

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 27, 2019
TO: City Council
FROM: John Pietig, City Manager
SUBJECT: WEEKLY UPDATES

Community Development Department Streamlines Review Process - The Laguna Beach Community Development Department is already making progress on its March 5 Action Plan to improve the project review process for property owners. In less than a month, the Department has hit the ground running and already made major changes to improve the quality and efficacy of permit processing. Those changes include a streamlined process that allows multiple plan submittals at once, allowing all Community Development Divisions and City Departments to review plans early in the process and in parallel with the Zoning Division review. This change is already resulting in quicker review times of building permit plan checks. Also, a newly formed Development Management Team (DMT) now reviews commercial and residential projects at the very beginning of the development review process. The DMT (made up of Community Development, Fire, Public Works and Water Quality Departments) reviews and provides comments on new projects within two weeks of a project submittal - then meets with the property owner and project design team to go over the DMT's comments to the applicant. By meeting with the property owner early, the DMT helps identify all the project requirements and direction up front, thus avoiding setbacks that could happen later in the process.

City Leaders Share Lessons Learned from Paradise - On Tuesday, March 25, Laguna Beach Mayor Bob Whalen, City Manager John Pietig and Emergency Operations Coordinator Jordan Villwock spoke to a full house about lessons learned from a January visit to fire-ravaged Paradise, California, the site of the deadly November 2018 Camp Fire. At this week's fire safety meeting, hosted by Village Laguna, Villwock shared his takeaways from the Paradise tragedy and outlined how residents can best prepare for a fast-moving fire and reduce fire risk, detailed current emergency preparedness measures and described the City's ongoing fuel modification efforts in and around Laguna Canyon. "We have one of the best notification programs in the State to help notify you when something happens, but one of the things we learned in Paradise is we need to take a look at it and make it even better," said City Manager John Pietig. Last fall, the City Council supported Mayor Bob Whalen's recommendation to create the Wildfire Mitigation and Fire Safety Subcommittee to help assess the City's current level of preparedness, fire risk and exposure to wildfires, resources and infrastructure and review current regulations to mitigate wildfires. The committee will present its recommendations to the City Council this summer and develop an immediate action plan. "It's important we not just evaluate all the opportunities for protection - we're going to have to prioritize them," Pietig said. "Choices are going to have to be made to maintain the type of community we all want to live in and also protect our residents." This week's meeting was held at the Unitarian Universalist Church.

Annual Composting Classes - The City's solid waste hauler, Waste Management, will offer the first of four free composting classes planned for 2019 on Saturday, March 30, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Bluebird Park, located at 798 Bluebird Canyon Drive. Compost and worm bins will be available for purchase during the class at a discounted price. For more information visit the city's website at www.lagunabeachcity.net/recycling, or contact the Waste Management class instructor, Lisa Ryder, at (310) 874-2499.

Junior Lifeguards - Registration for the 2019 Junior Lifeguard program is now open to Laguna Beach residents. Participants must pass the required swim test or have participated in the 2018 program to be eligible to register. The next swim tests will be held this Friday, March 29, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 30, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Not sure if your child is ready for the swim test? Try out our JG Clinic on Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. All swim tests and clinics take place at the Laguna Beach High School and Community Pool, located at 670 Park Avenue. Additional information about the Junior Lifeguard program is available at: <http://bit.ly/2RA1Qcl>, or call (949) 497-0788 for questions.