

The Week That Was^{TW2}

November 13 – November 16, 2023



1. Police Patrol Activity

2. California Coastal Commission Approves City-owned Parcels to be Rezoned as Open-Space

On November 16, 2023, the California Coastal Commission approved the City's request to amend its Land Use and Zoning maps to change the land use designations of 26 City-owned parcels from Residential/Hillside Protection to Permanent Open Space. Twenty-two of the 26 parcels are located on the eastern slope of Laguna Canyon; the remaining four parcels are also located in the undeveloped hillside area, southeast of the other 22 parcels. These City-owned parcels were purchased via Proposition 12 funding. This action completes this City Council priority item for this year, which was undertaken by the Community Development Department.

3. Outreach to the Business Community Regarding the Upcoming Proposed Maintenance Ordinance

The Community Development Department has sent letters to commercial properties throughout the City informing them that the City Council will consider a proposed Commercial District Beautification/Property Maintenance Ordinance at its January 9, 2024, meeting. The proposed Ordinance would establish minimum property maintenance standards for all commercial properties within the City. It would also allow the City to offer incentives to property owners to assist with compliance and for the City to enforce the established property maintenance standards. The purpose of this program is to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of commercial properties to promote a safe, clean, and visually appealing business environment. It further aims to enhance property values, promote economic development, and maintain a high quality of life for residents and visitors.

4. Promenade on Forest Program Extension

The Planning Commission considered approval of a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) and a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) extending the temporary closure of a portion of Forest Avenue and allow temporary use of a public street as a pedestrian plaza ("Promenade on Forest Program") through January 31, 2027. Meanwhile, staff will proceed with the design, entitlement, and permitting to convert the Promenade on Forest Program to a permanent pedestrian plaza. The Commission reviewed the project and the CEQA Notice of Exemption and, after deliberation, voted unanimously to conditionally approve the project.

5. Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center Data Cabling

The IT Division has selected a vendor to install data cabling and power electrical receptacles for the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center. The work will be performed over the next two weeks in preparation for workstations to include Fire administration, the Police report writing room, and Marine Safety work areas. The vendor will provide structured Cat6 to all designated workstation locations, upgrade the IT closet with cable management and patch panels, and provide several new cable drops for workstations and Access Points. Additionally, new power receptacles will be installed at various locations where new workstations will be located, ensuring there are power outlets in each office space, similar to the data ports. These services are necessary to connect computer systems to the city network and are a critical component of network infrastructure.

6. Fiscal Year 2022-23 Final Audit Fieldwork

The City's external auditors, Eide Bailly LLP, have initiated the final field testing with the Finance Division for the year ended June 30, 2023. Fieldwork will continue through the end of the month with Finance staff completing numerous financial schedules requested by the auditors. The results of the completed audit will result in the production of the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

7. Trolley Service to Sawdust Festival Winter Fantasy

Beginning on Friday, November 17, 2023, the City will operate enhanced trolley service to the Sawdust Festival Winter Fantasy event. Free parking will be available in Lot 16, with free trolley service to the Sawdust Festival from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through December 17, 2023. In addition, the City will operate a Winter Express trolley between a free, peripheral parking lot in Irvine, the Sawdust Festival and downtown Laguna Beach every Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., as well as on Friday, Nov. 24. These services help to reduce traffic congestion on Laguna Canyon Road and manage parking demand in the downtown area. More information available [here](#).

8. City Introduces One-Time Mobile Payment Option for Parking

In an effort to further improve customer experience and make it even easier to pay for parking, the Transit and Community Services Department recently introduced a new one-time parking payment option at City-operated parking lots and meters. Customers can now pay for parking simply by scanning a QR code, entering vehicle and parking space information, and paying via credit card, Google Pay or Apple Pay, without having to download an app to their phone. Regular customers can also continue to find and pay for parking by downloading the Laguna Beach Parking app. To access the new one-time parking payment portal, click [here](#).

9. Annual Closures for Field Maintenance

Each year, the City closes its sports fields during the winter months to complete turf repairs and maintenance. The field closure schedule is as follows:

- Alta Laguna Field – Nov. 14 – Dec. 15
- Riddle Field – Nov. 27 – Feb. 1
- Moulton Meadows Field – Dec. 18 – Jan. 18

10. Hospitality Night

The City of Laguna Beach and the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce will host the City's annual Hospitality Night on Friday, December 1, beginning at 5 p.m. in the Peppertree Parking Lot (Lot 2). Santa Claus will arrive to greet holiday revelers before a tree lighting at 6:10 p.m. Street closures begin at 4:00 p.m.

11. CR&R Solid Waste & Recycling Services Transition Progress Report

On Tuesday, November 14, representatives of the City's new Solid Waste and Recycling Services hauler CR&R (beginning July 1, 2024) provided an update on their Transition Plan to Mayor Bob Whalen and Interim City Manager Sean Joyce. CR&R and City staff, including Solid Waste Program Coordinator Liz Avila and Administrative Analyst Ashley Moran, have been meeting biweekly since the City Council selected CR&R as the new hauler in July 2023. Highlights of CR&R's updates included the purchase of its new collection vehicles including one Electric Vehicle (EV) collection truck. An EV charging station will be installed in town by late 2024, at CR&R's expense, and is being assessed in conjunction with City staff to optimize a potential interlay with the City's Master Plan for Electrification. Per the City's Franchise Agreement with CR&R, and State law, CR&R is required to provide an offer of employment to the incumbent's (Waste Management) workforce directly affected by the award of contract. Incumbent driver engagement includes discussions with Waste Management and the applicable unions. It is anticipated that a meeting will be arranged in January 2024 to offer employment to those incumbent drivers. Lastly, CR&R will reassign its most senior Route Managers to begin a training program in the City. Collectively these Route Managers have decades of experience and have been involved in multiple hauler transitions and program implementations. A Transition Progress Report will be submitted to the City Council later this month and will be available to the public on the City's website. Questions regarding CR&R's Transition Plan can be addressed directly to Senior Public Works Analyst/Solid Waste Program Coordinator Liz Avila at lavila@lagunabeachcity.net.

12. Annual Storm Drain Inspection and Cleaning Program Completed

This week, Public Works maintenance staff completed the annual inspection and cleaning of over 900 storm drain facilities Citywide. This work is conducted each year in late summer and early fall as part of the City's preparations for the upcoming storm season. The effort was overseen by Maintenance Supervisor Todd Henry.

13. Annual Neighborhood Traffic Striping and Curb Painting Begins Monday

On Monday, November 21, the City's striping maintenance contractor, OC Striping, will begin repainting all existing traffic striping, pavement legends, and curb markings on City-maintained public streets between Bluebird Canyon Drive and Cardinal Drive. The work is expected to last 3-4 weeks, weather permitting, and is overseen by Maintenance Supervisor Todd Henry. No work will occur on designated holidays or weekends.

14. HVAC Unit Replacements at City Hall and Susi Q

On Friday, November 17, Public Works contractors are scheduled to replace a poorly functioning air condition unit serving the second-floor offices of City Hall. The unit replacement will resolve cooling issues that were experienced this past summer. A crane will be used to remove the existing unit and install a new unit, which will partially impact access to the rear of City Hall early in the morning. Also on Friday, a pump for the boiler

unit at the Susi Q will be replaced to resolve some recent heating issues experienced at the Susi Q facility. This work is being overseen by Maintenance Supervisor Wayne Chintala, to whom questions can be directed at wchintala@lagunabeachcity.net.

15. Personal Rescue Watercraft Training for Marine Safety Staff

This week, Marine Safety staff participated in a Personal Rescue Watercraft training in Huntington Beach with regional partners. The annual course certifies new personal rescue watercraft operators for future Marine Safety operations. These regional training courses provide a platform for agencies to enhance the effectiveness of mutual aid and daily operations. Additionally, the training fosters policy alignment, creating a regional standard and a safer environment for the employees and the public. Other regional training exercises encompass a variety of scenarios, including Air-Sea Disaster Response, Missing Swimmer Drills, SCUBA Search and Rescue training, Maritime Smuggling Response, Rescue Vessel Operations, and Emergency Medical Technician Courses.

16. Police Department Reports

Patrol Activity

- On Wednesday, 11/08, officers arrested a male disturbing the peace on Main Beach. The subject cooperated with officers, but admitted he liked to fight police.
- On Thursday, 11/09, officers arrested a suspect for lighting a small fire under the bridge at the Alternate Sleeping Location (ASL). The suspect used leaves and sticks as kindling. He said he was going to sell fire briquettes.
- On Friday, 11/10, officers were dispatched to Heisler Park regarding a 6-foot male, blonde hair, wearing a hoodie and bright orange underwear following the reporting party around the park. While officers walked through the park looking for the subject, two separate individuals contacted the officers to report the same issue. Officers located the subject, who is a known sex registrant. The suspect was detained and refused to provide identification, although he said he had it. The suspect was arrested for delaying the officers.
- On Sunday, 11/11, officers were dispatched to the rear of 158 S. Coast Highway for a person down. Construction workers at the Rivian Theatre found the body of an unresponsive female with head trauma next to their job site. She was later pronounced dead, and a homicide investigation was initiated. The area was locked down and detectives were called in. The investigation led to the arrest of a suspect for homicide. This was an example of outstanding detective work by LBPD under truly tragic circumstances.
- Officers maintained a uniform presence during the “Free Palestine” rallies on Main Beach and in front of Pageant of the Masters. A separate protest group caravanned through the City. The group on Main Beach grew to approximately 250 people and concluded at 1830 hours. Several flag poles and pieces of wood

were removed from protesters per our municipal code. Overall, the event was peaceful, and no arrests were made.

- Officers arrested a male suspect following a search of his vehicle for possession of nitrous oxide and a large quantity of cannabis. They also located a large sum of cash that was seized for asset forfeiture.
- On Tuesday, 11/14, officers arrested a male and female suspect for domestic battery. Officers arrived and saw a male on top of a female through the front door. Officers got their attention, and both immediately cooperated and came to the door. The male and female were both detained and after an investigation, both parties were placed under arrest.

17. Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET)

Homeless Liaison Officer (HLO) Section

- The HLO was successful in getting one long-term Laguna Beach transient home through Project Homecoming.
- The HLO located a long-time missing adult and was able to reunite them with their family through Project Homecoming.
- The HLO worked with Be Well to divert three individuals into sobering facilities outside of the city.

Traffic Section

- Traffic Section officers are continuing to gather data from areas that have been identified as traffic related community concerns and conducting the necessary enforcement.
- The traffic section is working on analyzing the traffic data they collected to create an enforcement and traffic safety plan.

Patrol Training

- Department Taser training continued this week with our new technology.

Park Ranger Section

- Park Rangers assisted with the annual Dirt Fondo mountain bike ride by conducting traffic control for the riders through the city to the trails.
- Additionally, Park Ranger Kirk-Johnson once again represented the Laguna Beach Police Department by riding in the event.

Community Services Officer (CSO) Section

- CSO Rice is beginning preparations for the upcoming holiday events that will occur in the month of December.
- CSO Rice continues to work with community members promoting crime prevention education.

Parking Services

- All four Parking Services Officer (PSO) candidates were moved into the background process prior to hiring.
- The Parking Services Section continues to pursue purchase of the mobile Automatic License Plate Reader system for the new PSO truck.

Community Events

- LBPD Honor Guard and Command Staff attended the Veterans Day Memorial Ceremony at Monument Point on Saturday.
- The Laguna Beach Kindness Movement held their Courage to Be Kind award presentation on 11/11, their Day of Kindness. Lieutenants Ashton and Farris were given the 2023 Courage to Be Kind award for their acts of kindness.

18. City Manager Recruitment

The City Council is recruiting for City Manager through December 4, 2023. Interested candidates may apply by [clicking here](#).

19. Upcoming Notable Community Events (of which staff is aware)

- **Friday, November 17:** Sawdust Winter Fantasy from 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. (open each Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through December 17)
- **Friday, December 1:** Hospitality Night from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Downtown Laguna Beach

Sean Joyce

Interim City Manager