weeks, a couple of additional transitional kindergarten classrooms have been opened in response to higher than expected enrollment, Moskovitz said. Continued enrollment declines could even mean closing a school and changing it for a new use. For instance, Keller Elementary was closed due to decreased enrollment, and reopened as a middle school that supported dual immersion programs, Moskovitz said. What is now McBride High School was previously DeMille Middle School, and Sato High School used to be Hill Middle School. “Those are advantages in some way of declining enrollment, that we’re able to repurpose some of our facilities for other programs that we’re interested in creating,” Moskovitz said. As for combatting the decline itself, the district accepts families who live in other areas, and has participated in outreach efforts such as signage on buses, or flyers in childcare programs, churches, and other community centers, Moskovitz said. “We know that there’s still a need to do some outreach to families within the community just to let them know about programs we have to offer,” he said. If rates continue to decrease, however, at some point, there’s an expectation of “a bottoming out,” Moskovitz said, where the district is able to meet the demand of families. “But until then, we’ll just have to continue to make those staffing adjustments as we go to try to keep up with the reductions in funding that we will realize as a result of the declining enrollment,” he said. “We can’t control cost of living, we can’t control cost of housing. So the best thing we can control is trying to project and try to allocate staffing proportionate to what we believe will be some of the reductions,” Moskovitz said. “It’s not a perfect science, but it’s our best, I guess, solution to try to mitigate some of the impacts.” ■

California will soon face a major shortage of early childhood educators. This CSULB program just got \$11M to help fill the gap.



A student walks past the Bob and Barbara Ellis Education Building at Cal State Long Beach.

California is opening up transitional kindergarten to all 4-year-olds, but that means the state needs about 10,000 to 14,000 more early childhood educators.

By Tess Kazenoff

Starting in 2025, transitional kindergarten will be available to all California 4-year-olds. While it’s a win for accessibility—all families will be able to access transitional kindergarten through public school, regardless of their ability to pay—it also means that California will face a shortage of about 10,000 to 14,000 early childhood educators. But with an \$11 million gift from the Ballmer Group—the largest gift ever given to the College of Education at Cal State Long Beach—the university will soon be able to offer a credential program for early childhood educators, a step toward meeting the need for the nearly 400,000 4-year-olds who may soon be enrolling in transitional kindergarten. “This has really created a critical need for us to prepare those folks to enter and complete the PK-3 credential so that they can fill those teaching positions when the law goes into effect,” said CSULB Dean of the College of Education Anna Ortiz. Developing the new credential program is in the works, Ortiz said. The process involves not only creating the program but going through an approval process with

the university, as well as with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Although this is typically about a two-year process, the Ballmer Group grant has helped accelerate the effort by supporting faculty and administrative time, said Ortiz, who hopes that the program will be presented to the commission around mid-November, and can begin accepting students for the following fall. But more importantly, said Ortiz, the funds will support 290 students over the course of five years to complete the credential, whether it’s a student just beginning a bachelor’s degree, a transfer student, a student already enrolled in CSULB’s Liberal Studies or child development program, or a student already working as an early childhood educator who didn’t complete their bachelor’s. About 80% of the \$11 million will go directly to students. Additionally, some funds will support the expansion of existing programs with the Long Beach Unified School District providing more opportunities for students to work in the district while pursuing their credential, said Ortiz. According to Ortiz, the initiative will not only support equity for children, whose families may have otherwise not been able to afford an early childhood program, but also for early childhood educators. “I’m very excited for the 4-year-olds, but I’m really excited to really bring this level of professionalism to early childhood education, that sometimes doesn’t exist as widely as it should,” Ortiz said. With the credential, early childhood educators will have a pathway to work in public schools, and will be qualified to teach up to third grade. “Early childhood educators are

the lowest paid professionals in education, and this credential will give them access to all the benefits of being a public school teacher, so elevated salary, regular benefits, retirement programs, things that aren’t always open to early childhood educators, especially those who are practicing without a bachelor’s degree,” Ortiz said. Both locally and statewide, the teaching force doesn’t necessarily reflect the student population, but the partnership between the university and Ballmer will help to increase the diversity and cultural competence of educators—which helps improve students’ learning, while building self-esteem and confidence, Ortiz said. “That’s a central part of all of our curriculum building right now,” she said. In addition to gifting CSULB, Ballmer Group also granted \$22 million for Cal State Dominguez Hills in support of similar programs. “Early education is a game-changer for giving kids a fair shot in school and life,” said Kim Brownson, director of Strategy and Policy at Ballmer Group in a statement. “Teachers are vital to this work, and CSUDH and CSULB will now be able to support LA’s future early educators through scholarships, degree programs and partnerships to support our children’s learning.” To Ortiz, the whole field of early childhood education is often overlooked, both by the community in general, as well as by educational institutions. “I think what this gift has done for early childhood education, is it really is giving us a boost in terms of professionalizing that area, and providing more opportunities for our students who really want to work with young children. ... This grant, and the credential, itself gives a whole other dimension to their career,” Ortiz said. The grant solidifies the trust that Ballmer has for the university to develop a culturally responsive and sustaining program, which will engage the community as students, as well as bringing students to the community, Ortiz said. “It’s an investment, definitely in LA County, but I’m proud that they also want to invest in Long Beach,” Ortiz said. “We’re just thrilled, it means a lot to us.” ■



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Despite protests, CSU trustees approve 6% tuition increase

By Laura Anaya-Morga

Despite loud protests, many students in the 23-system Cal State University system will pay 6% more for tuition starting in fall 2024.

The Cal State University Board of Trustees passed the increase on Wednesday, Sept 13 in an effort to bridge a \$1.5 billion funding gap, promising to provide more financial aid as part of the rise in the cost of education.

The 6% five-year increase in tuition, the first since the 2011-12 academic year amounts to \$342 per full-time resident undergraduate student, taking the annual tuition price from \$5,742 per student to \$6,084.

Similar rate increases will affect nonresident undergraduates, as well as graduate, doctoral and teacher credential programs.

Tuition will go up by 6% every year until the 2028-2029 academic year, when the price of resident undergraduate tuition will reach \$7,682. In July 2027, 18 months before the new academic year, tuition rates will be reassessed to give the board



Angelmarie Taylor, a CSU student, leads a group protesting a 6% increase in tuition at California State University Chancellor's office in Long Beach.

"sufficient time to consider whether any additional tuition rate changes would be implemented for the 2029-30 year," according to the CSU.

After five years, tuition rates will remain at the 2028-2029 level unless the board decides to take another action.

The vote was 15-5-0, with opposition by Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis and State Superintendent Tony Thurmond, board member Lateefah Simon and

student trustees Diana Aguilar-Cruz and Jonathan Molina Mancio.

Students and faculty have been vocal in their opposition to the tuition hikes since the CSU released its initial proposal in July.

At the CSU Chancellor's Office in Downtown Long Beach on Tuesday, Sept. 12, students spent two hours sharing personal testimonies with the board during public comment about how the tuition hike would

affect them. At a rally outside, hundreds vehemently opposed the proposal and shared widespread concerns that the tuition increase will fall on the backs of students who already struggle to pay for basic needs like rent and food.

They also argued that the plan would deter students from applying to a CSU altogether and questioned how the system is spending over \$8 billion it currently has in reserves.

"Why is it that the people at the top have all the money and all the power while the staff, students and faculty have to fight so hard for livable wages, for human rights issues?" said Jennifer Chavez, a CSU Long Beach student with Students for Quality Education.

The CSU's budget gap, revealed in a May report, is a result of state funding that does not fully cover instructor pay, tutoring support and other costs tied to educating and graduating students. Roughly 40% of the operating budget for the CSU system comes from tuition and fees.

The tuition increase is part of a larger budget plan that intends to expand the system's graduation initiative, support

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Cal State Long Beach could add 1,600 student beds, grow enrollment by 2035, report says

By Maison Tran

Cal State Long Beach unveiled plans to potentially add 1,600 student beds and 285 housing units for faculty and staff to accommodate a projected increase in enrollment by 2035, according to a report published on Sept. 1.

The campus could adopt plans laid out in this draft environmental impact report as soon as January 2024.

According to the report, the university could be serving some 5,000 more students by 2035. Meanwhile, the campus could hire more than 700 full-time faculty and staff within that same time frame. As of 2020, 31,197 students were enrolled.

The plan is currently under environmental review, so campus officials declined to comment on the report as they work to gather public input. The campus invites the public to provide feedback on the report by emailing CSULB-CommunityEngagement@csulb.edu through Oct. 16.

To accommodate the campus' projected growth, the report details plans to double the number of beds in Parkside Village from 1,387 to 3,472. It is located on the northwestern part of the campus. A new complex for staff would be built where the Design Building currently sits within the East District of campus. Some 285 units



Students walk through the Cal State Long Beach campus.

for residents, as well as ground-level retail and dining, would replace the building.

To encourage campus members to be less reliant on cars to get around, the plan details improved walkability and transportation around the campus. For example, the report provides an overview of new and widened sidewalks compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Details on when construction could begin and its frequency were sparse. According to the report, construction would be ongoing through the 2023 planning horizon, with the majority of construction

taking place from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends.

Here are more of the projects laid out in the report.

Other short-term projects (2 to 5 years):

- Engineering Replacement Building
- University Student Union Renovation / Addition and Cafeteria Replacement
- Hillside College Renovations / Addition
- Beachside Housing
- Aquatics Center and Pool Renovation

- Lecture Hall 150-151 Renovation
- Student Health Services Addition
- Corporation yard Renovations
- Microbiology Student Success Center Renovation
- Friendship Walk Stairs Revitalization
- Improved Campus Entrance and Gateway

Mid-term future projects (6 to 10 years):

- College of the Arts Replacement Building
- New 7th Street Community Outreach Facility
- Jack Rose Track - Commencement Facilities
- Walter Pyramid Renovation
- Pedestrian and Bike Lane Improvements

- Fine Arts 4 Renovation
- Fine Arts 1 / 2 Renovation
- Liberal Arts 5 Renovation
- Theatre Arts Renovation
- University Theatre Renovation
- Baseball Field Conversion to Multi-Use Field
- Central Plant Decarbonization
- University Music Center Renovation / Addition
- Nursing Building Renovation
- Engineering Tech Renovation
- Relocated Archery Field
- Redefining Campus Quad (renovating the main quad in the South District with new spaces, pathways, landscaping, seating and outdoor gathering spaces) ■

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Dance Professor

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and "one of the people that paved the way for all of us to sit in the same room," Powell said.

The two became inseparable—Powell became his teaching assistant, and took his choreography class to learn his methods. McKayle even began to create dances for Powell as a soloist, which to a dancer, is an immense honor, she said.

"I thought I was pretty much in retirement right after 'Lion King' shut down," Powell said. "I had done my ballet, I had done my neoclassical ballet, I had done my modern and then I had checked off my musical theater—I thought I was done, right? I was in my 30s when I went back to school. [McKayle] said, 'Oh, no, no, I have much more for you to do.'"

Together, they brought UCI to Paris, and Powell performed the solo he had choreographed.

"He kind of brought that spark

back in—but it was during the daytime," she said.

After graduating, Powell took a position at Fresno City College due to its proximity to home. As she ran the school's dance program, Powell continued to fly to New York to perform McKayle's solo. The distance from Los Angeles added an extra leg to each journey, which became increasingly difficult. Plus, Powell craved more of a performing arts environment that she lacked in Fresno.

In 2005, she began working at Long Beach City College, and also returned to UCI, where she stayed for the next six years.

"Eventually I got pretty tired, and I met somebody, and I got pregnant," Powell said.

Nine and a half years ago, she gave birth to her daughter, and realized she had to let something go.

Wanting to be more present for her daughter, Powell decided to focus solely on Long Beach City College, where she has remained for the past 19 years.

"I made the right choice," Powell said. "I feel like our student

population needs a dancer of color in their lives."

Students need to see people like themselves in order for them to feel confident to do what they love, or what they think they love, Powell said, and she has since made substantial gains in grant writing and acquiring funds for dance floors and in hiring diverse teachers.

At Long Beach City College, dancers, new and returning, find a home within the dance program, run alongside her colleague, Martha Pamintuan, Powell said.

"We welcome everybody, because people want to feel better," she said.

Dance can serve as a sense of therapy, amid the challenges her students are facing in the outside world, said Powell.

"Folks have got some real heavy stuff on their plate. Don't we all? I know I certainly do. My mother just passed not too long ago," Powell said. "But even in my own grief, I can still help other people ... And not to say that as soon as they walk out of that studio that the reality of the world just hits them in the face right away. But they're able to cope

a little differently."

Powell's last performance was in 2019 at the Lincoln Center, in honor of the anniversary of Donald McKayle's passing. If it weren't for the pandemic that shut down theaters, Powell said she'd probably still be dancing.

But through her work with Long Beach City College's dance program, and as the principal interpreter of McKayle's work, she feels fulfilled, Powell said.

"My focus is not so much on performing anymore. My students are performing," Powell said.

"I don't necessarily feel like I have to be back out there, on the stage hitting it, seven days, six days a week—I'm good."

"I've got a 9-and-a-half-year-old that needs me, you know, I am that mom that picks up my kid after school and drives my kid to school," Powell said. "I drive an hour to West Hollywood from Culver City, and then I drive an hour and a half to Long Beach. But that's the kind of mom I want to be."

Get in touch with Stephanie Powell at spowell@lbcc.edu. ■



Tuition Increase

Continued from page 16

diverse course offerings, improve facilities on campuses, fund instructor pay and increase financial aid.

In the first year of the plan, the CSU will generate an extra \$148 million and eventually \$840 million by the last.

The CSU currently has more than \$8.6 billion in reserves, said board member Jack McGrory at a meeting on Sept. 13. Of that, only \$766 million is part of a “rainy day fund”—one-time funds set aside for economic uncertainty or emergencies—while the rest is obligated to contracts and auxiliary funds, among other things, that cannot be redistributed for other uses.

Around half of the \$766 million is earmarked for faculty and staff compensation that unions are currently negotiating, McGrory said.

“There’s some illusion out there that we are sitting in the Chancellor’s office sitting on a cash pot of \$776 million. We’re not,” McGrory said. “I know it’s tough to do this. ...It’s really difficult when we are so proud of our affordability and accessibility, but we’ve got to make these numbers work.”

The CSU has said the tuition increase will not affect a majority of

students, especially those that have the most financial need. In fact, 86% of students who apply for financial aid with household incomes less than \$75,000 have their tuition and fees fully covered and an additional 9% receive some assistance, according to CSU Board of Trustees member Julia I. Lopez.

At the Sept. 13 meeting, board member Lopez emphasized that because a majority of students do not pay for tuition out of pocket, the next issue to tackle would be reducing other costs associated with attending a CSU, such as housing, transportation and food.

“We’ve heard the stories,” she said. “Housing insecurity, food insecurity, basic needs that students have, ... that’s what we are struggling with.”

However, students like Lyssa Ortega, also with Students for Quality Education, are skeptical that the promise of more financial aid will work for its intended purpose. Ortega said she is part of the group of students that does not receive financial aid despite applying and qualifying.

A student at CSU Dominguez Hills, Ortega said she is working three jobs to afford \$3,000 tuition for a single class this semester. “I can’t pay for that. What am I supposed to do next semester when I’m supposed to take another four (classes)?” ■



Thomas R. Cordova / Business Journal

Lieutenant Governor of California Eleni Kounalakis and State Superintendent Tony Thurmond talk to a handful of CSU students outside the chancellor’s office before a 6% tuition increase vote by the board in Long Beach.



Thomas R. Cordova / Business Journal

Tyler Castilli, a CSU student, holds a sign that says, in Spanish, “Battle against the increase of tuition fee” ahead of a board vote to approve a 6% tuition increase.

All students can get free meals this year, regardless of income level, LBUSD says

The Long Beach Unified School District will offer free meals for all students regardless of whether or not they qualify for the traditional free or reduced-price lunch programs.

By Laura Anaya-Morga

For the 2023-2024 school year, all meals will be free for students enrolled in the Long Beach Unified School District regardless of whether or not they meet the income requirements that traditionally qualified them for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

Thanks to the California Universal Meals Program, which

was implemented last year, all public school districts, county offices of education and charter schools in the state are required to serve K-12 students breakfast and lunch for free each school day.

The menu for each month can be found on the nutrition services website or on their Instagram.

While it is not required, the LBUSD encourages families to fill out the free and reduced lunch application anyway, so the district can benefit from state funding for the program. The application is available in English and Spanish.

Additionally, high school students looking to gain work experience and pick up a part-time job while still in school can apply to be cafeteria student assistants for the 2023-2024 school year.

Applicants are required to be 15 years or older, enrolled in person at an LBUSD high school and have a work permit. The position pays \$15.50 an hour.

An application can be requested from your school’s Cafeteria Supervisor. ■

Community Sponsorships

The Port of Long Beach is accepting applications from nonprofit groups to sponsor community events and programs. Applications are open through Oct. 2 – applications will now be accepted in September, January and May. Find out more at polb.com/sponsorships.



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COLUMNIST: TIM GROBATY

Our picks of some great houses for sale in September

I’m embarking this week on a monthly sampler of some of my favorite listings in Long Beach. I’m not going to say there’s something for everyone, but I will try to include at least one property that, while not affordable for everyone, is at least at the lower end of the spectrum.

Has there ever been a better time to buy a house? The short answer is the same as it’s been for 50 years: Before now. That’s when it was a better time to buy a house.

It’s particularly difficult here in California, a state that left the other 49 in the dust starting in the 1970s when the gap between California’s home prices and those in the rest of the country started to widen. According to the California Legislative Analyst’s Office, in 1970 home prices in California were about 30% above US levels and by 1980 they were more than 80% higher.

The disparity continues and prices in Southern California are among the highest in the country.

And, of course, Long Beach is no exception, with a large majority of residents in the city unable to afford a large majority of the homes listed for sale in the city.

So, what’s the point of writing about homes for sale as I do each Monday in the Long Beach Post?

I write about a range of homes. Mostly, I admit, are on the opulent and expensive end, because nobody wants to read about \$700,000 tract homes week after week. The homes I tend to write about have some significant historical or architectural stories behind them, or are located in particularly beautiful neighborhoods, generally on the water.

I’m interested in the diversity of styles as well as Long Beach’s 18 historic districts that are spread around geographically from the coast to North Long Beach.

What the stories aren’t meant to be are puff pieces for Realtors—I’ve had almost as many brokers angry with me as those pleased with my stories. No, to answer a question or accusation I’ve heard several times, I don’t get any money from real estate agents. It’s unfortunate, but I just continue to live on my paycheck. I’m just your simple country real-estate writer.

That said, I’m embarking this week on a monthly sampler of some of my favorite listings in Long Beach. I’m not going to say there’s something for everyone, but I will try to include at least one property that, while not affordable for everyone, is at least at the lower end of the spectrum.

Here are four picks for September.

We’ll start at the high end with this recent listing in Naples at 27 The Colonnade. While not smack on the water, it’s pretty close, and the three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath house has views of the bay from every bedroom.

The 1949 brown-shingled home across from Colonnade Park is one of the more recognizable homes on the island for anyone who’s spent any time there. It’s on the market now for the first time in nearly 50 years.

It’s on a rare large double lot which allows for a large backyard patio where you can get more privacy than is offered at many Naples properties

by relaxing beneath a huge avocado shade tree out back. You’re steps away from the park which hosts summertime concerts and other events.

There are fireplaces in the formal living room as well as a cozy one in the kitchen and the family room has exposed wood beam ceilings as well as built-in shelving.

All three bedrooms are upstairs, each with views of the water. The home is listed by Natasha Schultheis at \$3.395 million.

Here’s a Tudor style home at 242 Bennett Ave. in the middle of Belmont Heights. I’m a sucker for the occasional Tudor home as long as it’s not overly faux. This vintage 1926 gem is faithful to the style and is holding up well, looking great both inside and out. The home’s interior has authentic wood trim throughout, including casings, window frames and floors. The living room has a high barrel ceiling with exposed wood beams and a rustic stone fireplace. The kitchen has been brought up to modern times with high-end appliances and marble countertops.

The bedrooms are large, with one having access to the Elysian backyard with beautiful landscaping and mature trees bearing olives, limes and avocados.

The rebuilt two-car garage is perhaps the most modern aspect of the nearly 100-year-old residence. Its features include an 18-foot door, a half-bath and an electric vehicle charging station.

The three bedroom, two-bath home is listed by Spencer Pabst at \$1.8 million.

Making the list just for its sly and somewhat quirky design (the listing calls it Mid Century Modern-inspired), is this three-bedroom, one-bath, 1,008-square foot home at 3579 Olive Ave. in the California Heights Historic District.

You could argue, at least from its curb appearance, that the 1948 home is Mid Century Modern-inspired in terms of its slanting flat roofline, its generous use of windows (at least at the front) and its xeriscape landscaping. Inside, though, not so much, which doesn’t mean it’s not attractive. The rooms, including the kitchen, are all separate in the traditional mode—no wide-open floor plan—and there’s no particular effort to merge the exterior with the interior by way of a more expansive use of floor-to-ceiling glass, so the effect is more cozy than open. There are hardwood floors throughout; the bedrooms are on the small side but the backyard is large and features a raised wooden deck set amid a forest of foliage.

The home is listed at \$825,000 by Connie Wildasinn.

Get off your high horse and consider this waterfront property in the prestigious 90803 ZIP code at a cost of \$350,000. OK, yes, it’s a mobile home, or trailer, or manufactured house, but it’s set along the Los Cerritos wetland and the Cerritos Channel and the Bahia Marina in Belmont Shores



Courtesy of Redfn

A three-bedroom home on a rare double lot on The Colonnade in Naples, just off the water.



Courtesy of Redfn

A three-bedroom Tudor Revival home in the heart of Belmont Heights.



Courtesy of Redfn

A Mid Century Modern-inspired home in the California Heights Historic District.



Courtesy of Redfn

A home in Belmont Shores Mobile Estates on the Los Cerritos Channel is listed at \$350,000.

Mobile Estates. I lived in the estates for a while, and have known several people who have moved here and they all enjoy(ed) the idyllic location, the breezes from the sea, the squawking night herons in the early evening, the plentiful amenities that include a large pool and spa, gym, community room with kitchen and more.

This home at 6271 Emerald Cove Drive has a bit more than many of the homes in the estate, including its own laundry room and a small yard with mature shade trees. The two-bedroom, two-bath home has an upgraded kitchen with granite counters, a living room with cathedral ceiling and bamboo floors.

One catch: It’s for residents 55 and older, so grow up and check it out. It’s listed by Realtor Miles Evans. ■

DLBA offers microgrants for groups holding events Downtown

By Tess Kazenoff

The Downtown Long Beach Alliance is offering a new round of small grants to organizations planning events Downtown.

Individuals, groups, businesses, neighborhood associations and nonprofits are all eligible to apply for the grants, which will range from \$250 to \$1,000. The DLBA said it has \$5,000 available to give out, and the application period is now open.

“The microgrants allow businesses and residents to re-energize our Downtown with music, culture, food and shopping,” DLBA President and CEO Austin Metoyer said in a statement. “There has been a lot of momentum this year with Downtown events.”

In addition to supporting community groups, the program allows the DLBA to build new connections and relationships, Metoyer added.

This is the second round of grants this year. In April, DLBA re-launched the program for the first time since 2012, with a focus on supporting events that align with the principles of the organization’s diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility initiative.

When choosing grantees, the organization also will consider events’ location in Downtown, marketing and reach, audience and participation estimates (including how many people are expected from outside the area), sponsorship benefits and deliverables, experience and the overall impact.

“We saw some amazing event ideas come out of the last microgrant cycle and we’re looking forward to seeing what the community has in store for Downtown this time around,” Justine Nevarez, DLBA’s community outreach and events manager, said in a statement.

The last round of the program supported 11 grant winners who produced events over the summer, including Visit Gay Long Beach’s “Cheers to Queers” event in June at Partake Collective, which used the funding for promotional materials and marketing.

The deadline to apply for this round is Sunday, Oct. 1. Events must take place between Oct. 12 and March 31.

Applicants are encouraged to review DLBA’s service area boundaries to make sure their proposed event will take place within them.

For complete application guidelines and to apply, visit <https://downtownlongbeach.org/invest/grants/>

Reporter Brandon Richardson contributed to this report. ■

Boeing to move 250 jobs out of Long Beach

By Jason Ruiz

Boeing informed employees in late August that it’s moving about 250 jobs out of Long Beach and into other states where workers could have to relocate if they want to keep their positions.

The announcement was made after a company analysis found that its facilities in Texas, Oklahoma, Florida and Georgia needed additional staffing, according to Barry Edwards, a spokesperson for

Boeing Global Services. Some of the jobs that will be moved are in finance, engineering, supply chain and project management.

While the moves were announced Aug. 29, Edwards said that they’re expected to be made over the course of about 15 months through the first quarter of 2025.

With over 2,000 employees in the city, the number of people told that their jobs would be moving amounted to about 10% of the company’s presence in Long Beach, Edwards said.

The jobs are support positions for the company’s C-17 program, which stopped production in Long Beach in 2015. The last Long Beach-made C-17A Globemaster left Long Beach Airport in November 2015 with people gathered to watch the historic takeoff.

Boeing’s former C-17 production site was purchased by Goodman Group in 2019 for over \$200 million, and Relativity Space, one of the many space companies that have made Long Beach their home in recent years, took over the site in 2021. ■

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Long Beach could put hotel wage increase on March ballot

By Jason Ruiz

Dozens of labor activists pushing for the Long Beach City Council to put an initiative on the 2024 ballot that would allow voters to raise the minimum wage for hotel workers in the city to \$25 per hour filled a committee hearing on Tuesday, Sept. 12 calling for its members to move the issue forward.

Unite Here Local 11 and its members are pushing for a \$25 minimum wage next year with an escalator to \$30 by the 2028 Olympics, mirroring other efforts across other cities in the region. The union represents over 32,000 hotel, restaurant, airport, convention center and sports arena employees in Southern California and Arizona.

The changes would apply to hotels in the city with over 100 rooms. It's unclear how it will affect Long Beach if voters adopt the wage increase.

The council requested a market study in July to analyze how a pay increase for the city's hotel workers might affect the industry, but some council members indicated that they were ready to place the issue on the ballot before authorizing the study.

However, Johnny Vallejo, the city's deputy director of Economic

Development, said the city was unable to find a firm that could perform an analysis in the short amount of time provided by the city. The City Council has to vote by Oct. 24 to place the issue on the March ballot, something it pledged to do in July.

Vallejo said several firms "politely declined" to conduct the study, citing the limited timeframe. Long Beach ran into a similar issue when it sought insight as to what would happen if the council approved a similar wage increase for employees of private health care facilities.

It eventually got a condensed report, with the authors admitting that they were unable to account for long-term effects to health care access or if it would create a spillover effect for other industries that might also be forced to raise wages.

Vallejo said there could be short-term benefits for both the city and hospitably workers, like increased hotel tax revenue collected by the city and increased wages, but long-term effects could include job losses, businesses exiting the city and eventually a decrease in hotel taxes seen by the city.

Long Beach already has a hotel minimum wage ordinance that was adopted in 2012 that provides annual increases based on the consumer



Unite Here Local 11 Co-President Ada Briceño calls for a boycott of Hotel Maya in Long Beach during a rally at the hotel.

price index. As of July, the minimum wage in the city was \$17.55 per hour.

"I don't believe the adjustments reflect the current cost of living," said Councilmember Cindy Allen, who chairs the Economic Development and Opportunity Committee.

Labor representatives said on Sept. 12 that the increase was justified given the profits being seen by some hotels and the need to provide a living wage to the employees who work at the hotels.

"Those profits are coming off the backs of hard-working Long Beach residents," said Devin Ablard, an organizer with the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, which includes Unite Here. "Those profits are the stolen wages of hard-working Long Beach residents or people who have been priced out."

Hoteliers called for a phased-in approach to any kind of wage increase, saying that it would allow them to adapt to the increased costs.

"We need to look at transitioning to that point, rather than shocking the system and potentially creating a bigger economic issue for the city," said Imran Ahmed, general manager for the Long Beach Marriott.

While strikes have been more visible in cities like Los Angeles, some of Unite Here's members joined the "Hot Labor Summer" in Los Angeles by picketing outside of Hotel Maya. Within the first week, the demonstrations turned violent after a hotel guest punched a protestor before a wedding ceremony at the hotel.

The union is behind several efforts across the region to raise the minimum wage for its members. In Los Angeles, some council members have proposed skipping a \$25 per hour wage in favor of a \$30 minimum wage.

Meanwhile, in Anaheim, that council has voted to oppose a ballot measure that would increase workers' wages to \$25 per hour. Unite Here qualified a measure for Anaheim's ballot that would raise wages for not only hotel workers,

but also those at the convention center, Angel Stadium and other entertainment spaces.

An analysis done for Anaheim found that in the short term, increased wages would likely lead to more transient occupancy tax for the city, which is the amount charged on top of daily room rates. The report suggested that hotels would raise prices and that would lead to between a 0.5% and 2.5% increase to the city's TOT revenue, or as much as \$5.9 million.

However, those gains could be short-lived, the report said. It projected that by 2028, the amount the city would see in TOT would actually be less with the wage increases than without, stating that visitors might choose to stay elsewhere because of the higher nightly charges and some hotels could go out of business.

The report noted that at least one hotel project has been canceled because of the pending ballot measure.

"The social goals of the bill are laudable," the report said. "However, policymakers should be very careful about balancing these trade-offs with nurturing the overall tourism market, and they should be cautious about long-term unintended consequences."

The hotel tax accounts for over 40% the city's overall revenue, a much larger amount than Long Beach, which projected just \$23.1 million of its \$676 million general fund would come from TOT.

Anaheim's council voted to oppose the measure, citing negative effects for its city-owned convention center and the tourism economy as a whole.

The issue will now move forward to the full City Council, which will be updated at its Sept. 19 meeting about potential options for the ballot measure.

If it eventually approves putting the hotel worker wage increase on the March ballot, it would join another wage increase for health care employees in the city, who are also seeking a \$25 minimum wage. ■

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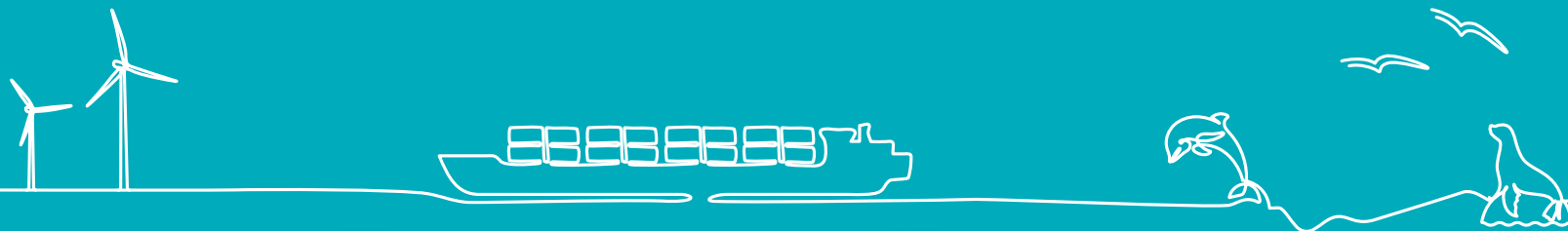
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