

LONG BEACH

PLANNING COMMISSION

2013 IN REVIEW





Photograph by the *Long Beach Business Journal's* Thomas McConville.

innovative change. The planning team works with neighborhood groups, the Mayor and City Council, police, developers, architects, engineers, contractors and business owners to ensure that all developments in the City – big and small – are smart, safe, and make the best sense for the community. Similarly, the seven-member Planning Commission provides insight and leadership to the Mayor and City Council on all matters affecting development throughout Long Beach. Commissioners are objective and independent advisors who are appointed to serve a maximum of two four-year terms. While the Commission acts as an advisory body on matters related to zoning and the General Plan, Commissioners also serve as the public hearing authority for a variety of development applications. Throughout the year, the Commission reviews numerous requests from homeowners and developers, including requests for Conditional or Administrative Use Permits, Standards Variances, Local Coastal Development Permits, Site Plan Reviews, and Subdivision requests. In 2013, the Planning Commission and staff worked diligently on an array of development projects spawning more attractive and safe neighborhoods, and further contributing to the promotion of economic growth and vitality throughout the City.

As the needs of the City's diverse populations continue to grow and change, Long Beach Development Services and planning staff are committed to working with the community to ensure that the Long Beach of tomorrow is the best that it can be. The Department believes good planning helps build communities that offer better options for people to live and work, and allows neighborhoods to thrive. Planning helps community members envision a great city while finding the right balance of new development, essential services, and

PLANNING COMMISSION

Donita Van Horik, Chair
(term began October 2013)

Becky Blair, Chair
(term ended October 2013)

Alan Fox, Vice Chair

Melani Smith

Phil Saumur

Molly Campbell

Mark Christoffels

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF

Amy J. Bodek, AICP, Director

Rob Zur Schmiede, AICP, Deputy Director
(term ended October 2013)

Derek Burnham, Planning Administrator
(term ended October 2013)

Jeff Winklepleck, Acting Planning Administrator
(term began November 2013)

Jill Griffiths, AICP, Planning Officer
(term ended November 2013)

Steve Gerhardt, Acting Planning Officer
(term began January 2014)

Heidi Eidson, Planning Bureau Secretary

PLANNING BUREAU

2013 BY THE NUMBERS*

- Over **7,500** phone calls on the Zoning Information phone line.
- Over **51,000** customers seeking information, submitting for permits, or receiving "over the counter" approval at the Permit Center/Development Services Counter.
- More than **5,500** plan checks and/or requests for Planning Entitlements including Conditional and Administrative Use Permits, Site Plan Review, Standards Variances, and Certificates of Appropriateness.
- Processed **856** discretionary zoning review projects and/or requests for planning entitlements including Conditional and Administrative Use Permits, Site Plan Review, Standards Variances, and Certificates of Appropriateness.
- Issued **398** staff-level Certificates of Appropriateness, including **21** projects brought before the Cultural Heritage Commission.

*Figures provided are for the calendar year.

MERCEDES-BENZ

The luxury automaker has selected Long Beach as the location for its new western U.S. regional office and vehicle preparation center, signing a long-term lease to occupy the former Boeing 717 aircraft manufacturing facility. The project signifies a new era for the aviation site conveniently located near the Long Beach Airport, and will compliment the neighboring Douglas Park development with a state-of-the-art facility currently being renovated. After acquiring the 1.1-million-square-foot property in July 2013, Mercedes-Benz USA was issued building permits to allow for the rehabilitation of the existing hangar buildings located at the northeast intersection of Conant Street and Lakewood Boulevard. Restoration efforts consist of façade remodeling, interior and exterior upgrades, repaving of the parking lot, and landscaping. The iconic neon "Fly DC Jets" sign still atop one of the buildings will be preserved and incorporated into the site's new design. The deal marks a significant milestone for the City of Long Beach, in what is being considered the largest industrial lease in the Los Angeles area in over 25 years. Re-use of the vacant property is expected to accelerate the City's economic vitality and sustainability through a combination of new jobs, prospective business opportunities, and property-tax revenues. In addition to housing Mercedes-Benz corporate offices and vehicle preparation facility, the location will be used as the import and distribution point for nearly 100 Mercedes-Benz dealers covering the entire western portion of the country. The new campus consolidation will also include a training center, museum and showroom.



Photograph by the *Long Beach Business Journal's* Thomas McConville.





Photo courtesy of Marriott International, Inc.

DOUGLAS PARK

The 238-acre Douglas Park saw exceptional development in 2013, further converting from an outdated aircraft manufacturing facility into a vibrant multi-use destination. Located five miles from downtown Long Beach and just north of the Long Beach Municipal Airport, Douglas Park is currently home to dozens of commercial, real estate and aircraft-related businesses. Promoted as one of Los Angeles County's last remaining open industrial areas, the mixed-use site provides ample space for everything from business and ancillary uses, to leisure areas set aside for restaurants, parks, and shops. Completed in August, Pacific Pointe South is the latest addition to Douglas Park. Situated along the south side of Conant Street, the development includes three separate parcels that combine to employ a site area of 922,679 square feet, or 21.2 acres. The project consists of three industrial buildings and a total of 764 new parking spaces. Also new to Douglas Park is the Courtyard by Marriott that opened last June. Located at the northwest corner of Lakewood Boulevard and Cover Street,





the 89,455-square-foot, four-story hotel includes 155 guest rooms, meeting room space, a swimming pool, exercise room, and vibrant lounge. Two adjacent 5,000-square-foot retail pads are made up of restaurants with indoor and outdoor dining to serve hotel guests and customers in the surrounding area. With a contemporary style of architecture and design, the new developments complement the overall character of Douglas Park. The enhanced paving, street furnishings, lighting and signage, and community open spaces offer an extra level of activity to the site. Further contributing to the variety of uses within Douglas Park, a medical office project has been proposed on the north side of Cover Street. Currently in plan check, the nearly five-acre development will consist of two medical use buildings located over at-grade parking structures. The medical office project represents the first development of its kind within Douglas Park, and sets a precedent of adding diversity to the industrial, hotel, and restaurant uses that already exist on the site.





Photograph by Kirk Saylin Studio.

AMERICAN HOTEL

After remaining unused for more than a decade, renovation efforts for the designated landmark building at 230 East Broadway began in earnest in 2013 with the partnering of interTrend Communications and the City of Long Beach to bring the historic site back to life. Built in 1905, the American Hotel is the second-oldest commercial building in the City, and one of the rare surviving original buildings in Downtown. In 2012, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued and awarded to Urbana Development for preservation, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of the former Psychic Temple and single room occupancy hotel. The proposed mixed-use structure will include approximately 3,670 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, and 7,000 square feet of creative office space on the second and third floors. Although retrofitted with a nominal seismic upgrade, subsequent assessments concluded that considerable renovation of the structural, mechanical and electrical systems are required in order for the building to be made functional and habitable. The project will result in the restoration of the historic façade; as well as eliminate a physical and economic blight in the Downtown by restoring occupancy and economic energy to the block. Construction is currently underway and expected to conclude at the end of summer 2014.





PRESS-TELEGRAM BUILDING / MEEKER-BAKER BUILDING

The Millworks office development project made substantial progress in 2013 with completion of the revitalized Press-Telegram Building at 604 Pine Avenue. Entitled just before the adoption of the Downtown Plan, tenant improvement of the historic building was permitted in the first of a three-phase project to include the adjacent Meeker-Baker Building. Completed in June 2013, the 89,000-square-foot Press-Telegram Building development includes a restored façade, interior upgrades, and a creatively landscaped outdoor plaza and pedestrian space that will connect the two buildings housed within the City block. The building incorporates a variety of outdoor terraces, and has been renewed to reflect the site's urban location. The adaptive reuse project supports the City's long-term redevelopment goals by giving new life to high-quality, but long-vacant buildings. The adjacent six-story, 127,000-square-foot Meeker-Baker project holds the dual distinction of being both the first major development processed under the Downtown Plan and the first to utilize the certified Downtown Plan Program EIR (PEIR), to gain entitlement in six months. Planning staff worked closely with the applicant, Cultural Heritage Commission, and the Planning Commission to ensure an efficient and thorough review of the project, with particular regard for the site's historic component. Built in 1924, the Meeker-Baker Building at 650 Pine Avenue is known for its decorative brick and tile work, topped with arched openings and medallions. Like the Press-Telegram Building, design for the Meeker-Baker includes the preservation of some of the original features of the historic façade and interior décor elements. The guidelines contained in the Downtown Plan were successfully used to enhance the design approach and materials selection, and provided flexibility for alternative parking opportunities befitting the site's urban setting. To be occupied by Molina Healthcare, completion of this project in June 2014 will result in 800 to 1,000 new jobs in the City.

Photograph by Kirk Saylin Studio.





FIRE STATION 12

The new Fire Station 12 celebrated its grand opening in September 2013, demonstrating the City's commitment to overcoming challenging economical times and improving public safety for Long Beach residents and businesses. Funded by the former Long Beach Redevelopment Agency (RDA), the project spans a 1.2-acre site at 1199 East Artesia Boulevard, and includes an 11,296-square-foot Fire Station and a 5,294-square-foot disaster support facility. The Fire Station has been built on a highly visible major traffic corridor, which provides noise and traffic-safety benefits. Fire Station 12 further accommodates

the needs of a modern department with gender-neutral dorms and a 100-foot-tall communication tower that greatly enhances radio coverage throughout the City. The Emergency Resource Center (ERC) will be used as a supply, distribution, and training site in North Long Beach. The state-of-the-art facility was designed to receive a minimum Gold rating from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, as it was built with several green technology elements; including solar panels, heat reflective roofing and paving material, separate climate controls for each room, and many features that will enhance the health and safety of firefighters.

RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS

Construction on the Ramona Park Senior Apartments development began in 2013, as the Planning Commission approved entitlements to replace the closed Farmers & Merchants Bank at 3290 East Artesia Boulevard, with an affordable residential complex for seniors. Adjacent to Ramona Park in North Long Beach, the 74,488-square-foot, three-story building will be constructed to meet a minimum U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification standard and comply with City green building guidelines. The project will consist of 49 one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom units. Recreation areas will include passive sitting/reading spaces, a swimming pool, circuit training course around the site; and a clubhouse that encompasses a kitchen, library, fitness center, computer room, dining area, entertainment area and restrooms. Residents will be provided with services such as lifestyle counseling, social activities, and classes that include computer use and personal financial management. With a warm and contemporary



exterior design, the apartment building will contribute to the neighborhood by offering an aesthetically pleasing architecture and landscaping. Expected for completion in summer 2014, occupancy will be made available to qualified low- and very low- income seniors over the age of 55 years.



NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY

The North Neighborhood Library received entitlements from the Planning Commission in spring 2013. Located in the 5800 block of Atlantic Avenue, the 25,000-square-foot facility will be a state-of-the-art focal point for the North Village Center. The design unveiled to the community includes artistic glass walls and green foliage, and incorporates a re-creation of the iconic Atlantic Theater tower integrated into a glass roof overlooking a children's reading room. The project will receive a minimum of a Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). The library will offer areas for youth and adults, as well as a community center and pedestrian plaza. The project is slated to begin construction in September 2014, and is expected to take approximately 20 months to complete.





THE EDISON (FORMERLY CITY HALL EAST)

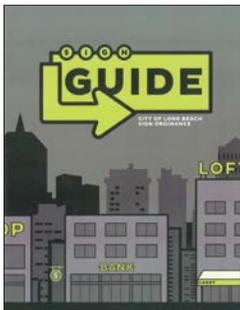
Adaptive reuse of the existing City Hall East Building was entitled in late 2013 through reliance on the Downtown Plan Program (PEIR). The proposed development will consist of a 12-story, 156-unit market rate residential component with a pool and amenity deck, approximately 3,621 square feet of retail space, and a modified parking structure. Originally built for Southern California Edison in 1959, the mid-century modern tower was used as municipal office space for City Hall and the Long Beach Police Department before becoming vacant in 2005. The 114,267-square-foot mixed-use development provides a reinvention of the building's original design and façade, while converting the structure for new residential and commercial uses. The project will result in a quality building that fits in well within the context of the area, and provides a strong presence and linkage between the Downtown Core and East Village neighborhoods of Downtown.

THE PARC BROADWAY (FORMERLY STATE OFFICE BUILDING SITE)

The former State Office Building site has been approved for a contemporary mixed-use project that would improve the location with a combination of residential and commercial lease space. The proposed seven-story building will include a 222-unit residential component atop an 8,500-square-foot retail area at ground floor. The unit mix will consist of four townhomes, 10 lofts, 26 studios, and a combination of one-and two-bedroom apartment homes. The full-block development will feature staggered building heights from 75 feet to 109 feet, a fully integrated three-level parking garage, and massing and elevations that balance solid and transparent treatment, as per the Downtown Plan. The building's 109-foot tower will be incorporated into the new design and serve as a focal point for the site. Lobbies and commercial leasing spaces will line the Broadway and Pacific Avenue frontages, improving pedestrian-orientation and bringing more vitality to the neighborhood.



SIGN ORDINANCE

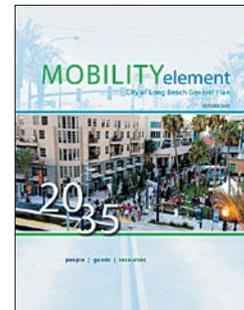


A new Sign Ordinance regulating all on-premise signs throughout the City was adopted by the City Council and went into effect in October 2013. The Sign Ordinance has been implemented to maintain the current eclectic character of Long Beach, while enabling innovation and the emergence of

new architectural styles. With a comprehensive review of the sign process and City standards, the Sign Ordinance includes guidelines on everything from display design, color, size and placement to sign maintenance and repairs. These regulations encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication, attract business, improve pedestrian and traffic safety, and preserve and enhance the look of the City.

MOBILITY ELEMENT

The Mobility Element was adopted by the Long Beach City Council in October 2013, after more than six years of community outreach, preparation, and revisions. The Element provides a 20-year vision and plan for how people, goods, and resources should move throughout the City. Replacing the



City-adopted 1991 Transportation Element, the Mobility Element takes a balanced approach to multiple modes of travel. Goals, policies, and implementation measures in the Mobility Element are designed to create a stable mobility system of complete streets and corridors that support and encourage all roadway users; regardless of age, ability, or choice of transportation – by foot, on bicycle, in a personal vehicle, or using public transit.

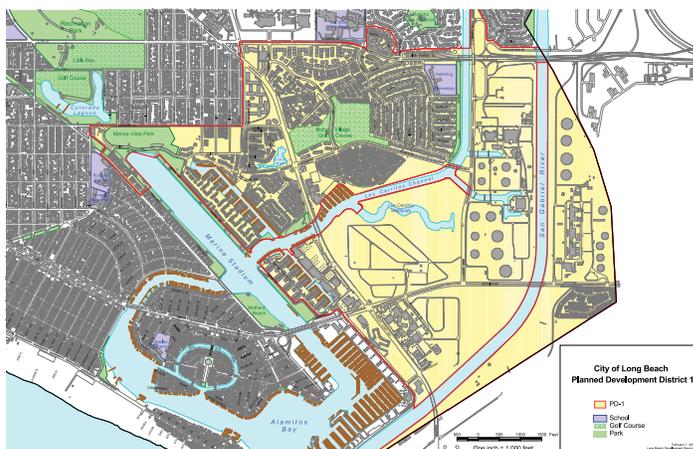
HOUSING ELEMENT

With over 176,000 housing units, Long Beach offers a range of housing opportunities varying from single-family homes, mobile homes, and moderate-density courtyard apartments and townhomes, to higher-density condominium and apartment buildings. The Housing Element is a chapter of the Long Beach General Plan and covers an eight-year period from 2013 to 2021. The Housing Element identifies policies, programs, and objectives that focus on providing adequate sites for new housing, removing governmental constraints to development; assisting in the development and improvement of affordable housing, and promoting equal housing opportunities for the City's population.

SOUTHEAST AREA DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SEADIP)

In spring 2013, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) and selected a planning consultant to prepare land use updates and development regulations for the zoning code historically known as SEADIP, which covers an area of 1,500 acres in southeast Long Beach. A comprehensive review of SEADIP, adopted in 1977 as the primary planning and development guide for the area, was

a long time coming. In June 2013, City Council authorized a contract with PlaceWorks, formerly The Planning Center|DC&E, to begin preparing land use updates and development regulations. Planning staff and the project team held kick-off meetings, and began opportunities and constraints analysis at the latter part of the year. This project will require the preparation of a new Specific Plan, an amendment to the City's Local Coastal Program (LCP), and will likely include the preparation of a Program EIR (PEIR).





City of Long Beach Department of Development Services
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This information is available in an alternate format by request at 562.570.7744.
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