

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH COAST DISTRICT OFFICE
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LONG BEACH, CA 90802-4325
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F11a

**A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach)
August 12, 2025**

Correspondence



August 11, 2025

Members of the California Coastal Commission
301 E. Ocean Blvd, Suite 300
Long Beach, CA, 90802

RE: Agenda Item F11a – City of Laguna Beach’s Response to Appeal of CDP 25-0318 and CDP 25-0587 – Promenade on Forest Project

Dear Members of the California Coastal Commission,

On behalf of the City of Laguna Beach, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on your August 15, 2025, Agenda Item F11a regarding CDP 25-0318 and CDP 25-0587. These CDPs seek to convert the temporary pedestrian plaza—known locally as the Promenade on Forest—into a more permanent public space.

The City of Laguna Beach supports the Coastal Commission staff’s recommendation of No Substantial Issue. We have appreciated the regular dialogue and feedback from Commission staff as we have developed this project.

The appellants are our neighbors who are sincere in their affection for Forest Avenue – but many equally passionate Lagunans see this project as both respectful to its history and character and forward-looking for Forest Avenue and for the community we all love. We believe the project is consistent with the City’s certified Local Coastal Program, addresses public access and environmental concerns, and enhances both the visitor and resident experience in our downtown. The following summary is provided in response to key points from the appeal.

1. Local Coastal Program and Downtown Specific Plan Consistency

The project was reviewed for consistency with the City’s LCP, which incorporates relevant General Plan policies, including those within the City’s DSP. The DSP emphasizes the importance of enhanced pedestrian access and improved streetscape design. Both the Improvements and Closure are consistent with the DSP. The DSP plan explicitly identifies that “Dedicated Public Facility (14),” which includes “parks, walkways, trails, and parklets, is permitted by right in every zone of the DSP, including CBD-1, CBD-2, CBD VC, CBD Office, CBD MFR, CBD, PP, Arts, and CBD CB.” (DSP, p. 140.)

Although the DSP does not explicitly recommend a permanent pedestrian plaza on Forest Avenue, it also does not prohibit such a project. The City’s adoption of the Slow Streets Ordinance and subsequent designation of Forest Avenue as a Slow Street—pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21080.25(b)(1)—provided a legal and policy foundation for the proposed improvements.

2. Parking and Access

The project would result in the loss of 48 public parking spaces. These spaces have not been in use for autos for over five years (since June 2020). The City's parking analysis conducted by DKS Associates concluded that the area continues to operate below the practical capacity threshold of 85% occupancy. In addition to the study, multiple parking resources have been implemented—such as additional spaces at the branch library, additional spaces on Ocean Avenue, and expanded shuttle and micro-transit service. We believe that the City can therefore effectively mitigate the permanent loss of the on-street spaces on lower Forest Avenue. In addition to the parking strategies, the City's Parking and Transportation Demand Management Report includes several potential parking infrastructure projects, some of which are now being studied.

3. Flooding and Drainage Infrastructure

The project site is located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area; however, the project includes improved drainage features to address this concern. A Hydrology and Hydraulics Report dated May 19, 2025, prepared by PSOMAS modeled a storm event using the Rational Method, as described in the Orange County Hydrology Manual, and concluded that the way the rainwater flows in and through the area won't dramatically.

Changes to the area will not negatively impact the functionality of the storm drain system; however, the project may reduce runoff, and may improve water quality, all while supporting the promenade design. Importantly, the Hydrology Study and Report notes that the improvements to site drainage will increase flow capacity by approximately 3.22% over the existing street's capacity. Further design phases will be subject to the City's floodplain development permitting process to demonstrate that the project does not worsen the existing condition.

Additionally, the project was conditioned to ensure that no adverse flooding impacts occur to adjacent properties, and further review will be required in the final design phase.

4. Coastal Scenic and Visitor-Serving Resources

One repetitive complaint from individuals opposed to the Promenade's permanence was their belief that it emphasized visitors' needs over residents. We respectfully disagree, in that it serves both. The project is designed to enhance the downtown experience for both residents and visitors by creating a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented gathering space that supports local businesses and promotes coastal access. The claim that the Promenade blocks scenic views of Main Beach is unsubstantiated. The improvements are low-profile and reversible and do not structurally impede coastal views from Coast Highway or Main Beach Park.

5. Environmental Review and Coastal Act Compliance

The City has reviewed the project for consistency with applicable Coastal Act policies. The proposed improvements do not involve development within an environmentally sensitive habitat area, do not adversely affect marine or archaeological resources, and are supported by robust public engagement and analysis.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with our neighbors, businesses, visitors, and the Coastal Commission to advance projects that serve the public and enhance Laguna Beach's unique coastal character.

Sincerely,



Dave Kiff
City Manager
City of Laguna Beach

cc: Members of the Laguna Beach City Council
Megan Garibaldi, City Attorney
Jane Abzug, Assistant City Attorney
Patrick Donegan, Assistant City Attorney
Matthew Schneider, Community Development Director
Thomas Perez, City Engineer
Anthony Viera, Acting Deputy Director of Community Development
Louie Lacasella, Senior Management Analyst

Ann Christoph landscape architect asta

31713 coast highway, south laguna, california 92651

949-499-3574

fox 499-1804

August 6, 2025

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a –
Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Coastal Commission:

I urge you to consider the promenade/Forest Avenue closure as a substantial issue, worthy of de novo review.

The city states that 30 parking spaces available after business hours at the Library and 7 spaces leased from the parking lot at behind 239 Broadway make up for the loss of 48 parking spaces at the promenade. They do not. They are not new spaces, they are already in the downtown “pool” of parking spaces already being used by many customers under different arrangements.

The loss of 48 parking spaces in the heart of downtown is a significant loss, for the general public, visitors to Main Beach Park, and for businesses, not only those directly on Forest Avenue but also those along Coast Highway and Ocean Avenue. That is because most of these businesses have no parking of their own and rely on public parking. Many of the spaces counted for these businesses are fictitious (grandfathered). Reference Laguna Beach zoning code 25.52.004 (E) (1) (d) which provides credit for parking spaces that don’t really exist when calculating spaces for existing buildings built in 1958 or before, giving credit for:

The number of parking spaces that would have been required by the parking regulations in effect in 1958 for the use currently existing on the property, if the building was built prior to that time, minus the actual number of parking spaces provided on-site, if any.

These 48 “real” spaces on lower Forest Avenue were heavily used (before the pandemic closure of the street), were relied on by the public and were critical for the health of business in the downtown. Since the pandemic closure of lower Forest Avenue there is a cluster of recently closed businesses including:

Temecula Olive Oil, 263 Forest Avenue
Quicksilver, 255 Forest Avenue
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory 248 South Coast Hwy.
Bodega Restaurant 400 South Coast Hwy.
Skyloft 422 South Coast Hwy.
Areo 207 Ocean Avenue

The parking amelioration programs the city has had for years are helpful but don't make up for this loss of convenient and easily seen parking at the entrance to downtown Laguna Beach.

In addition to grandfathered spaces there are also historical preservation incentives, a worthy and appreciated program. But it allows businesses to intensify—adding more restaurant seats, for example—without providing any parking.

Finney's at the White House, a 120-seat restaurant, is an example that got grandfathered and historic credits. At 330 South Coast Highway, the rear of the restaurant is directly adjacent to the library. Those library parking spaces that the city cites as available to make up for the loss of Forest Avenue spaces, are not new spaces. They will be used by Finney's customers as well as customers all along the 200 block of South Coast Highway, as well as customers of the Heisler Building at Laguna Avenue and Coast Hwy. None of those businesses have their own parking.

The city leased parking spaces behind 239 Broadway when the major part of the building was vacant. Now the Surfing Heritage Museum will be occupying that building and their Conditional Use Permit requires them to have all 51 spaces in that lot available for the Museum. (See attached CUP)

There are many reasons why the Commission should find Substantial Issue with the Promenade/Lower Forest Closure project, the City's faulty parking analysis is just one of them. Technical reasons abound.

The most important reason relates to Laguna's heritage. We are an artist founded community that has a long tradition. When you visit our city you can see and feel that, walk the sidewalks where artists and community founders walked. The dates and the contractors' names are stamped in the sidewalks. Forest Avenue connects the Main Beach with city hall in one long avenue lined with the eucalyptus trees like the original homesteaders planted. This project destroys the sidewalks and the traditional downtown look that is very rare in coastal (or any) towns these days and blocks the visual connection from beach to the rest of Forest Avenue and city hall. This is an important visitor experience that is being lost—part of what people come to Laguna for.

Forest Avenue is the entrance to the downtown from Coast Highway. Going south on Coast Highway there is no other way to enter the downtown. It is the downtown's grand entrance that is being cut off with this closure project. How do you enter downtown? Go all the way to Legion? The promenade prevents access to all of downtown for the public because it has cut off this important entrance.

Please find Substantial Issue so you can consider all these factors and save our town.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ann Christoph".

Ann Christoph
Landscape Architect FASLA

FOREST AVENUE CORRIDOR LINED WITH EUCALYPTUS

City Hall



Main Beach

THE PROMENADE CUTS OFF THIS HISTORIC LINK

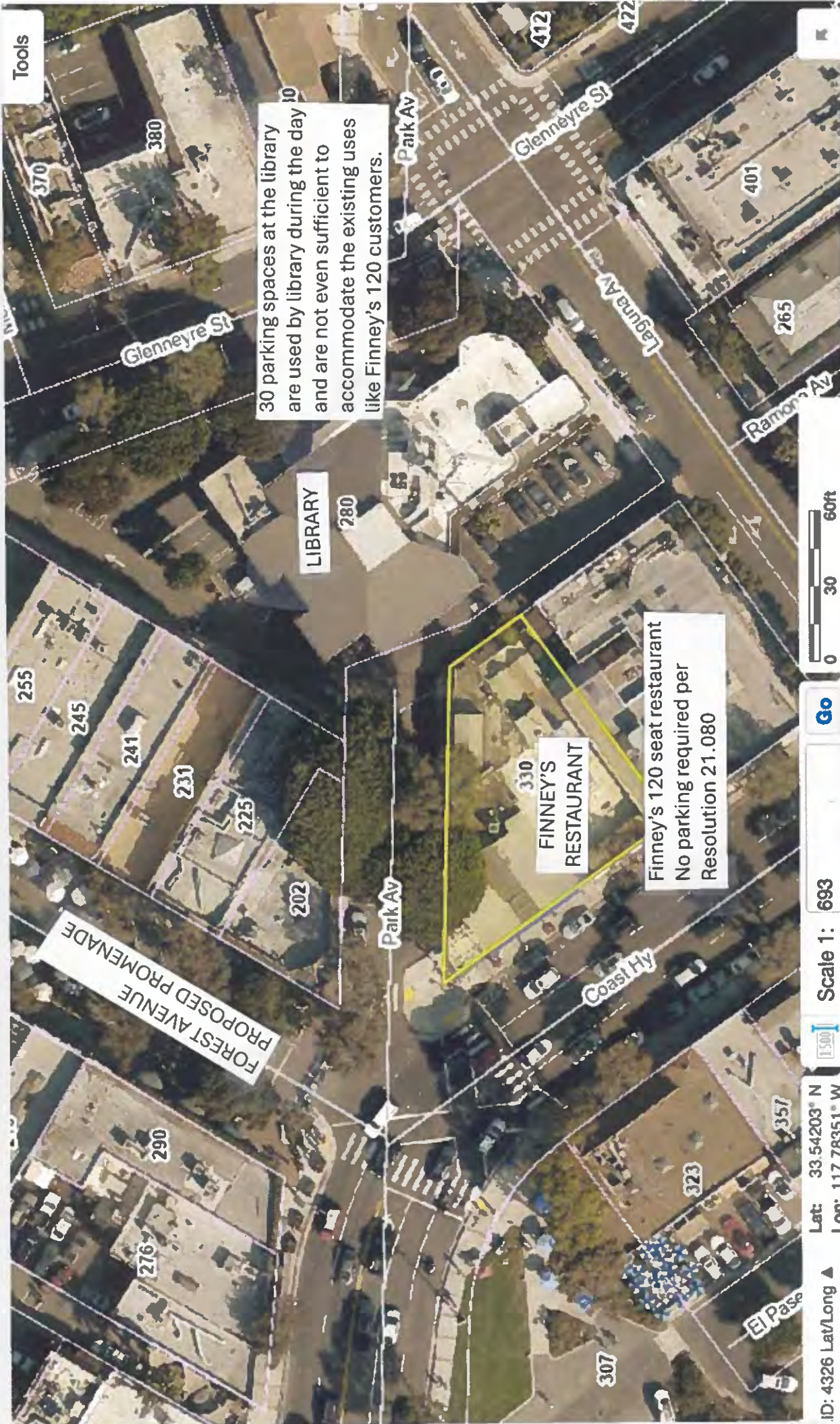


51 parking spaces are shared by US Bank and Museum users. The 7 spaces leased by the city when the Museum space was vacant are among the 51 spaces required in Resolution 25-0884 for the shared use of the bank and museum.



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RESOLUTION NO. 25-0884

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA APPROVING
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 25-0884 AND COASTAL
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 25-0885 LOCATED AT 239
BROADWAY AND APN 641-255-05 AND FINDING THE
PROJECT CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM CEQA
PURSUANT TO STATE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15301

WHEREAS, on April 8, 2025, an application was filed by the owner of property located at 239 Broadway and APN 641-255-05 (“Applicant”), requesting Conditional Use Permit 25-0884 and Coastal Development Permit 25-0885 to establish and operate a museum dedicated to the sport and lifestyle of surfing with ancillary uses to include retail sales, sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption, and use of the facility to host special events (the “Project”); and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a duly-noticed public hearing on May 21, 2025, pursuant to Title 25, Zoning, of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code. The Planning Commission has considered all public testimony on the proposed Project and all relevant public comments, and all documents and evidence submitted, including but not limited to the staff report, attachments, and materials submitted by the Applicant; and

WHEREAS, all other legal prerequisites to the adoption of this Resolution have occurred.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Planning Commission of the City of Laguna Beach does hereby find, determine, and resolve as follows:

SECTION 1. The recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution by this reference.

SECTION 2. The Planning Commission hereby finds under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that the Project is categorically exempt pursuant from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301 – Existing Facilities. The Class 1(a) exemption allows for repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing structures or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Here, the Project involves the establishment of a museum use with ancillary retail sales, sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption, and use of the facility to host events. The intensification is negligible in that the change of use results in an incremental increase in the site’s parking demand with an additional two spaces required, which can be accommodated within the existing parking supply for the project site.

Further, none of the exceptions outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply. The project site does not contain any environmentally sensitive areas because the property is fully developed with a



**NOTICE OF FINAL LOCAL ACTION
FOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMITS**

Date: December 20, 2021

Location: 300-340 South Coast Highway, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Coastal Development Project No: 21-10021

Project Description: The City Council approved Conditional Use Permit 21-10020 and Coastal Development Permit 21-10021 are requested for a restaurant with the service of alcohol, increased seating, outdoor seating and a historic parking reduction at 300-340 South Coast Highway (Formerly the White House Restaurant). Planning Commission Design Review 21-10019 is requested for exterior modifications to a K-rated structure listed on the City's Historic Register. Variance 21-10022 was also approved to exceed the maximum building height allowed for the rooftop equipment. The Planning Commission reviewed this request on September 15, 2021 and recommended City Council approval.

Applicant: Morris Skenderian Architects.

Mailing Address: 2094 S Coast Hwy # 3, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Effective Date of Approval: October 19, 2021

End of Local Appeal Period: n/a

Deciding Body:

☒	City Council
☐	Design Review Board
☐	Planning Commission

In granting this Coastal Development Permit, the following findings were made:

1. The project is in conformity with all the applicable provisions of the general plan, including the certified local coastal program and any applicable specific plans;
2. Any development located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea is in conformity with the certified local coastal program and with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act;
3. The proposed development will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

This project is both:

- ☐ not appealable to the Coastal Commission
- ☒ appealable to the Coastal Commission pursuant to Coastal Act Section 30603. An aggrieved person may appeal this decision to the Coastal Commission within 10 working days following Coastal Commission receipt of this notice. Applicants will be notified by the Coastal Commission if a valid appeal is filed. Appeals must be in writing to the appropriate Coastal Commission district office and in accordance with the California Code of Regulation Section 13111. The Coastal Commission may be reached by phone at (562) 590-5071 or by writing to 301 E. Ocean Boulevard, Suite 300, Long Beach, CA 90802.

Attn: Resolution No. 21.080

Staff Report

Reduced Plans

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WHEREAS, an application has been filed by the owner of the property located at 300-340 South Coast Highway requesting a Conditional Use Permit, Design Review, Coastal Development Permit and Variance in accordance with the provisions of Municipal Code Sections 25.05.025, 25.05.030, 25.05.040, and 25.05.050, to remodel a K-rated, eclectic-style historic commercial building to establish a full-service restaurant (American Tavern) with outdoor dining, the service of alcohol and a 34% historic parking reduction; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission carefully considered the oral and documentary evidence and arguments presented at the hearing, and recommended that the City Council approve Conditional Use Permit 21-10020, Planning Commission Design Review 21-10019, Coastal Development Permit 21-10021, Variance 21-10022 and Categorical Exemption; and

WHEREAS, on October 19, 2021, the City Council conducted a legally noticed public hearing regarding the application for Conditional Use Permit 21-10020, Planning Commission Design Review 21-10019, Coastal Development Permit 21-10021, Variance 21-10022 and Categorical Exemption; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed Planning Commission Design Review 21-10019 based on the Design Review Criteria set forth in the Downtown Specific Plan and

Municipal Code Section 25.05.040 and finds the project to be consistent with all of the design criteria and Downtown Specific Plan Design Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project is determined to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act in accordance with a Class 1 Categorical Exemption (Existing Facilities) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 because the proposed project involves the minor alteration of an existing structure with no expansion of the existing use. In addition, the project qualifies for a Class 31 exemption (Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15331; and

WHEREAS, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 provides specific instances where exceptions to otherwise applicable exemptions apply; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project will not create a substantial adverse change to a historic resource (Section 15300.2(f)) in that the project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (SOIS). A historic assessment (prepared by Historic Resources Group (HRG)) considered the proposed modifications as they relate to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and found that the proposed project as currently designed would not create an adverse change to the historic resource and that the project is consistent with the SOIS; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has made the following findings in regard to **Conditional Use Permit 21-10020**:

1. The site is adequate to accommodate the use without adverse impact on abutting property or on parking or traffic circulation in the downtown area in that the structure maintains a "K" rating

on the City's Historic Register, a 34% parking reduction incentive in conformance with Municipal Code Sections 25.45.006 and additional parking credits in conformance with 25.52.006(G)(3), and 25.52.006(E), which would ensure that the use complies with the City's parking requirements.

2. The proposed use will maintain a balanced mix of uses that serves the needs of both local and non-local populations in that the proposed restaurant in the historic structure would provide services to both residents and visitors alike.

3. The granting of the Conditional Use Permit will not produce an incremental effect of similar uses that would be detrimental to the City because the proposed restaurant will provide offering similar to the previous restaurant (*The White House*).

4. The proposed use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the CBD-V, Visitor Commercial District, in which it is located, and the goals and policies of the Downtown Specific Plan and the City's General Plan.

5. The Conditions stated in the decision are necessary to protect the public health, safety and general welfare to assure continued land-use compatibility.

6. There are adequate facilities on-site for storage of trash and garbage generated by the use and there will be daily trash pick-up. The new trash storage area is designed so that it can be cleaned and the refuse removed without creating a public nuisance and without being placed on public sidewalks or other public ways in that the property maintains an existing concealed trash enclosure at the alley frontage.

7. The business is not classified as a drive-in or fast-food restaurant.

8. Frozen desserts or other dessert items will be incidental menu items.

9. A total restaurant size or a maximum number of seats for the restaurant has been established by the Planning Commission for the use (4,789 square feet and a maximum number of 120 seats); and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission reviewed the **Design Review 21-10019** based on the applicable Design Review criteria set forth in Municipal Code Section 25.05.040:

1. Access - The proposed project will comply with emergency and handicap accessibility requirements.
2. Design Articulation - The existing building is well articulated and includes a mix of materials and wall offsets. The proposed façade changes and exterior alterations will maintain this articulation and will not add to the appearance of mass.
3. Design Integrity - The proposed exterior changes and finishes are designed to be consistent with the eclectic style of the building and will comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
4. Environmental Context - There are no heritage trees or significant rock outcroppings on the property and the property is not located in a Coastal ESHA.
5. General Plan Compliance - The proposed project complies with the goals and policies of the General Plan, specifically the policies that encourage adaptive reuse and historic preservation.
6. Historic Preservation - Based on the Historic Assessments prepared by HRG, the project has been designed to comply with the SOIS. Additionally, the project is consistent with the applicable City's Historic Rehabilitation Guidelines (LBMC 25.45.008(B)) and was reviewed by the City's

Heritage Committee.

8. Lighting and Glare - As conditioned, the proposed project will comply with the City's Design Guidelines and significant light spillage is not anticipated.

10. Pedestrian Orientation - The proposed project will enhance the existing pedestrian-oriented configuration and the proposed mechanical equipment has been designed to protect public views.

11. Privacy - The project and improvements are located within the limits of the existing building and privacy impacts are not anticipated.

14. Sustainability - The proposed project will incorporate energy efficient building code requirements.

16. View Equity - The proposed exterior changes and new rooftop equipment is designed and conditioned to protect existing views; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has made the following findings in regard to **Coastal Development Permit 21-10021**:

1. The project is in conformity with all the applicable provisions of the General Plan, including the certified local coastal program and the Downtown Specific Plan in that the project will provide an enhanced streetscape with additional outdoor dining and is not a major remodel. Additionally, the project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the City's Historic Preservation Guidelines, and view impacts are not anticipated. Lastly, the project has been conditioned to reduce the appearance of the rooftop equipment.

2. The project, which is not located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea, is in conformity with the certified local coastal program and with the public access and

public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

3. It has been determined that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under Sections 15301(a), and 15531 of the State CEQA Guidelines; therefore, the project is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act. The proposed project is in compliance with the applicable rules and regulations set forth in the Municipal Code and will not cause any significant adverse impacts on the environment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has made the following findings in regard to **Variance 21-10022**, to exceed the maximum 18-foot height limit with new rooftop equipment.

1. There are special circumstances applicable to the property involved, including location and surroundings that cause the strict application of the zoning ordinance to deprive such property of privileges enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification in that the existing structure is split-level and was constructed prior to the current zoning standards, which impose a one-story height limit and although the proposed alterations are above the first-floor level, such alterations are limited to required ancillary mechanical roof equipment, do not affect the mass of the building and are in keeping with the historical character of the building. Additionally, the applicant has worked with HRG to situate the equipment away from public views and in a manner that protects the historic resource and primary facade.

2. Such variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right of the applicant, which right is possessed by other property owners under like conditions in the same vicinity and zone in that a variance was previously granted in 2009 and 2021 for additions

that exceed the maximum building height at 400-424 South Coast Highway and at 222 Ocean Avenue. In addition, the proposed alterations are modest and of similar scale to other two-story properties in the immediate vicinity and are in keeping with the historical character of the building.

3. The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, convenience and welfare or injurious to property and improvements in the vicinity in which the property is located in that the proposed alterations do not impact ocean, beach, or hillside views from neighboring properties, do not obstruct light, air, or solar access to neighboring properties and are in keeping with the historical character of the building.

4. The granting of variance will not be contrary to the objectives of the zoning regulations and the General Plan, in that the development is consistent with the zoning ordinance, the City's Residential Design Guidelines and other provisions of the General Plan in that the proposed rehabilitation and restoration conforms with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Conditional Use Permit 21-10020, Planning Commission Design Review 21-10019, Coastal Development Permit 21-10021, Variance 21-10022 and Categorical Exemption are hereby approved to the following extent:

To remodel a K-rated, eclectic-style historic commercial building to establish a full-service restaurant (American Tavern) with outdoor dining, the service of alcohol and a 34% historic parking reduction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following condition(s) are set forth to protect the

health, safety and welfare of the community and to assure the intent and purpose of the regulations:

1. The Conditional Use Permit shall be subject to review if written complaints are received, and shall be subject to administrative review one (1) year after issuance of the certificate of use to determine if the approved conditions of approval are in compliance. These reviews may result in a formal noticed public hearing before the Planning Commission. After the public hearing on the matter, the Planning Commission may require immediate condition compliance, amend the conditions of approval or proceed with revocation of the Conditional Use Permit as specified in Municipal Code Section 25.05.075.

2. It is understood that the conditions of approval apply herein to any future owners or lessees operating under this Conditional Use Permit. This means in legal terms that the conditions of approval for the Conditional Use Permit shall be and hereby are obligations of and binding upon the applicant and his/her heirs, successors, assigns, agents and representatives. The conditions shall constitute a covenant running with and binding the land in accordance with the provisions of California Civil Code Section 1468. Failure to comply with such conditions, and each of them, and any other related federal, state and local regulations may be grounds for revocation of the Conditional Use Permit, in addition to other remedies that may be available to the City.

3. Applicable Certificate of Use and/or Certificate of Occupancy shall not be issued until City staff has verified compliance with all conditions of approval.

4. This Conditional Use Permit shall not be operative until any required Design Review approval has been obtained.

5. This Conditional Use Permit shall not be operative until the owner of the subject property has signed an affidavit in the form attached to this Resolution, whereby the property owner acknowledges and consents to the imposition of the conditions set forth in this Resolution, and agrees that such conditions shall constitute restrictions running with the land and shall be binding upon the property owner and the property owner's heirs, successors and assigns. If the applicant is different from the owner of the subject property, then this Conditional Use Permit shall also not be operative until the applicant has signed an affidavit in the form attached to this Resolution, whereby the applicant acknowledges and consents to the imposition of the conditions set forth in this Resolution, and agrees that such conditions shall be binding upon the applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors and assignees.

6. This Conditional Use Permit shall lapse and automatically become void two years following the Effective Date unless: a) the privileges authorized are established, or b) a building permit is issued and construction is begun and thereafter diligently pursued to completion, or c) an extension of time is granted pursuant to Municipal Code Section 25.05.030 (I); provided, however, that in the event multiple discretionary governmental approvals are required for the proposed project, the two-year period shall not commence until all final approvals have been obtained.

7. If the use authorized under this Resolution and Conditional Use Permit is abandoned or terminated for any reason for a period of at least one year, the Conditional Use Permit shall automatically expire and become void.

8. In the absence of specific provisions or conditions herein to the contrary, the application and

all plans or exhibits attached to the application are relied upon, incorporated and made a part of this resolution. It is required that such plans or exhibits be complied with and implemented in a consistent manner with the approved use and other conditions of approval. Such plans and exhibits for which this Conditional Use Permit has been granted shall not be substantially changed or substantially amended except pursuant to a subsequent Conditional Use Permit or Variance as might otherwise be required or granted pursuant to the terms of Title 25 of the Municipal Code.

9. No additions or enlargements to the use of structures for which this Conditional Use Permit has been granted shall be allowed except pursuant to a subsequent Conditional Use Permit or Variance as might otherwise be required or granted pursuant to the terms of Title 25 of the Municipal Code.

10. The subject property is located within an identified FEMA "special flood hazard area" (SFHA) and therefore may be prone and/or subject to flooding and water damage during certain and/or extreme local precipitation. To mitigate potential flooding damage, the permittee is responsible to install devices intended to seal structural openings, such as doors and windows, from flood waters immediately after forecasted heavy precipitation and/or after the City has declared the possibility for potential flooding conditions. These devices include, but are not limited to, flood shields/gates, watertight doors, moveable floodwalls, partitions, water-resistive sealant devices and other similar techniques. The floodproofing measures should be designed to assist in the prevention of flooding. These flooding devices shall be stored on-site and shall be maintained in good repair on the premises for rapid and effective deployment when flooding is imminent. The permittee shall also provide the City with a

“single point of contact” including the name, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of a contact person that the City can forewarn of potential flooding and/or heavy precipitation. Although the City will make every effort to contact businesses and property owners prior to forecasted heavy precipitation, the permittee is responsible to monitor local weather conditions to mitigate potential flood damage to the property and/or business. If the property and/or business location already has floodproofing devices installed or available on site, it is the permittee’s responsibility to confirm that these devices are not damaged and will operate efficiently and install correctly. It is also advisable that the permittee regularly practice installing the required floodproofing devices prior to the need to install them. The applicant shall submit plans to the Community Development Department for approval of the contingency flood proofing measures.

11. The sale of tee-shirts, bathing suits, jewelry and ivory of any kind shall be prohibited.

12. The use of expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam) food containers is prohibited.

13. Outdoor display or additional outside seating of any kind shall be prohibited, unless approved or an amendment to this Conditional Use Permit is approved. Application for such an amendment may only be accepted for processing, if outdoor display and/or outside seating are permitted use(s) in the applicable zoning district.

14. A City business license shall be obtained prior to the operation of any business use permitted by this Conditional Use Permit.

15. No proposed change or modification to the specifically permitted use of a full service restaurant (American Tavern) shall be allowed except pursuant to a subsequent or amended

Conditional Use Permit granted pursuant to the terms of Title 25 of the City of Laguna Beach Municipal Code.

16. The applicant shall not allow, act, cause or permit any lessee, agent, employee, exhibitor or concessionaire any "prohibited discharge" (as defined in Municipal Code Section 16.01.020) into the City's storm water drainage system.

17. The permittee shall defend, hold harmless and indemnify, at his/her/its expense, the City, the City Council and other City bodies and members thereof, officials, officers, employees, agents and representatives (collectively, the City) from and against any and all third-party claims, actions or proceedings to attack, set aside, void or annul the approval of this conditional use permit, or any associated determination made pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. This obligation shall encompass all costs and expenses incurred by the City in defending against any claim, action or proceeding, as well as costs, expenses or damages the City may pay as a result of such claim, action or proceeding. In the event an action or proceeding is filed in court against the City, the conditional use permit, or any associated determination, the permittee shall promptly be required to file a formal indemnification agreement with the City, which shall include, among other things, that the City will be defended by the counsel of its choice, and that the permittee shall deposit with the City sufficient funding, and thereafter replenish the funding, to ensure that the City's defense is fully funded, by the permittee. The deposit amount and replenishment schedule shall be established by the City.

18. The hours of operation shall be limited to 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (midnight) daily.

19. Employees shall not engage in sidewalk solicitation. Sidewalk solicitation may include any of the following: (1) the distribution of product samples outside of an enclosed building, (2) interactions that may occur between employees and pedestrians outside of an enclosed building with the intent to solicit business or (3) any employee positioned at or near a doorway with the intent to attract the patronage of a pedestrian located beyond the physical boundary of the private property.

20. The historic character of the property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive material or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationship that characterize a property shall not be permitted, unless approved by the City.

21. All modifications (as part of this permit) made to the subject property will be undertaken in conformance with the SOI Standards and in compliance with the approved plans and the Historic Impact Analysis prepared on August 2, 2021, by *Historic Resources Group*. Any damage caused to the building's historic fabric during design and/or construction activities associated with the project will be reported to the City and repaired by the applicant immediately in a manner consistent with the SOI Standards.

22. The property owner must sign and record with the county a Historic Preservation Agreement prior to the issuance of a building permit or this project.

23. An agreement allowing continued use of the trash storage area under the Laguna Beach Library (at 363 Glenneyre Street) shall be in effect and kept on file at the City. If the agreement with the library is severed, a new trash enclosure or new agreement is required.

24. The proposed kitchen hood exhaust (stakes 9-12 on the staking plan) shall be re-located and/or

fully screened when viewed from the north elevation.

25. Any future signage shall comply with the City's Sign Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 25.54).

26. Expiration. If development has not commenced within two years from the final action of the approval authority on the application, the Design Review approval will expire. Development, once timely commenced, shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Any application for extension of the Design Review approval must be made prior to the expiration date and shall be accompanied by an explanation of good cause for the request.

27. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be determined by the Community Development Director, whose determinations may be subject to appeal pursuant to the provisions of Title 25 of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code.

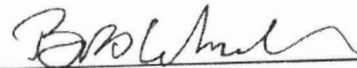
28. Indemnification. The permittee shall defend, hold harmless and indemnify, at his/her/its expense, the City, City Council and members thereof, commissions, boards, officials, officers, employees, agents and representatives from any and all third party claims, actions or proceedings to the attack, set aside, void or annul and approval of this Conditional Use Permit, Design Review, Coastal Development Permit, Variance and Categorical Exemption. This obligation shall encompass all costs and expenses incurred by the City in defending against any claim, action or proceeding, as well as costs or damages the City may be required by a court to pay as a result of such claim, action or proceeding.

29. Grounds for Revocation. The Design Review approval shall be subject to revocation or

modification with regard to the grounds set forth in Title 25 of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code, including without limitation failure to comply with all conditions of approval.

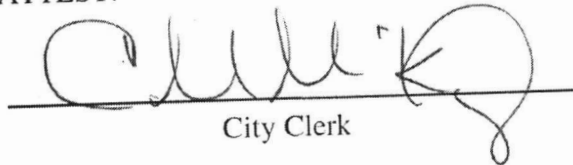
30.

ADOPTED this 19th day of October, 2021.



Bob Whalen, Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk

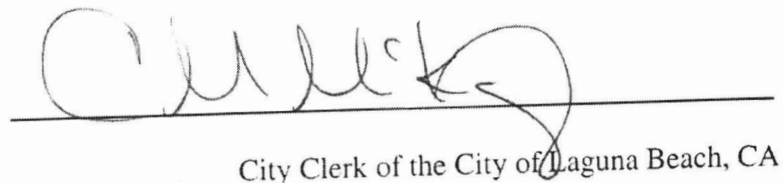
I, ANN MARIE MCKAY, City Clerk of the City of Laguna Beach, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 21.080 was duly adopted at a Regular Meeting of the City Council of said City held on October 19, 2021, by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBER(S): Blake, Kemfp, Whalen

NOES: COUNCILMEMBER(S): Iseman, Weiss

ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBER(S): None

ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBER(S): None


City Clerk of the City of Laguna Beach, CA

commercial building and parking facilities, is surrounded on all sides by streets and developed properties, and the City's environmentally sensitive areas maps do not identify any such areas on-site or within the immediate project vicinity. There will be no cumulative impact resulting from successive projects of the same type in the same place over time because the Project is limited to interior improvements for a new museum within an existing commercial space and no physical expansion is proposed. There are no unusual circumstances resulting in a significant impact on the environment because the Project does not involve any site improvements or grading and is limited to a change of use within an existing commercial building. There will be no damage to scenic resources, including trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway because no such resources exist on the Project site or immediate Project vicinity. The project is not located on a hazardous waste site or any other site included on a list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. The project will not result in significant adverse impacts to historical resources as defined by CEQA in that there are no such resources on the Project site, and all improvements are limited to the building interior. Consequently, additional environmental analysis is not necessary to meet the requirements of the CEQA.

Staff will cause the Notice of Exemption (NOE) to be filed with the County Recorder's Office and State Clearinghouse within 5 days of adoption of this Resolution.

SECTION 3. The Planning Commission hereby makes the following findings with respect to **Conditional Use Permit 25-0884:**

Finding No. 1: The site is adequate to accommodate the use without significant adverse impact on abutting property or on parking or traffic circulation in the downtown area.

The site for the proposed use is adequate to accommodate the use without significant adverse impact on abutting property or on parking or traffic circulation in the downtown area because the subject property is located along a commercial corridor allowing for a range of non-residential uses including a bank, retail, offices, and restaurants. Additionally, the proposed museum use would be conducted within an existing space of a two-unit commercial building and is compatible with the surrounding Downtown commercial uses. The proposed museum use and associated events (a total of 153 fixed seats or 1,785 square feet of assembly area) can be accommodated by the existing on-site parking spaces located at 232 Ocean Avenue adjacent to the subject property and under common ownership. There are no changes proposed to the existing landscaping, site walls, parking lot striping, or loading areas. The museum would be contained entirely within the existing building interior, would generate low ambient noise levels, and events would occur after peak traffic times. Furthermore, while the proposed use constitutes an intensification of use, it would not impact traffic and circulation because the operating hours remain consistent with those of surrounding commercial uses in the Downtown, and the existing 51-space parking lot currently provides a surplus of two parking spaces that will satisfy the incremental increase in parking demand.

Finding No. 2: The proposed use will maintain a balanced mix of uses and not produce an incremental

effect of similar uses that would be detrimental to the downtown and its village character.

The proposed use will maintain a balanced mix of uses and not produce an incremental effect of similar uses that would be detrimental to the downtown and its village character because the proposed museum use will introduce a cultural institution to the DSP area with a focus on the sport and lifestyle of surfing, which would be unique to the DSP area and to the City more generally. As indicated in the DSP, the Downtown is the commercial, political, economic, and social center of Laguna Beach and an important contributor to its identity, where residents can find shopping, recreational, cultural, and civic opportunities. The proposed use would enhance the strong cultural identity of the area by introducing a second museum to the Downtown. The existing museum (Laguna Art Museum) has a different focus, with a mission to collect and exhibit artworks created by California artists. Therefore, the proposed use would maintain a balanced mix of uses and would not produce a detrimental, incremental effect of similar uses.

Finding No. 3: The proposed use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the District in which it is located, and the goals and policies of the Downtown Specific Plan and the City's General Plan.

The proposed use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the District in which it is located, and the goals and policies of the Downtown Specific Plan and the City's General Plan because the purpose of the Downtown Commercial District is to "maintain a proper mix of resident- and visitor-serving businesses." Cultural institutions, including museums, are considered resident and visitor serving as the proposed use will foster community identity, provide educational opportunities, and support economic development for the City. Additionally, the proposed museum will play a crucial role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of surfing, contributing to social awareness and engagement of the sport and lifestyle.

Further, the proposed use is consistent with the following General Plan Land Use Element Goals and Policies, related to the attraction of small businesses and resident- and visitor-serving businesses within the City's commercial areas:

General Plan - GOAL 3: Preserve, enhance, and respect the unique, small-scale village character and individual identity of Laguna Beach's commercial areas, specifically,

Policy 3.7 Encourage retention and attraction of small businesses throughout the community.

The proposed museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and a member organization of the American Alliance of Museums ([AAM](#)), North American Reciprocal Museum ([NARM](#)), and California Association of Museums ([CAM](#)) museum associations. The proposed use includes rotating exhibits, media installations, and flexible gathering spaces to preserve and promote surf culture in an engaging and accessible format. SHACC's proposal presents an opportunity to enrich Laguna Beach's cultural offerings through a well-rounded facility that respects local heritage while fostering global connections through surf culture.

Furthermore, the proposed use would help facilitate the following goal (Downtown Commercial Uses).

Downtown Specific Plan - Downtown Commercial Uses - Goal: *Promote an economically viable downtown through a diversity and individuality of uses that serves both residents and visitors and enhances the character of Laguna Beach, specifically because Downtown Laguna Beach should provide amenities and services for residents and should be a destination for local community members; and because, Laguna Beach is a popular tourist destination and visitors help support the local economy. Commercial uses downtown should provide amenities and services for both day and overnight visitors.*

The proposed museum use will be located within the downtown commercial district, and it is considered resident and visitor serving as the proposed use will provide a cultural and educational gathering place to preserve and promote the history of surfing that will attract patrons that are both local and visitors. The proposed use would contribute to the diversity of uses in the Downtown in that the museum would create a space for community engagement, promoting cultural understanding, and offering diverse perspectives through curated exhibits and special programs focused on surfing, the official sport of the state of California. Additionally, the museum would support economic development within the City by encouraging tourism, providing employment opportunities, and through generation of sales tax revenue. Similar to other downtown destinations that include a special events component, SHACC has the potential to improve year-round Downtown commercial activity through special events scheduled outside of the summer visitor season.

Finding No. 4: The conditions stated in the decision are necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

The conditions stated in the decision are necessary to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare because the conditions of approval have been included to ensure continued land use compatibility, including restrictions on the hours of operation and special event occupancy.

SECTION 4. The Planning Commission hereby makes the following findings with respect to **Coastal Development Permit 25-0885:**

Finding No. 1: The project is in conformity with all the applicable provisions of the certified local coastal program, including the following review criteria:

1. The proposed development will not encroach upon any existing physical accessway legally utilized by the public or any proposed public accessway identified in the adopted local coastal program land use plan.

The proposed development is limited to the interior of an existing commercial space within an existing two-unit commercial building. The proposed development will not encroach upon any existing physical accessway legally utilized by the public or any proposed public accessway identified in the adopted

local coastal program land use plan because no such areas exist on site or within the immediate project vicinity.

2. The proposed development will not adversely affect marine resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or archaeological or paleontological resources.

The proposed development will not adversely affect marine resources, environmentally sensitive areas, or archaeological or paleontological resources because no such areas or resources are identified on site or within the immediate project vicinity. Additionally, the proposed development is limited to the interior of an existing commercial space and no grading is proposed.

3. The proposed development will not adversely affect recreational or visitor-serving facilities or coastal scenic resources.

The proposed development will not adversely affect recreational or visitor-serving facilities or coastal scenic resources because the development is limited to interior improvements of an existing commercial space, and no physical expansion is proposed that may adversely impact visitor-serving facilities. The required parking for the proposed change in use is satisfied by the existing 51-space parking lot under common ownership and will be sufficient to accommodate the intensification of use with the establishment of a museum. The proposed development will not affect recreational facilities or coastal scenic resources because no such facilities or resources exist on site, and the interior tenant improvements will have no effect on Main Beach Park, or views of the ocean from Broadway and across Coast Highway from the Project site.

4. The proposed development will be sited and designed to prevent adverse impacts to environmentally sensitive habitats and scenic resources located in adjacent parks and recreation areas, and will provide adequate buffer areas to protect such resources.

The proposed development will not have an adverse impact to environmentally sensitive habitats and scenic resources because such areas do not exist on the project site. The proposed development is limited to an intensification of use and interior improvements to an existing commercial space within a developed commercial building. Additionally, the proposed development would have no impact on the nearby Main Beach Park, which is located approximately 240 feet from the Project to the west.

5. The proposed development will minimize the alterations of natural landforms and will not result in undue risks from geological and erosional forces and/or flood and fire hazards.

The proposed development will minimize the alterations of natural landforms and will not result in undue risks from geological and erosional forces and/or flood and fire hazards because the project site is already developed with a commercial building and a surface parking lot. The development does not include any expansions to the existing commercial space or the surface parking lot and is limited to interior improvements, which will comply with the applicable building and fire code requirements to

ensure life safety standards are met.

6. The proposed development will be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and where feasible, will restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas.

The proposed development will be visually compatible with the character of the surrounding areas because all improvements are limited to the building interior. Future signage will be subject to compliance with the City's Sign Ordinance (LBMC Chapter 25.54). The area is not visually degraded.

7. The proposed development will not have any adverse impacts on any known archaeological or paleontological resource.

The proposed development will not impact archaeological or paleontological resources in that development is limited to interior tenant improvements, and no ground-disturbance activities are proposed.

8. The proposed development will be provided with adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and other necessary facilities.

The proposed development will be provided with adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and other necessary facilities because the site is fully developed with a commercial building and parking lot within the Downtown Specific Plan area that is equipped with the necessary utilities to accommodate the proposed use, is located between Ocean Avenue and Broadway and in close proximity to Coast Highway, and contains sufficient parking facilities with adequate access to facilitate traffic flow.

9. Other public services, including, but not limited to, solid waste and public roadway capacity have been considered and are adequate to serve the proposed development.

Public roadway capacity and other public services can adequately support the proposed development. Additionally, the project site is well-served by public transportation, with bus stops and access to trolley services located along Broadway within short walking distance of the proposed museum.

Finding No. 2. Any development located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea is in conformity with the certified local coastal program and with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

The Project is not located between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea, and therefore, this finding is inapplicable. Nevertheless, the project will not conflict with the public access and recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. Furthermore, as detailed above in the facts supporting Finding Number 1, the proposed development is in conformity with the certified Local Coastal Program.

Finding No. 3. The proposed development will not have any significant adverse impacts on the

environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

As discussed further herein, the proposed Project will not cause any significant adverse impact on the environment and qualifies for a categorical exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

SECTION 5. The Planning Commission hereby approves Conditional Use Permit 25-0884 and Coastal Development Permit 25-0885, subject to conditions of approval in Exhibit A, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 6. The documents and materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which this Resolution has been based are located at City Hall, 505 Forest Avenue Laguna Beach, CA 92651. The custodian of the record of proceedings is the Director of Community Development.

SECTION 7. If any provision of this Resolution is held invalid, the remainder of this Resolution shall not be affected by such invalidity, and the provisions of the Resolution are severable.

ADOPTED this 21st day of May, 2025.

AYES: Commissioner(s) DUBIN, GOLDMAN, KELLENBERG, SADLER, WHITIN

NOES: Commissioner(s)

ABSENT: Commissioner(s)

ATTEST:

Anthony Viera

Anthony Viera
Planning Manager
City of Laguna Beach, California

Ken Sadler

Ken Sadler (May 24, 2025 18:38 EDT)

Ken Sadler, Chairperson
Planning Commission
City of Laguna Beach, California

EXHIBIT A
RESOLUTION NO. 25-0884
(CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL)

Standard Conditions – Community Development Department

1. Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 25-0884 and Coastal Development Permit (CDP) 25-0885 are granted to establish and operate a museum dedicated to the sport and lifestyle of surfing with ancillary uses to include retail sales, sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption, and use of the facility to host special events. Approval is granted based on the development plans submitted by Studio 941, Keith Lee, Designer, and cleared by and stamped by City on May 9, 2025. Said plans are approved as submitted and conditioned herein and shall not be altered unless reviewed and approved in accordance with Title 25 of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code.
2. That the conditions of approval contained herein, shall be made part of the construction drawings for the proposed development. Construction drawings shall not be accepted for Plan Check without the conditions of approval incorporated into the construction drawings.
3. In the event that exhibits and written conditions are inconsistent, the written conditions shall prevail. If there are any disparities between these conditions and the plans or final revised plans that are approved for any subsequent phase, the conditions and/or plans as stipulated in the later approval shall prevail.
4. All plans, specifications, studies, reports, calculations, maps, notes, legal documents, and designs shall be prepared, signed, and stamped (when required) only by those individuals legally authorized to do so.
5. Approval of this application does not relieve the applicant from complying with other applicable Federal, State, County or City regulations or requirements.
6. The Applicant shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Laguna Beach and its officers, employees, and agents from and against any claim, action, or proceeding against the City of Laguna Beach, its officers, employees, or agents to attack, set aside, void, or annul any approval or condition of approval of the City of Laguna Beach concerning this Project, including but not limited to any approval or condition of approval of the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Community Development Director, or City Planner. The City shall promptly notify the Applicant of any claim, action, or proceeding concerning the Project and the City shall cooperate fully in the defense of the matter. The City reserves the right, at its own option, to choose its own attorney to represent the City, its officers, employees, and agents in the defense of the matter.

7. The Applicant shall be responsible for informing all subcontractors, consultants, engineers, or other business entities providing services related to the project of their responsibilities to comply with these conditions of approval and all pertinent requirements in the Laguna Beach Municipal Code, including the requirement that a business license be obtained by all entities doing business in the City.
8. The Applicant shall pay all fees at the time fees are determined payable and comply with all requirements of the applicable federal, state, and local agencies. The duty of inquiry as to such requirements shall be upon the applicant.
9. Failure to comply with any of these conditions of approval is grounds for revocation of the entitlement(s) and is subject to any other available remedies to the City.
10. The Certificate of Occupancy and/or Certificate of Use, as applicable, shall not be issued until City staff has verified compliance with all conditions of approval.
11. The effective date of the entitlements granted herein do not commence until all appeals, including those to the California Coastal Commission, have been exhausted, statutes of limitation have expired, and any lawsuits, filed within the statutes of limitation, have concluded.
12. In the event any of the conditions of approval are infeasible, the decision-making body hereby authorizes the Community Development Director to modify those conditions in the most conservative manner possible, in accordance with the limitations of the City's Municipal Code, to allow for the completion of the project.

Standard Conditions of Approval for CUP and CDP – Community Development Department

13. The approvals granted by this Resolution shall lapse and automatically become void two years following the effective date unless a shorter approval period is specified for the project or unless: a) the privileges authorized are established; or b) a building permit is issued and construction is begun and diligently pursued to completion; or c) an extension of time is granted pursuant to the Laguna Beach Municipal Code. Extensions of time shall be requested in writing by the applicant or authorized agent prior to the expiration of the entitlements.
14. The right to a use and occupancy permit shall be contingent upon the fulfillment of all general and special conditions imposed by this Conditional Use Permit.
15. All of the special conditions shall constitute restrictions running with the land, and shall be binding upon the owner of the land and the successors or assigns.
16. The permit shall be subject to review at any time upon receipt of written complaint.

Standard Conditions of Approval – Building Department

17. The project shall be required to comply with the City's Construction hours, which are: 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. weekdays only; Hauling Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Construction activity shall not be permitted on weekends or any Federal Holiday.
18. The project must comply with the California Green Building Code (Title 24: Part 11) and include Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the construction phase, including but not limited to dust and sediment control, erosion control, and other measures as required by the Building Official.

Project Specific Conditions of Approval for CUP – Community Development Department

19. Outdoor display or outside seating of any kind shall be prohibited, unless approved or an amendment to this Conditional Use Permit is approved. Application for such an amendment may only be accepted for processing, if outdoor display and/or outside seating are permitted use(s) in the applicable zoning district.
20. A City business license shall be obtained prior to the operation of any business use permitted by this Conditional Use Permit.
21. No proposed change or modification to the specifically permitted use of a museum dedicated to the sport and lifestyle of surfing with ancillary uses to include retail sales, sale of beer and wine for on-site consumption, and use of the facility to host special events shall be allowed except pursuant to a subsequent or amended Conditional Use Permit granted pursuant to the terms of Title 25 of the City of Laguna Beach Municipal Code.
22. The applicant shall not allow, act, cause or permit any lessee, agent, employee, exhibitor or concessionaire any "prohibited discharge" (as defined in Municipal Code Section 16.01.020) into the City's storm water drainage system.
23. The hours of operation for the museum use shall be limited to 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., daily.
24. The hours of operation for hosting events at the facility shall be limited to 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., daily.
25. The maximum fixed seat count or assembly area for events shall not exceed 153 seats or 1,785 square feet. Special events proposed with a larger assembly area, or a greater number of fixed seats are subject to review and approval of a Temporary Use Permit and shall include a parking plan to demonstrate how additional parking requirements will be met. Should the applicant desire to host events that exceed the maximum fixed seat count or assembly area on a continual basis, the Director may require that the Applicant apply for Planning Commission approval of a temporary use permit or an amendment to this

conditional use permit, and any other entitlements as may be required.

26. Employees shall not engage in sidewalk solicitation. Sidewalk solicitation may include any of the following: (1) the distribution of product samples outside of an enclosed building, (2) interactions that may occur between employees and pedestrians outside of an enclosed building with the intent to solicit business or (3) any employee positioned at or near a doorway with the intent to attract the patronage of a pedestrian located beyond the physical boundary of the private property.
27. There shall be daily trash pick-up and adequate onsite facilities provided for the closed storage of trash and garbage generated by the use. The storage area shall be regularly cleaned and refuse removed on a daily basis without creating a public nuisance and without being placed on the public sidewalks or other public ways.
28. An occupant load sign shall be posted above the front door.
29. Any future signage shall comply with the City's Sign Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 25.54).
30. Food (pre-packaged and pre-prepared) and the service of beer and wine associated with the museum use shall be for on-site consumption only.
31. The operators of the use authorized by this permit will be responsible for the cleanup of all on-site and adjacent public areas, including the sidewalks. A practical plan for monitoring and implementing this cleanup will be provided as a condition of this permit.
32. Prior to the commencement of the service and sales of alcohol, the Applicant shall apply for and receive approval for the appropriate liquor license(s) from the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.
33. Employees that will be serving alcoholic beverages shall attend "Responsible Beverage Server Training," offered through the Alcoholic Beverage Control.
34. The proposed bar is subject to the food facility requirements of the Orange County Health Department. A building permit for tenant improvements shall not be issued until the Orange County Health Department approves the plans.
35. The use and distribution of plastic beverage straws, stirrers, cutlery, disposable food service ware, plastic takeout bags, and expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam) food containers is prohibited.



To preserve and enhance the unique village character of Laguna Beach

August 1, 2025

Janet Torres, Coastal Program Analyst
California Coastal Commission

Re: Agenda Item 11.a, August 15, 2025, South Coast District
Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018, City of Laguna Beach

Dear Dr. Torres:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Staff Report.

Grounds for an appeal to the California Coastal Commission include “allegations that the approved development does not conform to the LCP” (Appeal Information Sheet, p. 3). The Staff Report ignores two allegations fatal to its conclusion that the project approvals “are consistent with the policies of the certified LCP” (p. 2).

1) There is a *required* 85 percent target occupancy threshold in the Downtown Specific Plan, Local Coastal Program.

The Staff Report ignores the specific metric in the LCP for determining whether parking spaces can be eliminated. The City’s own parking study—conducted *off-season*, not even in summer when demand is highest—demonstrates that the loss of parking on lower Forest Avenue exceeds the 85 percent target occupancy threshold in the downtown.

2) Laguna Beach’s LCP requires that all projects subject to design review “shall comply with *all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements, applicable specific plans, and the certified local coastal program*” (25.05.040(H)(5), *emphasis added*).

The Staff Report does not understand that under Laguna Beach’s LCP, conformity with the LCP is not achieved unless the project complies with “all” “elements” of the General Plan. The City never reviewed the project at any point in light of the Safety Element of the General Plan, even though the project is located within a FEMA-mapped floodway and Special Flood Hazard Area, prone to 100-year flood risk with additional hazard from storm waves.

For more than fifty years our organization has worked to preserve the unique character of Laguna Beach, a coastal treasure that attracts over 7 million visitors annually. This project demolishes the historic gateway to our downtown and its rare surviving “Main Street” that connects to Coast Highway. Legacy businesses face bankruptcy as a result of project construction and the loss of parking, which is why over 100 owners of downtown visitor- and resident-serving businesses signed a petition, submitted to the

City, opposing construction of the Promenade. This project promises to transform the character of Laguna Beach for the worse. Because so much is at stake for our community—for business owners, residents, and visitors—we hope that you will give these comments the careful attention we believe they deserve.

Allegation 1. Downtown Specific Plan and the Parking Threshold

The Staff Report cites the relevant policy from the DSP but ignores the specific 85 percent target occupancy rate necessary to remove parking spaces from the downtown. That threshold was recently written into the DSP specifically to address concerns from businesses and residents as to parking adequacy in the downtown.

Topic 4, Policy 9 (DSP)

Allow for the limited or temporary adaptive re-use of public parking spaces for community-desired events and activities during summer and non-summer months, provided that an 85 percent target occupancy level is not exceeded. The utilization of parking spaces will be offset by a parking program combination of parking rate adjustments, public/private shared parking agreements, transit services (free trolley program) with peripheral parking, and will be monitored for an 85 percent or less occupancy level by data collection efforts. The maximum number of public parking spaces utilized shall be based on the available supply and occupancy levels (emphasis added).

The City is allowed to remove public parking spaces downtown—even just on a temporary basis—*only if* the 85 percent target occupancy threshold *is not exceeded*. The City's own analysis of its parking study indicates that this figure *was exceeded* during the study, which took place in late October, not the far busier summer (Agenda Report, Laguna Beach, June 11, 2025, p. 32, and cited throughout that document and exhibits).

The Staff Report seems to interpret the rest of the Policy 9 language as though it cancels out the 85 percent target occupancy requirement. It does not. Rather, that language points to safeguards to ensure that the target occupancy remains under 85 percent—as the references to data collection and monitoring make clear. The City cannot remove 48 parking spaces for the project just because it purports to make other efforts to address parking impacts. A “robust package” of alternatives (p. 10) is not a data-driven measurement equivalent to 85 percent.

The Staff Report echoes the City in reporting that the consultant DSK “found no significant impact on parking conditions” if the spaces were removed. However, that finding ignored the DSP's specific metric for determining what constitutes a significant impact on parking—the 85 percent target occupancy level, which was exceeded even in October.

The City may well regret having written such a very specific requirement into the DSP, now that it wishes to remove public parking spaces for an event space like the Promenade. But the City cannot wish away the plain language of Topic 4, Policy 9 with vague assertions about the trolley program and shared public/private parking partnerships, which are not guaranteed to be permanent. The Staff Report cannot argue that there is “sufficient mitigation” (p. 2) for parking loss in the absence of evidence that

the 85 percent threshold will not be exceeded in general and in the summer months. That evidence does not exist. Moreover, the Staff Report ignores demonstrable evidence that the City has already lost and will lose other parking spaces as a result of changes to state law governing parking near intersections and the City's parklet program (Appeal document, p. 6).

The Staff Report states that Topic 4, Policy 9 was written before California's Slow Streets program became law (p. 10). That is irrelevant. LCP and General Plan requirements don't go away unless they are countermanded by state law. Such is not the case here.

When the City revised the DSP circa 2020, the public was very concerned about the change in parking requirements for new businesses. The revised DSP required new businesses to provide less parking than ever before. The specificity of the 85 percent threshold was part of the City's commitment to ensuring adequate parking before public spaces could be removed downtown. With over 7 million visitors a year, adequate parking in Laguna Beach is an urgent concern to residents, visitors, and business owners. If the City wants to eliminate 48 parking spaces, even if doing so exceeds the 85 percent target occupancy threshold, it must amend the DSP/LCP.

Allegation 2. Laguna Beach Zoning Code

The Staff Report acknowledges that the Zoning Code (Title 25) is part of the Local Coastal Program but does not understand the implications of this fact for the appeal. The Staff Report erroneously claims that evidence of the project's failures to conform to the Safety Element "are not appealable contentions as they are not part of the LCP or standard of review" (p. 4).

As explained in the appeal, however, and reiterated here, under the LCP, this project "*shall comply with all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements, applicable specific plans, and the certified local coastal program*" (25.05.040(H)(5), emphasis added). This is the plain language of the Zoning Code, which is part of the LCP. Thus, as a project subject to this section of Title 25, the Promenade fails to comply with Laguna Beach's certified LCP if it fails to comply with the General Plan. The Zoning Code Section 25.05.040(H)(5) must refer to general plan elements that are not themselves part of the LCP; otherwise, the language of this section would be meaningless.

It is distressing that the Staff Report ignores the relevance of the *Safety* Element for a project located within an area identified on FEMA maps as a floodway and Special Flood Hazard Area, prone to 100-year flood risk with additional hazard from storm waves. Please see pages 9-10 of the Appeal for a discussion of the Safety Element requirements as related to the project. None of this is addressed in the Staff Report, under the mistaken claim that conformity with the General Plan is not required for conformity with the LCP.

The City did not assess the project at all in light of Safety Element policies, and the Staff Report ignores the problem. The City approved the project with a (belated) hydrology report—*after* the Planning Commission voted to approve the project—that models only a 25-year storm, even though commissioners specifically called for a 100-year storm

design (Appeal, p. 8). The Promenade project proposes to significantly alter the “drainage infrastructure” of lower Forest Avenue by ripping out and replacing existing curbs and gutters, which direct water flow away from businesses, and raising the level of the street.

Substantial Issue Factors

1. The degree of factual or legal support for the local government’s decision that the development is consistent or inconsistent with the LCP.

As established in the appeal and above, **there is inadequate factual/legal basis** on which to conclude that the project conforms to Topic 4. Policy 9 of the DSP. 85 percent is a hard number, and the loss of parking along lower Forest Ave. exceeds that target occupancy threshold according to the City’s own consultant, and even though the parking study was conducted during the off season.

The City never evaluated the project against the Safety Element, even though our LCP *requires* conformity with *all elements* of the General Plan for this project, whether those elements are included in the LCP or not, as explained in greater detail above. There is **no factual basis at all** on which to conclude that the project conforms with the Safety Element as required under 25.05.040(H)(5). We believe the case cannot be made that there is no substantial issue.

3. The extent of the coastal resources affected by the decision.

This is outside the scope of the objective points focused on in this document, but the indifference to the scenic value of the historic “Main Street” streetscape of Laguna Beach, one of California’s best preserved and most visited beach towns, is disappointing.

4. The precedential value of the local government’s decision for future interpretations of its LCP.

Much of the parking/transit options that the Staff Report relies on to justify its finding of no significance are hardly “previously unavailable to the general public visiting downtown” (p. 4). The trolley has run for years. The parking spaces at the library are not available 24-7. The seven spaces on Ocean Avenue are limited to residents with a Shopper’s Permit. The precedential import is that the City can continue to ignore the 85 percent target occupancy threshold that is written into the DSP when it wants to eliminate parking spaces. It could also ignore with impunity the provision in the Zoning Code/LCP that projects must conform with all elements and policies in the General Plan. These factors have terrible implications for future interpretations of the LCP and raise a substantial issue.

5. Whether the appeal raises local issues, or those of regional or statewide significance.

The Staff Report is agnostic on whether this constitutes a substantial issue, but it should qualify given the Report’s own claim that changes to state law around pedestrian street closures “will pose significant challenges for local and regional governments...” (p. 13). The issue of permanently removing parking spaces from a heavily visited coastal tourist destination obviously has regional and statewide significance, and this is particularly important because the state’s new Slow Streets Program exempts projects from CEQA review—not simply the street closure itself but any alterations to the streetscape as part of that closure. The Staff Report claims that

“the City mitigated for and analyzed the wider issues of changes to transportation and environmental impacts to the extent they found feasible” (p. 13). Not even the City claims that these proposed measures are the only or most feasible options. Indeed, the exemption from CEQA review means that no environmental impacts had to be disclosed let alone mitigated, unless required specifically as part of the LCP and General Plan, which makes conformity with the LCP all the more important.

Conclusion

The Staff Report finds that the City’s approvals “are consistent with the policies of the certified LCP and raises no substantial issue with regard to the grounds upon which the appeal was filed” (p. 2). This rebuttal focuses on abundant evidence of at least two key ways the City’s approvals are inconsistent with LCP policies. We believe our evidence and concerns raise a Substantial Issue.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to speaking with you in advance of the hearing to discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Merrill Anderson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Merrill Anderson
President, Village Laguna

Cc:: Kurt Schwing, District Director

31423 Coast Hwy. #28
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

August 8, 2025

Dear Commissioners:

Please find a substantial issue with the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue to create a new pedestrian mall. The project objectively does not comply with the LCP.

LCP Elements are full of subjective language about possibilities and goals. But Laguna Beach's LCP has a **very specific hard number** that limits the City's ability to remove public parking spaces in the downtown. This is an **objective criterion**. The City ignored it, and so did the Staff Report.

According to the Local Coastal Program (Downtown Specific Plan), public parking spaces cannot be eliminated unless an "85 percent target occupancy level is not exceeded." (Topic 4. Policy 9).

The 85 percent threshold is likewise referenced in Policy 8: "adaptive re-use of public parking spaces during the summer months may not be ideal due to the high parking occupancy observed. **The reduction of public parking spaces during the summer may be possible provided that an 85 percent occupancy level is met.**" (See attached from the DSP, emphasis added).

The project proposes to remove parking permanently year-round. However, reduction of public parking spaces can occur only if the occupancy level **remains at or below 85 percent**. That figure is an industry standard and the result of a comprehensive downtown parking study conducted by consultant IBI for revisions to the DSP, adopted in 2022, in part to compensate for reductions in the parking spaces new businesses had to provide (policy 7). IBI gathered its data in summer and off-season. IBI found that public on-street and off-street parking occupancy levels routinely rose far above 85 percent in summer, as noted in the Downtown Specific Plan:

The following table shows the parking occupancy trends observed from the study. Specifically, it shows the occupancy at each hour from 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM in the public on- and off-street spaces and the private spaces for the counts done on a summer weekday and weekend and a non-summer weekday and weekend, including the daily average occupancy. The cells that are highlighted in red indicate where occupancy met or exceeded the 85 percent practical capacity.

Time Period	Parking Space Type	AM		PM										AVERAGE
		10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Summer Weekday	Public On-Street	52%	67%	80%	79%	76%	76%	71%	76%	81%	90%	85%	73%	76%
	Public Off-Street	38%	53%	67%	71%	70%	71%	73%	84%	87%	90%	81%	71%	71%
	Private	49%	59%	68%	70%	69%	67%	65%	66%	64%	66%	63%	53%	63%
Summer Weekend	Public On-Street	69%	88%	91%	94%	93%	90%	90%	92%	93%	95%	93%	79%	89%
	Public Off-Street	53%	62%	75%	86%	91%	91%	93%	98%	98%	99%	98%	82%	86%
	Private	53%	61%	68%	72%	74%	73%	74%	76%	78%	81%	80%	70%	72%
Non-Summer Weekday	Public On-Street	51%	58%	61%	62%	59%	59%	53%	53%	54%	46%	36%	31%	52%
	Public Off-Street	43%	51%	64%	60%	56%	52%	48%	46%	46%	49%	39%	26%	48%
	Private Spaces	50%	54%	59%	58%	56%	54%	52%	47%	42%	41%	35%	26%	48%
Non-Summer Weekend	Public On-Street	61%	58%	61%	62%	59%	59%	53%	53%	53%	54%	46%	36%	55%
	Public Off-Street	51%	67%	72%	73%	77%	72%	65%	64%	63%	62%	64%	53%	65%
	Private	46%	52%	56%	56%	56%	54%	51%	50%	49%	48%	45%	39%	50%

IBI gathered data in 2016 on August 17 and 20 (public parking spaces) August 24 and 27 (private parking spaces). and for the off-season September 24 and 28 (IBI Parking Study, 2017, p. 21).

By contrast, DSK collected data for its Forest Avenue parking study—a different study area—over two days **off season, October 22 and 26, 2022**, for on-street public spaces; DSK did not gather its own data for off-street public spaces but relied on data from the parking platform FrogParking. The FrogParking data are from a year earlier, September 1 and September 4, 2021, **in the middle of the Covid pandemic** (DSK Parking Study, p. 8 [p. 415 in Laguna Beach Staff Report]). Even so, DSK found that without the parking on Forest Avenue, “the combined utilization rate of the on-street and off-street parking facilities *mostly* remained under 85 percent” (DSK, p. 10, [p. 417 in Staff Report], emphasis added). From the off-season 2022 study:

**TABLE 6 – ON-STREET PARKING DEMAND & UTILIZATION RATE (WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 26, 2022 & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2022)**

	Time of Day											
	10AM	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM	10PM
Capacity	608											
Weekday (Wednesday, October 26, 2022)												
Demand	364	395	435	460	419	417	446	445	414	357	297	225
Utilization	60%	65%	72%	76%	69%	69%	73%	73%	68%	59%	49%	37%
Weekend (Saturday, October 22, 2022)												
Demand	463	514	501	521	492	486	442	453	452	447	390	361
Utilization	76%	85%	82%	86%	81%	80%	73%	75%	74%	74%	64%	59%

In other words, the City's consultant found that the loss of parking on lower Forest Avenue **exceeded the 85 percent occupancy level even in the off season** and thus does not meet the threshold for removing public parking spaces. DSK's opinion of no significant impact in the study area does not change the DSP requirement. **We have no idea what the actual occupancy level for on-street and off-street public parking downtown is in summer, because the City did not study it.** It is guaranteed to be much higher in the summer, as the comprehensive IBI study makes clear. The City must restore the parking at lower Forest Avenue under the DSP/LCP.

It is remarkable that the City did not supply you with the parking studies. I attach copies (I only have a draft of the IBI study, but the data are the data, and the City can share.) The City has gained some part-time public spaces but lost others to parklets. The trolley service has operated year-round for a decade. The City cannot substitute guesses for data and facts. Other cities may well want to wriggle out of parking requirements that the Commission has carefully protected to ensure public access to the coast. These spaces are among the closest to Main Beach in the entire city, and their loss is a hardship. You should protect them.

Please allow a de novo hearing on this project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Jurca
Catherine Jurca

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Fri 8/8/2025 11:28 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

 4 attachments (9 MB)

A-5_LGB-25-0018_SupportDeNovoHearing.pdf; DSP_2022_Topic4Policies.pdf; IBI_2017_parkingstudy.pdf; DKS_2022_parkingstudy.pdf;

From: Catherine Jurca <cathjurca@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 11:12 AM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please accept the attached comment in support of a Substantial Issue with the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue and granting of a De Novo hearing. Attachments include relevant pages from the certified Local Coastal Program (Downtown Specific Plan), the DSK parking study (2022), and the IBI parking study (2017).

Staff and the Commission cannot understand the LCP compliance issue without these documents.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Catherine Jurca



2401 E KATELLA AVENUE, SUITE 425, ANAHEIM, CA 92806 • 657.284.2620 • DKSASSOCIATES.COM

DATE: December 29, 2022

TO: Thomas Perez | City of Laguna Beach, Public Works

FROM: Rasool Andalibian, PhD, Yana Loginova, PE (OR), Jeff Heald, PE | DKS Associates

SUBJECT: Promenade on Forest Traffic Impact and Parking Analysis Project 22018-000

1. INTRODUCTION

During the Pandemic, the City of Laguna Beach decided to foster a more walking-friendly environment along Forest Avenue in the downtown area by closing the segment between South Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street to vehicular traffic. As a result, the roadway closure eliminated vehicular access and included the removal of forty-eight (48) on-street parking spaces. The City retained the team led by RRM Design Group supported by DKS Associates (DKS) to conduct a traffic and parking analysis to assess the impacts to traffic in the downtown area in the immediate vicinity of the roadway closure and parking conditions in a 1,000-foot perimeter of the roadway closure.

The roadway closure was implemented in 2021 during the Pandemic and the traffic and parking analysis studies were conducted one year after the roadway closure in 2022 when traffic conditions had normalized.

2. PROJECT STUDY AREA

Beaches, coves, beach parks, boardwalk, hiking trails, art galleries, restaurants, and summer festivals are main features of the City of Laguna Beach and its downtown area that attract nearly six million visitors each year¹. The City provides free trolley services that helps residents and visitors to get around the City and alleviate traffic circulation in the City especially the downtown area. The primary land use in the downtown area is commercial with restaurants, shops, galleries, etc. that serve high pedestrian activities throughout the day.

¹ <https://www.lagunabeachcity.net/live-here/about-laguna-beach>

3. INTERSECTION TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

As part of the traffic assessment of the roadway closure, DKS conducted a traffic analysis for six (6) intersections (4 signalized intersections and 2 unsignalized intersections) in the immediate vicinity of the roadway closure, as listed below. All the listed signalized intersections are owned and maintained/operated by Caltrans.

1. South Coast Highway at Forest Avenue (signalized)
2. South Coast Highway at Laguna Avenue (signalized)
3. South Coast Highway at Ocean Avenue (signalized)
4. South Coast Highway at Broadway Street (signalized)
5. Forest Avenue at Glenneyre Street (unsignalized)
6. Forest Avenue at Beach Street (unsignalized)

The intersection performance was assessed during the weekday AM and PM peak hours. Figure 1 presents the study area.

FIGURE 1 –STUDY AREA MAP, DOWNTOWN OF LAGUNA BEACH



3.1 INTERSECTION TRAFFIC ANALYSIS METRIC

The analysis of the project intersections was performed using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2000 methodology. The HCM 2000 methodology was applied because the latest version of HCM does not support the analysis of the unique geometry of the South Coast Highway/Forest Avenue intersection. The assessment of intersection conditions addresses Level of Service (LOS) in terms of average control delay. In this study, the Synchro software package, a microsimulation tool, was used to determine intersection LOS based on the HCM methodology for the study intersections. Tables 1 and 2 present the intersection LOS and associated delay for signalized and unsignalized intersections based upon the HCM 2000 methodology.

TABLE 1 – LOS CRITERIA FOR SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS)	DELAY (SECONDS PER VEHICLE)
A	≤ 0 - 10
B	> 10 - 20
C	> 20 - 35
D	> 35 - 55
E	> 55 - 80
F	> 80

Source: Highway Capacity Manual 2000.

TABLE 2 – LOS CRITERIA FOR UNSIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS)	DELAY (SECONDS PER VEHICLE)
A	≤ 0 - 10
B	> 10 - 15
C	> 15 - 25
D	> 25 - 35
E	> 35 - 50
F	> 50

Source: Highway Capacity Manual 2000.

The degree of congestion at an intersection is described by the level-of-service, which ranges from LOS A to F, with LOS A representing free-flow conditions with little delay and LOS F representing over-saturated traffic flow throughout the peak hour. Table 3 provides a description of each specific LOS grade (LOS A through LOS F).

TABLE 3 – LEVEL OF SERVICE DESCRIPTIONS

LOS	DESCRIPTION
A	No approach phase is fully utilized by traffic, and no vehicle waits longer than one red indication. Typically, the approach appears quite open, turns are made easily, and nearly all drivers find freedom of operation.
B	This service level represents a stable operation, where an occasional approach phase is fully utilized and a substantial number are nearing full use. Many drivers begin to feel restricted within platoons of vehicles.

LOS	DESCRIPTION
C	This level still represents a stable operating condition. Occasionally drivers may have to wait through more than one red signal indication, and backups may develop behind turning vehicles. Most drivers feel somewhat restricted, but not objectionably so.
D	This level encompasses a zone of increasing restriction approaching instability at the intersection. Delays to approaching vehicles may be substantial during short peaks within the peak period; however, enough cycles with lower demand occur to permit periodic clearance of developing queues, thus preventing excessive backups.
E	Capacity occurs at the upper end of this service level. It represents the most vehicles that any particular intersection approach can accommodate. Full utilization of every signal cycle is seldom attained no matter how great the demand.
F	This level describes forced flow operations at low speeds, where volumes exceed capacity. These conditions usually result from queues of vehicles backing up from a restriction downstream. Speeds are reduced substantially, and stoppages may occur for short or long periods of time due to the congestion. In the extreme case, both speed and volume can drop to zero.

Source: Highway Capacity Manual 2000.

3.2 INTERSECTION TURNING MOVEMENT COUNT DATA COLLECTION

Intersection turning movement (ITM) counts at the study intersections were collected on Tuesday, April 21, 2022 when the roadway closure was in place. ITM counts were collected from 7:00 am to 9:00 am, accounting for the AM peak period, and from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, accounting for PM peak period. After that, the peak hours were determined by combining the four highest consecutive 15-minute periods during the AM peak period and the PM peak period. The details of intersections turning movement counts are provided in Appendix A.

3.3 LEVEL OF SERVICE (FOREST AVENUE CLOSED)

The LOS analysis was conducted for the study intersections for both the AM and PM peak hours using Synchro in conjunction with the HCM 2000 methodology. Table 4 summarizes the average intersection delay and associated LOS for the AM and PM peak hours. Appendix B provides the Synchro reports detailing the LOS analysis.

TABLE 4 – EXISTING (2022) PROJECT INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE

Intersection	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec/veh)	LOS
Signalized Intersections				
South Coast Highway at Forest Avenue	5.9	A	7.7	A
South Coast Highway at Laguna Avenue	18.7	B	16.6	B
South Coast Highway at Ocean Avenue	3.1	A	3.5	A
South Coast Highway at Broadway Street	12.3	B	25.7	C

Intersection	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec/veh)	LOS
Unsignalized Intersections				
Forest Avenue at Glenneyre Street	15.3	C	14.2	B
Forest Avenue at Beach Street	11.4	B	10.7	B

Reviewing Table 4 shows that both signalized and unsignalized intersections operate at LOS C or better during the weekday AM and PM peak hours. It should be noted that the City's threshold is LOS D. Therefore, it is concluded that all the study intersections operate at an acceptable level under the road closure conditions and, consequently, no adjustment/modification is recommended.

4. PARKING ANALYSIS

The parking study was conducted for on-street parking locations and off-street parking facilities within a 1,000-foot perimeter of Forest Avenue, the roadway closure segment. DKS conducted a field visit to verify parking locations and to count the total parking spaces/supply per parking location. Overall, there are thirty-one (31) on-street parking locations totaling 608 on-street parking spaces and eight (8) off-street parking facilities totaling 433 off-street parking spaces in the study area. Figure 2 shows the locations of on-street parking spaces and off-street parking facilities and Table 5 provides the supply of parking locations.

FIGURE 2 – PARKING STUDY AREA MAP



TABLE 5 – PARKING SUPPLY

NO.	Description	Parking Capacity
On-Street Parking Segment		
On1	Beach St between Cliff Dr and Broadway St (east/north side)	3
On2	Cliff Dr between Aster St and Lower Cliff Dr (south side)	18
On3	Beach St between Broadway St and Forest Ave (east side)	7
On4	Beach St between Broadway St and Forest Ave (west side)	6
On5	Broadway St between Forest Ave and Coast Hwy (east side)	29
On6	Broadway St between Forest Ave and Coast Hwy (west side)	12
On7	Ocean Ave between Forest Ave and Coast Hwy (east side)	36
On8	Ocean Ave between Forest Ave and Coast Hwy (west side)	61
On9	Forest Ave between Ocean Ave and Forest Ave (east side)	14
On10	Forest Ave between Ocean Ave and Forest Ave (west side)	9
On11	Forest Ave between 3rd St and Glenneyre St (east side)	18
On12	Forest Ave between 3rd St and Glenneyre St (west side)	38
On13	Coast Hwy between Forest Ave and Sleepy Hollow (north side)	23
On14	Coast Hwy between Forest Ave and Sleepy Hollow (south side)	18
On15	Coast Hwy between Broadway St and Ocean Ave (north and south sides)	8
On16	Coast Hwy between Broadway St and Lower Cliff Dr (north side)	7
On17	Laguna Ave between Glenneyre St and El Paseo	9
On18	Legion St between Glenneyre St and Coast Hwy (east and west sides)	5
On19	El Paseo	6
On20	Cliff Dr between Aster St and Rosa Bonhuer Dr (north side)	32
On21	Cliff Dr between Lower Cliff West and Lower Cliff East (south side)	58
On22	Cliff Dr between Lower Cliff East and Acacia Dr (south side)	21
On23	Lower Cliff Dr (both sides)	40
On24	Mermaid St between 3rd St and Glenneyre St (north side)	12
On25	Mermaid St between 3rd St and Glenneyre St (south side)	14
On26	2nd St between Forest Ave and Mermaid St (east side)	28
On27	2nd St between Forest Ave and Mermaid St (west side)	14
On28	3rd St between Forest Ave and Mermaid St (east side)	11
On29	3rd St between Forest Ave and Mermaid St (west side)	17
On30	Park Ave between Glenneyre St and 3rd St (both sides)	28
On31	Glenneyre St between Forest Ave and Laguna Ave-Park Ave	6
Total On-Street Parking Supply		608
Off-Street Parking Facility		
Off1	Broadway Lot [Lot #1]	26
Off2	Forest Lot [Lot #2]	38
Off3	Ocean Lot B (North Lot) [Lot #3]	24
Off4	Ocean Lot A (South Lot) [Lot #4]	18
Off5	Mermaid Lot (northeast corner of Glenneyre & Mermaid St) [Lot #5]	15
Off6	Glenneyre Structure [Lot #6]	215
Off7	Laguna Beach Community/Susi Q Center Parking Structure [Lot #13]	72
Off8	Hagan Place Lot (480 Mermaid St; 3 rd St & Mermaid St) [Lot #14]	25
Total Off-Street Parking Supply		433

The study area has a total of approximately 1,041 parking spaces consisting of 608 on-street and 433 off-street spaces.

4.1 PARKING DATA COLLECTION

The on-street parking demand counts were collected by DKS. The parking data collection was conducted in October 2022 for one weekend (Saturday, October 22, 2022) and one weekday (Wednesday, October 26, 2022) from 10:00 am until 10:00 pm on an hourly basis.

The off-street parking data including parking utilization rates and parking duration was provided by the City of Laguna Beach. The City uses a parking platform created by FrogParking². The provided data covered parking data from June 25, 2021 until September 6, 2021, which was the most recent data available. DKS chose the parking data for Wednesday, September 1, 2021 and Saturday September 4, 2021 for comparison as the most recent data available.

4.2 PARKING ANALYSIS

The collected on-street and off-street parking data was used to analyze the existing parking condition of the study area. In general, optimum parking occupancy is between 84 and 86 percent. When parking occupancy reaches this level, parking efficiency starts to deteriorate, and changes need to be implemented to improve parking efficiency. The 15 percent remaining capacity accounts for those vehicles leaving a space and the few spaces that are scattered throughout the system or a facility that one might have to circle to find.

Tables 6 summarizes the on-street parking demand and utilization rate of the entire study area for weekday and weekend. The raw parking data is provided in Appendix C.

**TABLE 6 – ON-STREET PARKING DEMAND & UTILIZATION RATE (WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 26, 2022 & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2022)**

	Time of Day											
	10AM	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM	10PM
Capacity	608											
Weekday (Wednesday, October 26, 2022)												
Demand	364	395	435	<u>460</u>	419	417	446	445	414	357	297	225
Utilization	60%	65%	72%	<u>76%</u>	69%	69%	73%	73%	68%	59%	49%	37%
Weekend (Saturday, October 22, 2022)												
Demand	463	514	501	<u>521</u>	492	486	442	453	452	447	390	361
Utilization	76%	85%	82%	<u>86%</u>	81%	80%	73%	75%	74%	74%	64%	59%

² <https://frogparking.com/>

Table 6 shows that the parking utilization rate is higher during weekend than weekday as expected. The table shows that the highest parking utilization rate throughout the weekday is 76 percent occurring between 1:00 and 2:00 pm and the highest utilization rate throughout the weekend is 86 percent occurring between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm. In general, parking utilization rate during the weekend from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm is between 80 percent and 86 percent and that means the on-street parking locations operate near/at capacity during that period with the road closure.

Tables 7 summarizes the off-street parking utilization rate of the entire study area for weekday and weekend. The raw parking data is provided in Appendix C.

TABLE 7 – OFF-STREET PARKING UTILIZATION RATE (WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 & SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 4, 2021)

	Time of Day											
	10AM	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	11AM	12PM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM	10PM
Capacity	433											
Weekday (Wednesday, September 1, 2021)												
Utilization	31%	36%	44%	47%	<u>49%</u>	46%	47%	46%	46%	45%	36%	24%
Weekend (Saturday, September 4, 2021)												
Utilization	39%	54%	68%	78%	77%	77%	<u>79%</u>	78%	77%	75%	68%	54%

Table 7 shows that the off-street parking utilization rate is higher during weekend than weekday as expected. The table shows that the highest parking utilization rate throughout the weekday is 49 percent occurring between 2:00 and 3:00 pm and the highest utilization rate throughout the weekend is 79 percent occurring between 4:00 pm and 5:00 pm. In general, off-street parking facilities have more capacity than on-street parking throughout the weekday and weekend.

Overall, the parking analysis shows that the study area has enough parking spaces to accommodate the existing parking demand throughout the weekday and weekend. Therefore, removal of forty-eight (48) parking spaces on Forest Avenue has not impacted the parking condition of the study area.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The City of Laguna Beach in 2021 (during the Pandemic) closed a segment of Forest Avenue between South Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street to make the segment more walking friendly and improve pedestrian safety. As a result, the roadway closure eliminated vehicular access and included the removal of forty-eight (48) on-street parking spaces.

To assess the impact of roadway closure, DKS conducted traffic impact analysis study for six (6) intersections (4 signalized and 2 unsignalized intersections) in the immediate vicinity of roadway closure and parking study in the 1,000-foot perimeter of the roadway closure.

Analysis showed that all the study intersections operated at LOS C or better during the weekday AM and PM peak hours, while the City's threshold is LOS D. Parking analysis showed the parking removal did not significantly impact the parking conditions of the study area throughout weekday and weekend because the combined utilization rate of the on-street and off-street parking facilities mostly remained under 85 percent.

in an area underneath a raised building) presents exposed parking at street level while parking structures or garages typically present large driveway openings and/or a large, blank façade to the streetscape. These impacts may be minimized if vehicles are properly screened and sensitive architectural treatments are used.

Concentrating parking at the edges of the downtown is another way to lessen the visual impact of parking lots in areas that have high pedestrian activity. Parking areas such as those located along Cliff Drive are within walking distance of main commercial areas, but do not contribute to congestion in the highest traffic areas nor do they detract from aesthetics of the downtown core.

Developing a strategic approach to market, communicate and brand a parking system is important for residents, visitors and employees to know where they can find parking. For example, parking wayfinding signs can display real-time availability, pointing motorists to facilities with available spaces. In 2014, the



City introduced parking wayfinding signs with a “Circle P” logo denoting public parking throughout the Downtown and peripheral parking areas, which was highly successful in assisting residents and visitors to locate City public parking lots.

The City’s new mobile parking app will build on this wayfinding by offering users the ability to find available parking before they enter downtown. The City’s marketing and outreach efforts include a trolley logo, trolley and parking integrated mapping, a trolley and parking interactive webpage on the City’s website, social media postings, public outreach, and enhancements to the Trolley Tracker mobile application. Additional

signage and electronic messaging placed on Coast Highway and Laguna Canyon Road direct people to peripheral parking lots. Preparation and implementation of a Citywide Wayfinding Sign Program would help to address pedestrian and vehicular needs.

Topic 4 Policies:

1. Develop and implement a program to locate all-day employee parking outside the central portion of the downtown, and establish a convenient and reliable shuttle service for downtown employees to encourage use of outlying parking areas.
2. Ensure that all-day parking is reasonably priced and located in peripheral parking areas in order to encourage use of the City’s public transit system, improve circulation, and minimize congestion in the downtown.

3. Continue to advance the City's public transit system for beach-goers and downtown visitors through an enhanced public relations program that includes information about the location and cost of peripheral parking. This shuttle service may be combined with the employee shuttle service.
4. Improve the identification and availability of parking that serves the Downtown Specific Plan Area through implementation of parking technology, such as smart meters, parking guidance mobile apps, interactive parking maps, and dynamic real time parking information.
5. Encourage the use of shade trees, ground-level landscaping, context-sensitive lighting, and signage to improve parking design.
6. Maintain City-owned parking lots in the downtown core for short-term parking needs by utilizing time and price limits.
7. Establish a parking requirement of three (3) spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area for certain non-residential uses in the downtown.
8. Encourage efficient use of private parking spaces by encouraging privately held development owners to enter into shared parking lease agreements with the City to allow for public use of private parking spaces after business hours and during the peak summer months. These shared parking agreements may be needed for the limited or temporary adaptive re-use of public parking facilities for community-desired events and activities, including but not limited to, partial street closures and/or implementation of a parklet program during times of the year when an 85 percent target occupancy level is not achievable.
9. Allow for the limited or temporary adaptive re-use of public parking spaces for community-desired events and activities during summer and non-summer months, provided that an 85 percent target occupancy level is not exceeded. The utilization of parking spaces will be offset by a parking program combination of parking rate adjustments, public/private shared parking agreements, transit services (free trolley program) with peripheral parking, and will be monitored for an 85 percent or less occupancy level by data collection efforts. The maximum number of public parking spaces utilized shall be based on the available supply and occupancy levels.
10. Expand the annual summer data collection efforts to include all non-residential public and private parking within the Downtown Specific Plan area. This data collection is necessary to monitor utilization of parking on a recurring basis, and will inform and validate changes to parking requirements to maintain an overall occupancy of 85 percent or less over time.
11. Continue to support existing traffic mitigation efforts, such as the use of police traffic aides to direct pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists during peak demand periods.
12. Continue implementation of the smart parking guidance system that allows the City to collect real-time parking occupancy data to inform adjustments to rates for all public parking meters and lots in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Parking rates may be adjusted gradually and periodically based on parking availability targets and actual vehicle occupancy. An increase in any given year is subject to review and approval of a coastal development permit. The City will continue to periodically review a Parking Management Plan for the summer months that outlines specific strategies to manage the downtown parking supply efficiently.

City of Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Area Parking Actual Demand Study

EXISTING DATA COLLECTION AND PARKING UTILIZATION
PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH BY IBI GROUP

DRAFT

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Executive Summary

The City of Laguna Beach is presently undergoing a comprehensive update of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). In support of this update, the City initiated a review of parking demand downtown to help inform the development of new parking standards and strategies. This report presents detailed findings from IBI Group's parking data collection efforts, while providing the basis for informing decision-making as it relates to parking.

Parking in the Downtown Specific Plan area is composed of public and private on-street and off-street parking spaces with demand that fluctuates in the summer and non-summer seasons of the year. The current total overall supply is 3,365 spaces throughout the DSP area, shown in **Figure 1**. This study area is bound by the Boys and Girls club to the north, Cliff Drive on the West, North/South Coast Highway on the south and Sleepy Hollow Lane/Legion Street on the east. The study area encompasses approximately 115 acres and includes 272 parcels.

This parking demand study resulted in an analysis of current parking supply and parking occupancy trends during various time periods as well as subsequent parking ratio recommendations based on observed demand. A general summary of the overall observed occupancy is as follows:

- Summer Weekday Parking Occupancy
 - Public Spaces: 46% - 90%
 - Private Spaces: 35% - 64%
- Summer Weekend Parking Occupancy
 - Public Spaces: 62% - 97%
 - Private Spaces: 43% - 64%
- Non-Summer Weekday Parking Occupancy
 - Public Spaces: 31% - 62%
 - Private Spaces: 21% - 56%
- Non-Summer Weekend Parking Occupancy
 - Public Spaces: 44% - 67%
 - Private Spaces: 34% - 45%

Based on these observed occupancies and the current public and private parking supply, which was further analyzed according to the area's land uses, the study resulted in three key findings.

Key Finding #1: *The City can benefit from reducing the minimum required parking requirements for non-residential uses in the DSP area.* The overall actual built supply of parking spaces exceeds overall actual demand. Actual demand can be accommodated by addressing the differences between public and private parking demand during summer and non-summer months.

Key Finding #2: *Private parking spaces are underutilized.* Parking demand in the Downtown Specific Plan area is higher in public parking spaces than in private parking spaces during both summer and non-summer months. Private parking spaces never reached full capacity during data collection, but public parking spaces often reached at least 85 percent capacity, with certain individual lots sometimes reaching 100 percent capacity.

Key Finding #3: *The Downtown Specific Plan area attracts more visitors during the summer season.* Parking demand in the DSP Area is higher during the summer months than during the non-summer months, specifically for public parking spaces. With a variety of beach activities and amenities occurring during the summer, public parking spaces are in high demand and are occupied at high rates during most hours of the day. High demand also results in high turnover rates for these spaces compared to private parking spaces.

Recommendations

Given these key findings, IBI Group has recommended parking ratios that better accommodate the DSP area's parking demand during different time periods and according to varying land use types. The recommendations are found in Section 5.0 of this report, which include a blended rate for all non-residential uses in the DSP area, as well as additional parking strategies that address the availability of private parking spaces.

Historically, cities desiring to resolve parking issues simply increased supply. However, increasing parking supply does not address the core problem of concentrated demand, in which high-demand on-street spaces are consistently over-utilized while nearby off-street facilities remain underutilized. The recommendations listed below provide an approach that utilizes policies and programs that will enable more efficient use of existing supply to meet a variety of parking needs as well as maintaining flexibility when it comes to land uses within the DSP area.

The following summarizes those recommendations:

- New Parking Minimums/Blended Parking Rate
- Shared Parking
- Wayfinding and Signage
- Parking Technology
- Parking Space Displacement
- Ongoing Data Collection, Monitoring, and Evaluation



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The City of Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan was originally adopted in 1989. It has been amended several times, most recently in September 2008. The plan is a policy and regulatory document that guides community development within the Downtown area. The Downtown Specific Plan creates detailed action programs and implementation strategies for land use, building form, site design, streetscape, and economic development. The comprehensive planning process used to create the DSP provided customized techniques to integrate community goals and policies for useful and effective revitalization of the Downtown area.

In 2013, the City of Laguna Beach completed the Downtown Specific Plan Area & Laguna Canyon Road Parking Management Plan (PMP) to develop a toolbox of strategies to efficiently manage the existing public parking and existing publicly accessible off-street parking spaces in the Downtown Specific Plan Area and along Laguna Canyon Road.

After a review of that PMP and the City's Downtown Specific Plan, the City assembled a specific list of desired parking outcomes in the Laguna Beach DSP area. Through the planning process, the community and City expressed a desire for parking solutions that address:

- Flexibility – a system of clear parking standards for development with the ability to act on unique circumstances for projects.
- Shared parking – a format that allows for parking associated with intensified uses to share available parking supply in Downtown.
- Growth of the supply – a system that keeps pace with intensification of uses in Downtown and provides for appropriate growth of the parking supply.

1.2 Purpose and Intent

The purpose and intent of this study is to build upon the results of the aforementioned efforts and determine viable parking management solutions in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. The City is in need of current data and analysis related to actual parking demand in the study area. This study aims to determine actual parking demand in the DSP area to inform a basis for minimum parking requirements relative to land use (built and occupied) and to provide recommendations to optimize usage of parking resources. As the DSP area is a downtown area located along the Orange County coast, identified strategies should appropriately accommodate for additional growth and flexibility in land uses.

1.3 The California Coastal Commission

As the DSP is located within the Coastal Zone, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) has regulatory authority and will play an integral role in shaping the final recommendations of this study. The CCC takes a particularly keen interest in parking management within the Coastal Zone, focusing on maintaining coastal and beach access for the general public. Below presents the key concepts for the CCC:

- Preservation of “24-hour” public access
- Achievement of regulatory balance, while erring on the side of public access
- Local jurisdictions to use policy to regulate parking without giving exclusive access to residents

2.0 Data Collection and Methodology

Parking data was collected for all non-residential private and public on and off-street parking spaces throughout the study area for both summer and non-summer periods. These periods were selected to capture typical parking demand during peak summer periods with the inclusion of the downtown summer festival and typical non-summer periods. Data was collected on an hourly basis from 10 am to 10 pm over two days, comprised of one weekday and one weekend day for both the summer and non-summer periods.

During the summer, public parking counts were collected on Wednesday August 17th, 2016 and Saturday August 20th, 2016, while private parking counts were collected on Wednesday August 24th, 2016 and Saturday August 27th, 2016. During the non-summer period, data for both public and private spaces was collected on Saturday, September 24th, 2016 and Wednesday, September 28th, 2016. It should be noted that the entirety of the Las Brisas private lot located at 361 Cliff Drive was inaccessible during data collection efforts.¹

Data Collection Assumptions

- *Trolley System* – Assumed to be in place and operating normally during the data collection effort. Any proposed changes to the existing trolley system (operating times, additional routes, additional offsite capacity, increased frequency/headways, etc.) should subsequently be evaluated for its effect parking occupancy and demand.
- *Beach Users* - The demand for downtown parking spaces is very dynamic and seasonal due to the proximity to the beach. One of the biggest challenges is accommodating the variable parking demand from the beach because the beach often requires a significant number of spaces but does not have a specific parking requirement. Due to the study area's mixed-use downtown characteristics, there is no existing parking made exclusively for beach goers, so many beach goers are able to park throughout downtown in the public parking spaces available to them. While the beach is their primary destination and they tend to park for longer periods of times than other visitors to the DSP area, they may also be customers of many downtown businesses. For this reason, beach users were not separated from the overall parking occupancy counts.
- *Design Day* – The level at which the parking supply is designed to satisfy is known as the design day. The design day should be a typical day that meets the parking demand adequately on most days of the year, but not necessarily the absolute peak day, where parking demand will exceed the effective parking supply or cause patrons to park further away from their destination. This study collected data based on a typical day, as there were no special events occurring during the collection periods.

¹ The Las Brisas Lot was closed for a private event during the summer weekend data collection. As a result, summer supply numbers differ between weekday and weekend days as the Las Brisas Lot is not included in the weekend data, reducing weekend supply by 70 spaces.

3.0 Parking Inventory

Parking inventory data provided by the City of Laguna Beach was verified in the field and includes a total of 3,365 spaces within the study area, where 1,674 are public parking spaces and the remaining 1,691 consist of private parking spaces. The breakdown of space types for public/private and on-street and off-street parking is shown below in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Parking Inventory

Space Type			Total Spaces
Public Spaces			
On-Street			925
Off-Street			749
A-1	Lot 6	Glennayre Street Parking Structure	215
A-2	Lot 5	Mermaid Lot (n/e corner of Glennayre & Mermaid Street)	15
A-3	Lot 2	Peppertree Lot (332 Forest Avenue)	38
A-4	Lot 11	Forest Avenue/Laguna Canyon Road Lot	167
A-5	Lot 1	Broadway Lot	26
A-6	Lot 4	Ocean Lot A (South Lot)	18
A-7	Lot 3	Ocean Lot B (North Lot)	24
A-8	Lot 12	Lumberyard Lot	84
A-9	Lot 14	Hagan Place Lot (480 Mermaid; 3rd & Mermaid)	25
A-12	Lot 13	Laguna Beach Community/Susi Q Center Parking Structure	71
A-13	Lot 10	725 Laguna Canyon Road Lot	66
Total			1674
Private Spaces			
Total			1691
Overall			
Total			3365

4.0 Parking Occupancy Analysis

The parking occupancy analysis paints a detailed picture of how public and private parking is utilized in the Downtown Specific Plan Area of Laguna Beach. The following terms are used when discussing parking occupancy.

- **Occupancy:** The number of cars parked in a specific area, lot, or blockface² during one period of observation. It is often expressed as the percentage of the total supply of spaces that is occupied by parked cars.
- **Peak:** The time period associated with the highest observed level of occupancy in a specific area or parking facility.
- **Practical Capacity:** The occupancy level or number of vehicles that can be parked in a facility or area before it becomes difficult for a driver to find a space without having to circle or “cruise” for parking. Practical capacity is typically set at an 85 percent occupancy level³. For on-street parking this equates to roughly one vacant space per blockface.
- **Unique Vehicle:** A unique vehicle refers to each instance where a single vehicle is observed parked in a single space.

This report will present the findings from this data collection effort in four sections: 1) overall occupancy trends, 2) occupancy levels by space type, 3) duration, and 4) turnover.

4.1 Overall Occupancy Trends

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the parking occupancy levels for the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Area expressed as a percent of available parking for a typical summer weekday and summer weekend day, respectively. **Figure 4** depicts occupancy levels for a typical non-summer weekday and **Figure 5** depicts a typical non-summer weekend day. The following discussion presents overall occupancy trends for public on- and off-street parking, as well as private off-street parking during summer and non-summer periods.

4.1.1 Summer – Weekday Parking

Summer weekday occupancy levels for the study area tend to increase sharply in the morning, reaching midday peak at 1 pm (70 percent occupied), and then remain fairly steady until about 4 pm (65 percent occupied). At that point, occupancy in public parking facilities then increases and reaches its evening peak at 7 pm (90 percent occupied) before beginning to decrease. In contrast, summer occupancy in private parking facilities tends to decrease at a fairly steady rate after 4 pm, possibly as employees leave workplaces. Summer weekday parking occupancy

² A blockface is one side of a street between two consecutive features intersecting that street.

³ An on-street parking occupancy of 85 percent has been demonstrated by parking experts, most notably Donald Shoup of UCLA, as the benchmark for the practical capacity of on-street parking. At 85 percent occupancy, approximately one available space is expected per block, thus limiting the cruising phenomenon and generally assuring the availability of a space.

reaches as high as 90 percent occupancy during its peak for public parking and 64 percent for private parking.

4.1.2 Summer – Weekend Parking

Summer weekend occupancy levels for the study area tend to gradually increase overall throughout the day, with midday peak occurring at 2 pm (74 percent occupied). The evening peak occurs at 7 pm (81 percent occupied), just before the occupancy levels begin to decrease at the 8 pm hour. Occupancy of public parking facilities is typically higher than private parking facilities in the study area.

4.1.3 Non-Summer – Weekday Parking

Non-summer weekday occupancy levels for the study area tend to increase sharply in the morning, reaching midday peak at 12 pm (59 percent occupied), and then remain fairly steady until about 3 pm. Public parking occupancy begins to steadily decrease, then reach its evening peak at 7 pm (52 percent occupied) before decreasing again more dramatically. In contrast, occupancy in private parking facilities tends to decrease after 3 pm and continues decreasing until the end of the day. Non-summer weekday parking occupancy levels are generally lower than non-summer weekend parking occupancy levels.

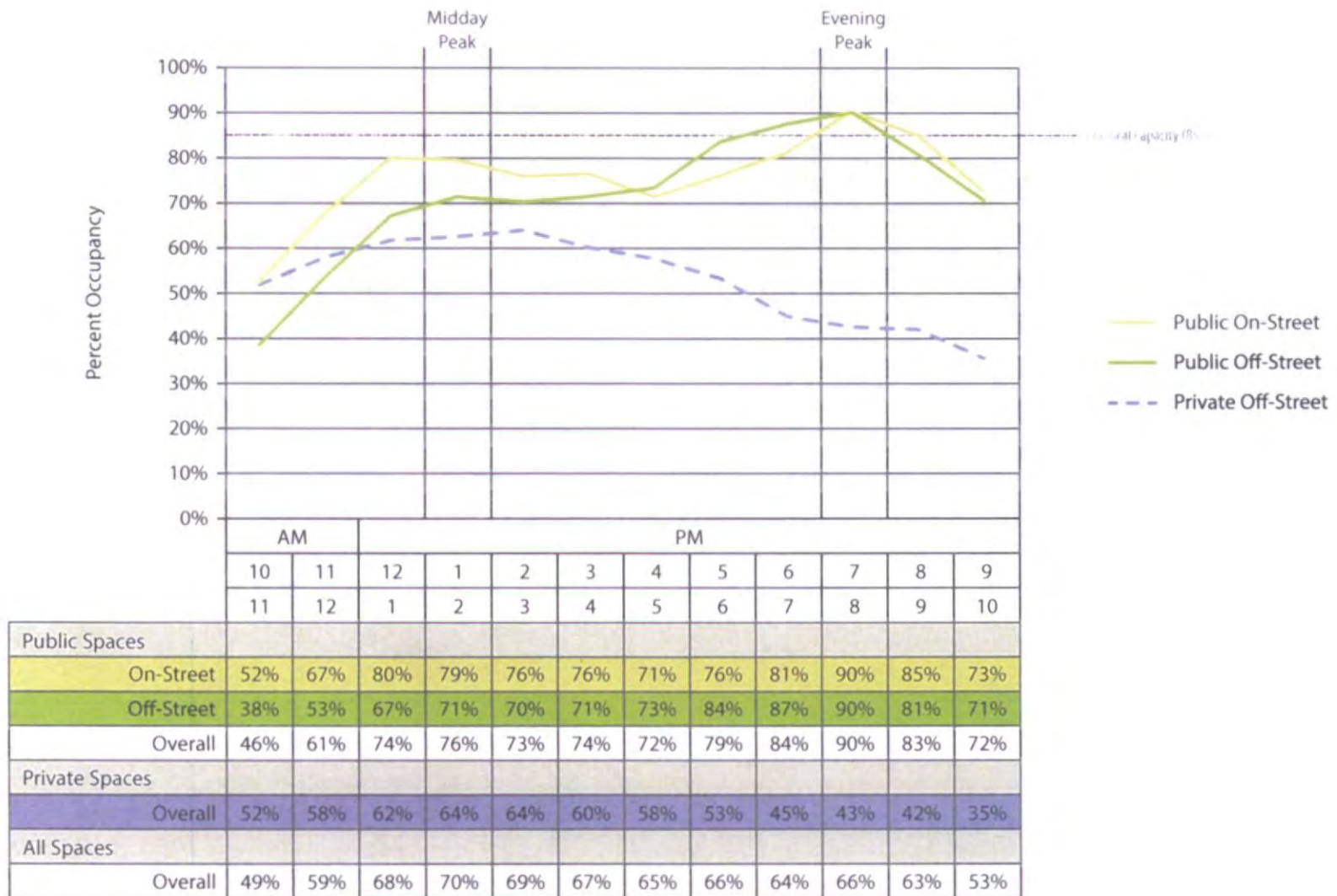
4.1.4 Non-Summer – Weekend Parking

Non-summer weekend occupancy levels for the study area tend to gradually increase in the morning, reaching their highest levels of the day, with midday peak at about 2 pm (56 percent occupied). Occupancy then decreases fairly steadily, except for a short increase in its evening peak at 7 pm (48 percent occupied) before beginning to decrease further until the end of the day. Occupancy levels of public parking facilities are generally higher than those of private parking facilities in the study area during the weekend. Additionally, private parking occupancy levels tend to remain fairly consistent (at around 41 percent occupied, on average) throughout the day during the weekend while private parking during the non-summer weekday decreases during the day.

Overall, non-summer occupancy reaches its highest peak during the early afternoon while summer occupancy reaches its highest peak during the early evening.

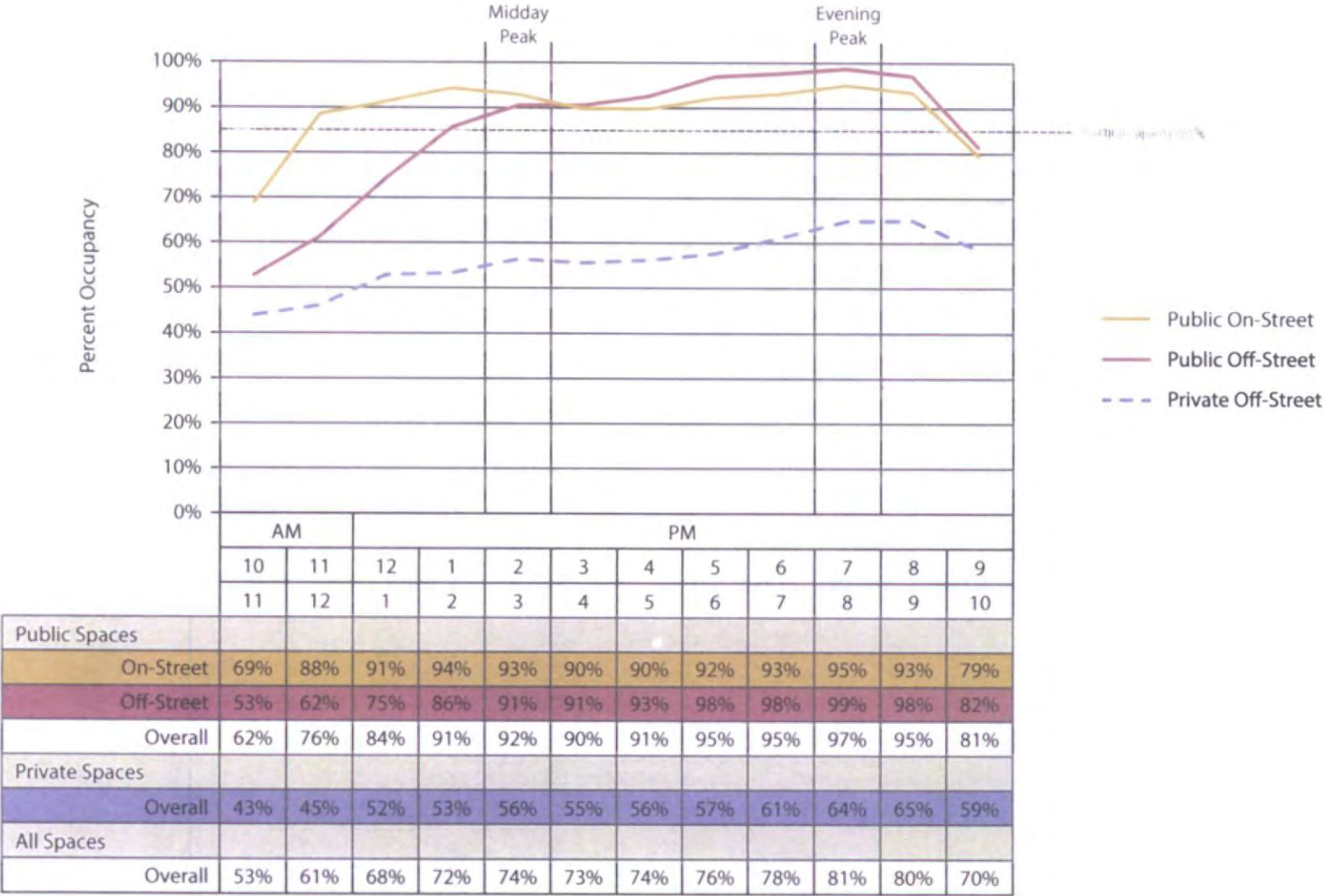
City of Laguna Beach - Downtown Specific Plan Area

Figure 2: Summer Overall Weekday Occupancy



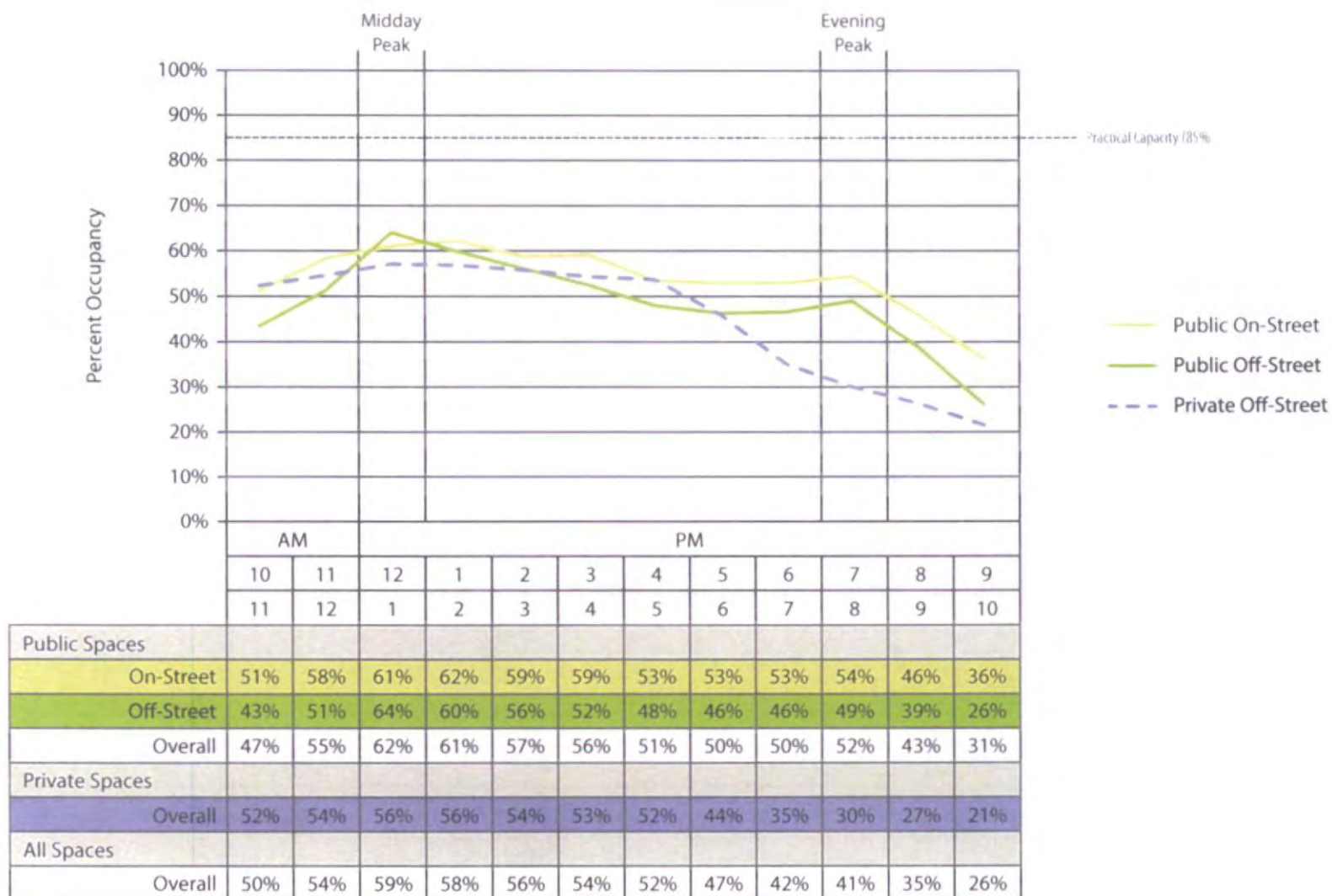
City of Laguna Beach - Downtown Specific Plan Area

Figure 3: Summer Overall Weekend Occupancy



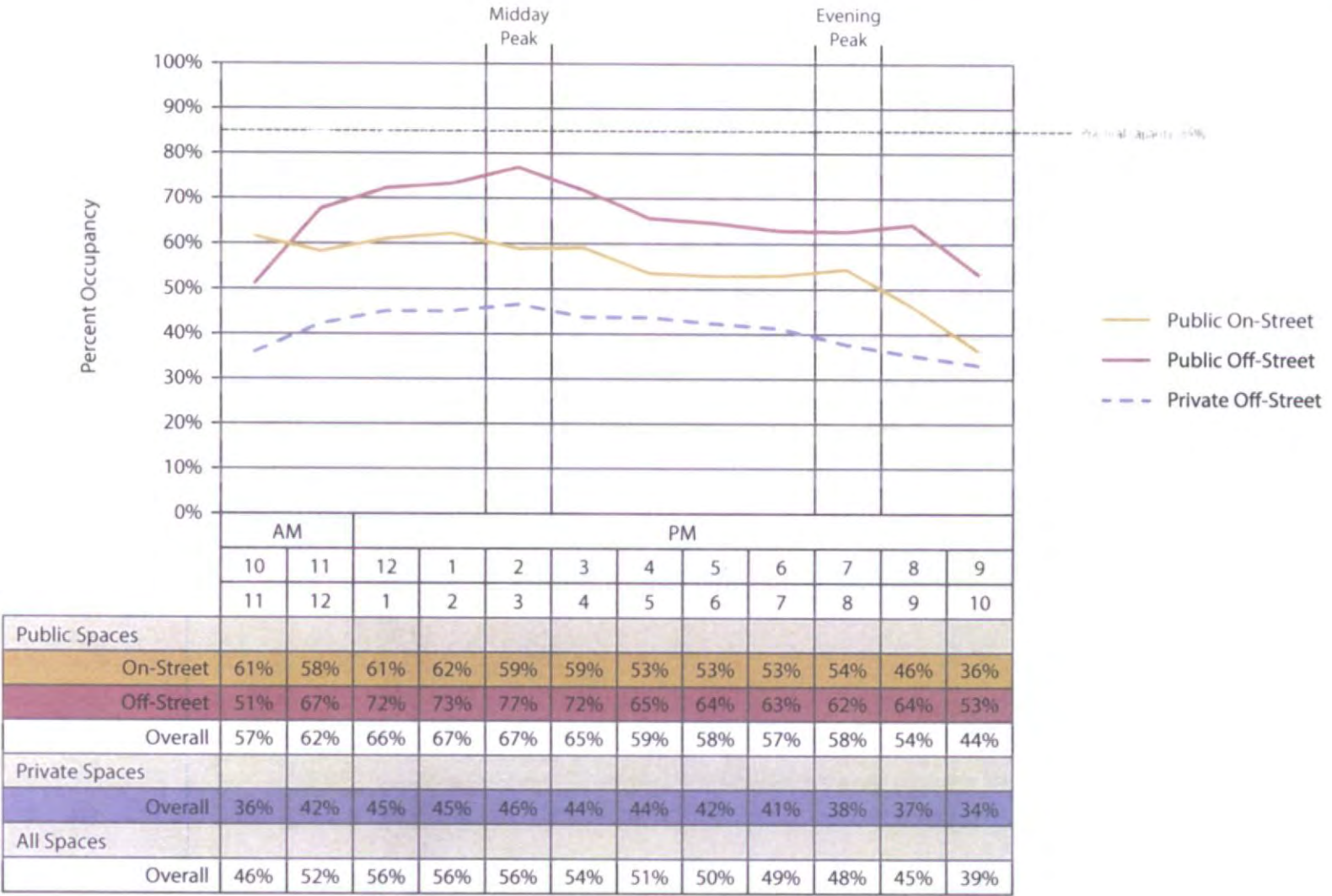
City of Laguna Beach - Downtown Specific Plan Area

Figure 4: Non-Summer Overall Weekday Occupancy



City of Laguna Beach - Downtown Specific Plan Area

Figure 5: Non-Summer Overall Weekend Occupancy



4.2 Occupancy Levels by Space Type

The following tables present hour-by-hour occupancy rates for public on-street parking and the various public and private off-street parking facilities in the Laguna Beach DSP Area.

To provide visual definition, the tables are highlighted to indicate periods of high usage. Cells highlighted in light pink indicate hours when a facility meets or exceeds practical capacity (85 percent) and remains below 90 percent, cells shaded in dark pink indicate times when occupancy was observed to have reached a level of 90 percent or higher, and cells shaded in red indicate times when occupancy was observed to reach full capacity.

4.2.1 Summer – Weekday Parking

Weekday occupancy levels throughout a typical summer weekday is presented in **Table 2** for the study area. Overall, on-street occupancies remain under practical capacity throughout most of the day, increasing to over 85 percent in many public parking facilities between 7 – 9 pm.

Among the off-street facilities, public facilities experience higher occupancy levels throughout most of the day compared to private facilities. Many public off-street facilities reach practical capacity during the midday and evening, with the lots closest to the beach often reaching full capacity, suggesting a high demand for parking in this area.

Table 2 – Summer Weekday Occupancy Levels

Space Type	Total Spaces	AM		PM										
		10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
		11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Public Spaces														
On-Street	925	52%	67%	80%	79%	76%	76%	71%	76%	81%	90%	85%	73%	
Off-Street	749	38%	53%	67%	71%	70%	71%	73%	84%	87%	90%	81%	71%	
A-1	Lot 6	215	37%	38%	66%	82%	80%	78%	80%	92%	96%	100%	79%	63%
A-2	Lot 5	15	47%	80%	80%	100%	100%	100%	87%	87%	80%	100%	100%	100%
A-3	Lot 2	38	47%	92%	100%	97%	92%	87%	82%	95%	97%	95%	89%	68%
A-4	Lot 11	167	42%	54%	68%	69%	73%	82%	99%	99%	99%	98%	95%	87%
A-5	Lot 1	26	81%	92%	100%	100%	100%	92%	92%	69%	85%	96%	81%	81%
A-6	Lot 4	18	28%	61%	94%	94%	94%	100%	78%	94%	94%	61%	100%	100%
A-7	Lot 3	24	42%	92%	100%	100%	92%	88%	83%	96%	100%	100%	88%	88%
A-8	Lot 12	84	69%	82%	90%	89%	93%	89%	81%	98%	85%	95%	82%	70%
A-9	Lot 14	25	40%	60%	56%	60%	56%	56%	52%	44%	32%	40%	36%	36%
A-12	Lot 13	71	7%	51%	48%	42%	30%	35%	20%	30%	46%	44%	41%	30%
A-13	Lot 10	66	5%	5%	8%	6%	8%	8%	24%	65%	89%	98%	94%	88%
Total		1674	46%	61%	74%	76%	73%	74%	72%	79%	84%	90%	83%	72%
Private Spaces														
Total		1691	52%	58%	62%	64%	64%	60%	58%	53%	45%	43%	42%	35%
Overall														
Total		3365	49%	59%	68%	70%	69%	67%	65%	66%	64%	66%	63%	53%

Evening peak hour on summer weekdays is during the 7 pm hour for the study area, displayed in **Figure 6**. The highest occupancies of off-street parking are found along Laguna Canyon Road in Lots 10, 11, and 12, as well as closer to North/South Coast Highway in Lots 1, 3, 5, and 6. The highest occupancies of on-street parking are concentrated in the core area of the downtown area, as well as along South Coast Highway south of Park Avenue.

FIGURE 6: SUMMER WEEKDAY EVENING PEAK OCCUPANCY (7:00PM)



4.2.2 Summer – Weekend Parking

Weekend occupancy levels throughout a typical summer weekend is presented in **Table 3** for the study area. Note again that the total supply of private spaces for the weekend is 70 spaces less than the total for summer weekday supply since the Las Brisas Lot was inaccessible on the weekend. Overall, both on-street and off-street public parking facilities reach practical capacity at some point in the day, with many reaching occupancy levels of over 90 percent and in some cases, reaching 100 percent. Full occupancy levels are concentrated mostly during the 11 am to 3 pm timeframe in lots closest to the beach. Compared to weekday occupancy, these levels suggest much higher parking demand on weekends in the study area.

Private parking facilities, however, remain under practical capacity between 43 and 65 percent occupancy levels. Compared to weekday occupancy for these facilities, weekend occupancy tends to be higher in the later hours of the day as opposed to the earlier hours of high occupancy during the weekdays.

Table 3 – Summer Weekend Occupancy Levels

Space Type		Total Spaces	AM			PM								
			10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public Spaces														
On-Street		925	69%	88%	91%	94%	93%	90%	90%	92%	93%	95%	93%	79%
Off-Street		749	53%	62%	75%	86%	91%	91%	93%	98%	98%	99%	98%	82%
A-1	Lot 6	215	49%	52%	88%	100%	99%	99%	97%	98%	100%	100%	100%	83%
A-2	Lot 5	15	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	93%	100%	93%	100%	93%	93%
A-3	Lot 2	38	68%	97%	97%	100%	100%	84%	89%	92%	89%	97%	100%	74%
A-4	Lot 11	167	91%	98%	96%	99%	98%	96%	99%	99%	100%	100%	99%	92%
A-5	Lot 1	26	96%	92%	100%	96%	96%	92%	100%	100%	92%	96%	100%	73%
A-6	Lot 4	18	50%	94%	100%	100%	100%	94%	78%	94%	89%	94%	89%	89%
A-7	Lot 3	24	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	88%	96%	92%	96%	96%	96%
A-8	Lot 12	84	25%	27%	29%	29%	54%	65%	81%	95%	99%	99%	98%	77%
A-9	Lot 14	25	40%	72%	100%	100%	100%	96%	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%	60%
A-12	Lot 13	71	28%	37%	34%	49%	75%	77%	86%	96%	99%	100%	89%	55%
A-13	Lot 10	66	3%	3%	27%	91%	95%	95%	95%	98%	100%	98%	98%	94%
Total		1674	62%	76%	84%	91%	92%	90%	91%	95%	95%	97%	95%	81%
Private Spaces														
Total		1621	43%	45%	52%	53%	56%	55%	56%	57%	61%	64%	65%	59%
Overall														
Total		3295	53%	61%	68%	72%	74%	73%	74%	76%	78%	81%	80%	70%

Evening peak hour on the summer weekend is during the 7 pm hour for the study area, displayed in **Figure 7**, following many of the same patterns displayed in the summer weekday peak occupancy map, with additional high occupancy in every public off-street parking lot. On-street parking also reaches further occupancy along Laguna Canyon Road and Cliff Drive.

FIGURE 7: SUMMER WEEKEND EVENING PEAK OCCUPANCY (7:00PM)



4.2.3 Non-Summer – Weekday Parking

Weekday occupancy levels throughout a typical non-summer weekday is presented in **Table 4** for the study area. Overall, public on-street occupancies remain under practical capacity all day during the non-summer weekday, while just a few off-street public parking facilities reach practical capacity or higher during peak hours, much lower than summer weekday occupancy.

Similar to summer weekday occupancy, private parking facilities remain under practical capacity all day during the non-summer weekday.

Table 4 – Non-Summer Weekday Occupancy Levels

Space Type		Total Spaces	AM		PM									
			10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public Spaces														
On-Street		925	51%	58%	61%	62%	59%	59%	53%	53%	53%	54%	46%	36%
Off-Street		749	43%	51%	64%	60%	56%	52%	48%	46%	46%	49%	39%	26%
A-1	Lot 6	215	17%	33%	60%	57%	50%	50%	49%	59%	80%	91%	74%	44%
A-2	Lot 5	15	60%	93%	87%	93%	80%	67%	93%	87%	87%	93%	47%	47%
A-3	Lot 2	38	71%	66%	87%	95%	79%	63%	53%	58%	32%	24%	26%	18%
A-4	Lot 11	167	58%	68%	72%	70%	66%	62%	50%	44%	34%	28%	20%	17%
A-5	Lot 1	26	50%	58%	81%	73%	96%	85%	96%	92%	85%	85%	65%	54%
A-6	Lot 4	18	50%	72%	94%	94%	72%	67%	89%	89%	94%	100%	67%	94%
A-7	Lot 3	24	54%	63%	100%	83%	63%	71%	54%	96%	83%	96%	75%	58%
A-8	Lot 12	84	49%	55%	54%	52%	49%	46%	36%	35%	27%	23%	15%	8%
A-9	Lot 14	25	60%	72%	64%	60%	64%	56%	52%	28%	20%	16%	16%	8%
A-12	Lot 13	71	86%	72%	80%	59%	66%	52%	45%	17%	11%	21%	21%	1%
A-13	Lot 10	66	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	8%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total		1674	47%	55%	62%	61%	57%	56%	51%	50%	50%	52%	43%	31%
Private Spaces														
Total		1691	52%	54%	56%	56%	54%	53%	52%	44%	35%	30%	27%	21%
Overall														
Total		3365	50%	54%	59%	58%	56%	54%	52%	47%	42%	41%	35%	26%

Evening peak hour on non-summer weekdays is during the 7 pm hour for the study area, displayed in **Figure 8**. The highest occupancies of off-street parking are found closest to South Coast Highway in Lots 3 and 4. The highest occupancies of on-street parking are also concentrated mostly closer to South Coast Highway south of Forest Avenue, as well as along Broadway Street.

FIGURE 8: NON-SUMMER WEEKDAY EVENING PEAK OCCUPANCY (7:00PM)



4.2.4 Non-Summer – Weekend Parking

Weekend occupancy levels throughout a typical non-summer weekend is presented in **Table 5** for the study area. Overall, public on-street parking facilities again remain under practical capacity all day while public off-street parking facilities reach practical capacity at some point in the day, with many reaching occupancy levels of over 90 percent, sometimes reaching 100 percent capacity. Compared to non-summer weekday occupancy, these levels suggest much higher parking demand on non-summer weekends in the study area.

Private parking facilities again remain under practical capacity ranging between 34 and 46 percent occupancy all day. Overall, the occupancy levels suggest a higher demand for public off-street parking than public on-street or private off-street parking.

Table 5 – Non-Summer Weekend Occupancy Levels

Space Type		Total Spaces	AM			PM								
			10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Public Spaces														
On-Street		925	61%	58%	61%	62%	59%	59%	53%	53%	53%	54%	46%	36%
Off-Street		749	51%	67%	72%	73%	77%	72%	65%	64%	63%	62%	64%	53%
A-1	Lot 6	215	32%	75%	97%	98%	95%	92%	88%	99%	100%	98%	97%	84%
A-2	Lot 5	15	33%	80%	93%	93%	100%	100%	93%	100%	100%	100%	93%	100%
A-3	Lot 2	38	95%	97%	100%	97%	97%	95%	84%	92%	92%	92%	97%	53%
A-4	Lot 11	167	85%	86%	86%	83%	90%	83%	67%	56%	47%	44%	56%	48%
A-5	Lot 1	26	100%	100%	96%	85%	100%	96%	96%	85%	96%	92%	88%	85%
A-6	Lot 4	18	83%	100%	94%	94%	89%	100%	100%	94%	94%	89%	94%	72%
A-7	Lot 3	24	63%	96%	100%	88%	96%	100%	92%	96%	96%	96%	100%	83%
A-8	Lot 12	84	0%	0%	0%	8%	19%	25%	25%	25%	25%	37%	33%	17%
A-9	Lot 14	25	72%	92%	100%	100%	96%	80%	96%	100%	100%	100%	88%	88%
A-12	Lot 13	71	79%	85%	59%	58%	63%	30%	18%	17%	18%	20%	17%	15%
A-13	Lot 10	66	0%	0%	3%	24%	27%	30%	30%	9%	5%	2%	0%	0%
Total		1674	57%	62%	66%	67%	67%	65%	59%	58%	57%	58%	54%	44%
Private Spaces														
Total		1691	36%	42%	45%	45%	46%	44%	44%	42%	41%	38%	37%	34%
Overall														
Total		3365	46%	52%	56%	56%	56%	54%	51%	50%	49%	48%	45%	39%

Evening peak hour on non-summer weekends is during the 7 pm hour for the study area, displayed in **Figure 9**. The highest occupancies of off-street parking are found scattered throughout the core area of the downtown area. The highest occupancies of on-street parking are found along Forest Avenue and south of Forest Avenue towards Mermaid Street and along South Coast Highway.



4.3 Duration

The following tables present the parking duration analysis in terms of the distribution of observed length of stay for each of the facilities in the study area.

4.3.1 Summer – Weekday Parking

Table 6 presents the length of stay by space type for the study area between 10 am and 10 pm for a typical summer weekday. Overall, about 35 percent of users stay parked for an hour or less in the Downtown Specific Plan area during the weekday. Average duration for both public and private facilities remain fairly consistent with the overall percentage of duration for the area, with public on-street duration being slightly higher than public off-street parking for one hour or less.

Table 6 – Summer Weekday Durations by Parking Type

Space Type		Unique Vehicles	Parking Duration (Hours)												Average Stay (Hours)
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Public Spaces															
On-Street		3418	39%	27%	15%	7%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2.5
Off-Street		1939	24%	26%	19%	9%	7%	6%	3%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	3.1
A-1	Lot 6	787	29%	33%	24%	7%	3%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2.4
A-2	Lot 5	60	33%	30%	13%	7%	7%	3%	5%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2.7
A-3	Lot 2	157	36%	27%	17%	6%	8%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2.5
A-4	Lot 11	262	10%	15%	10%	17%	12%	15%	9%	5%	4%	3%	0%	0%	4.6
A-5	Lot 1	108	33%	27%	20%	8%	4%	3%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2.6
A-6	Lot 4	66	23%	38%	15%	8%	11%	3%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	2.7
A-7	Lot 3	95	31%	31%	19%	5%	4%	5%	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	2.7
A-8	Lot 12	177	7%	10%	22%	8%	14%	17%	6%	4%	5%	3%	0%	3%	4.9
A-9	Lot 14	27	7%	19%	11%	0%	15%	7%	15%	19%	4%	0%	0%	4%	5.3
A-12	Lot 13	119	36%	24%	18%	13%	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2.5
A-13	Lot 10	81	5%	14%	17%	23%	30%	7%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4.0
Total		5357	34%	27%	16%	8%	5%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2.7
Private Spaces															
Total		3076	36%	16%	11%	7%	6%	4%	5%	6%	3%	1%	1%	3%	3.6
Overall															
Total		8433	35%	23%	14%	8%	6%	4%	3%	3%	2%	1%	0%	2%	3.0

4.3.2 Summer – Weekend Parking

Table 7 presents the length of stay by space type for the study area between 10 am and 10 pm for a typical summer weekend. Overall, about 36 percent of users stay parked for an hour or less in the study area. A larger percentage of users stay between 1 – 3 hours during the weekend compared to weekday durations. These users are typically concentrated in the core downtown area, suggesting they are parked for short visits to retail and restaurants within the area.

Table 7 – Summer Weekend Durations by Parking Type

Space Type		Unique Vehicles	Parking Duration (Hours)												Average Stay (Hours)
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Public Spaces															
On-Street		3945	37%	29%	15%	7%	5%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2.5
Off-Street		2445	30%	25%	17%	10%	6%	5%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3.0
A-1	Lot 6	966	35%	30%	18%	8%	4%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.4
A-2	Lot 5	79	37%	35%	15%	4%	6%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.2
A-3	Lot 2	180	41%	28%	14%	7%	6%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2.3
A-4	Lot 11	402	24%	16%	15%	14%	7%	10%	3%	5%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3.7
A-5	Lot 1	109	32%	26%	21%	7%	4%	4%	2%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2.7
A-6	Lot 4	84	38%	31%	12%	12%	5%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2.3
A-7	Lot 3	119	41%	28%	18%	3%	3%	2%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2.3
A-8	Lot 12	141	15%	13%	8%	11%	19%	13%	8%	5%	1%	1%	3%	3%	4.6
A-9	Lot 14	55	13%	13%	16%	11%	13%	5%	9%	5%	4%	4%	7%	0%	4.8
A-12	Lot 13	165	18%	21%	18%	18%	8%	8%	3%	4%	2%	1%	1%	0%	3.5
A-13	Lot 10	145	10%	19%	24%	12%	11%	10%	3%	6%	3%	3%	0%	1%	4.1
Total		6390	34%	28%	16%	8%	5%	4%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2.7
Private Spaces															
Total		3480	39%	17%	9%	9%	7%	4%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	4%	3.2
Overall															
Total		9870	36%	24%	13%	9%	6%	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2.9

4.3.3 Non-Summer – Weekday Parking

Table 8 presents the length of stay by space type for the study area between 10 am and 10 pm for a typical non-summer weekday. Overall, about 43 percent of users stay parked for an hour or less in the Downtown Specific Plan area during a non-summer weekday, which is 8 percent higher than the amount of users during the summer weekday. A higher percentage of users park for one hour or less in on-street public parking rather than off-street public parking. Compared to average duration within private parking facilities, average duration for public parking facilities is generally lower.

Table 8 – Non-Summer Weekday Durations by Parking Type

Space Type		Unique Vehicles	Parking Duration (Hours)												Average Stay (Hours)
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Public Spaces															
On-Street		2596	51%	23%	10%	5%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2.3
Off-Street		1499	35%	24%	15%	6%	6%	4%	4%	3%	2%	1%	0%	1%	2.9
A-1	Lot 6	563	32%	30%	21%	6%	4%	2%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.5
A-2	Lot 5	63	49%	29%	8%	0%	5%	3%	5%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2.2
A-3	Lot 2	132	55%	28%	6%	5%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1.9
A-4	Lot 11	179	12%	8%	8%	8%	13%	17%	9%	11%	7%	3%	2%	2%	5.4
A-5	Lot 1	94	41%	22%	17%	5%	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2.5
A-6	Lot 4	71	46%	20%	10%	11%	4%	3%	1%	0%	1%	3%	0%	0%	2.5
A-7	Lot 3	110	55%	23%	10%	5%	5%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2.0
A-8	Lot 12	71	6%	14%	8%	8%	17%	21%	7%	6%	10%	1%	0%	1%	5.2
A-9	Lot 14	22	0%	9%	14%	14%	9%	9%	32%	5%	0%	0%	0%	9%	5.8
A-12	Lot 13	185	47%	26%	15%	6%	3%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.0
A-13	Lot 10	9	33%	44%	11%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.1
Total		4095	45%	23%	12%	5%	4%	3%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2.5
Private Spaces															
Total		2618	38%	16%	9%	7%	6%	5%	6%	7%	2%	1%	0%	3%	3.5
Overall															
Total		6713	43%	20%	11%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2.9

4.3.4 Non-Summer – Weekend Parking

Table 9 presents the length of stay by space type for the study area between 10 am and 10 pm for a typical non-summer weekend. Overall, about 41 percent of users stay parked for an hour or less in the study area. Compared to the non-summer weekday durations, average non-summer weekend durations tend to be slightly lower, suggesting users are parked for short visits in the study area, similar to summer durations. Non-summer public and private parking duration patterns tend to remain fairly consistent with summer public and private parking duration patterns.

Table 9 – Non-Summer Weekend Durations by Parking Type

Space Type		Unique Vehicles	Parking Duration (Hours)												Average Stay (Hours)
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Public Spaces															
On-Street		3246	49%	26%	11%	6%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2.2
Off-Street		2167	33%	28%	16%	7%	6%	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2.7
A-1	Lot 6	967	34%	33%	17%	7%	4%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.3
A-2	Lot 5	75	39%	29%	23%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.2
A-3	Lot 2	190	45%	27%	14%	6%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2.2
A-4	Lot 11	353	22%	22%	11%	8%	8%	11%	5%	5%	3%	2%	1%	3%	3.9
A-5	Lot 1	125	37%	31%	16%	10%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2.3
A-6	Lot 4	87	40%	28%	15%	9%	3%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2.3
A-7	Lot 3	130	51%	23%	14%	5%	3%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2.0
A-8	Lot 12	55	20%	18%	35%	5%	11%	4%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3.2
A-9	Lot 14	47	2%	13%	4%	6%	17%	30%	6%	2%	6%	4%	2%	6%	5.9
A-12	Lot 13	116	28%	25%	15%	6%	22%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2.9
A-13	Lot 10	22	5%	5%	18%	45%	23%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3.9
Total		5413	42%	27%	13%	6%	4%	3%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2.4
Private Spaces															
Total		2778	40%	19%	12%	7%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	1%	2%	3.1
Overall															
Total		8191	41%	24%	13%	7%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2.6

4.4 Turnover

Parking turnover is an indicator of how often a single parking space is used by multiple vehicles throughout the day. Turnover rates are essential for areas with limited parking supply, such as downtowns, as they signify the level of convenience and availability for patrons parking in the area throughout the day. Typically, higher turnover numbers show that parking spaces are constantly being made available, while lower turnover counts reflect long-term parking areas and few parking restrictions, making it easier for vehicles to stay longer, but reducing the number of spaces available nearby for arriving vehicles.

4.4.1 Summer – Weekday Parking

The average frequency of parking turnover for a typical summer weekday is presented graphically in **Figure 10** for on-street and off-street parking facilities for the study area between 10 am and 10 pm. On a summer weekday, the study area has fairly high turnover rates for on-street parking in the core downtown area, with fairly low turnover rates for off-street parking surrounding the City Hall area.

4.4.2 Summer – Weekend Parking

On a summer weekend, the study area has slightly higher turnover rates compared to weekday turnover rates for on-street parking facilities, as displayed in **Figure 11**. Public off-street parking facilities also have higher turnover rates compared to weekday turnover rates. Private parking facilities have lower turnover rates, suggesting a higher demand for public parking during the weekend in the Downtown Specific Plan area.

4.4.3 Non-Summer – Weekday Parking

On a typical non-summer weekday, the study area has generally lower turnover rates than summer weekday turnover. Turnover rates closer to the coast remain high, but turnover rates further inland are much lower for both on-street and off-street parking, especially along Laguna Canyon Road, as shown in **Figure 12**. Non-summer weekday off-street parking in general has lower turnover rates throughout the downtown core area than on-street.

4.4.4 Non-Summer – Weekend Parking

On a non-summer weekend, the study area again has lower turnover rates than summer weekend turnover. Low turnover rates are found along Laguna Canyon Road and in the lots closest to City Hall, as well as in the core downtown area, similar to the rates found during non-summer weekday turnover. **Figure 13** displays lower turnover rates for both on-street and off-street parking near the more inland portion of the study area and higher turnover rates closer to North/South Coast Highway – slightly higher than non-summer weekday turnover. The highest turnover rates are fairly consistent with the areas of highest occupancy found earlier.

FIGURE 10: SUMMER WEEKDAY TURNOVER



FIGURE 11: SUMMER WEEKEND TURNOVER



FIGURE 12: NON-SUMMER WEEKDAY TURNOVER



FIGURE 13: NON-SUMMER WEEKEND TURNOVER



5.0 Land Use Analysis and Recommendations

Given the study's findings throughout the summer and non-summer collection periods, summer occupancy tends to be higher than non-summer occupancy. Non-summer occupancy reaches its peak during the day and steadily dwindles down for the remainder of the day, whereas summer occupancy experiences a second high peak in the evening, often higher than the midday peak. During the evening peak, turnover tends to be higher during the summer months, in contrast to much lower turnover rates during the non-summer months.

Because the area's land use consists of substantial retail and dining uses, these results suggest that the Downtown Specific Plan area attracts more visitors during the summer months and therefore parking demand is higher during the summer, especially in public parking facilities. Private parking facilities never reach practical capacity and tend to remain consistent throughout both summer and non-summer periods.

5.1 Land Use

The City provided land use classifications for each of the parcels in the study area. The aggregate square footage of each land use type was calculated and further analyzed according to the City's existing Zoning Code. Land use types in the study area are summarized in **Table 10**, along with the parking ratios currently specified in Chapter 25.52.012 of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code.

Where minimum parking requirements were not specified by square footage, parking standards stated for that land use type by the Institute of Transportation of Engineers were used. The total number of required parking spaces from these parking requirements is 4,421 spaces based upon built square footage and 4,352 spaces based upon occupied square footage.

Table 10 – Land Use

Land Use	Square Feet	Existing Minimum Parking Requirements ⁴	Required Spaces ⁵
Built Land Uses			
Office/Professional	215,519	1/250	862
Commercial	401,670	1/250	1,607
Restaurant	132,172	1/100	1,322
Institutional (Place of Assembly) ⁶	83,627	1/350	239
Institutional (Library/Museum)	19,300	1/300	65
Institutional (Child Care Center) ⁷	24,440	1/250	98
Financial	56,795	1/250	228
Total	933,523		4,421
Occupied Land Uses			
Office/Professional	211,797	1/250	848
Commercial	387,931	1/250	1,552
Restaurant	132,172	1/100	1,322
Institutional (Place of Assembly) ⁷	83,627	1/350	239
Institutional (Library/Museum)	19,300	1/300	65
Institutional (Child Care Center) ⁷	24,440	1/250	98
Financial	56,795	1/250	228
Total	916,062		4,352

In addition, an analysis of the actual built and actual demand ratio of parking was also conducted. Parking ratios were developed using the actual built supply and actual parking utilization. These ratios were computed to provide a comparison between the actual built environment and the actual parking demand. The actual built ratio (Table 11) was determined based on the total supply of parking spaces and the total built land use (square feet). The actual demand ratio (Table 12) was determined based on the highest public and private parking occupancy during the summer and non-summer weekend periods and the total occupied land use (square feet).

Table 11 – Actual Built Ratio

Time Period	Actual Built Square Footage	Actual Parking Supply	Actual Built Ratio per Space	Actual Built Ratio per 1,000 sf
Summer and Non-Summer ⁸	933,523	3,365	277	3.60

⁴ Defined as the number of parking spaces per each square feet of gross floor area.

⁵ Defined as square footage divided by parking requirement.

⁶ Parking requirements for this land use is specified by the Institute of Transportation Engineers, *Parking Generation*, 4th Edition (2010), 137.

⁷ Parking requirements for this land use is specified by the Institute of Transportation Engineers, *Parking Generation*, 4th Edition (2010), 166.

⁸ Because our analysis includes both public and private parking spaces, the actual built parking supply remains the same for both the summer and non-summer time periods. Although the public and private parking supply numbers may change individually during special events, our analysis covers the entire availability of the study area, and therefore, the actual parking supply number does not change between seasons.

Table 12 – Actual Demand Ratio

Time Period	Actual Occupied Square Footage	Actual Parking Demand	Actual Demand Ratio per Space	Actual Demand Ratio per 1,000 sf
Summer Weekday	916,062	2,590	354	2.83
Summer Weekend	916,062	2,679	342	2.92
Non-Summer Weekday	916,062	1,986	461	2.17
Non-Summer Weekend	916,062	1,905	481	2.08

The DSP area experiences the highest parking demand during the summer weekend time period. According to the actual demand observed during this time, the actual parking ratio is 2.92 spaces per 1,000 of building square feet. In comparison to the actual built ratio of 3.60 spaces per 1,000 of building square feet, this ratio indicates the actual parking demand for the DSP area does not exceed the actual parking supply. This suggests that although the DSP area may be perceived as having high occupancy, adequate supply is available.

5.2 Recommendations

Historically, cities desiring to resolve parking issues simply increased supply. However, increasing parking supply does not address the core problem of concentrated demand, in which high-demand on-street spaces are consistently over-utilized while nearby off-street facilities remain underutilized. The recommendations listed below provide an approach that utilizes policies and programs that will enable more efficient use of existing supply to meet a variety of parking needs as well as maintaining flexibility when it comes to land uses within the DSP area.

The recommendations that follow are designed to work together to meet the City's parking management goals. While these recommendations could theoretically be implemented piece by piece, they are most effective if implemented together. It is important that to the greatest extent possible the recommendations be implemented as a cohesive "package" of reforms.

As the Downtown Specific Plan area continues to grow and evolve, its parking needs will change as well. This report recommends techniques to both address current challenges and also allow the City to be nimble in reacting to future parking challenges. Finally, it is important to emphasize that these recommendations are specific to the Downtown Specific Plan area and would not necessarily apply to other neighborhoods within the City of Laguna Beach.

Recommendation #1: New Parking Minimums/Blended Parking Rate

IBI Group recommends reducing the current minimum parking requirements to a minimum parking ratio of 2.92 spaces per 1,000 of square feet. This is a blended rate for all non-residential uses in the study area. Grouping office, commercial, restaurant, institutional, and financial under the broad definition of "non-residential" use allows simplified parking standards, and facilitates the opportunity for DSP area-wide shared parking among land uses of different sizes and peak and non-peak operating hours. By reducing the parking standard, future parking

supply will be developed in proportion to the actual demand, resulting in fewer underutilized parking spaces. Using the actual parking ratios as the basis for establishing parking minimums allows for less required parking spaces for each land use in the study area and allows for flexibility for a variety of land uses while accommodating both local residents and visitors.

The blended rate includes both public and private parking and does not account for any residential land uses throughout the DSP area. It is assumed that residential uses provide their own parking and are not a part of the public/private parking system. Implementation of a blended rate for non-residential uses will assist in optimization of existing public and private parking supply and can have an indirect benefit of reducing encroachment into residential neighborhoods and streets.

In the event of new residential development within the DSP area, the City shall review options for residential parking permits (RPPs), which restrict the time and/or duration a non-resident can park in an on-street space. The City would need to coordinate with the Coastal Commission for approval of an RPP as a means to manage parking spillover issues in residential areas. Because each RPP has the potential to reduce public access opportunities to coastal resources, the Commission evaluates each application on an individual basis, ultimately seeking to meet its mission of providing, maintaining, and ensuring public access to coastal resources while taking into account the needs of local residents.

Recommendation #2: Shared Parking

Shared parking is one of the most effective tools in parking management. Because many different land uses have different periods of parking demand, they can easily share a common parking facility, thereby limiting the need to provide additional parking. Shared parking policies do not treat the parking supply as individual units specific to particular businesses or uses, but rather emphasize the efficient use of the parking supply by including as many spaces as possible in a common pool of shared, publicly available spaces. Shared parking encourages efficient land use and in the long-term the cost of shared parking is significantly less than the costs associated with constructing and operating new parking facilities.

Because the private parking spaces in the DSP area are underutilized during both the summer and non-summer months, the City has the opportunity to take advantage of the available parking supply and form shared parking agreements with developed uses that provide private parking. Making these spaces available to the public would be especially effective during the summer months in order to accommodate residents and the additional amount of visitors that the DSP area experiences. This can include incentives for businesses to enter shared parking agreements with the City. Specific steps to creating shared parking agreements include:

- Working with existing property owners to ensure that private parking is made available to the public when not needed for its primary commercial use.
- Working with property owners and businesses to develop mutually-agreeable operating hours and liability arrangements for public use of private parking facilities.

- Requiring as a condition of approval that all newly constructed private parking in any non-residential development in the DSP area or adaptive reuse project be made available to the public.
- Allowing parking to be shared among different uses within a single mixed-use building by right.
- If new public parking is needed, first purchase or lease existing private parking lots or structures from willing sellers, and add this parking to the shared public supply before building expensive, new lots or garages.

Recommendation #3: Identify and Communicate Parking System

The on-street parking system is finite and future growth of visitor demand can only be met off-street. Customers and visitors must recognize and understand the City's role in parking. As such, it is recommended the City develop a strategic approach to market, communicate and brand its parking system. This will establish a recognizable and intuitively understandable parking message. These can include branding, wayfinding, and marketing. It is important for residents, visitors, and employees to know where they can find parking.

Wayfinding signage helps orient visitors, shoppers, and residents alike, pointing them to area parking facilities, retail/restaurant establishments, and other important destinations.

Wayfinding informs people of the best way to access an area, depending on their mode of travel. Parking wayfinding signs can also display real-time availability data, pointing motorists to facilities with available spaces.

Wayfinding is most effective when it is consistent in terms of branding and marketing; all signage should be produced in a similar style, and organized by type. Regardless of the particular signage implementation, good design that is consistent with and supports the character of the downtown area is critical for all signage components. The City is currently undergoing a study to update wayfinding signage within the DSP area.

Recommendation #4: Integrate Parking Technology

The City may also want to consider the integration of parking technology to enhance their parking system. There are various promising technologies with a range of applications. These can include convenient payment options (smart meters), interactive maps of parking information, mobile applications, dynamic signage such as digital signs that display parking availability in real time, etc. Further analysis would need to be conducted to determine applicability of technologies as it pertains to the City.

Recommendation #5: Temporary/Permanent Removal of Parking Spaces

The public and private parking supply and demand observed in this report provide the basis of informing the decision-making process when it comes to any temporary or permanent removal of parking spaces in the DSP area. The City has expressed interest in the potential partial closure of Forest Avenue (Glennestre Street to South Coast Highway) and development of parklet programs, both of which require either temporary or permanent removal of spaces. Depending upon the scale, time of year, and time of day of parking space removals, shared parking agreements discussed above may be needed. Based on parking behaviors discussed in this

study, the following provides a range of potential spaces that can be removed from the public and private parking supply.

Due to the high occupancy in summer months, it is not recommended to remove spaces from the public supply, as occupancy is beyond the 85 percent practical capacity; removal of public parking spaces would result in over capacity occupancies.⁹ The occupancy in the non-summer months, however, is well below 85 percent and can accommodate removal of public spaces. Based on the supply and maximum occupancy, in the non-summer months, up to 449 spaces and 354 spaces can be removed from the public supply in the weekday and weekend days, respectively.

The private parking occupancy for summer and non-summer periods are below 85 percent practical capacity. As such, the private supply can accommodate removal of up to 420 spaces and 378 spaces in the summer for weekday and weekend periods and up to 579 spaces and 769 spaces in the non-summer for weekday and weekend periods, respectively. These ranges are to act as guidance on the removal of parking spaces as needed for programs, road closures, etc.

When removing public parking spaces from the public supply, the number of removed spaces should be within these ranges. However, if spaces are to be removed during peak periods (such as the summer months when occupancy is beyond 85 percent) and the public supply cannot handle the removal of spaces, additional supply can be obtained via utilization of available private supply through shared parking agreements as detailed in Recommendation #2.

Recommendation #6: Establish an Ongoing Data Collection, Monitoring, and Evaluation Process

In parking, you can only manage what you measure. This recommendation seeks to formalize the “measurement” process by proposing that the City implement regular occupancy counts of non-residential public and private parking in an effort to maintain an overall occupancy of approximately 85 percent or less over time.

It should be noted that the City currently conducts an annual Summer Festival Downtown and Laguna Canyon Road Parking Occupancy Study, which surveys parking occupancy, turnover, and parking permits. This recommendation calls for the City to build upon the Summer Festival Counts to include all public and private on and off-street parking. It is recommended that this effort occur at a minimum of once every two years (biannual data collection and monitoring).

This “baseline” data will serve as the foundation to measure the effectiveness/validity of implementation of a blended parking rate, a shared parking program, or any other recommendation as part of this study. Each iteration of data collection will allow the City to make informed decisions regarding the continued use of the recommended blended parking rate, or if any modifications or adjustments are needed. To ensure adequacy of parking supply year-round, the City can employ a variable programs (summer vs non-summer).

⁹ It should be noted that removal of public spaces in the summer months can be done. However, this removal would need to be off-set by adding to public parking supply using private parking; i.e. shared parking agreements.

The ongoing data collection, monitoring, and evaluation will be critical for evaluating whether the recommendations as part of this report are achieving their intended goals and will assist in providing assurance to the community and retail businesses regarding adequate parking supply.

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Fri 8/8/2025 8:27 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

 1 attachment (3 MB)

June 7 2022 Staff Report Text Highlighted.pdf;

From: johnthomas@cox.net <johnthomas@cox.net>

Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 5:21 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Cc: 'A' <johnthomas@cox.net>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To the California Coastal Commission:

Please find a "Substantial Issue" with this appeal and grant a full and proper hearing.

In a process that took from 2014 to 2022, the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Update involved hundreds of thousands of dollars and untold number of hours by the public, city staff, and the following consultants - MIG, Inc., MJB Consulting, Rick Williams Consulting, IBI Group, Stanley R. Hoffman Associates, and Stoffel & Associates. Finally, more than 7 years after the process commenced, on December 15, 2021, the California Coastal Commission approved LCP Amendment (LCP-5-LGB-20-0052-with modifications, and finally, at its meeting February 15, 2022 the Laguna Beach City Council adopted an ordinance accepting the California Coastal Commission's revisions to the City's Downtown Specific Plan.

Nowhere in that 171 page Downtown Specific Plan have I been able to find one recommendation that the city create a permanent pedestrian only plaza or "Promenade" on lower Forest or anywhere in Laguna Beach.

Instead, there are numerous sections of that plan that specifically recommend AGAINST a permanent pedestrian plaza, but instead discuss the possibility of a temporary, or seasonal pedestrian plaza, including these references:

- P 78 (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) Through adaptive re-use of public parking spaces on a limited or temporary basis, the City has the opportunity to accommodate enhancements such as a pedestrian promenade or street festivals through partial street closures, a parklet program, or other community desired events and activities within the downtown.

- (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) during the non-summer months
- (MAYBE NOT A TEMPORARY PROMENADE) On the other hand, adaptive re-use of public parking spaces during the summer months may not be ideal due to the high parking occupancy observed.
- P 78 Perhaps the **greatest impact associated with providing more parking** in the downtown is the **potential to worsen traffic congestion by drawing more cars into the local street circulation system**. Parking areas also pose potentially negative impacts by virtue of their design and appearance.
- P 80 Topic 4 Policies (PROMENADE?) #9 Allow for the limited or temporary- adaptive re-use of public parking spaces for community-desired events and activities during summer and non-summer months, provided that an 85 percent target occupancy level is not exceeded.
- P 111 (PARKLETT) On-street parking allows the opportunity for drivers to shop and give patronage to local businesses with convenience
- P102/113 (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) The use of a continuous paving material on Forest Avenue between Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street will create a more pedestrian friendly street that also retains existing parking and aids in traffic calming.
- P106/117: (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) Depending on usage, this plaza could be installed on a temporary status to be used during non-peak visitor months, and then reverted to the original auto-oriented use during peak summer months.

And yet, ignoring the specifics of its own Adopted Downtown Specific Plan, and without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on consultants, and without involving the public to the degree the public was involved in the Downtown Specific Plan Update, the Laguna Beach City Council has taken it upon itself to drive this concept through the city's approval process.

To make matters worse, with the ink barely dry on the Coastal Commission approved version of LCP Amendment (LCP-5-LGB-20-0052-2), in spite of specific instructions reflected in Agenda Report Regular Item #14 of the June 14, 2022 City Council meeting (attached) that an alternative plan be developed that could be a temporary or seasonal pedestrian plaza, the city ignored its own approval and the city proceeded ONLY with a plan for a permanent pedestrian plaza. It never seriously considered an alternative to a total and permanent pedestrian plaza.

There clearly is a substantial issue involved and I ask that the Commission find there is a substantial issue and grant a full and proper hearing. Thank you.

John Thomas
31699 Seaciff Drive
Laguna beach, Ca. 92651
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AGENDA REPORT

Regular
14

Meeting Date
June 7, 2022

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PROMENADE ON FOREST PROGRAM PLAN AS A GUIDE TO DEVELOP TWO DISTINCT CONCEPT PLANS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Approve the Promenade on Forest Program Plan.

Appropriation: _____ **Fund Name:** _____

Submitted By:  **Approved:** 
Mark McAvoy, Director of Public Works Shohreh Dupuis, City Manager

SUMMARY OF THE MATTER

On May 18, 2021, the City awarded a contract to RRM Design Firm (RRM) to perform preliminary engineering and entitlements to make the Promenade on Forest (Promenade) a permanent installation. The initial phase of work included the preparation of a program plan to identify the basic design parameters for the permanent Promenade. Extensive outreach with business owners along Forest Avenue, public safety personnel, maintenance staff, and public officials was conducted to identify key program elements to be incorporated into the program plan. The program plan is being presented now for the public and City Council review and City Council approval. The program plan information will be the basis of design for the development of the Promenade concept plans. The concept plans will include two options for consideration. The first option is a complete conversion to a pedestrian promenade that no longer resembles a roadway, while the second is a simpler version that maintains curbs, gutters and sidewalks similar to what exists today. Both options will include enhanced paving, improved lighting, and improved infrastructure. The development of the concept plans will include comprehensive public outreach with the entire community to collaborate on thoughts and inspiration that will help guide the design and vision forward.

DISCUSSION

Stakeholder Interviews

Staff walked door to door along the Promenade making introductions with shop owners and managers. As part of the introductions, staff shared letters providing contact information and an invitation to participate in stakeholder interviews. Stakeholder interviews were held with several business owners on Forest Avenue, utility companies, city staff, public safety, councilmembers, planning commissioners, and others in the corridor directly influenced by the Promenade.

The design team inquired about opportunities, constraints, potential concerns, deal-breakers, desirables, design character and the many factors related to day-to-day operations of the Promenade. The stakeholder interviews were setup with up to four people with similar interests and roles within the project area. Public officials were interviewed individually. The interviews varied in duration from thirty minutes to one hour; with conversations focused on the interviewee's experience with the Promenade since it was created in June 2020. Common items discussed included appearance, character, pedestrian circulation, programmed activities and events, public function, short and long-term maintenance, and impacts to businesses.

Feedback received included both positive and negative elements. These shared experiences regarding the closure of Forest Avenue and day-to-day operations of the Promenade, were collected and organized to

Approval of Promenade on Forest Program Plan
June 7, 2022
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develop the Promenade on Forest Program Plan (Attachment 1), which organizes key elements to be addressed and considered in the creation of the Promenade design.

Program Plan Format

Once RRM organized the feedback received in the stakeholder interviews, they divided the Promenade into five distinct areas. These areas serve different functions in the operation of the Promenade; however, they may share common program elements. Although these areas have differing functions, they will all be incorporated into a cohesive design for the Promenade.

The Paseo Access is the existing breezeway adjacent to Bushard's Pharmacy that provides access to the parking lot on Ocean Avenue (Lot 3), the alley, and the public restroom. The West Entrance to the Promenade at South Coast Highway is a prominent crossing to Main Beach and the shops and restaurants on the west side of South Coast Highway. The Central Promenade is the core space of the Promenade. This space will be the most active area in the Promenade design. The East Entrance is the access into the Promenade at the intersection of Forest Avenue and Glenneyre Street. In addition to pedestrian access, this access also provides access for emergency and maintenance vehicles. The Main Beach Access is at Main Beach Park. Although it is not within the limits of the Promenade, it will be considered in the design to provide a transition from the Promenade to Main Beach Park.

Program Plan Elements

The program plan summarizes stakeholder input into two categories. The first category is Function and Services (how the space is used), and the second category is Site Design Elements (physical features). The elements listed under each category are derived from the most common items mentioned in the stakeholder interviews. The check boxes in the center of the program plan identify which elements will be incorporated into each of the five project site areas.

While discussing the site design elements, stakeholders felt strongly that the Promenade should have a timeless design with high-end and elegant features that capture and preserve the unique culture of Laguna Beach. Key elements such as lighting, landscape, and pavement design will be developed to deliver the desired unique site character. The design will also create an inviting destination for residents and visitors to the area. The site character and aesthetic improvements will be identified and refined with the development of the concept plans.

Outdoor dining was a major topic of discussion with stakeholders. Stakeholders did not want the Promenade to have the feel of an outdoor food court. While stakeholders understood that outdoor dining is a component of the Promenade, the majority requested that restaurant seating be limited, and that open seating should be incorporated throughout the Promenade. It was further stated by several stakeholders that the space reserved for restaurants should be rented to the restaurants at a fair market rate and should be limited to 500 square feet per restaurant. Stakeholders identified concerns with the existing restaurant spaces and wanted assurance that the permanent design would address these concerns. For example, it was stated that space heaters and propane tanks were bulky and detracted from the overall aesthetic, and the tents and shade covers block open sight lines through the Promenade, making it hard for pedestrians to see adjacent storefronts and signage. These concerns are reflected in the program plan and will all be addressed in the concept design(s).

Approval of Promenade on Forest Program Plan

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Stakeholders shared mixed feelings regarding public performances in the Promenade. Most stakeholders supported public performances but expressed that they should occur in different areas rather than at one fixed performance area. The program plan identifies event space in the West Entrance, Central Promenade, and the East Entrance. These spaces will consist of informal performance areas by providing electrical and audio/visual infrastructure throughout the Promenade. This will allow performances to occur in various locations throughout the Promenade. The program plan identifies a large event space which could be up to 400 square feet. Several stakeholders suggested this space should be located towards Coast Highway.

ADA accessibility was a shared concern amongst stakeholders. It is anticipated that an accessible path will be created through the Paseo Access to provide accessibility to parking and the public restroom. In addition to access to parking and the public restroom, the entire Promenade design will focus on accessibility to all public spaces, amenities, and businesses.

Next Steps

The next step in the design of the Promenade will be holding a series of public workshops. Public Workshop #1 will be an information gathering workshop with the community. Together with the information received at the public workshop and the approved program plan, RRM will produce draft concept plans. The draft concept plans will then be shared with the public at Public Workshop #2 and will provide an opportunity for the public to review and evaluate the two concepts. Following this workshop, RRM will make additional refinements to the concept plans and then share them at Public Workshop #3, which is intended to be an informal open house to allow the public to review the plans and discuss them with the design team. Following the last public workshop, the concepts will be finalized and presented to the City Council for selection of the concept to be studied for CEQA compliance, design review, and coastal development permitting. The detailed Promenade Outreach Plan is provided as Attachment 2.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The current budget includes funding for this project. No appropriation is being requested.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The City Council's action at this time is limited to providing preliminary direction on the design of the Promenade project. It does not constitute authorization to proceed with the project and will not directly result in construction or site disturbance. Further, until such time as the proposed design is ascertained, there is not sufficient information for which meaningful environmental review can be undertaken. Accordingly, the City Council's direction on the program plan is not a "project" pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21065. The project entitlements will ultimately consist of applications for design review and coastal development permits, and a CEQA evaluation and determination must be made when the project is considered for approval at a noticed public hearing.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Promenade on Forest Program Plan (Pgs. 4-14)
2. Public Outreach Plan (Pgs. 15-16)

Report Prepared By:

Thomas Perez, Capital Program Manager

Coordinated With:

PROMENADE ON FOREST PROGRAM PLAN



PROMENADE ON FOREST PROGRAM PLAN

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Create a vibrant plaza in downtown for safe outdoor dining, gathering and shopping – The Promenade on Forrest shall preserve and enhance the unique character of the Laguna Beach downtown.

INTRODUCTION

Forest Avenue was closed to through traffic between South Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street to create a pedestrian promenade in 2020 to activate the area, encourage pedestrian social distancing and circulation through the street block. The block has been referred to ever since as The Promenade on Forest. The City worked with local restaurants and businesses to install parklets along the edge of the sidewalks in the parking zone to allow for outdoor dining, flex space for retail shops, and casual seating and gathering areas for pedestrians visiting the Promenade. The City of Laguna Beach



along with their Design Team have begun the first steps to create a permanent promenade by meeting with stakeholders to listen and gather input about the existing promenade and better understand the opportunities and constraints within the corridor. The following document summarizes key issues, opportunities, and challenges to consider while developing improvements to create a premiere public space.

This program plan will be used as a guide to work with the community as a whole and further develop two distinct concept plans for a Promenade on Forest. During the conceptual design phase, the design team will work with stakeholders and the Laguna Beach community to

identify improvements that further enhance the corridor for pedestrians and create a vibrant public space. The outcome of the conceptual design phase will be concept plans for the area. One concept will explore a minimized design approach with enhancements that retain a roadway, curbs, public sidewalks, with improvements to the parklet design elements, and other upgrades such as lighting, landscaping, and open spaces. The second concept will include a complete redesign of the area to create a one-level plaza or piazza with new decorative hardscape, lighting, upgraded landscape, event space, outdoor dining, gathering spaces, and other enhancements to create a unique outdoor experience in downtown.

Stakeholder interviews are an important and effective way to gather information and perspective since often people are more relaxed interfacing in a small group. The stakeholder interviews were held with the variety of the business owners, utility companies, city staff, first responders, public officials, and others in the corridor directly influenced by the promenade and the permanent closure to vehicle traffic through Forest Avenue.

The stakeholder interviews were setup with up to four people with similar interests and roles within the project area. The interviews varied in duration from 30 minutes to one (1) hour with most of the conversation focused on the interviewee's sharing their experience with day-to-day operations along the promenade such as; pedestrian circulation, emergency access, activities and events, the changing routines seasonally, public function, adaptations to changing conditions, maintenance, and other opportunities and constraints over the last two years.

[illegible]

Shared experiences and ideas regarding the stakeholder's involvement in the day-to-day operations of the promenade were collected and recorded to develop the following Program Plan to organize key elements that need to be addressed and considered in the predesign information gathering phase of the project. The program plan information will be the basis of the conceptual design while continuing to collect public input from the greater community through several public workshop sessions. The public workshops will provide the design team and the public an opportunity to collaborate on thoughts and inspiration that will guide the design and vision that will preserve and enhance the public space on the Promenade.



PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The program plan summarizes the stakeholder input into two categories. The first category is the site design elements, and the second category are the functions and services that take place on the promenade. The site elements are design components needed for the built environment. Some of the design elements will be located at specific locations and others may occur in one or more locations. These were the primary items and issues brought up in the stakeholder interviews to consider in the promenade corridor and adjacent boundaries. The project limits have been labeled to delineate areas within the corridor where different activities and elements generally occur.

PROJECT SITE DELINEATION

AREA A – PASEO ACCESS

This is the existing breezeway adjacent to Bushard's Pharmacy that provides access to the Ocean Avenue Parking Lot B, the alley, and the nearby public restroom. This paseo is not currently wheelchair accessible from the alley side.



AREA B – WEST ENTRANCE

The west entrance to the promenade at South Coast Highway is a prominent crossing to Main Beach and the restaurants, cafes, and shops on the west side of South Coast Highway. The west entrance has a view to the ocean and is currently a non-programmed passive area. This area has been closed to through vehicular traffic with the placement of decorative mosaic bollards.



AREA C – CENTRAL PROMENADE

The core space of the promenade is where several parklets are constructed for outdoor dining, informal seating, display areas for shops, and a performance deck.



AREA D - EAST ENTRANCE

This is the access into the promenade from Glenneyre Street. This access is closed to through vehicle traffic with removable bollards to provide access for emergency and maintenance vehicles. This intersection has been a two-way stop controlled intersection since Forest Avenue was closed to through-traffic.



PROMENADE ON FOREST PROGRAM PLAN

AREA E – MAIN BEACH ACCESS

The crossing at South Coast Highway was updated by the City to include a scramble crossing for pedestrians crossing from Main Beach to Forest Avenue. This access provides views to the ocean and beach and pedestrian access across South Coast Highway. This is an important access point for Forest Avenue and needs to be examined further with the improvement plans for the Promenade and Main Beach Park.



UP NEXT: Program Elements
Function, Service, and Site Design

PROMENADE ON FOREST PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Function & Services

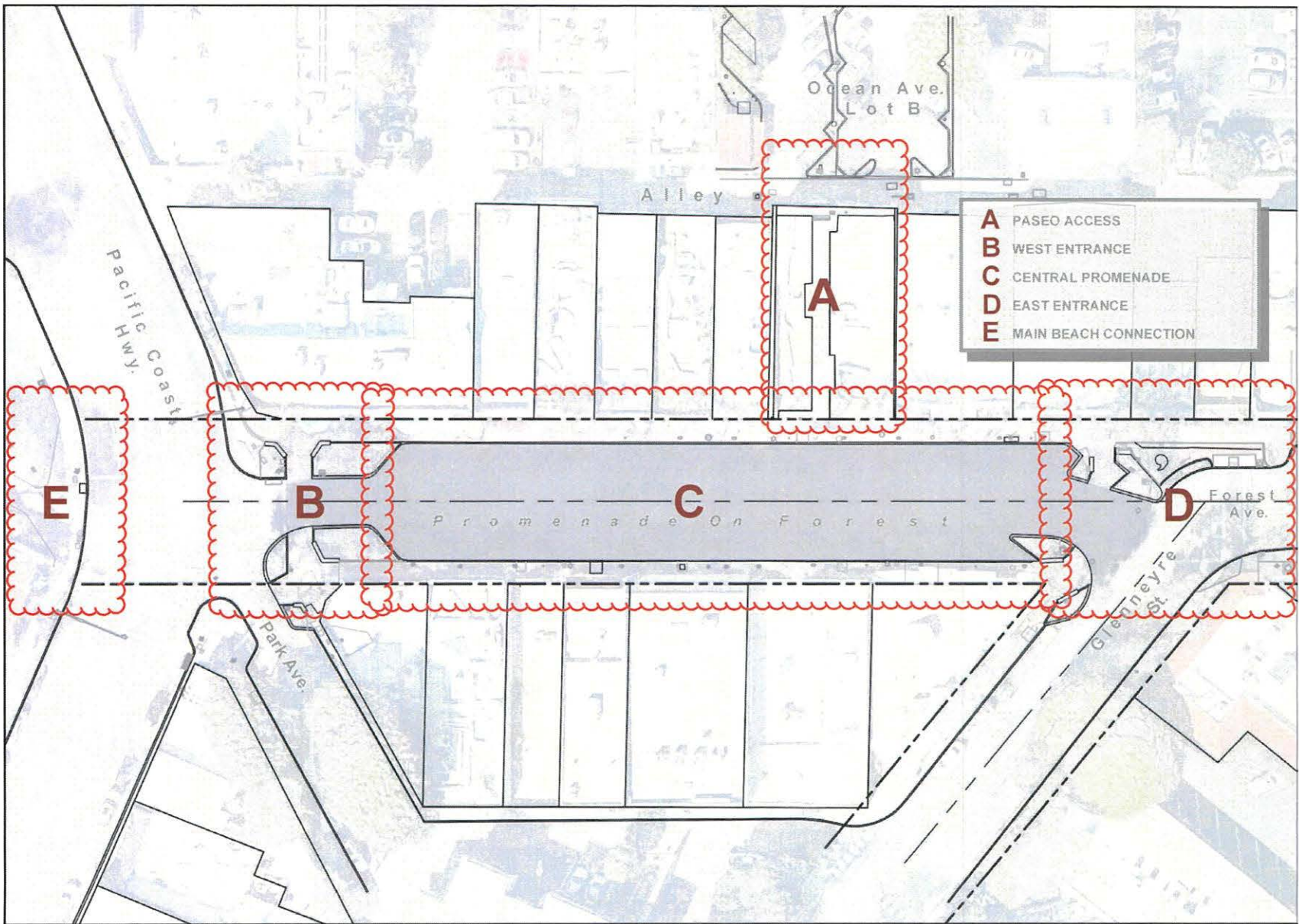
	PROJECT SITE AREA					NOTES
	PASEO ACCESS	WEST ENTRANCE	CENTRAL PROMENADE	EAST ENTRANCE	MAIN BEACH CONNECTION	
	A	B	C	D	E	
RESTAURANTS						
Outdoor Dining			✓			Assigned seating (rented at market rate) and open seating
Overhead Cover		✓	✓	✓		Improved shade opportunities with reduced view impacts
Storage		✓	✓	✓		Should be concealed and placed to minimize public interruption
RETAIL						
Visibility	✓	✓	✓	✓		Maximize storefront visibility
Walkbys		✓	✓	✓		Encourage circulation toward retail frontage
Easy Access	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Minimize physical barriers
UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY						
Facilities for All Abilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrated throughout
ADA Parking / ADA Route	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Upgrade ADA parking and access
EMERGENCY SERVICES						
Access			✓	✓		Vehicle access from Glenneyre
Hydrants		✓	✓	✓		
Parking				✓		Identify nearby space
DELIVERY						
Access	✓		✓	✓		
Loading Zone				✓		
TRANSIT						
Trolley Stop				✓		Nearest at Main Beach and Laguna Avenue
Load-Unload Zone				✓		Maintain access from Glenneyre and Park Ave.
Parking	✓			✓		Identify opportunities for additional parking in nearby areas
SAFETY						
Access Control	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Well defined ingress and egress for visitors
Natural Surveillance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Designed and integrated throughout
Image Management/Maintenance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
MISC.						
Public Events		✓	✓	✓		Create multiple spaces within the project area
Flexible Space		✓	✓	✓		Include power and AV connections at multiple points
Sustainability		✓	✓	✓	✓	Incorporate throughout

PROMENADE ON FOREST

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Site Design Elements

PROMENADE ON FOREST PROGRAM ELEMENTS <i>Site Design Elements</i>		PROJECT SITE AREA					NOTES
		PASEO ACCESS	WEST ENTRANCE	CENTRAL PROMENADE	EAST ENTRANCE	MAIN BEACH CONNECTION	
		A	B	C	D	E	
PUBLIC & EVENT SPACE							
Outdoor Dining				✓			Maximum 500 s.f. for rented areas
Open Seating Areas			✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrate throughout with varying furniture heights
Event Space / Staging Areas			✓	✓			Approximately 400 s.f. formal performance area
Public Art (Static & Seasonal)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrate into design throughout
CIRCULATION & TRANSIT							
Walkways	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Enhanced Pavement
Ingress/Egress	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Accessibility For All Abilities	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrated throughout
First Responders	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Access at Glenneyre intersection
Maintenance Vehicle Access			✓	✓	✓	✓	Access at Glenneyre intersection
Trolley / Drop-off Area					✓	✓	Explore moving stop to Park Avenue
Bike Parking			✓		✓		Parking at each end of promenade
LIGHTING							
Walkways - Low Lighting	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrate throughout
Event Lighting			✓	✓	✓	✓	Outlets throughout
Overhead Lighting			✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrate throughout
Safety Lighting	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Accent Lighting			✓	✓	✓	✓	Landscape lighting
LANDSCAPE							
Canopy Trees			✓	✓	✓		Promote random/natural placement
Enhancements & Focal Points			✓	✓	✓		
Bio-retention			✓	✓	✓		Potential education points
Space Definition			✓	✓	✓		
Enhanced Hardscape	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrate w/ landscape throughout
UTILITY							
Electrical	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Upgrade throughout
Potable Water			✓	✓	✓	✓	Maintain existing drinking fountains
Storm Water	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Ensure system adequacy
Sewer			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Trash Storage & Pick-up			✓	✓	✓	✓	Enhanced receptacles (trash & recycle)
Communication/Low Voltage			✓	✓	✓		
SITE CHARACTER							
Essence	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Public gathering
Creative and Unique	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	High end, elegant, non-cookie cutter, local culture
Family or Visitor-centric	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Artistic / Eclectic	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Intimate	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Integrate throughout





PROMENADE ON FOREST

Outreach Plan

Summary:

The intent is to first have stakeholder meetings with business owners/managers, property owners, and city staff. The three public workshops will follow the stakeholder meetings. Public Workshop #1 will be an information gathering workshop with the community. Public Workshop #2 will be a review and evaluation of the two concepts. The results will be discussed with staff and shared with City Council for further direction. Public Workshop #3 will be the presentation of the preferred concept plans to the community. Following the final public workshop, the concepts will be finalized and presented to the City Council for further direction. Below is a detailed outline of the outreach approach for the project.

Plan Outline:

1. Contact Stakeholders for Meetings

- a. Work with City staff member Jeremy Frimond and Chamber of Commerce to make contact with Forest Avenue business owners.
- b. City will coordinate schedules for outreach meeting.
- c. Develop spreadsheet with names and contact information for each stakeholder.
- d. Update and maintain the contact list.

2. Stakeholder Meetings

- a. RRM set (Zoom) meetings to last 40 minutes each.
 - i. Stakeholders with like interests can be grouped, no more than four (4) different representatives in one meeting.
 - ii. Council member meetings will include CM, Shohreh Dupuis, and up to two (2) council members at a time.
 - iii. City staff stakeholders (i.e. Fire, Police, Community Development, Maintenance, other staff) will be in one (1) stakeholder meeting 60 to 90 minute long.

3. Program Plan

- a. City Council Presentation
 - i. City coordinate presentation to City Council
 - ii. RRM provide project overview and planning efforts ahead
 - iii. Collect input of current improvements (2020 closure to vehicle traffic to date)
 - iv. Discuss Program elements to develop concept plans

4. Outreach Materials – To be coordinated with Cassie Walder

- a. City webpage
- b. Social Media Notices announcing public workshops
- c. Flyer Announcing Public Workshop
- d. Posters at Promenade site

5. Public Workshop #1

Information gathering to identify visions and ideas for the promenade's two design options for minor and major improvements.

- a. Project overview – boundaries of the project (virtual walk-through)
 - i. On-site photos/video, aerial plan views, survey plan view
- b. Introduce the project
- c. Share stakeholder meeting key results
- d. What are the needs for public promenade?
 - i. Program Elements
- e. Visual collection of images of public pedestrian spaces
- f. Break-out Groups – break into groups to discuss ideas and inspiration (up to four groups). The groups will have same format to listen and discuss enhancement ideas
- g. Open Forum - Come back to main group and share ideas from the breakout groups
- h. Rank items and ideas for most important, share the results live.

6. Public Workshop #2

- a. Project overview – Discussion of previous input and direction
- b. Present each conceptual option
- c. Breakout groups to share comments on each plan option
 - i. What's missing from either
 - ii. What are the top prioritized elements?
 - iii. Top three things can't live without from each option
- d. Return to large group and present each groups response to preference and priorities

7. Open House Final Preliminary Plan

- a. Informal open house with plan and sketches of the preferred concept plans.
- b. Display exhibits for public to review independently
- c. RRM and City staff available for one-on-one discussions with public

8. City Council Presentation

- a. Present final concept plans to City Council.
- b. Obtain direction for which concept to proceed with for design development and entitlements.

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 7/30/2025 4:30 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

 3 attachments (13 MB)

Calif. Coastal Commission 7.30.25.docx; CCC Appeal 7.30.25-Presentation Board Photo A.jpg; CCC Appeal 7.30.25-Presentation Board Photo B.jpg;

Hi Janet,
Here's a public comment.

From: bryan menne <bryan@menne.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 4:27 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Cc: Bryan Menne <bryanmenne@gmail.com>; Patricia Menne <patmenne@gmail.com>; Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>; Merrill Anderson <merrill1137@yahoo.com>; CATHERINE JURCA <cathjurca@gmail.com>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dr. Janet Torres,

Thank you for your return call & time for reviewing my questions.

Please see my attached Letter to Calif. Coastal Commission and Evidence Presentation Photo Boards A & B which substantiate my Comments, displays a Resident Alternative Plan Concept which has wide support from the 905 Residents Against the Forest Ave. Closure /City Promenade Proposal- requesting this project be Stopped, to Preserve our Village Character Commercial Entry, Circulation of Lower Forest Ave. & its Parking Spaces for Retail viability.

Bryan T.S. Menne – Land Planner/ Landscape Architect #1826
949-246-6183

July 30, 2025

To: California Coastal Commission – South Coast District – Dr. Janet Torres

301 East Ocean Blvd. Long Beach, CA 90802-4830 Phone: 562-590-5071

From: Bryan T.S. Menne , 31988 10th Ave. Laguna Beach, Ca. 92651 Ph: 949-246-6183; as a 60-year resident and Qualified Expert Land Planner/ Calif. Registered Landscape Architect #1826.

Laguna Residents have been denied an Alternative Plan as required /California Law, (see CCC & CEQA –“Major Public Works Project”) & changes of this magnitude to Downtown Character, Circulation /Drainage Changes, further Loss of parking downtown & beach access are obvious reasons why Resident Approval – Voting is needed.

The City skirt’s Resident participation with “Slow Streets” Caltrans Exemption & No Alternative Plan which will be subject to certain CCC Appeal & Legal actions from Commercial Lot Owners, Retail Businesses, Resident Impacts of losing Access & Parking, Real Estate Value/Income from the City’s “Permanent Take” of their Land/ Lost Incomes of yearlong+- construction disruption previous /future bankruptcies.

- How many businesses will close increasing a few restaurants profits with this City Council’s Plan promotion since lockdown, while Residents haven’t had an Alternative Plan?
- The 180+- Parking Spaces lost Downtown were never disclosed to Businesses & Residents and “In Lieu Parking Space”- Fees paid by Businesses are Diverted, Fraud?
- City proposes No Replacement Parking -suggests taking 30 Library spaces “Robbing Peter(retailers & residents) to Pay Paul” (restaurants). (122 spaces - Village Entry in 2019, 48 Forest spaces, 10 parklet spaces - 2020 benefiting just 8 restaurants, while hurting access & parking for Residents /other Retail merchants).
- Replacement costs for 180 Parking spaces lost by City in the last 5 years = \$21.6 +-Million (\$120,000+- /parking structure space, built on City’s available land / between Tivoli II & City Employee Lot)
- The City keeps adding to the Traffic Congestion & Circling car problems downtown from the 7.4 million annual visitors, Day Trippers, Cruisers & Beachgoers.(“Visit Laguna”) that prohibits Resident’s use.
- Malibu Fires could further swell our Village’s invasion to 10 million?, even without need of the “Visit Laguna” 10-year Contract- \$500,000 annual campaigns = last 10 years getting us past saturation overload point.

An Alternative Now! to Reopen Forest Promenade this Summer to one-way ingress from PCH can preserve our Historic Village Commercial Gateway and the south-side 24 parking spaces saving struggling Retailers while retaining the 4 Restaurant’s Cafe Tables / north-side Promenade & will improve traffic circulation. The City would save \$5 million in future Pkg. Structure Costs & Design- essentially no costs for 1-week conversion = providing immediate relief to Retailers & Traffic Congestion. (while still allowing monthly Special Event bollard closures on future Brick Rd. Plaza.)

The City Alternative Plan should include upgrading Sidewalks & Curbs to Stone Paving & Herringbone Brick Pavers with One-Way travel lane, bike lane & parking into our Historic Village Gateway, protecting our City from Flood Liability, to restoring Resident’s Support & Confidence, or Require a citywide Resident Vote approval if no Plan consensus is reached.

Previously , On Sept.10, 2018- I wrote to CCC - Marlene Alvarado; Charles Possner & Jordan Sanchez- reported the City of Laguna Beach had misrepresented the Public Parking Loss of 114 Parking spaces from the City Village Entrance Project in 2018. I later Appealed the City Project DR #17-2506 & CDP #17-

2507 as the City sought to Amend their Permit with the CCC for an additional building & loss an additional 4 parking spaces. My 32-page CCC Appeal was submitted on 10/24/18 , for Non- Disclosure of actual Parking space Losses, Improper Public noticing & Misrepresentation of the Scale , Size of a Major Public Works Project/MND, Project Boundary incorrect, etc. with all the evidence & Standing for My previous Appeal. The City subsequently did not refute my Appeal case filed to CCC, but instead the City withdrew their CCC amendment application after my Appeal was under CCC review. I can only speculate that the City did not want to refute my evidence of deceitful representations from being exposed to its Residents/Public & thus I lost my standing & my CCC appeal was never heard.

Therefore, the Public was never informed that the **City had lost 118 actual /comparable Public Parking spaces with the Construction of the Village Entrance (VE) Project** as constructed in 2019(not the 10 Pkg. spaces reported to the Public by City). As a result, the City Residents & businesses & Public Beach access Parking has been compromised for the last 6 years without the required LB General Plan- Policy 6H & CCC previously stated directives that Public Parking space losses be replaced on a 1 for 1 Basis.

This has directly affected the Public's access for beaches & businesses as this Parking has never been restored to equivalent parking resource for those previous Public Parking Space losses. Since 2019 the City subsequently added 24 parking spaces to Caltrans/Laguna Cyn. Rd. R.O.W. that wasn't part of VE Project Boundary & 14 spaces at the former Transit Bus site-City Lot 15 = **a Cumulative Net loss of 80 Parking Spaces has existed for over 5 years.** Contrarily, the **City has yet Taken another 6 parking spaces in the last 5 years for Parklets/ Restaurant/dining use on Beach St., Ocean & Forest Ave. , and in the last 2 Months another Take of 4 more Parking spaces on Mermaid & Park Ave. for more Parklets/ Restaurant dining uses = losing 10 more Parking Spaces in the DSP Area.** Additionally, the City took **another loss = 10 more parking spaces have also been Bagged as Tow Away/ Unusable spaces** by a new 2025 Law per CVC restrictions within 20' of Intersection Corners. **So, my observations are the City is still currently dealing with a Cumulative and Unmitigated Loss of 100 available Vehicle Parking Spaces that was never replaced per City General Plan & CCC Parking replacement policy Mandates.** This can be substantiated by my 10/24/18 CCC Appeal Document (available upon request)

These Parking space losses can't be mitigated through Local Transit or Dial up City Taxi services- as CCC Staff Report just stated, as the impact is to the Day Trippers & Visitors who arrive from out of Town, **looking for those 100 existing Parking spaces removed by City that don't exist anymore,** and amplified with the ever-increasing Car Visitor totals that come from our City advertising with "Visit Laguna" marketing that now totals 7.4 million visitors annually.

These 2 City Projects removing existing Parking Resources and the current Proposed Street Closure of Lower Forest Ave./loss of an additional 48 Parking Spaces permanently are conflicting with the majority of recent Resident responses presented at the Special City Hearing on June 11, 2025. **"Friends of Forest Avenue"(FOFA) collected & presented 874 Resident hard Copy Jotform Petitions & their Comments which should be individually reviewed & responded to by CCC, as the City never even reviewed a single petition presented to the City Clerk for the Public Record & at the City Council & has provided no response to the 3:1 Resident Majority against the Forest Ave. Closure , including 119 Local Businesses who signed their petition.** Instead, the City approved this project 5-0. (These Petitions were Collected online in just 30 days before the City Meeting by the "Friends of Forest Ave.com" website- with Resident's Names on JotForm's with the date, their Comments, & emails, and in person by "FOFA" members/ Residents in just 30 days from the formation of these Resident's advocating for preservation

of Forest Ave., but allowing closures for special events , while requesting Denial/ Against this Promenade Street Closure Project responses & plus another 31 City letters/emails against with Comments- for a **Total of 905 Residents (66%) requesting a Stop to this Project at that Public Hearing ,** & Alternative Plan be prepared allowing for limited Event Closure & retention of at least ½- 24 parking Spaces. Proponents for the Forest Closure Project numbered 308 (34%) letters for it = **shows a current Residents 3:1 ratio Majority against Closure of Forest Ave. to preserve our Parking resources.**

Two new polls conducted by Local Newspaper-LB Independent also show Resident's rallying against It: **February 11, 2025** : Support = 10 votes, Against = 94 votes & June 6, 2025, **(90% Against = Majority)** **June 6, 2025** : Support = 61 votes, Against = 117 votes **(66% Against = Majority , a 3:1 Ratio against)**

The City has refused its Residents' repeated requests for a majority vote to decide if there is support for this project, so as to avoid the risk of losing the Pet Project of Councilmembers & a minority supporters' group for pro-Pedestrian Promenade/ anti-parking advocates.

The City for the last several years instead has dictated their Preferred Closure Plan Alternative/dialog to the Planning Commission and Residents attending Community Input meetings, while not allowing Alternative Plan Options to be introduced, discussed or proposed. The City Council only presented its chosen plan for Complete Closure of Forest Ave. (this is a direct violation of the CEQA & CCC Protocol of Project review & its purpose to protect Public Access Resources, Circulation & Parking resources with EIR Alternative Plan Option Alternatives & No Alternative for Study to minimize impacts, preserve Public Coastal Resources.)

Laguna Residents & Retail Businesses have realized that a better Alternative Plan should be prepared which Protects our Community Forest Ave. Entry to preserve our main Retail Business Community Entry, Village Character and vital adjacent Parking spaces for our Retail Business & beaches. The CCC Appeal is our last California mandated protection agency for the Public & Residents & should impartially judge who is being impacted here, not the City who no longer represents our Resident's concerns of limited Parking availability, inability to shop locally due to lost parking resources adjacent to local Retail Businesses, and traffic congestion in the downtown area. The congestion Residents & Public are exposed to daily is all due to limited Parking remaining & circling of cars looking for spaces in the Downtown/Beach close parking Spaces that are no longer a public resource- gone for City Councilmembers pet Projects. (**See Attached Photos- 2 -36"x48"** Evidence Boards presented to City Council by Bryan Menne- Public Record 6/11/25- Showing Alternative Concept, selected Letters and Retail Businesses / Business Cards opposed to Forest Ave. Closure, flooding risks)

Now, 7 years later the City of Laguna Beach, Councilmembers/City Manager are again proposing removal of another 48 Commercial/Public Parking Spaces permanently as City Council directed "Planning " of our City's future! This Project should be stopped and revised to get a net gain in Parking and work towards solving our Parking & Circulation shortfalls- not adding to our problems of Residents and restricting Public Access for Beach & Retail Commercial Uses.

The City now also disguises this Lower Forest Ave. Promenade Project as a "Slow Street" Closure based on a new April 2025 Cal-Trans Exemption- thereby circumventing Public Review & Comments via the EIR Process Review /Mitigation requirements, and further avoids Public Notification & Input of having to evaluate the true impacts on Circulation & 48 more parking space losses being imposed on the Residents

of Laguna & General Public , resulting in more restricted access to Public Beaches & Retail businesses in the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) area.

At a Minimum the CCC should Protect the Public Access Rights to existing Parking resources removed & not replaced by Granting the Appeal or by CCC Enforcement Action requirements- for the following actionable Items:

1. Replacement of full-size Public Parking spaces on a 1 for 1 Basis be required for all Cumulative Parking spaces with the Requirement for the City to prepare an Updated Cumulative Downtown Parking Impact analysis to verify Public Access Parking Space losses required.
2. Require City to Prepare a Traffic Circulation analysis to quantify the Downtown Congestion Impacts for the Previous 7 years, and from the losses for the additional 48 Parking spaces as proposed by City for the permanent lower Forest Ave. closure/Promenade Project.
3. The City's "Slow Streets" Caltrans Exemption closing Forest Ave. should not have precedence over a CEQA & California Coastal Commission (CCC) resource of Public Parking resource adjacent to Main Beach Park. The City is using this exemption to avoid Public Disclosure and review by the CCC and avoid normal protocol of evaluation for an EIR or MND process of review.
4. The City has not provided Proof of Service to Public & Notice to all Property Owners of each Business Lot owner for the Take of their Legal Property Street access (per the New Cal trans-Slow Streets' that City has invoked as authorization to close Lower Forest as required/outlined by that exemption). This is a Take- City mechanism of Lot Owners Rights as guaranteed by their Title Reports for their Legal Access/Parking entitlement being taken without compensation, and losing their ability to service their properties for Commercial use as entitled and guaranteed by their original purchase Title Policies.
5. The City should not be allowed to avoid Standard Public Requirements /CEQA review when proposing a new Major Public Works Project & depleting a Public Resource of existing Public Parking access that's covered by the LB LCP. (Non-compliance with COASTAL Commission, Calif. Coastal Act Sec. 30600 (c), LCP [EG. "TAKING of parking abolishes Visitor resource " , and..." removal of PARKING violates good faith to encourage Visitor and local spending at established licensed business", This Forest Ave. Closure/Promenade. This project appears to Resident's as exactly that-losing Public Parking Access with this hidden downsizing in Parking Resources.
6. The City failed to disclose the removal of 3 of the 4 existing Handicapped spaces covered by the ADA Requirements and their proximity to the FOA/Arts/Events uses for Village Entrance Project. in 2018 (City Lot 11, unreported to the Public & California Coastal Commission) This Forest Ave. Closure also has 2 more Handicapped space losses being undisclosed.
7. The City has provided No Budget, No Cost Estimate for the Residents to evaluate or Comment on the Financial Impacts & Implications of the Forest Ave street Closure/Promenade.
8. The City has no plan or response for facts presented- that 89% of past Street Closure/Promenades have failed, or been returned to their original street configuration.(i.e.- Santa Monica, Santa Barbara, Denver, Pasadena, Burbank, Pacific City, Solvang, etc.)
9. The City has no plan for compensation to businesses that fail, potential bankruptcies , litigation that arises for losses incurred by existing & previous closed business caused by Forest Closure for last 5 years & future Business closures/ loss of income for duration of the Construction work.
10. The City has only provided for a 25-year Hydrology study in planning this street Closure Project , while Forest Ave. has experienced 3 - 100-Year flood events and damage to these Commercial

properties in the last 55 years. This compromises public safety and increases flood risks & maintenance Liability to the Residents & increased risk exposure to Taxpayers of Laguna Beach.

11. Keeping the street section as is won't expose Taxpayers to flooding liability, whereas any new drainage/ level plaza solution proposed will expose the City & its residents to any future flooding Liability for damages for altering the existing drainage pattern & capacities of flood waters.
12. The City cannot allocate 30 parking spaces as suggested are available at the adjacent Library site, as each project has a required Parking requirement that are necessary for its operation/ approved with that use. To suggest using those parking spaces is deceptive and robs the Library to justify the Promenade Project, while offering no Parking use during Library business hours which are same as most Retail Businesses who would lose parking directly in front of their stores = convenient parking/directly adjacent to storefronts is crucial to retail businesses.
13. The City should also be required to review the total Car Parking spaces committed to the existing "In Lieu" Parking = City Parking Space Requirement Fee Program for those Businesses which have been required to Contribute these Fees for access to the existing Pool of Parking Spaces in DSP Area. That core Parking Count has been depleted or are potentially defrauding those Businesses of their available "purchased access-parking spaces 'Rights' they paid to use for their Businesses (City Street Parking Resource sold to businesses as CUP conditional permitting alternative Parking pool for any business that doesn't have parking or meet its required spaces). The 2019 Village Entrance Project created Parking losses from City Lots 11 & 12 were greatly affected-serving as the Central Parking for all Laguna Playhouse, Art A Fair, Tivoli Too events and weddings, Sawdust Festival, Downtown Businesses, Overflow Beach Parking. These uses never recovered the directly adjacent spaces at all, as we all know these uses are under-parked, and near impossible to find a space here in Summer Peak use time.
14. The California Coastal Commission should respond to the 874 Resident/Business petitions and pertinent comments to appeal, as forwarded by Patricia Menne in a separate letter/ submission.

The City references below illustrate examples of the pattern of deception presented to Residents and Public Agencies by the City, that are supposed to be protected by the Laguna Beach General Plan/LCP, Safety Element and California Law- CEQA, & CCC policies for Project Developments.

See Pages-121 (Paragraph 3-6 of the Mit. Neg. Dec.-Policy 6H- City General Plan-"(Central Business District), preserve all existing parking by assuring replacement on a one-for-one basis."

See pages 144-145(4.16 "Transportation/Traffic-a. Cause an increase in Traffic" . It's logical assumption it would greatly increase circling vehicles looking for open Parking spaces for the 100 cumulative parking space losses from the last 2 City Projects. This constitutes a Significant Impact- per CEQA that should be evaluated by CCC by this Appeal or through an Enforcement Action Case that should be initiated.

I look forward to the review by the California Coastal Commission review & an enforcement investigation of the Cumulative losses of the 100 Parking Spaces & Public accessibility from the City's 2 projects in the last 7 years in the Downtown areas.

Bryan T.S. Menne

Land Planner/ California Registered Landscape Architect #1826, 60-year Resident of Laguna Beach

FriendsOfForestAve.com

Supporting Residents & Retail Businesses

Surf/Hip District

Open Forest Now!

Supporting Businesses:

- Open 1-Lane Forest Gateway Entry Now!
- Convert 5 Parklets - 40 free Resident Golf Carts (last 10 spaces re-stripped as 40 free parking spaces)
- Open Forest so. side - 24 Plg. Spaces Now! (Restore south Forest Parking Spaces revenue)
- Open Forest's lost Downtown Circulation Now! for public safety & emergency vehicle access!
- 12' wide Stone Promenade Sidewalks - both sides!
- Added 12' Pedestrian Promenade @ Cafe fronts
- Red Brick Forest Ave. - PCH to Lag. Cyn. Rd.
- N. sidewalk Euro-style Cafe Table & Chair Dining
- Preserve Existing Forest Avenue's Character & Trees
- No Hydrology report & No Circulation studies needed!
- 1- Month Construction in OFF - Season, NO Closure!
- Concerts & Entertainment events (Monthly St. Closures with bollards & Entertainment)
- Future Forest - Herringbone Brick Lane parking spaces in Permeable Brick Rd. / Stone Paving upgrade Stone Sidewalks to Market / F.O.A.
- Keep St. Section Drainage - No added City Flood Liability

FriendsOfForestAve.com

Resident Alternative Plan Concepts:

Alt. Plan Legend

- Business Supporters
- Vacant / Closed Business
- 12' Stone Promenade, 12' wide
- Permeable Brick Pavers (12' wide Concrete / 12' wide)
- Permeable Brick Pavers

FOREST AVE 12/12/10
100 YR. FLOOD DEBRIS CLEANUP STORES DAMAGED

100 YR. FLOODS - 1967, 1971, 2010

FLOODING ON FOREST 12/12/10
BARRIERS DAMAGED

theINDYPoll

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:
Do you like the direction in which the city is going regarding the downtown promenade project?
Yes (9.7% (10 votes))
No (90.3% (94 votes))

theINDYPoll

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:
As the Promenade project moves to City Council on June 11, do you support making it permanent?
Yes (24.0% (27 votes))
No (76.0% (87 votes))

FriendsOfForestAve.com

Supporting Residents & Retail Businesses

N.C. Hwy.

Forest Ave.

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FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Fri 8/8/2025 3:35 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Anne Caenn <anne@lagunaemail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 3:30 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

August 8, 2025

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a-
Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners,

I've had the good fortune to have lived in Laguna Beach for almost 30 years. Part of what makes it a wonderful town is we have our own "Main Street" called Forest Avenue. It gives residents and visitors alike a wonderful place to park, shop and then cross the highway and sit on a bench to view the ocean at Main Beach.

Over time I have gotten to know some of the small business owners on our historical, tree-lined avenue. They have created a sense of history and continuity that helps elevate the shopping experience. A number of them have stated that they have been trying to hang on through the pandemic and what they believed was a temporary closure of Forest Avenue. Now, with the prospect of it becoming a permanent closure, it is difficult to imagine how anything but restaurants will be able to exist, thus creating a food court.

I am sure you are aware that other promenades in Southern California have now succumbed to allowing people to carry alcohol in order to try to promote the declining public interests. Our City Council has talked about allowing alcohol as well, and as much as I enjoy a glass of wine, I don't see how walking around with drinks will benefit our community.

Please find a substantial issue with a permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue and allow a de nova hearing on this project.

Thank you for your consideration,
Anne Caenn

965 Katella Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 Forest Avenue closure, City of Laguna Beach
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:08:18 AM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-3.png](#)
[APPEAL A-5-LGB-25-0018 Coastal Commission--promenade 2.pdf](#)

From: ann@ac-la.com <ann@ac-la.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 6:30 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 Forest Avenue closure, City of Laguna Beach

ANN
CHRISTOPH
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT • ASLA
California State License 1439
Fellow, American Society of Landscape Architects

31713 COAST HIGHWAY • SOUTH LAGUNA • CA 92651
TEL (949) 499 1574 FAX (949) 499 1604

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 11:28:27 AM
Attachments: [A-5_LGB-25-0018_SupportDeNovoHearing.pdf](#)
[DSP_2022_Topic4Policies.pdf](#)
[IBI_2017_parkingstudy.pdf](#)
[DKS_2022_parkingstudy.pdf](#)

From: Catherine Jurca <cathjurca@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 11:12 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please accept the attached comment in support of a Substantial Issue with the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue and granting of a De Novo hearing. Attachments include relevant pages from the certified Local Coastal Program (Downtown Specific Plan), the DSK parking study (2022), and the IBI parking study (2017).

Staff and the Commission cannot understand the LCP compliance issue without these documents.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Catherine Jurca

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 4:22:21 PM

From: bmanalis@cox.net <bmanalis@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 4:17 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To: The California Costal Commission

I am a 46 year resident and want you to consider that first and foremost, this is a very small town where residents live and people work and, only secondly, a tourist attraction.

This beloved small quaint town has very few streets and way too many visitors with cars to lose one of the very few streets in the heart of the town and the parking spaces that are essential for getting a round.

To lose the lower portion of Forest avenue to automobile traffic is especially a hardship for residents being able to go inland to our homes from the Coast Highway; not to mention how hard it is to find parking to do business in town. The loss of these precious parking places hurts business who aren't restaurants or bars who prosper at the expense of other business *and* the needs of real town services necessary to meet the needs of it's residents. There is a whole coastline of beaches where people can congregate and do, plus parks throughout the City, and festivals and all sorts of venues and activities for people to enjoy, as well as vast portions of open spaces, The Irvine Bowl and Festival of the Art.

We can't afford to lose half of our one main street to a food court. Where is the balance?

Please find a Substantial Issue in support of the Village Laguna appeal to the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach for a full hearing.

Thank you,

Barbara Manalis

31618 Jewel Avenue
Laguna Beach, CA

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a-Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 2:40:26 PM

From: bobndennis <bobndennis@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 1:59 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a-Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Robert Gentry, I am a former Mayor and City Council Member of Laguna Beach, California. I am writing to urge you to find a substantial issue to grant a full and proper hearing regarding the closure of lower Forest Avenue to vehicular traffic, and making it into a pedestrian promenade. This issue is vital to the cultural history, charm, and definition of our historic sea side village. Lower Forest Ave is the heart beat of our downtown commercial center. It deserves the full participation of our community before making a policy decision to change its function forever! This issue has been discussed over the years, and NO policy documents have been altered to eliminate the parking, and subsequent use, of lower Forest Avenue. Eliminating 47 parking stalls is a very big change to such a small, visitor oriented, village. Those stalls are extremely important to Laguna Beach residents, to access businesses and services, in the hours before our beach going daytime visitors descend into town to access the beautiful beach front. Changing lower Forest Avenue into a pedestrian promenade will alter the function and the character of downtown Laguna Beach. There will be strong pressure to change the commercial activity along Forest Avenue to primarily visitor serving establishments. Our residents will suffer. Laguna Beach does not need a pedestrian strip mall in the heart of its historic village! Please find that there is a substantial issue to grant a full and proper hearing on this proposal. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Robert F. Gentry, former Mayor and City Council Member
City of Laguna Beach, California
(bobndennis@aol.com)

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 1:27:30 PM

From: Joy Berry <Joy@joyberry.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 11:04 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please excuse my comments for a minor change – the loss of parking is 48 spaces not 45 – even worse than thought.
48 lost spaces when we have so very few parking available for Main Beach is SUBSTANTIAL

Also see below I inserted my address.

From: Joy Berry
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:01 AM
To: 'SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov' <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please see attached or below comments to this item:

Date: August 7, 2025
To: California Coastal Commission Staff
From: Joy Berry, 30 year resident of Laguna Beach, 22361 3rd Avenue, Laguna Beach, 92651

Subject: Rebuttal to Staff Report Finding of “No Substantial Issue” for Appeal No. A-5-LGB-23-0056 (Laguna Beach Forest Avenue Promenade)

I am writing in response to your Staff Report's conclusion that the appeal concerning the City of Laguna Beach's Forest Avenue Promenade project raises no substantial issue. The report's finding of "no substantial issue" is based on a narrow interpretation of both the project's impacts and the requirements of the City's certified Local Coastal Program (LCP).

The Loss of Parking is Substantial and Violates the LCP

The Staff Report dismisses the loss of 48 parking spaces as not substantial, relying on the City's claim of "sufficient mitigation" and the availability of a trolley system. This conclusion ignores key facts and misinterprets the very policy it cites.

- **The LCP's 85% Occupancy Threshold is a Hard Number, Not a Suggestion.** The Staff Report claims that a "robust package" of parking alternatives is sufficient mitigation for the loss of parking. This directly contradicts the plain language of Topic 4, Policy 9 of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). The DSP explicitly allows for the temporary re-use of public parking spaces *only if an 85% target occupancy level is not exceeded*. As our initial appeal demonstrated, the City's own off-season study showed this threshold was already exceeded. To argue that other measures negate this specific, data-driven metric is to render the policy meaningless and sets a dangerous precedent.
- **Nighttime "Replacements" are Irrelevant for Peak Use.** The Staff Report's claim that the loss of parking is not substantial because 30 spaces are replaced at night is a critical oversight. The vast majority of visitors who drive to Laguna Beach and use these spaces—beachgoers, daytime shoppers, and diners—do so during the day. The loss of **48 spaces during peak hours is a significant detriment to coastal access** and local businesses. The availability of replacement spaces at night, when demand is lower, does not mitigate the daytime deficit.
- **The Trolley is Not a Viable or Comprehensive Alternative.** While the trolley system is a valuable resource, it does not fully mitigate the loss of these specific parking spaces. The trolley runs on Coast Highway, which does not directly serve the local streets where the 48 spaces were lost. Visitors coming to the downtown area and legacy businesses on these streets are left without a direct, convenient alternative. The trolley system is an important part of the LCP, but it is not a cure-all for the removal of a significant number of parking spaces in a dense, heavily visited downtown.

The Safety Element is a Substantial Issue and an LCP Requirement

The Staff Report's claim that the project's failure to conform to the General Plan's Safety Element is "not an appealable contention" is based on a fundamental misreading of the LCP. This finding ignores a clear and specific requirement within the LCP itself.

- **Zoning Code 25.05.040(H)(5) is Part of the LCP.** The Staff Report erroneously separates the General Plan from the LCP. However, Laguna Beach's own Zoning Code, which is part of the certified LCP, explicitly states that projects subject to design review "shall comply with all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements." This language is unequivocal. By failing to review the project against the Safety Element, especially for a project located within a FEMA-mapped floodway, the City acted in direct

violation of its own LCP.

- **The Flood Risk is Substantial.** The project proposes to alter street and drainage infrastructure in a high-risk flood zone. The City's belated hydrology report only modeled a 25-year storm, a measure that is woefully inadequate for a 100-year flood zone. The Staff Report's indifference to this issue is perplexing and dangerously shortsighted. This is not a minor technicality; it is a substantial public safety concern that the City failed to address, and it is a directly appealable matter under the LCP's own terms. The precedential value of ignoring this provision for a project in a high-risk area is significant for all future coastal development in Laguna Beach.

Conclusion

The Staff Report's finding of no substantial issue is based on an analysis that glosses over critical inconsistencies with the LCP. By ignoring the explicit 85% occupancy threshold, misinterpreting the parking substitution at night only, the role of the trolley, and failing to acknowledge the LCP's requirement for conformity with the General Plan's Safety Element, the report downplays what are in fact substantial and appealable issues.

We urge the Commission to find that a substantial issue exists and to accept this appeal. The City's decision has significant negative impacts on coastal access, public safety, and the precedent for future interpretations of the LCP.

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres.Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:08:54 AM
Attachments: [CC Appeal Promenade.pdf](#)

From: Joy Berry <Joy@joyberry.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:01 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please see attached or below comments to this item:

Date: August 7, 2025
To: California Coastal Commission Staff
From: Joy Berry, 30 year resident of Laguna Beach

Subject: Rebuttal to Staff Report Finding of "No Substantial Issue" for Appeal No. A-5-LGB-23-0056 (Laguna Beach Forest Avenue Promenade)

I am writing in response to your Staff Report's conclusion that the appeal concerning the City of Laguna Beach's Forest Avenue Promenade project raises no substantial issue. The report's finding of "no substantial issue" is based on a narrow interpretation of both the project's impacts and the requirements of the City's certified Local Coastal Program (LCP).

The Loss of Parking is Substantial and Violates the LCP

The Staff Report dismisses the loss of 45 parking spaces as not substantial, relying on the City's claim of "sufficient mitigation" and the availability of a trolley system. This conclusion ignores key facts and misinterprets the very policy it cites.

- **The LCP's 85% Occupancy Threshold is a Hard Number, Not a Suggestion.** The Staff Report claims that a "robust package" of parking alternatives is sufficient mitigation for the loss of parking. This directly contradicts the plain language of Topic 4, Policy 9 of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). The DSP explicitly allows for the temporary re-use of public parking spaces *only if an 85% target occupancy level is not exceeded*. As our initial appeal demonstrated, the City's own off-season study showed this threshold was already exceeded. To argue that other measures negate this specific, data-driven metric is to render the policy meaningless and sets a dangerous precedent.

- **Nighttime "Replacements" are Irrelevant for Peak Use.** The Staff Report's claim that the loss of parking is not substantial because 30 spaces are replaced at night is a critical oversight. The vast majority of visitors who drive to Laguna Beach and use these spaces—beachgoers, daytime shoppers, and diners—do so during the day. The loss of **45 spaces during peak hours is a significant detriment to coastal access** and local businesses. The availability of replacement spaces at night, when demand is lower, does not mitigate the daytime deficit.
- **The Trolley is Not a Viable or Comprehensive Alternative.** While the trolley system is a valuable resource, it does not fully mitigate the loss of these specific parking spaces. The trolley runs on Coast Highway, which does not directly serve the local streets where the 45 spaces were lost. Visitors coming to the downtown area and legacy businesses on these streets are left without a direct, convenient alternative. The trolley system is an important part of the LCP, but it is not a cure-all for the removal of a significant number of parking spaces in a dense, heavily visited downtown.

The Safety Element is a Substantial Issue and an LCP Requirement

The Staff Report's claim that the project's failure to conform to the General Plan's Safety Element is "not an appealable contention" is based on a fundamental misreading of the LCP. This finding ignores a clear and specific requirement within the LCP itself.

- **Zoning Code 25.05.040(H)(5) is Part of the LCP.** The Staff Report erroneously separates the General Plan from the LCP. However, Laguna Beach's own Zoning Code, which is part of the certified LCP, explicitly states that projects subject to design review "shall comply with all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements." This language is unequivocal. By failing to review the project against the Safety Element, especially for a project located within a FEMA-mapped floodway, the City acted in direct violation of its own LCP.
- **The Flood Risk is Substantial.** The project proposes to alter street and drainage infrastructure in a high-risk flood zone. The City's belated hydrology report only modeled a 25-year storm, a measure that is woefully inadequate for a 100-year flood zone. The Staff Report's indifference to this issue is perplexing and dangerously shortsighted. This is not a minor technicality; it is a substantial public safety concern that the City failed to address, and it is a directly appealable matter under the LCP's own terms. The precedential value of ignoring this provision for a project in a high-risk area is significant for all future coastal development in Laguna Beach.

Conclusion

The Staff Report's finding of no substantial issue is based on an analysis that glosses over

critical inconsistencies with the LCP. By ignoring the explicit 85% occupancy threshold, misinterpreting the parking substitution at night only, the role of the trolley, and failing to acknowledge the LCP's requirement for conformity with the General Plan's Safety Element, the report downplays what are in fact substantial and appealable issues.

We urge the Commission to find that a substantial issue exists and to accept this appeal. The City's decision has significant negative impacts on coastal access, public safety, and the precedent for future interpretations of the LCP.

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:08:43 AM

From: John Morreale <jmorreale900@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 7:51 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

As a business owner and 30+ year resident of Laguna Beach I find substantial issues with the proposed promenade in Laguna Beach. We already have seen substantial decaying of our beaches. More trash, drunk people leaving the trash on the beach and in the streets, only to wash into the ocean. A loss of more parking will also frustrate both citizens and visitors alike. This summer has been ridiculous. I've seen fights, literally over parking spots. The residence ,who respect our coastal environment, are starting to stay away only to be replaced by out of towners who have no such respect for our city, it's beaches, or ocean environment. If you truly care about the health of our city beaches, please, I implore you to grant us a hearing to address this critical issue.

Thank you,

With respect,

John Morreale

714-469-2787

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:08:21 AM

From: Roxane Cohen Silver <rsilver@uci.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:41 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

I am a 33-year resident of Laguna Beach and own two homes in the city. I am writing in the strongest possible terms to request that you find a substantial issue with the appeal of the decision to permanently close Forest Avenue in favor of the Promenade project.

I strongly object the permanent closure of Forest Avenue on behalf of a small number of businesses to the extreme detriment of the community. There are numerous empty storefronts on streets surrounding Forest Avenue that will not benefit in any way from this project, as the last two years have made clear. Indeed, the loss of parking spaces that have occurred from the temporary closure of the street have only made the situation worse. I fear it will be a permanent disaster for the small businesses in our beautiful city.

I request that you grant a full and proper hearing of the appeal, which is supported by hundreds of residents who wrote to the City of Laguna Beach protesting this decision (including my husband and me).

Sincerely,

Roxane Cohen, Ph.D.
31623 Coast Highway
Laguna Beach, California 92651

Rsilver@uci.edu

713-404-9414

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:03:08 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Frank Fassero <fefassero@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 5:30 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Honorable Coastal Commissioners,

I am writing to urge you to find that a “Substantial Issue” exists with regard to the appeal of the City of Laguna Beach’s approval of the Promenade on Forest project, and to respectfully request that you grant the public a full and proper hearing.

As a resident of Laguna Beach, I am deeply concerned about the long-term impacts this project will have on our community. The Promenade will significantly alter the character of downtown Laguna Beach, a place that holds historic, cultural, and economic importance to many of us.

From my perspective, the project raises numerous concerns that merit a full review:

- * Community Input: Many locals feel their voices have not been adequately heard. This project was fast-tracked without a comprehensive, transparent process that truly considers public input and long-term implications.
- * Economic Impact: While some businesses may benefit in the short term, others especially those not directly adjacent to the Promenade may suffer from reduced access, visibility, and parking. As a resident, I am concerned that the project may redirect foot traffic and create unfair advantages.
- * Environmental and Coastal Access Concerns: Laguna Beach is a coastal community, and permanent changes to public access areas deserve careful, thoughtful review. The Promenade could limit traditional coastal access, change traffic flow, and worsen congestion.
- * Permanent Changes Without Full Coastal Review: A temporary pandemic measure is now being made permanent without adequate environmental review under the Coastal Act. That is a precedent that should not be taken lightly.

The Coastal Commission’s role is critical in ensuring that development projects align with the values of public access, environmental stewardship, and fairness. I urge you to uphold that role and grant a proper hearing on this matter.

Respectfully,

Frank Fassero
1401 Lavender Ln
Laguna Beach, CA 92625

Frank Fassero
314.223.3036
fefassero@gmail.com <<mailto:fefassero@gmail.com>>

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: [Torres, Janet@Coastal](mailto:Torres_Janet@Coastal)
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 4:55:13 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

From: Stephen Pappin <pappy92651@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 4:48 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

As a resident I'm concerned about the direction that the City of Laguna Beach is being forced to move in. It seems that that the 22,000 residents of my town are being disregarded in favor of turning Laguna Beach into an out of control amusement park. Even worse most of the people who come to our town don't buy anything or pay for anything. No other city on the coast operates this way. So continuing to remove more paid parking spaces in favor of a courtyard where bad things will happen makes no sense at all. This invites more people to hang out, litter, drink, get high, pee, and defecate. So then the police have to allocate even more resources. Our tourist density keeps increasing until we are packed into downtown like sardines. Businesses that would have benefitted from people driving in will have large groups sitting around in a courtyard taking up space and buying nothing. It's counterintuitive. We are moving in the wrong direction. I can't use my downtown anymore. It's just going to keep getting worse until this type of uncontrolled expansion forces the closure of city lands in the same way that Rancho Palos Verdes operates, Marine Sanctuaries or Sanctioned Properties where no one can go! It's happened before. Look at Emerald Bay and Corona Del Mar where you can't go anywhere unless you pay. Crystal Cove, you have to pay to get in. Catalina, tourists are corralled downtown, and residents have passes. There are residents here who are in favor of privatizing and gating our roads. You think it can't happen? Watch, it's coming! Unlike much of LA we actually own most of the land In Laguna Beach. Even though public access has to be granted, the landowners can make it almost impossible for areas to be used.

There are three more private beaches in Laguna Beach, Orange County with no public access (Three Arch Bay, Emerald Bay, Irvine Cove). The property owners have and will start making it more difficult for people to come to Laguna Beach if things don't change to protect them. Again, we are moving in the wrong direction:



POLICE DEPARTMENT ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

Year-to-Date Comparisons	2025	2024	RAW	%Change
Calls for Service	29,165	24,819	+4,346	+17.5%
Parking	13,064	10,912	+2,152	+19.7%
Speeding	1,022	642	+380	59.2%
Loud Exhaust	168	44	+124	+281.8%
All Arrests	491	468	+23	+4.9%
Driving Under the Influence	139	138	+11	+8.6%
Dogs Off Leash	142	156	-14	-9.0%
Drinking/Smoking in Public	699	331	+368	+111.2%

We are asking the CCC to find a “Substantial Issue” for our appeal and to grant us a full and proper hearing.

Stephen Pappin

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Pappin".

219 La Brea St B
Laguna Beach CA 92651
Phone: (442) 232-1794

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 3:01:58 PM

From: Tracy Ahearn <tracyahe@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:59 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commssioners and Staff:

I ask that you please don't reject our appeal without a full hearing. This is a very important matter for residents of Laguna Beach and it would be respectful to listen to us.

Our appeal argues that the project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it

- 1) reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan,
- 2) does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element, and
- 3) impacts coastal community character.

I want Forest Avenue opened and restored to its original concept with parking spaces and open sidewalks that benefit all business owners. An open street is safer because emergency vehicles have quick access. This is very important for our safety especially regarding fires.

Please find a "Substantial Issue" with the appeal and to grant us a full and proper hearing.

Thank you for your consideration. I appreciate it.

Much love,
Patricia Ahearn

731 Cliff Drive
Laguna Beach, Ca 92651
Tel: 949-684-0055

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:32:22 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Rosalind Russell <rstar@pacbell.net>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:31 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To Whom It Does Concern:

These, I feel, are substantial reasons to stop the Promenade proposal by Laguna Beach. Thanks for your consideration.

- * I won't and don't shop on Forest anymore because of the eliminated parking
- * It is unfair to other non-related to restaurant businesses to end the parking by allowing the "parklets"
- * Visitors are discouraged because of the thoughtless elimination of parking spots close to all the Forest Avenue businesses, including restaurants
- * Coast Highway is impacted by no left turn onto Forest Avenue
- * The City can create another venue for a walking park to produce future events, rather than impacting businesses
- * The proposal is not fair to the majority

Rosalind Russell
350 Forest Ave., #4183
Laguna Beach, CA
RStar@Pacbell.net
949 497 4911

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 3:35:52 PM

From: Anne Caenn <anne@lagunaemail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 3:30 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

August 8, 2025

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a-
Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners,

I've had the good fortune to have lived in Laguna Beach for almost 30 years. Part of what makes it a wonderful town is we have our own "Main Street" called Forest Avenue. It gives residents and visitors alike a wonderful place to park, shop and then cross the highway and sit on a bench to view the ocean at Main Beach.

Over time I have gotten to know some of the small business owners on our historical, tree-lined avenue. They have created a sense of history and continuity that helps elevate the shopping experience. A number of them have stated that they have been trying to hang on through the pandemic and what they believed was a temporary closure of Forest Avenue. Now, with the prospect of it becoming a permanent closure, it is difficult to imagine how anything but restaurants will be able to exist, thus creating a food court.

I am sure you are aware that other promenades in Southern California have now succumbed to allowing people to carry alcohol in order to try to promote the declining public interests. Our City Council has talked about allowing alcohol as well, and as much as I enjoy a glass of wine, I don't see how walking around with drinks will benefit our community.

Please find a substantial issue with a permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue and allow a de nova hearing on this project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Anne Caenn

965 Katella Street

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:25:04 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Kathy <myblissdesigns@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:05 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please note the project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it does the following:

It reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan, The current parking situation is out of control. This Summer has been unbearable for residents. It's hard to park and hard to drive in town. It also pushes tourists to park in front of residents houses and leave their trash on the streets. People are fighting over parking spaces and driving crazy too.

It does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element. We prefer the hybrid option that the council did not consider even with 837 signatures. It's hard for residents to even go into town to shop or eat. The businesses are not happy about this either. This is also a flood zone so how is this safe?

It will ruin the historic look of the city. It also greatly impacts the coast! More people, trash everywhere, even in the ocean.

Thank you the Tanaka Family

Please appeal this!

Sent from my iPhone

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 12:11:16 PM
Importance: High

From: Diane Mello <dianelmello@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 11:12 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Cc: contact@friendsofforestavenue.com
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Importance: High

Dear California Coastal Commission Staff,

I am referring to and strictly oppose the “Permanent Closure of lower Forest Avenue for the Promenade Project”. Closing off these streets permanently impacts the safety of our community. How much more evidence does a committee need to have as proof of a poor choice that will impact the local residents (and tourists) for a long time to come. We need parking spaces not blocked off roads.

I understand Laguna Beach would like to draw in customers to buy their goods and to eat at local restaurants... however —the wake up call is very loud and very concerning to close Forest Avenue off permanently. I kindly offer you some examples that I have personally lived through:

I have lived in Laguna Beach since 1993...I survived the October 27th, 1993 wild fire that traumatized our community. 3 years ago, 2022 the Emerald Fire in Laguna Beach caused our evacuation once again in Laguna Beach. Please see attached URL --I am interviewed and quoted. Recently, this past July, due to a juvenile (13 year old) the “Rancho Fire” caused evacuation.



[Emerald fire in Laguna Beach area contained at 20% as officials warn. 'Stay vigilant' ocregister.com](#)

WE NEED OUR STREETS OPEN—We need flow of traffic. Having Forest Avenue closed permanently is a negligent choice in my opinion. Also, the project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it 1) reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan, 2) does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element, and 3) impacts coastal community character.

Kind regards,

Diane Mello
2506 Altamar Dr.
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

+1 949-280-7610

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 12:10:20 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Eunnie Hur <eunnie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 11:02 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear California Coastal Commission Staff,

Thank you for your continued service and for your consideration of public input on matters that significantly impact our communities.

I am writing to express my strong support for the appeal regarding the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach for the Promenade project. I respectfully urge the Commission to find that a Substantial Issue exists and to allow a full public hearing on this matter.

The current proposal, as it stands, raises significant concerns that merit further scrutiny:

1. It appears to reduce parking availability below the minimum 85% occupancy threshold outlined in Laguna Beach's certified Downtown Specific Plan.
2. It is inconsistent with several elements of the City's certified Local Coastal Program, including the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element.
3. It threatens to alter the coastal community character in ways that are not fully understood or publicly discussed.

As someone who lives in Laguna Beach, frequents the beach, and relies on equitable access to public spaces, I'm concerned about the long-term impacts of permanently closing a key public street without a thorough public review process. Parking and access are already a challenge for residents and visitors alike. Removing parking spaces and limiting vehicular access without robust planning and input will further strain the community and disproportionately impact those who rely on inclusive and accessible downtown infrastructure.

A full hearing is necessary to ensure transparency, accountability, and a true reflection of the diverse voices of Laguna Beach. I respectfully request that the Commission reject staff's recommendation to deny the appeal without a hearing and instead grant the public an opportunity to be fully heard.

Eunnie Hur
3044 Bern Drive
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
eunnie@gmail.com <<mailto:eunnie@gmail.com>>

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:35:48 AM

From: meg monahan <monahan.shops@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:22 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

August 6, 2025

To: California Coastal Commission

RE: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Honorable Commissioners,

I am a 40 year resident of Laguna Beach, a coastal town that's had a consistent population of around 22,000 to 23,000 over those years. During my residency, Laguna Beach has morphed from a small coastal town that was a summer vacation destination into a year-around destination for well over 6 million visitors. The overwhelming number of visitors has only increased the need for parking in our community while our city council continues to convert needed parking into restaurant and pedestrian spaces. The restaurant use of parking spaces both decreases the amount of available parking while greatly increasing the need for it.

The proposed Forest Avenue promenade further complicates the parking issue by pushing visitor parking into our residential neighborhoods because there's no available parking downtown. Visitors drive around searching for parking in our residential neighborhoods which impacts our peace, safety, security, and privacy. It also increases noise especially when visitors return to their vehicles – often talking loudly, laughing, and sometimes with drunken behavior.

We are quickly losing our safe and peaceful town while becoming another Downtown Disney – a fake, manufactured representation of a beautiful, historic coastal town.

In addition to the impact to the residents of Laguna Beach, the proposal does not meet the city's General Plan policies, nor does it meet the city's Downtown Specific Plan policies.

Please grant a full, proper hearing on the matter. It is a very serious issue for those

of us who live here and suffer from the impacts.

Thank you for your consideration,

Meg Monahan
345 Flora Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 9:18:10 AM

From: Michele Monda <michelemonda3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 9:14 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to ask that you find a "Substantial Issue" with the appeal as currently requested by Laguna Beach city staff. I ask that you grant us a full and proper hearing on an issue as town-transforming as permanent closure of our main street, Forest Avenue.

This permanent closure not only reduces the number of parking spots in the downtown but it also makes it impossible for elderly clients to shop in the local shops there with parking so far removed. Further, it totally changes the flavor and feel of our beloved Laguna. Visitors come to enjoy our authentic old town feel and enjoy one of the last remaining "Main Streets" in Orange County. I shop frequently there but increasingly the merchants are closing, leaving us with essentially a food court. This is not compatible with our Downtown Specific plan nor the town I want to live in.

I have supported temporary closure of Forest Avenue, weekends and special nights during the week. The City Council has refused to consider this option - allowing merchants to have street access during the day, and restaurants at night like they do in Europe. I fear that not only this permanent closure but taking away the curbs and totally destroying our historic street will change the town forever and not make it a place visitors or residents want to come except to eat.

Please grant us a full hearing so you can truly understand the negative impact of this request by city staff.

Thank you-

Michele Monda
23 year resident

3 Hillhaven Ranch Way, LB
Michelemonda3@gmail.com
502/594-8231

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:33:55 AM

From: Deborah Vanley <deborah.vanley@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 5:48 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please grant us a full appeal. We believe the majority of Laguna residents are not in favor of this Promenade. It should be put to a vote.

Thank you,
Christopher and Deborah Vanley
42 year residents of Laguna Beach

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:33:45 AM

From: stevebunting <stevebunting@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 7:37 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Steve Bunting
3198 Bonn Dr.
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to ask you to find a Substantial Issue with the above listed appeal and to grant the Friends of Forest Avenue a full and proper hearing.

I am a life-long resident of Laguna Beach and I am opposed to the taking of Forest Avenue due to its impact on residents.

Forest Avenue has always been an important part of the downtown traffic circulation. It's closure during the City's test period has only served to demonstrate its importance as one of the principal routes into the downtown. The closure creates congestion on the smaller feeder streets as traffic from either direction on Coast Highway must now take a more circuitous through residential neighborhoods to access the downtown merchants and services. This also delays the response time by emergency vehicles responding into the downtown area.

As I'm sure you are aware, parking is limited in Laguna Beach. The City could double the amount of available parking and it would still be insufficient. The loss of parking on Forest Avenue only contributes to our misery and the City has made no effort to offset the loss of these parking spaces.

This Disneyesque effort by the City to create a European town square where there has never been one represents a significant change to the charm and character to our unique downtown. I have no objection to an occasional closure for the purpose of special events, but please, don't allow the City to permanently change that which makes Laguna Beach unique.

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:33:05 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Toni Flores <tonif1939@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 8:40 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am very disappointed that the City wants to keep the closure of lower Forest avenue. They convinced us during Covid that it would allow restaurants to survive and we would be safer if we were eating in the fresh air. I am handicapped and this sounded like a good idea. Here is what I found. All of the other business were affected also because there is no parking near this strip of Forest Ave. . The public parking lot is a block away and I am not able to walk or use a wheelchair as it is up hill from Forest avenue. Since the closure of Forest Avenue I have not been able to buy shoes clothes, items for my home, gifts for family and friends, or even take visitors to shop down town. I am handicapped but not dead and would like to lead as normal of life as I can. Laguna has limited handicapped park as it is and losing the spot on Forest has been noticed by many of our friends. I have lived in Laguna 56 years and would like to continue to have my town available to me. I was able to almost totally shop in Laguna before Forest Ave was closed. I was born in 1939 BC, Before Computers and have problems trying to order items I need. We are suppose to have handicap availability thru out the city but this area is off limits to us. Toni Flores 1751 Thurston Dr, Laguna Beach, Ca 92651

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:32:57 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Pepper <bgpepper44@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 8:30 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

This entire problem was brought about when covid almost destroyed and changed our country. It was a solution, at the time, for the citizens of Laguna to feel somewhat normal enjoying the beauty and community Laguna has always provided. The idea/plan was never really for the businesses welfare on Forest, although it definitely benefited the restaurants more than the other retail stores, it was what was needed at the time for its residents.

The project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it:

- 1) reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan
- 2) Does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element
- 3) Impacts coastal community character

Another issue is how are the taxes being managed/accessed when restaurants have gained more occupancy/space and other retailers have not on Forest Avenue?

I'm not from Laguna originally, but I will never forget when I arrived in the 70s the charm and uniqueness that was Laguna. We all know change is constant, sometimes not for the better.

I think making this a permanent change is one that is NOT for the better or fair to all the businesses on Forest Avenue.

My hopes are you will kindly read and carefully consider all citizens concerns on this major change to Laguna's charm and landscape with the appeal and to grant the citizens of Laguna a full and proper hearing.

Regards,
Barbara Pepper
200 Cinnamon Teal
bgpepper44@gmail.com <mailto:bgpepper44@gmail.com>
205-243-4889

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres.Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:29:53 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: kurt mahoney <cherokeeaudiopeace@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 5:41 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Coastal Commission,

As a 41 year resident of Laguna Beach I strongly oppose making the Forest Avenue Promenade permanent. This was designed as a temporary 'solution' during Covid to allow businesses to serve residents and tourists- restaurants to be exact.

It was never meant to be permanent, and should not be as

- 1) It eliminates badly needed parking spaces in Laguna. (Have any of you ever tried to visit Laguna-particularly in the summer months-and find parking?) The City keeps trying to 'find' parking spaces, but continues to shoot itself in the foot with things like this. It also deprives the City of revenue from these parking spots, which the City relies on heavily-counts on, in fact-as a significant part of the annual budget.
- 2) It favors a few restaurants on one side of the street, but does nothing for, or actually detracts from other businesses on each side of Forest.
- 3) It creates potentially dangerous situations with people literally parking in the southbound lane of PCH while dropping off or picking up people. I have literally encountered this more than once. You are traveling south on PCH, and at Forest the street makes a dramatic curve, and there's an SUV parked ON THE STREET, stopping traffic in that lane, causing confusion and more unneeded traffic issues.
- 4) Laguna Beach is in Southern California-Orange County. Not France. This is what the people who came up with this think they are emulating, but in France this has been built into the infrastructure for 100's of years. It simply does not work in a beach town of 22,000 people inundated with tourists for a large part of the year looking for a place to park.

Sincerely,
Kurt Mahoney
PO BOX 4212 Laguna Beach, Ca 92652
949-497-1523 (LAND LINE-NO TEXT)

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 10:27:59 AM

From: Robert Jacob <rjacob@mac.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 10:19 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commission Members,

I writing to request that you find a “Substantial Issue” with the appeal that is the subject of this Agenda Item.

I have resided in Laguna Beach since 1979 and am opposed to your staff’s recommendation. I request that a public hearing occur to fully hear the many objections to the City’s plan. This plan will permanently close the section of lower Forest Avenue they have euphemistically labeled the “Promenade” in an effort to present their idea for the transformation of this historic coastal retail environment as a fait accompli. They have done this by loading citizen groups charged with providing thoughtful input with supporters, while ignoring or squelching serious, rational criticisms.

My primary reason for requesting that you find a “substantial issue” is that the City has failed to reasonably consider other options besides complete closure. As an urban designer and California registered landscape architect for more than 45 years, such failure to consider reasonable alternatives for such a significant project is shocking, considering the importance of this space to the history and character of this city, which is unique in California Coastal history and urban development.

Local residents recognize the enormous changes that occurred to our city as a premiere California coastal tourist destination during COVID. We appreciated and supported the temporary need to close lower Forest during this period to save the street’s restaurants by using public land for outdoor restaurant seating. We also understand that occasional or regularly scheduled closure might be a benefit worth considering now that the pandemic is (mostly) over. But there are many days and times during the year when complete closure would not be justified, and the City’s response to these concerns has been little more than perfunctory and performative.

In this situation, we are counting on the Coastal Commission to protect this valuable tourist resource and historic urban environment. Please allow the many citizens of Laguna Beach who are trying to protect this resource the opportunity for a more balanced, nuanced hearing than we have been able to achieve with our city government.

Robert Jacob

Robert Jacob Consulting
Planning•Urban Design•Landscape Architecture

2935 Chillon Way
Laguna Beach, California 92651
949.338.1573
California Landscape Architect #1985 CLARB
rjacob@mac.com

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:50:39 PM

From: Chris Tebbutt <chris.tebbutt@compass.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:44 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Coastal Commissioners,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to find a “Substantial Issue” with the appeal of the Promenade project in Laguna Beach and to grant a full and proper public hearing.

As a long-time resident and business owner in Laguna Beach, I am deeply concerned about the lasting impacts this project will have—not just on the character of our town, but also on the day-to-day accessibility for residents and visitors. The Promenade, as proposed, significantly limits access into the downtown village and, more importantly since being closed during the pandemic, restricts essential routes for residents trying to reach their own homes.

Our coastal downtown should remain open, inclusive, and easily accessible to all. Any project that curtails this access without thorough review and public input is cause for concern. Additionally, the potential impacts on businesses, coastal views, and public access deserve close scrutiny under the Coastal Act.

Laguna Beach is a unique and cherished community. Decisions that could permanently alter our coastal environment and public access points must be made with transparency and full public participation.

I urge you to ensure that the public’s voice is heard by granting a full hearing on this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris Tebbutt

504 Goff St

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

939.485.9898

Chris Tebbutt / Founder

540 S. Coast Hwy #202 / Laguna Beach CA 92651

Mobile [949.485.9898](tel:949.485.9898) / License 01993864

[Agent Profile](#) / [Chris Tebbutt Group](#)

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 4:30:14 PM
Attachments: [Calif. Coastal Commission 7.30.25.docx](#)

Hi Janet,

Here's a public comment.

From: bryan menne <bryan@menne.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 4:27 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Cc: Bryan Menne <bryanmenne@gmail.com>; Patricia Menne <patmenne@gmail.com>; Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>; Merrill Anderson <merrill1137@yahoo.com>; CATHERINE JURCA <cathjurca@gmail.com>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dr. Janet Torres,

Thank you for your return call & time for reviewing my questions.

Please see my attached Letter to Calif. Coastal Commission and Evidence Presentation Photo Boards A & B which substantiate my Comments, displays a Resident Alternative Plan Concept which has wide support from the 905 Residents Against the Forest Ave. Closure /City Promenade Proposal- requesting this project be Stopped, to Preserve our Village Character Commercial Entry, Circulation of Lower Forest Ave. & its Parking Spaces for Retail viability.

Bryan T.S. Menne – Land Planner/ Landscape Architect #1826

949-246-6183

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 9:51:17 AM

From: Francesca Smith <smith-zzz@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 9:40 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Chair Harmon and Commissioners:

I disagree with the recommendation to find no substantial issue with the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue and urge you to schedule a *de novo* hearing.

I am a frequent visitor to Laguna Beach and am disabled. I have relied on the disabled parking spaces available on lower Forest Avenue to access both the shops on that street and Main Beach. It has been miserable the last five years since that parking has been removed. I no longer visit downtown in summer at all.

I cannot wait around forever for the trolleys. Laguna Beach has been totally indifferent to the needs of people like me.

Please find a substantial issue and schedule a *de novo* hearing.

Sincerely,

Francesca Smith
Glendale, CA

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 9:26:13 AM

From: Paige Lyall <paigeannel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 9:08 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am a 23 year resident of Laguna Beach. When I moved here in 2002, I loved the small town vibe of Laguna. We had the annual art festival and Pageant of the Masters but the rest of the year was a nice, local community. Over the years the city leaders have changed to try to become one of the large coastal towns the residents don't want. The plans to permanently close lower Forest Avenue makes it less attractive for locals to want to visit the downtown area. It is the LOCAL residents that support these businesses and restaurants throughout the year. When I have out of town guests, the choice to visit downtown Laguna is the least chosen because of limited parking.

This project does NOT conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program for the following reasons:

- it reduces the number of parking spaces below the targeted occupancy threshold of 85% identified in the Downtown Specific Plan
- it does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use and Safety element
- it severely impacts our coastal community character.

I am asking the Commissioners to find substantial issue with the appeal and grant a full and proper hearing. The decision to permanently close lower Forest Avenue should not be decided by a few people and the resident voices not heard. Reasonable alternatives presented in the past were completely disregarded.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Paige Lyall
940 Baja Street
Laguna Beach, CA
paigeannel@gmail.com

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres.Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 8:28:00 AM

From: Bob Borthwick <bob.borthwick@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 11:10 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please consider the Promenade / Forest Avenue closure as a substantial issue worthy of a full and proper hearing.

The main issue is not what will be gained by creating a new pedestrian mall in a (formerly) fully functional historic commercial district in downtown Laguna...but rather, **what will be lost**. A stated goal by the City for this project is to "preserve and enhance the unique character of the downtown area" (City of Laguna Beach: Request for Proposal, Feb. 9, 2021. This project **does not preserve the unique character** of Forest Avenue as a historic commercial street with parking and businesses. **On the contrary, this project destroys that historic character and fabric.**

Since the founding of Laguna Beach in the 1920's, Forest Avenue functioned as the town's Main Street. It served as the hub of commerce in downtown, and still serves that function. "Small town Main Street, USA." In particular, the retail component of Forest Avenue is threatened by this project and the loss of 48 parking spaces that existed prior to the "temporary" street closure for COVID purposes to allow outdoor dining in 2021. As an example, the Shoe Cellar (originally established in 1947) has been a retail landmark and legacy business on the street for generations. The family ownership of this store has seen substantially reduced business since the street was closed and parking removed. They have publicly stated that their business will likely close if the street closure and parking removal becomes permanent. It is small, family-owned retail shops such as these that have created the charm and character of this street, appreciated by residents and visitors alike. Once such shops are gone, the treasured ambiance of the street changes forever and Forest Avenue becomes just another outdoor pedestrian mall.

The loss of parking affects more than just the businesses on lower Forest Avenue. This parking is also the most visible and safest parking for tourists to take a short visit across the street to the famed Main Beach Boardwalk and historic Lifeguard Tower. Parallel parking on Coast Highway is difficult due to traffic volumes and speeds.

As a professional landscape architect and urban planner I have designed downtown

projects that included permanent street closure, such as the award-winning Avalon Waterfront on Catalina Island. However, permanent street closure is not the answer in all cases, as evidenced by the high failure rate of downtown pedestrian mall conversions. As a resident I would have hoped to see a hybrid design alternative that combined some curbside dining along with limited street parking, but the City refused to consider any hybrid designs or other planning alternatives. In my opinion the lack of public support for the Promenade is directly related to the lack of options and/or alternatives (to full street closure) for public review and discussion.

For a beautiful town (and quaint downtown) that is known world-wide, lower Forest Avenue deserves more study and options before destroying something that is irreplaceable.

Respectfully,
Bob Borthwick, ASLA
Landscape Architect

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a- Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 8:27:50 AM

From: Jean Arovas <jearovas@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 10:18 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a- Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Commissioners:

This email is written to provide you with background, facts, and concerns regarding the lower Forest Avenue project, hereafter referred to as the “Promenade Project” sufficient for you to find a Substantial Issue with the Promenade Project.

Background and Facts-

Our City Council is an elected body by the residents of Laguna Beach. As such, they should represent majority opinions regarding decisions to be made and money to be spent. This is not the case and the community is divided. The Council seeks opinions from the public as a matter of form, not substance. Written and verbal comments are sought before and during City Council meetings, respectfully. They may read but certainly hear opinions from residents, but there is never a response to either. It is a ruse to convince themselves and others from which approvals are required.

In this small city of less than 25,000 people, tourists abound by the millions during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. They leave trash on our beaches and streets. They constitute most DUI and assault arrests..They drive city costs well beyond the revenues the city realizes from their presence. So why would the City Council enter a 10-year contract designed to increase their numbers? They want the money from special interests to support their reelection.

We are in a high risk fire area. The last fire was approximately two months ago. Many good things have been done by the City Council to improve our environment as well as our abilities to fight fires, but much remains to be done to not only protect our residents but also our pristine coast from the immediate and post fire effects all of which you know. We have a total of five traffic lanes into and out of the community. This together

with the fire mitigation efforts are clearly inadequate to protect people, property, and our coast during peak fire periods. This will take time and money, the latter of which is proposed to be used to entertain one another with a better venue - the Promenade Project.

Concerns:

During the COVID pandemic our City Council sold residents on the need for temporary outdoor seating to augment indoor seating at our restaurants and bars on lower Forest, and Ocean Avenues. This was accomplished by building outdoor seating where many parking spaces existed at the expense of retailers. Regardless, the residents agreed with the plan as it was alleged to be temporary. Then the Promenade Project was disclosed. This was nothing short of a bait and switch imposed on the residents. To give you a sense of the value of parking spaces in Laguna Beach, the City Council is favorable to a proposal to tear down a 100 year old historical registered property to gain seven parking spaces.

Thank you for reading this and I hope that it provides sufficient basis for you to find a Substantial issue with the Promenade Project, despite your staffs support for the project.

Robert Arovas
950 Wilson Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
rarovas@gmail.com
714-240-7410

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 8:27:38 AM
Attachments: [CC Appeal Promenade.pdf](#)

From: j.pudwill@cox.net <j.pudwill@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 7:27 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am familiar with the following two letters which have been previously sent to you - and I fully concur with their content.

The proposed promenade does not account for the parking it is removing from public use, plus it obstructs the gateway to Laguna Beach's most vital and historic avenue. Additionally, it blocks a key evacuation route.

Of critical regards, Laguna Beach's total neglect of residents' concerns should clearly bear some weight; In a town of 22,300, 851 residents petitioned the Council for a different plan - one which the Council promised to the public, but then totally refused to provide.

I attended the council meeting when this "temporary" promenade was illegally introduced to the public by the Council without any pre-meeting notification - a clear violation of the Brown Act. Subsequently, the public has never had the opportunity to vote or properly weigh in on whether it wanted its hometown Main Street turned into a modern mall - this has been entirely driven by the City Council which recently voted to proceed with its development despite having not set budget, much less budgetary limits.

Please review the two enclosed letters - both far more eloquent than mine - and put a hold on the project until many of these issues can be sussed out.

Many thanks,

Jerome Pudwill,
38-Year Laguna Beach Resident

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To the California Coastal Commission:

Please find a "Substantial Issue" with this appeal and grant a full and proper hearing.

In a process that took from 2014 to 2022, the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Update involved hundreds of thousands of dollars and untold number of hours by the public, city staff, and the following consultants - MIG, Inc., MJB Consulting, Rick Williams Consulting, IBI Group, Stanley R. Hoffman Associates, and Stoffel & Associates. Finally, more than 7 years after the process commenced, on December 15, 2021, the California Coastal Commission approved LCP Amendment (LCP-5-LGB-20-0052-with modifications, and finally, at its meeting February 15, 2022 the Laguna Beach City Council adopted an ordinance accepting the California Coastal Commission's revisions to the City's Downtown Specific Plan.

Nowhere in that 171 page Downtown Specific Plan have I been able to find one recommendation that the city create a permanent pedestrian only plaza or "Promenade" on lower Forest or anywhere in Laguna Beach.

Instead, there are numerous sections of that plan that specifically recommend AGAINST a permanent pedestrian plaza, but instead discuss the possibility of a temporary, or seasonal pedestrian plaza, including these references:

- P 78 (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) Through adaptive re-use of public parking spaces on a limited or temporary basis, the City has the opportunity to accommodate enhancements such as a pedestrian promenade or street festivals through partial street closures, a parklet program, or other community desired events and activities within the downtown.
- (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) during the non-summer months
- (MAYBE NOT A TEMPORARY PROMENADE) On the other hand, adaptive re-use of public parking spaces during the summer months may not be ideal due to the high parking occupancy observed.
- P 78 Perhaps the **greatest impact associated with providing more parking** in the downtown is the **potential to worsen traffic congestion by drawing more cars into the local street circulation system.**

Parking areas also pose potentially negative impacts by virtue of their design and appearance.

- P 80 Topic 4 Policies (PROMENADE?) #9 Allow for the limited or temporary- adaptive re-use of public parking spaces for community-desired events and activities during summer and non-summer months, provided that an 85 percent target occupancy level is not exceeded.
- P 111 (PARKLETT) On-street parking allows the opportunity for drivers to shop and give patronage to local businesses with convenience
- P102/113 (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) The use of a continuous paving material on Forest Avenue between Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street will create a more pedestrian friendly street that also retains existing parking and aids in traffic calming.
- P106/117: (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) Depending on usage, this plaza could be installed on a temporary status to be used during non-peak visitor months, and then reverted to the original auto-oriented use during peak summer months.

And yet, ignoring the specifics of its own Adopted Downtown Specific Plan, and without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on consultants, and without involving the public to the degree the public was involved in the Downtown Specific Plan Update, the Laguna Beach City Council has taken it upon itself to drive this concept through the city's approval process.

To make matters worse, with the ink barely dry on the Coastal Commission approved version of LCP Amendment (LCP-5-LGB-20-0052-2), in spite of specific instructions reflected in Agenda Report Regular Item #14 of the June 14, 2022 City Council meeting (attached) that an alternative plan be developed that could be a temporary or seasonal pedestrian plaza, the city ignored its own approval and the city proceeded ONLY with a plan for a permanent pedestrian plaza. It never seriously considered an alternative to a total and permanent pedestrian plaza.

There clearly is a substantial issue involved and I ask that the Commission find there is a substantial issue and grant a full and proper hearing. Thank you.

John Thomas
[31699 Seacliff Drive](mailto:johnthomas@cox.net)
[Laguna beach, Ca. 92651](mailto:johnthomas@cox.net)
johnthomas@cox.net

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 8:27:22 AM
Attachments: [June 7 2022 Staff Report Text Highlighted.pdf](#)

From: johnthomas@cox.net <johnthomas@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 5:21 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Cc: 'A' <johnthomas@cox.net>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

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There clearly is a substantial issue involved and I ask that the Commission find there is a substantial issue and grant a full and proper hearing. Thank you.

John Thomas
31699 Seacliff Drive
Laguna beach, Ca. 92651

johnthomas@cox.net

.

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Friday, August 8, 2025 5:11:58 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: Trish Sweeney <trish@sweeney.zone>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 4:56 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

Our family opposes the proposed Promenade at Forest and we ask that you find a substantial issue with the appeal for the following reasons:

* Laguna Beach is located in an extreme high fire hazard zone with only three exits out of town. Currently, 7.1 million visitors a year visit. Closing half the street burdens surrounding streets--some of which are one way or narrow—causing vehicles to back up, especially at peak times. Closure of a street in a crowded, high fire zone is irresponsible.

* The loss of the parking on the Promenade has impacted the public and surrounding streets have food corrals taking up additional spaces. This has made it more difficult for residents and visitors alike to find convenient beachside parking.

* The drainage issues in this area have been well documented and the potential for flooding could pose an elevated risk for businesses operating there. Multiple business owners say they want the street returned to its original use along with parking. As it stands now, many are struggling and no wonder: pedestrian promenades in the U.S. have an 89% failure rate.

* Under the revised Downtown Specific Plan, parking requirements were changed, which indirectly allowed the intensification of use there. Under the \$14 million-dollar Downtown Action Plan, more of the public right of way is slated to be removed and repurposed.

* The loss of convenient access, nearby parking, and ability to use our public streets as intended are just the beginning of the real costs of the promenade. An impartial overview and proper survey should be mailed to all residents and responses tabulated by an independent third party. As it stands now, the city conducted a survey of 500 people visiting the promenade. Of this, 58% were Laguna residents; 290 people—in a city of 23,000—approved. This is a major change to downtown and more than 1.3% of the residents should be asked about it. Even so, our

current city council is pressing for this controversial plan—one that has too many question marks to move forward.

Please grant the opponents a full and proper hearing.

Thank you,

Patricia Sweeney

Mike Sweeney

Jim Sweeney

Kathryn Sweeney

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agends Appeal #A-5-LGB-25-0018(City of Laguna Beach}
Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 6:41:09 PM

Hi Janet,
Here's a public comment for review.

Becky

From: Darrylin Girvin <dgirvin1216@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 5:31 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agends Appeal #A-5-LGB-25-0018(City of Laguna Beach}

Dear Coastal Commissioners,

Please accept my email for consideration of the Appeal of the Promenade on Forest Ave.

I am a 27 year resident of Laguna Beach. But, I have been coming to Laguna Beach since my College years. The town had an attractive charm about it with lovely shops and great restaurants especially along this one block area.

Now, since 2021 the COVID era has changed it, not for the better. The Promenade had its use to help keep businesses open. But now, it is a determinant for the local Retail businesses in this one short block. 45 parking spaces were removed that the retail and restaurants relied on.

Two long time businesses have closed and this could continue along this strip if the Promenade is allowed to stay.

We would gain 45 parking spaces back, to accommodate the visitors and our local shoppers and bring back the Charm to this area of Laguna Beach.

As to the staff report's conclusions they do not conform to the City's LCP as you will read in our Appeal nor is it consistent with the Policies of the Certified LCP.

You can read the reasoning behind these faulty conclusions made by the Staff in our Appeal Email and testimony.

I encourage you to uphold our Appeal and Deny the City's Request for your approval on this issue.

Thank you,

Darrylin Girvin

dkgirvin1216@gmail.com

949-633-7565 cell

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres_Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:55:11 PM

From: margareetbee <margareetbee@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:54 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please find a "Substantial Issue" with the appeal and to grant a full and proper hearing.

The temporary closure has negatively affected traffic in the downtown and it will be a total wipeout in any substantial flooding. Meanwhile, resident-serving businesses in the area and on the fringes of it are suffering and cannot survive. The only businesses that will survive will be restaurants, bars, coffee and possibly another t-shirt shop. Tuvalu, the retail business at the entry, has access to nearby parking and a separate entrance from one in the "promenade" and so it has maintained. In the past I frequented Brussels Bistro and Moulin but have not been there since the street was closed off as it's too far to walk from parking. I go to the library several times a week and they have had to install security to ensure their parking is available for library patrons and I see the commission has included library parking as available after hours but who pays attention to that, cars will be parking there during the day to access the "promenade". The current "temporary Promenade" is virtually empty at many hours - many people have simply strayed over from the City's large and beautiful park directly across the street unless they have come to eat in one of the restaurants. Plus the City has avoided giving the public any cost estimates and has not divulged how they intend to pay for it. Residents should be allowed to vote on this issue. 90% of these closed-street affairs fail and are returned to open traffic. That will be another cost residents must bear.

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres.Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Thursday, August 7, 2025 9:45:57 AM

From: lbvandercook@cox.net <lbvandercook@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 9:26 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To: Janet Torres, Coastal Program Analyst, California Coastal Commission

As a long-time resident (twenty-six plus years) and employee of a business directly impacted by the “Promenade project”, I am writing to support Village Laguna in its efforts to stop the permanent closure of Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach.

I request that you find a Substantial Issue with the appeal and grant a proper hearing. This Promenade has negatively impacted the community character of the downtown village area, creates a significant safety issue, destroys the beauty and ambiance of our village community and has, and will, severely impact the viability of business throughout Laguna Beach.

Thank you for hearing the voices of the community who oppose this permanent tragedy to the history, appeal and flavor of our community.

**Linda Vandercook
2937 Rounsevel Terrace
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
lbvandercook@cox.net
(949) 315-5592**

From: SouthCoast@Coastal
To: Torres.Janet@Coastal
Subject: FW: : Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 9:06:57 AM

From: Johanna Felder <johanna@felders.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 8:46 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: : Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Janet Torres, Coastal Program Analyst
California Coastal Commission
Re: Agenda Item 11.a, August 15, 2025, South Coast District
Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018, City of Laguna Beach

Dear Dr. Torres:
August 5, 2025

I am taking this opportunity to respond to significant parts of the Staff Report.

Grounds for an appeal to the California Coastal Commission include “allegations that the approved development does not conform to the LCP” (Appeal Information Sheet, p. 3). The Staff Report ignores two allegations fatal to its conclusion that the project approvals “are consistent with the policies of the certified LCP” (p. 2). **1) There is a required 85 percent target occupancy threshold in the Downtown Specific Plan, Local Coastal Program.** The Staff Report ignores the specific metric in the LCP for determining whether parking spaces can be eliminated. The City’s own parking study—conducted *off-season*, not even in summer when demand is highest—demonstrates that the loss of parking on lower Forest Avenue exceeds the 85 percent target occupancy threshold in the downtown.

2) Laguna Beach’s LCP requires that all projects subject to design review “shall comply with all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements, applicable specific plans, and the certified local coastal program” (25.05.040(H)(5), emphasis added).

Please consider the above points as the Staff Report does not understand that under Laguna Beach’s LCP, conformity with the LCP is not achieved unless the project complies with “all” “elements” of the General Plan. The City never reviewed the project at any point in light of the Safety Element of the General Plan, even though the project is located within a FEMA-mapped floodway and Special Flood Hazard

The Village Laguna’s rebuttal focuses on abundant evidence of at least two keyways the City’s approvals are inconsistent with LCP policies. I believe their evidence and concerns raise a Substantial Issue.

Respectfully,

Johanna Felder
Laguna Beach, CA.

From: [bryan menne](#)
To: [SouthCoast@Coastal](#)
Cc: [Bryan Menne](#); [Patricia Menne](#); [Torres, Janet@Coastal](#); [Merrill Anderson](#); [CATHERINE JURCA](#)
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 4:27:20 PM
Attachments: [Calif. Coastal Commission 7.30.25.docx](#)

Dr. Janet Torres,

Thank you for your return call & time for reviewing my questions.

Please see my attached Letter to Calif. Coastal Commission and Evidence Presentation Photo Boards A & B which substantiate my Comments, displays a Resident Alternative Plan Concept which has wide support from the 905 Residents Against the Forest Ave. Closure /City Promenade Proposal- requesting this project be Stopped, to Preserve our Village Character Commercial Entry, Circulation of Lower Forest Ave. & its Parking Spaces for Retail viability.
Bryan T.S. Menne – Land Planner/ Landscape Architect #1826
949-246-6183

From: Torres, Janet@Coastal
To: SouthCoast@Coastal
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 3:56:16 PM

Janet Torres, Ph.D.

(They/Them/Elle)

Coastal Program Analyst

California Coastal Commission | South Coast District

(562) 590-5071

301 E. Ocean Blvd, Suite 300

Long Beach, CA, 90802

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Fri 8/8/2025 10:27 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Robert Jacob <rjacob@mac.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 10:19 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commission Members,

I writing to request that you find a “Substantial Issue” with the appeal that is the subject of this Agenda Item.

I have resided in Laguna Beach since 1979 and am opposed to your staff’s recommendation. I request that a public hearing occur to fully hear the many objections to the City’s plan. This plan will permanently close the section of lower Forest Avenue they have euphemistically labeled the “Promenade” in an effort to present their idea for the transformation of this historic coastal retail environment as a fait accompli. They have done this by loading citizen groups charged with providing thoughtful input with supporters, while ignoring or squelching serious, rational criticisms.

My primary reason for requesting that you find a “substantial issue” is that the City has failed to reasonably consider other options besides complete closure. As an urban designer and California registered landscape architect for more than 45 years, such failure to consider reasonable alternatives for such a significant project is shocking, considering the importance of this space to the history and character of this city, which a unique in California Coastal history and urban development.

Local residents recognize the enormous changes that occurred to our city as a premiere California coastal tourist destination during COVID. We appreciated and supported the temporary need to close lower Forest during this period to save the street’s restaurants by using public land for outdoor restaurant seating. We also understand that occasional or regularly scheduled closure might be a benefit worth considering now that the pandemic is (mostly) over. But there are many days and times during the year when complete closure would not be justified, and the City’s response to these concerns has been little more than perfunctory and performative.

In this situation, we are counting on the Coastal Commission to protect this valuable tourist resource and historic urban environment. Please allow the many citizens of Laguna Beach who are trying to protect this resource the opportunity for a more balanced, nuanced hearing than we have been able to achieve with our city government.

Robert Jacob

Robert Jacob Consulting

Planning•Urban Design•Landscape Architecture

2935 Chillon Way

Laguna Beach, California 92651

949.338.1573

California Landscape Architect #1985 CLARB

rjacob@mac.com

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Fri 8/8/2025 9:51 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Francesca Smith <smith-zzz@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 9:40 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Chair Harmon and Commissioners:

I disagree with the recommendation to find no substantial issue with the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue and urge you to schedule a *de novo* hearing.

I am a frequent visitor to Laguna Beach and am disabled. I have relied on the disabled parking spaces available on lower Forest Avenue to access both the shops on that street and Main Beach. It has been miserable the last five years since that parking has been removed. I no longer visit downtown in summer at all.

I cannot wait around forever for the trolleys. Laguna Beach has been totally indifferent to the needs of people like me.

Please find a substantial issue and schedule a *de novo* hearing.

Sincerely,

Francesca Smith
Glendale, CA

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Fri 8/8/2025 9:26 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Paige Lyall <paigeannel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 8, 2025 9:08 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am a 23 year resident of Laguna Beach. When I moved here in 2002, I loved the small town vibe of Laguna. We had the annual art festival and Pageant of the Masters but the rest of the year was a nice, local community. Over the years the city leaders have changed to try to become one of the large coastal towns the residents don't want. The plans to permanently close lower Forest Avenue makes it less attractive for locals to want to visit the downtown area. It is the LOCAL residents that support these businesses and restaurants throughout the year. When I have out of town guests, the choice to visit downtown Laguna is the least chosen because of limited parking.

This project does NOT conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program for the following reasons:

- it reduces the number of parking spaces below the targeted occupancy threshold of 85% identified in the Downtown Specific Plan
- it does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use and Safety element
- it severely impacts our coastal community character.

I am asking the Commissioners to find substantial issue with the appeal and grant a full and proper hearing. The decision to permanently close lower Forest Avenue should not be decided by a few people and the resident voices not heard. Reasonable alternatives presented in the past were completely disregarded.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Paige Lyall
940 Baja Street
Laguna Beach, CA
paigeannel@gmail.com

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a- Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Fri 8/8/2025 8:27 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Jean Arovas <jearovas@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 10:18 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a- Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Commissioners:

This email is written to provide you with background, facts, and concerns regarding the lower Forest Avenue project, hereafter referred to as the "Promenade Project" sufficient for you to find a Substantial Issue with the Promenade Project.

Background and Facts-

Our City Council is an elected body by the residents of Laguna Beach. As such, they should represent majority opinions regarding decisions to be made and money to be spent. This is not the case and the community is divided. The Council seeks opinions from the public as a matter of form, not substance. Written and verbal comments are sought before and during City Council meetings, respectfully. They may read but certainly hear opinions from residents, but there is never a response to either. It is a ruse to convince themselves and others from which approvals are required.

In this small city of less than 25,000 people, tourists abound by the millions during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. They leave trash on our beaches and streets. They constitute most DUI and assault arrests..They drive city costs well beyond the revenues the city realizes from their presence. So why would the City Council enter a 10-year contract designed to increase their numbers? They want the money from special interests to support their reelection.

We are in a high risk fire area. The last fire was approximately two months ago. Many good things have been done by the City Council to improve our environment as well as our abilities to fight fires, but much remains to be done to not only protect our residents but also our pristine coast from the immediate and post fire effects all of which you know. We have a total of five traffic lanes into and out of the community. This together with the fire mitigation efforts are clearly inadequate to protect people, property, and our coast during peak fire periods. This will take time and money, the latter of which is proposed to be used to entertain one another with a better venue - the Promenade Project.

Concerns:

During the COVID pandemic our City Council sold residents on the need for temporary outdoor seating to augment indoor seating at our restaurants and bars on lower Forest, and Ocean Avenues. This was accomplished by building outdoor seating where many parking spaces existed at the expense of retailers. Regardless, the residents agreed with the plan as it was alleged to be temporary. Then the Promenade Project was disclosed. This was nothing short of a bait and switch imposed on the residents. To give you a sense of the value of parking spaces in Laguna Beach, the City Council is favorable to a proposal to tear down a 100 year old historical registered property to gain seven parking spaces.

Thank you for reading this and I hope that it provides sufficient basis for you to find a Substantial issue with the Promenade Project, despite your staffs support for the project.

Robert Arovas
950 Wilson Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
rarovas@gmail.com
714-240-7410

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Thu 8/7/2025 4:22 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: bmanalis@cox.net <bmanalis@cox.net>

Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 4:17 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To: The California Coastal Commission

I am a 46 year resident and want you to consider that first and foremost, this is a very small town where residents live and people work and, only secondly, a tourist attraction.

This beloved small quaint town has **very few streets** and way too many visitors with cars to lose one of the very few streets in the heart of the town and the parking spaces that are essential for getting a round.

To lose the lower portion of Forest avenue to automobile traffic is especially a hardship for residents being able to go inland to our homes from the Coast Highway; not to mention how hard it is to find parking to do business in town. The loss of these precious parking places hurts business who aren't restaurants or bars who prosper at the expense of other business *and* the needs of real town services necessary to meet the needs of it's residents. There is a whole coastline of beaches where people can congregate and do, plus parks throughout the City, and festivals and all sorts of venues and activities for people to enjoy, as well as vast portions of open spaces, The Irvine Bowl and Festival of the Art.

We can't afford to lose half of our one main street to a food court. Where is the balance?

Please find a **Substantial Issue** in support of the Village Laguna appeal to the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach for a full hearing.

Thank you,

Barbara Manalis
31618 Jewel Avenue
Laguna Beach, CA

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Fri 8/8/2025 8:27 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

 1 attachment (196 KB)

CC Appeal Promenade.pdf;

From: j.pudwill@cox.net <j.pudwill@cox.net>

Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 7:27 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am familiar with the following two letters which have been previously sent to you - and I fully concur with their content.

The proposed promenade does not account for the parking it is removing from public use, plus it obstructs the gateway to Laguna Beach's most vital and historic avenue. Additionally, it blocks a key evacuation route.

Of critical regards, Laguna Beach's total neglect of residents' concerns should clearly bear some weight; In a town of 22,300, 851 residents petitioned the Council for a different plan - one which the Council promised to the public, but then totally refused to provide.

I attended the council meeting when this "temporary" promenade was illegally introduced to the public by the Council without any pre-meeting notification - a clear violation of the Brown Act. Subsequently, the public has never had the opportunity to vote or properly weigh in on whether it wanted its hometown Main Street turned into a modern mall – this has been entirely driven by the City Council which recently voted to proceed with its development despite having not set budget, much less budgetary limits.

Please review the two enclosed letters - both far more eloquent than mine - and put a hold on the project until many of these issues can be sussed out.

Many thanks,

Jerome Pudwill,
38-Year Laguna Beach Resident

Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018
(City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To the California Coastal Commission:

Please find a "Substantial Issue" with this appeal and grant a full and proper hearing.

In a process that took from 2014 to 2022, the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Update involved hundreds of thousands of dollars and untold number of hours by the public, city staff, and the following consultants - MIG, Inc., MJB Consulting, Rick Williams Consulting, IBI Group, Stanley R. Hoffman Associates, and Stoffel & Associates. Finally, more than 7 years after the process commenced, on December 15, 2021, the California Coastal Commission approved LCP Amendment (LCP-5-LGB-20-0052-with modifications, and finally, at its meeting February 15, 2022 the Laguna Beach City Council adopted an ordinance accepting the California Coastal Commission's revisions to the City's Downtown Specific Plan.

Nowhere in that 171 page Downtown Specific Plan have I been able to find one recommendation that the city create a permanent pedestrian only plaza or "Promenade" on lower Forest or anywhere in Laguna Beach.

Instead, there are numerous sections of that plan that specifically recommend AGAINST a permanent pedestrian plaza, but instead discuss the possibility of a temporary, or seasonal pedestrian plaza, including these references:

- P 78 (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) Through adaptive re-use of public parking spaces on a limited or temporary basis, the City has the opportunity to accommodate enhancements such as a pedestrian promenade or street festivals through partial street closures, a parklet program, or other community desired events and activities within the downtown.
- (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) during the non-summer months
- (MAYBE NOT A TEMPORARY PROMENADE) On the other hand, adaptive re-use of public parking spaces during the summer months may not be ideal due to the high parking occupancy observed.
- P 78 Perhaps the **greatest impact associated with providing more parking** in the downtown is the **potential to worsen traffic congestion by drawing more cars into the local street circulation system**. Parking areas also pose potentially negative impacts by virtue of their design and appearance.
- P 80 Topic 4 Policies (PROMENADE?) #9 Allow for the limited or temporary- adaptive re-use of public parking spaces for community-desired events and activities during summer and non-summer months, provided that an 85 percent target occupancy level is not exceeded.
- P 111 (PARKLETT) On-street parking allows the opportunity for drivers to shop and give patronage to local businesses with convenience
- P102/113 (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) The use of a continuous paving material on Forest Avenue between Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street will create a more pedestrian friendly street that also retains existing parking and aids in traffic calming.

- P106/117: (TEMPORARY PROMENADE) Depending on usage, this plaza could be installed on a temporary status to be used during non-peak visitor months, and then reverted to the original auto-oriented use during peak summer months.

And yet, ignoring the specifics of its own Adopted Downtown Specific Plan, and without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on consultants, and without involving the public to the degree the public was involved in the Downtown Specific Plan Update, the Laguna Beach City Council has taken it upon itself to drive this concept through the city's approval process.

To make matters worse, with the ink barely dry on the Coastal Commission approved version of LCP Amendment (LCP-5-LGB-20-0052-2), in spite of specific instructions reflected in Agenda Report Regular Item #14 of the June 14, 2022 City Council meeting (attached) that an alternative plan be developed that could be a temporary or seasonal pedestrian plaza, the city ignored its own approval and the city proceeded ONLY with a plan for a permanent pedestrian plaza. It never seriously considered an alternative to a total and permanent pedestrian plaza.

There clearly is a substantial issue involved and I ask that the Commission find there is a substantial issue and grant a full and proper hearing. Thank you.

John Thomas
[31699 Seacliff Drive](#)
[Laguna beach, Ca. 92651](#)
johnthomas@cox.net

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5- LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Thu 8/7/2025 2:40 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: carolyn Birnbaum <carolynbirnbaum@cox.net>

Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 2:24 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5- LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am writing to ask the California Coastal Commission to grant us a full and proper hearing to prevent the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue for the promenade project.

The promenade closure was supposed to be a temporary solution in response to the Covid shutdown.

Now, somehow without a full hearing, there are plans to make it permanent!

That means that we permanently lose our sorely needed parking places. Business (other than restaurants) will suffer because of this change. I have lived here for 25 years and have always opted to "shop local" in our charming little downtown. Now, that it is crowded and difficult to find parking, I avoid our downtown. Lower Forest Ave now looks contrived, and because of this change, we have lost our charming beach town character.

Additionally, this new plan doesn't comply with the Downtown Specific Plan Land Use Element and Safety Element.

Please give this appeal a full and proper hearing before you proceed.

Thank you,

Carolyn & Bill Birnbaum

1025 Canyon View Drive

Laguna Beach Ca 92651

Carolynbirnbaum@cox.net

949 684-3717

Sent from my iPhone

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a-Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Thu 8/7/2025 2:40 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: bobndennis <bobndennis@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 1:59 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a-Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Robert Gentry, I am a former Mayor and City Council Member of Laguna Beach, California. I am writing to urge you to find a substantial issue to grant a full and proper hearing regarding the closure of lower Forest Avenue to vehicular traffic, and making it into a pedestrian promenade. This issue is vital to the cultural history, charm, and definition of our historic sea side village. Lower Forest Ave is the heart beat of our downtown commercial center. It deserves the full participation of our community before making a policy decision to change its function forever! This issue has been discussed over the years, and NO policy documents have been altered to eliminate the parking, and subsequent use, of lower Forest Avenue. Eliminating 47 parking stalls is a very big change to such a small, visitor oriented, village. Those stalls are extremely important to Laguna Beach residents, to access businesses and services, in the hours before our beach going daytime visitors descend into town to access the beautiful beach front. Changing lower Forest Avenue into a pedestrian promenade will alter the function and the character of downtown Laguna Beach. There will be strong pressure to change the commercial activity along Forest Avenue to primarily visitor serving establishments. Our residents will suffer. Laguna Beach does not need a pedestrian strip mall in the heart of its historic village! Please find that there is a substantial issue to grant a full and proper hearing on this proposal. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Robert F. Gentry, former Mayor and City Council Member
City of Laguna Beach, California
(bobndennis@aol.com)

FW: NO Promenade on Forest Ave Laguna Beach

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Thu 8/7/2025 1:28 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Sahar Saljooghi <saharsfineart@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 12:38 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: NO Promenade on Forest Ave Laguna Beach

Please save the village!
We need our parkings back.
No Promenade.

Thanks for your help.

Best Regards,
Sahar.

FW: Stop closure of Forest Ave Laguna Beach

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Thu 8/7/2025 1:27 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Lewismmoss <lewismmoss@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 12:33 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Stop closure of Forest Ave Laguna Beach

Sent from my iPhone

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Thu 8/7/2025 1:27 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Joy Berry <Joy@joyberry.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 11:04 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please excuse my comments for a minor change – the loss of parking is 48 spaces not 45 – even worse than thought.
48 lost spaces when we have so very few parking available for Main Beach is
SUBSTANTIAL

Also see below I inserted my address.

From: Joy Berry
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 8:01 AM
To: 'SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov' <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please see attached or below comments to this item:

Date: August 7, 2025
To: California Coastal Commission Staff
From: Joy Berry, 30 year resident of Laguna Beach, 22361 3rd Avenue, Laguna Beach, 92651
Subject: Rebuttal to Staff Report Finding of “No Substantial Issue” for Appeal No. A-5-LGB-23-0056 (Laguna Beach Forest Avenue Promenade)

I am writing in response to your Staff Report's conclusion that the appeal concerning the City of Laguna Beach's Forest Avenue Promenade project raises no substantial issue. The report's finding of "no substantial issue" is based on a narrow interpretation of both the project's impacts and the requirements of the City's certified Local Coastal Program (LCP).

The Loss of Parking is Substantial and Violates the LCP

The Staff Report dismisses the loss of 48 parking spaces as not substantial, relying on the City's claim of "sufficient mitigation" and the availability of a trolley system. This conclusion ignores key facts and misinterprets the very policy it cites.

- **The LCP's 85% Occupancy Threshold is a Hard Number, Not a Suggestion.** The Staff Report claims that a "robust package" of parking alternatives is sufficient mitigation for the loss of parking. This directly contradicts the plain language of Topic 4, Policy 9 of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP). The DSP explicitly allows for the temporary re-use of public parking spaces *only if an 85% target occupancy level is not exceeded*. As our initial appeal demonstrated, the City's own off-season study showed this threshold was already exceeded. To argue that other measures negate this specific, data-driven metric is to render the policy meaningless and sets a dangerous precedent.
- **Nighttime "Replacements" are Irrelevant for Peak Use.** The Staff Report's claim that the loss of parking is not substantial because 30 spaces are replaced at night is a critical oversight. The vast majority of visitors who drive to Laguna Beach and use these spaces—beachgoers, daytime shoppers, and diners—do so during the day. The loss of **48 spaces during peak hours is a significant detriment to coastal access** and local businesses. The availability of replacement spaces at night, when demand is lower, does not mitigate the daytime deficit.
- **The Trolley is Not a Viable or Comprehensive Alternative.** While the trolley system is a valuable resource, it does not fully mitigate the loss of these specific parking spaces. The trolley runs on Coast Highway, which does not directly serve the local streets where the 48 spaces were lost. Visitors coming to the downtown area and legacy businesses on these streets are left without a direct, convenient alternative. The trolley system is an important part of the LCP, but it is not a cure-all for the removal of a significant number of parking spaces in a dense, heavily visited downtown.

The Safety Element is a Substantial Issue and an LCP Requirement

The Staff Report's claim that the project's failure to conform to the General Plan's Safety Element is "not an appealable contention" is based on a fundamental misreading of the LCP. This finding ignores a clear and specific requirement within the LCP itself.

- **Zoning Code 25.05.040(H)(5) is Part of the LCP.** The Staff Report erroneously separates the General Plan from the LCP. However, Laguna Beach's own Zoning Code, which is part of the certified LCP, explicitly states that projects subject to design review "shall comply with all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements." This language is unequivocal. By failing to review the project against the Safety Element, especially for a project located within a FEMA-mapped floodway, the City acted in direct violation of its own LCP.
- **The Flood Risk is Substantial.** The project proposes to alter street and drainage infrastructure in a high-risk flood zone. The City's belated hydrology report only modeled a 25-year storm, a measure that is woefully inadequate for a 100-year flood zone. The Staff Report's indifference to this issue is perplexing and dangerously shortsighted. This is not a minor technicality; it is a substantial public safety concern that the City failed to address, and it is a directly appealable matter under the LCP's own terms. The precedential value of ignoring this provision for a project in a high-risk area is significant for all future coastal development in Laguna Beach.

Conclusion

The Staff Report's finding of no substantial issue is based on an analysis that glosses over critical inconsistencies with the LCP. By ignoring the explicit 85% occupancy threshold, misinterpreting the parking substitution at night only, the role of the trolley, and failing to acknowledge the LCP's

requirement for conformity with the General Plan's Safety Element, the report downplays what are in fact substantial and appealable issues.

We urge the Commission to find that a substantial issue exists and to accept this appeal. The City's decision has significant negative impacts on coastal access, public safety, and the precedent for future interpretations of the LCP.

FW: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Thu 8/7/2025 9:45 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: lbvandercook@cox.net <lbvandercook@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 9:26 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To: Janet Torres, Coastal Program Analyst, California Coastal Commission

As a long-time resident (twenty-six plus years) and employee of a business directly impacted by the “Promenade project”, I am writing to support Village Laguna in its efforts to stop the permanent closure of Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach.

I request that you find a Substantial Issue with the appeal and grant a proper hearing. This Promenade has negatively impacted the community character of the downtown village area, creates a significant safety issue, destroys the beauty and ambiance of our village community and has, and will, severely impact the viability of business throughout Laguna Beach.

Thank you for hearing the voices of the community who oppose this permanent tragedy to the history, appeal and flavor of our community.

**Linda Vandercook
2937 Rounsevel Terrace
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
lbvandercook@cox.net
(949) 315-5592**

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Thu 8/7/2025 8:08 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: John Morreale <jmorreale900@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 7:51 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

As a business owner and 30+ year resident of Laguna Beach I find substantial issues with the proposed promenade in Laguna Beach. We already have seen substantial decaying of our beaches. More trash, drunk people leaving the trash on the beach and in the streets, only to wash into the ocean. A loss of more parking will also frustrate both citizens and visitors alike. This summer has been ridiculous. I've seen fights, literally, over parking spots. The residence ,who respect our coastal environment, are starting to stay away only to be replaced by out of towners who have no such respect for our city, it's beaches, or ocean environment. If you truly care about the health of our city beaches, please, I implore you to grant us a hearing to address this critical issue. Thank you.
With respect,
John Morreale
714-469-2787

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Thu 8/7/2025 8:08 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Roxane Cohen Silver <rsilver@uci.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:41 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

I am a 33-year resident of Laguna Beach and own two homes in the city. I am writing in the strongest possible terms to request that you find a **substantial issue** with the appeal of the decision to permanently close Forest Avenue in favor of the Promenade project.

I strongly object the permanent closure of Forest Avenue on behalf of a small number of businesses to the extreme detriment of the community. There are numerous empty storefronts on streets surrounding Forest Avenue that will not benefit in any way from this project, as the last two years have made clear. Indeed, the loss of parking spaces that have occurred from the temporary closure of the street have only made the situation worse. I fear it will be a permanent disaster for the small businesses in our beautiful city.

I request that you grant a full and proper hearing of the appeal, which is supported by hundreds of residents who wrote to the City of Laguna Beach protesting this decision (including my husband and me).

Sincerely,

Roxane Cohen, Ph.D.
31623 Coast Highway
Laguna Beach, California 92651

Rsilver@uci.edu
713-404-9414

FW: Closing one block of Forest Avenue to traffic

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Thu 8/7/2025 8:03 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Dorothea Yellott <dyellott@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 5:29 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Closing one block of Forest Avenue to traffic

Please reconsider the closing of lower Forest Avenue to thru traffic.

Closing the street will not help the residents and business owners who live and shop in the downtown. The closing will not solve our existing problems in the area regarding the impact of many tourists, the very limited parking and difficulties of accessing and serving local shops. Laguna Beach is a small town, whose residents share its businesses and streets with a huge number of tourists already, but we pay taxes and deserve a say in what the City offers to visitors at our expense.

Speaking as a long time resident,

Dorothea Yellott

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Thu 8/7/2025 8:03 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Frank Fassero <fefassero@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 5:30 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Honorable Coastal Commissioners,

I am writing to urge you to find that a "Substantial Issue" exists with regard to the appeal of the City of Laguna Beach's approval of the Promenade on Forest project, and to respectfully request that you grant the public a full and proper hearing.

As a resident of Laguna Beach, I am deeply concerned about the long-term impacts this project will have on our community. The Promenade will significantly alter the character of downtown Laguna Beach, a place that holds historic, cultural, and economic importance to many of us.

From my perspective, the project raises numerous concerns that merit a full review:

- * **Community Input:** Many locals feel their voices have not been adequately heard. This project was fast-tracked without a comprehensive, transparent process that truly considers public input and long-term implications.
- * **Economic Impact:** While some businesses may benefit in the short term, others especially those not directly adjacent to the Promenade may suffer from reduced access, visibility, and parking. As a resident, I am concerned that the project may redirect foot traffic and create unfair advantages.
- * **Environmental and Coastal Access Concerns:** Laguna Beach is a coastal community, and permanent changes to public access areas deserve careful, thoughtful review. The Promenade could limit traditional coastal access, change traffic flow, and worsen congestion.
- * **Permanent Changes Without Full Coastal Review:** A temporary pandemic measure is now being made permanent without adequate environmental review under the Coastal Act. That is a precedent that should not be taken lightly.

The Coastal Commission's role is critical in ensuring that development projects align with the values of public access, environmental stewardship, and fairness. I urge you to uphold that role and grant a proper hearing on this matter.

Respectfully,

Frank Fassero
1401 Lavender Ln
Laguna Beach, CA 92625

- - - - -

Frank Fassero
314.223.3036
fefassero@gmail.com <<mailto:fefassero@gmail.com>>

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 4:55 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Stephen Pappin <pappy92651@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 4:48 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

As a resident I'm concerned about the direction that the City of Laguna Beach is being forced to move in. It seems that that the 22,000 residents of my town are being disregarded in favor of turning Laguna Beach into an out of control amusement park. Even worse most of the people who come to our town don't buy anything or pay for anything. No other city on the coast operates this way. So continuing to remove more paid parking spaces in favor of a courtyard where bad things will happen makes no sense at all. This invites more people to hang out, litter, drink, get high, pee, and defecate. So then the police have to allocate even more resources. Our tourist density keeps increasing until we are packed into downtown like sardines. Businesses that would have benefitted from people driving in will have large groups sitting around in a courtyard taking up space and buying nothing. It's counterintuitive. We are moving in the wrong direction. I can't use my downtown anymore. It's just going to keep getting worse until this type of uncontrolled expansion forces the closure of city lands in the same way that Rancho Palos Verdes operates, Marine Sanctuaries or Sanctioned Properties where no one can go! It's happened before. Look at Emerald Bay and Corona Del Mar where you can't go anywhere unless you pay. Crystal Cove, you have to pay to get in. Catalina, tourists are corralled downtown, and residents have passes. There are residents here who are in favor of privatizing and gating our roads. You think it can't happen? Watch, it's coming! Unlike much of LA we actually own most of the land In Laguna Beach. Even though public access has to be granted, the landowners can make it almost impossible for areas to be used.

There are three more private beaches in Laguna Beach, Orange County with no public access (Three Arch Bay, Emerald Bay, Irvine Cove). The property owners have and will start making it more difficult for people to come to Laguna Beach if things don't change to protect them. Again, we are moving in the wrong direction:



POLICE DEPARTMENT ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS

Year-to-Date Comparisons	2025	2024	RAW	%Change
Calls for Service	29,165	24,819	+4,346	+17.5%
Parking	13,064	10,912	+2,152	+19.7%
Speeding	1,022	642	+380	59.2%
Loud Exhaust	168	44	+124	+281.8%
All Arrests	491	468	+23	+4.9%
Driving Under the Influence	139	138	+11	+8.6%
Dogs Off Leash	142	156	-14	-9.0%
Drinking/Smoking in Public	699	331	+368	+111.2%

We are asking the CCC to find a "Substantial Issue" for our appeal and to grant us a full and proper hearing.

Stephen Pappin

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stephen Pappin".

219 La Brea St B
Laguna Beach CA 92651
Phone: (442) 232-1794

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 3:01 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Tracy Ahearn <tracyahe@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:59 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commssioners and Staff:

I ask that you please don't reject our appeal without a full hearing. This is a very important matter for residents of Laguna Beach and it would be respectful to listen to us.

Our appeal argues that the project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it

- 1) reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan,
- 2) does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element, and
- 3) impacts coastal community character.

I want Forest Avenue opened and restored to its original concept with parking spaces and open sidewalks that benefit all business owners. An open street is safer because emergency vehicles have quick access. This is very important for our safety especially regarding fires.

Please find a **"Substantial Issue"** with the appeal and to grant us a full and proper hearing.

Thank you for your consideration. I appreciate it.

 Much love,
Patricia Ahearn
731 Cliff Drive
Laguna Beach, Ca 92651
Tel: 949-684-0055

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 2:32 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Rosalind Russell <rstar@pacbell.net>

Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:31 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

To Whom It Does Concern:

These, I feel, are substantial reasons to stop the Promenade proposal by Laguna Beach. Thanks for your consideration.

- * I won't and don't shop on Forest anymore because of the eliminated parking
- * It is unfair to other non-related to restaurant businesses to end the parking by allowing the "parklets"
- * Visitors are discouraged because of the thoughtless elimination of parking spots close to all the Forest Avenue businesses, including restaurants
- * Coast Highway is impacted by no left turn onto Forest Avenue
- * The City can create another venue for a walking park to produce future events, rather than impacting businesses
- * The proposal is not fair to the majority

Rosalind Russell
350 Forest Ave., #4183
Laguna Beach, CA
RStar@Pacbell.net
949 497 4911

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 2:25 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Kathy <myblissdesigns@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 2:05 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please note the project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it does the following:

It reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan, The current parking situation is out of control. This Summer has been unbearable for residents. It's hard to park and hard to drive in town. It also pushes tourists to park in front of residents houses and leave their trash on the streets. People are fighting over parking spaces and driving crazy too.

It does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element. We prefer the hybrid option that the council did not consider even with 837 signatures. It's hard for residents to even go into town to shop or eat. The businesses are not happy about this either. This is also a flood zone so how is this safe?

It will ruin the historic look of the city. It also greatly impacts the coast! More people, trash everywhere, even in the ocean.

Thank you the Tanaka Family

Please appeal this!

Sent from my iPhone

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 12:11 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Diane Mello <dianelmello@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 11:12 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Cc: contact@friendsofforestavenue.com
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)
Importance: High

Dear California Coastal Commission Staff,

I am referring to and strictly oppose the “Permanent Closure of lower Forest Avenue for the Promenade Project”. Closing off these streets permanently impacts the safety of our community. How much more evidence does a committee need to have as proof of a poor choice that will impact the local residents (and tourists) for a long time to come. We need parking spaces not blocked off roads.

I understand Laguna Beach would like to draw in customers to buy their goods and to eat at local restaurants... however —the wake up call is very loud and very concerning to close Forest Avenue off permanently. I kindly offer you some examples that I have personally lived through:

I have lived in Laguna Beach since 1993...I survived the October 27th, 1993 wild fire that traumatized our community. 3 years ago, 2022 the Emerald Fire in Laguna Beach caused our evacuation once again in Laguna Beach. Please see attached URL --I am interviewed and quoted. Recently, this past July, due to a juvenile (13 year old) the “Rancho Fire” caused evacuation.



[Emerald fire in Laguna Beach area contained at 20% as officials warn, ‘Stay vigilant’](#)
[oregister.com](#)

WE NEED OUR STREETS OPEN—We need flow of traffic. Having Forest Avenue closed permanently is a negligent choice in my opinion. Also, the project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it 1) reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan, 2) does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element, and 3) impacts coastal community character.

Kind regards,

Diane Mello
2506 Altamar Dr.
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

+1 949-280-7610

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 12:10 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Eunnie Hur <eunnie@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 11:02 AM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear California Coastal Commission Staff,

Thank you for your continued service and for your consideration of public input on matters that significantly impact our communities.

I am writing to express my strong support for the appeal regarding the permanent closure of lower Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach for the Promenade project. I respectfully urge the Commission to find that a Substantial Issue exists and to allow a full public hearing on this matter.

The current proposal, as it stands, raises significant concerns that merit further scrutiny:

1. It appears to reduce parking availability below the minimum 85% occupancy threshold outlined in Laguna Beach's certified Downtown Specific Plan.
2. It is inconsistent with several elements of the City's certified Local Coastal Program, including the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element.
3. It threatens to alter the coastal community character in ways that are not fully understood or publicly discussed.

As someone who lives in Laguna Beach, frequents the beach, and relies on equitable access to public spaces, I'm concerned about the long-term impacts of permanently closing a key public street without a thorough public review process. Parking and access are already a challenge for residents and visitors alike. Removing parking spaces and limiting vehicular access without robust planning and input will further strain the community and disproportionately impact those who rely on inclusive and accessible downtown infrastructure.

A full hearing is necessary to ensure transparency, accountability, and a true reflection of the diverse voices of Laguna Beach. I respectfully request that the Commission reject staff's recommendation to deny the appeal without a hearing and instead grant the public an opportunity to be fully heard.

Eunnie Hur
3044 Bern Drive
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
eunnie@gmail.com <<mailto:eunnie@gmail.com>>

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 10:35 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: meg monahan <monahan.shops@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 10:22 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

August 6, 2025

To: California Coastal Commission

RE: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Honorable Commissioners,

I am a 40 year resident of Laguna Beach, a coastal town that's had a consistent population of around 22,000 to 23,000 over those years. During my residency, Laguna Beach has morphed from a small coastal town that was a summer vacation destination into a year-around destination for well over 6 million visitors. The overwhelming number of visitors has only increased the need for parking in our community while our city council continues to convert needed parking into restaurant and pedestrian spaces. The restaurant use of parking spaces both decreases the amount of available parking while greatly increasing the need for it.

The proposed Forest Avenue promenade further complicates the parking issue by pushing visitor parking into our residential neighborhoods because there's no available parking downtown. Visitors drive around searching for parking in our residential neighborhoods which impacts our peace, safety, security, and privacy. It also increases noise especially when visitors return to their vehicles – often talking loudly, laughing, and sometimes with drunken behavior.

We are quickly losing our safe and peaceful town while becoming another Downtown Disney – a fake, manufactured representation of a beautiful, historic coastal town.

In addition to the impact to the residents of Laguna Beach, the proposal does not meet the city's General Plan policies, nor does it meet the city's Downtown Specific Plan policies.

Please grant a full, proper hearing on the matter. It is a very serious issue for those of us who live here and suffer from the impacts.

Thank you for your consideration,

Meg Monahan
345 Flora Street
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

FW: Hearing

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 9:25 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: roakley <royoak@cox.net>

Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 9:21 AM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Hearing

Sir: I am a long term resident of Laguna Beach, and I am requesting the you hear the appeal being put forth by Friends Of Forest Avenue August 15th

Sincerely,

Jesse Oakley
1359 Cliff Dr
Laguna Beach, CA. 92651

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 9:18 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Michele Monda <michelemonda3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 9:14 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to ask that you find a "Substantial Issue" with the appeal as currently requested by Laguna Beach city staff. I ask that you grant us a full and proper hearing on an issue as town-transforming as permanent closure of our main street, Forest Avenue.

This permanent closure not only reduces the number of parking spots in the downtown but it also makes it impossible for elderly clients to shop in the local shops there with parking so far removed. Further, it totally changes the flavor and feel of our beloved Laguna. Visitors come to enjoy our authentic old town feel and enjoy one of the last remaining "Main Streets" in Orange County. I shop frequently there but increasingly the merchants are closing, leaving us with essentially a food court. This is not compatible with our Downtown Specific plan nor the town I want to live in.

I have supported temporary closure of Forest Avenue, weekends and special nights during the week. The City Council has refused to consider this option - allowing merchants to have street access during the day, and restaurants at night like they do in Europe. I fear that not only this permanent closure but taking away the curbs and totally destroying our historic street will change the town forever and not make it a place visitors or residents want to come except to eat.

Please grant us a full hearing so you can truly understand the negative impact of this request by city staff.

Thank you-

Michele Monda
23 year resident
3 Hillhaven Ranch Way, LB
Michelemonda3@gmail.com
502/594-8231

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:33 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Deborah Vanley <deborah.vanley@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 5:48 AM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please grant us a full appeal. We believe the majority of Laguna residents are not in favor of this Promenade. It should be put to a vote.

Thank you,
Christopher and Deborah Vanley
42 year residents of Laguna Beach

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:33 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: stevebunting <stevebunting@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 7:37 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Steve Bunting
3198 Bonn Dr.
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to ask you to find a Substantial Issue with the above listed appeal and to grant the Friends of Forest Avenue a full and proper hearing.

I am a life-long resident of Laguna Beach and I am opposed to the taking of Forest Avenue due to its impact on residents.

Forest Avenue has always been an important part of the downtown traffic circulation. It's closure during the City's test period has only served to demonstrate its importance as one of the principal routes into the downtown. The closure creates congestion on the smaller feeder streets as traffic from either direction on Coast Highway must now take a more circuitous through residential neighborhoods to access the downtown merchants and services. This also delays the response time by emergency vehicles responding into the downtown area.

As I'm sure you are aware, parking is limited in Laguna Beach. The City could double the amount of available parking and it would still be insufficient. The loss of parking on Forest Avenue only contributes to our misery and the City has made no effort to offset the loss of these parking spaces.

This Disneyesque effort by the City to create a European town square where there has never been one represents a significant change to the charm and character to our unique downtown. I have no objection to an occasional closure for the purpose of special events, but please, don't allow the City to permanently change that which makes Laguna Beach unique.

FW: Promenade Project in Laguna Beach, CA

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:33 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeb Brown <jebbrown@cox.net>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 6:50 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Promenade Project in Laguna Beach, CA

Dear Coastal Commission,

Please allow this email to support the proposed changes to the Promenade in Laguna Beach, CA. These changes allow the City to go ahead and make a permanent space which will be beautiful and enhance our community. The majority of the community supports this project and it received unanimous approval by the City Council.

I urge you to reject the appeal and allow us to proceed.

Thank you for your time.

Jeb Brown

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:33 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Toni Flores <tonif1939@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 8:40 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

I am very disappointed that the City wants to keep the closure of lower Forest avenue. They convinced us during Covid that it would allow restaurants to survive and we would be safer if we were eating in the fresh air. I am handicapped and this sounded like a good idea. Here is what I found. All of the other business were affected also because there is no parking near this strip of Forest Ave. . The public parking lot is a block away and I am not able to walk or use a wheelchair as it is up hill from Forest avenue. Since the closure of Forest Avenue I have not been able to buy shoes clothes, items fo my home, gifts for family and friends, or even take visitors to shop down town. I am handicapped but not dead and would like to lead as normal of life as I can. Laguna has limited handicapped park as it is and losing the spot on Forest has been noticed by many of our friends. I have lived in Laugna 56 years and would like to continue to have my town available to me. I was able to almost totally shop in Laguna before Forest Ave was closed. I was born in 1939 BC, Before Computers and have problems trying to order items I need. We are suppose to have handicap availability thru out the city but this area is off limits to us. Toni Flores 1751 Thurston Dr, Laguna Beach, Ca 92651

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:32 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Pepper <bgpepper44@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 8:30 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

This entire problem was brought about when covid almost destroyed and changed our country. It was a solution, at the time, for the citizens of Laguna to feel somewhat normal enjoying the beauty and community Laguna has always provided. The idea/plan was never really for the businesses welfare on Forest, although it definitely benefited the restaurants more than the other retail stores, it was what was needed at the time for its residents.

The project does not conform with Laguna Beach's certified Local Coastal Program because it:

- 1) reduces the number of parking spaces below the hard target occupancy threshold of 85 percent identified in the Downtown Specific Plan
- 2) Does not comply with the Downtown Specific Plan, Land Use Element, and Safety Element
- 3) Impacts coastal community character

Another issue is how are the taxes being managed/accessed when restaurants have gained more occupancy/space and other retailers have not on Forest Avenue?

I'm not from Laguna originally, but I will never forget when I arrived in the 70s the charm and uniqueness that was Laguna. We all know change is constant, sometimes not for the better.

I think making this a permanent change is one that is NOT for the better or fair to all the businesses on Forest Avenue.

My hopes are you will kindly read and carefully consider all citizens concerns on this major change to Laguna's charm and landscape with the appeal and to grant the citizens of Laguna a full and proper hearing.

Regards,

Barbara Pepper

200 Cinnamon Teal

bgpepper44@gmail.com <<mailto:bgpepper44@gmail.com>>

205-243-4889

FW: Forest closure

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:30 AM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Bobbie Phillips <bobbie.phillips@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 5:59 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Forest closure

I do not support the Forest closure in Laguna Beach.
Barbara Phillips
449 Panorama
Laguna Beach.
Sent from my iPhone

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Wed 8/6/2025 8:29 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: kurt mahoney <cherokeeeradiopeace@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 5:41 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Coastal Commission,

As a 41 year resident of Laguna Beach I strongly oppose making the Forest Avenue Promenade permanent.

This was designed as a temporary 'solution' during Covid to allow businesses to serve residents and tourists-restaurants to be exact.

It was never meant to be permanent, and should not be as

1) It eliminates badly needed parking spaces in Laguna. (Have any of you ever tried to visit Laguna-particularly in the summer months-and find parking?) The City keeps trying to 'find' parking spaces, but continues to shoot itself in the foot with things like this. It also deprives the City of revenue from these parking spots, which the City relies on heavily-counts on, in fact-as a significant part of the annual budget.

2) It favors a few restaurants on one side of the street, but does nothing for, or actually detracts from other businesses on each side of Forest.

3) It creates potentially dangerous situations with people literally parking in the southbound lane of PCH while dropping off or picking up people. I have literally encountered this more than once. You are traveling south on PCH, and at Forest the street makes a dramatic curve, and there's an SUV parked ON THE STREET, stopping traffic in that lane, causing confusion and more unneeded traffic issues.

4) Laguna Beach is in Southern California-Orange County. Not France. This is what the people who came up with this think they are emulating, but in France this has been built into the infrastructure for 100's of years. It simply does not work in a beach town of 22,000 people inundated with tourists for a large part of the year looking for a place to park.

Sincerely,
Kurt Mahoney
PO BOX 4212 Laguna Beach, Ca 92652
949-497-1523 (LAND LINE-NO TEXT)

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agends Appeal #A-5-LGB-25-0018(City of Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Tue 8/5/2025 6:41 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

Hi Janet,
Here's a public comment for review.

Becky

From: Darrylin Girvin <dgirvin1216@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 5:31 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agends Appeal #A-5-LGB-25-0018(City of Laguna Beach)

Dear Coastal Commissioners,

Please accept my email for consideration of the Appeal of the Promenade on Forest Ave.

I am a 27 year resident of Laguna Beach. But, I have been coming to Laguna Beach since my College years. The town had an attractive charm about it with lovely shops and great restaurants especially along this one block area.

Now, since 2021 the COVID era has changed it, not for the better. The Promenade had its use to help keep businesses open. But now, it is a determinant for the local Retail businesses in this one short block. 45 parking spaces were removed that the retail and restaurants relied on. Two long time businesses have closed and this could continue along this strip if the Promenade is allowed to stay.

We would gain 45 parking spaces back, to accommodate the visitors and our local shoppers and bring back the Charm to this area of Laguna Beach.

As to the staff report's conclusions they do not conform to the City's LCP as you will read in our Appeal nor is it consistent with the Policies of the Certified LCP.

You can read the reasoning behind these faulty conclusions made by the Staff in our Appeal Email and testimony.

I encourage you to uphold our Appeal and Deny the City's Request for your approval on this issue.

Thank you,
Darrylin Girvin
dkgirvin1216@gmail.com
949-633-7565 cell

FW: Lower Forest Avenue between Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Tue 8/5/2025 4:55 PM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: JONATHAN ELLICHMAN <ellichman@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:49 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Lower Forest Avenue between Coast Highway and Glenneyre Street

I have specific concerns regarding tax revenues that are being put towards the maintenance of the street, sewage, public lighting, as well as parking spots.

It seems as though we have private businesses utilizing public roads for business at taxpayers expense. This is impacting our downtown plan of 85% threshold for parking, does not comply with land use element or safety and most certainly affects our coastal community obligation.

Jonathan Ellichman

FW: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Tue 8/5/2025 4:55 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: margaretbee <margaretbee@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:54 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Please find a “**Substantial Issue**” with the appeal and to grant a full and proper hearing.

The temporary closure has negatively affected traffic in the downtown and it will be a total wipeout in any substantial flooding. Meanwhile, resident-serving businesses in the area and on the fringes of it are suffering and cannot survive. The only businesses that will survive will be restaurants, bars, coffee and possibly another t-shirt shop. Tuvalu, the retail business at the entry, has access to nearby parking and a separate entrance from one in the "promenade" and so it has maintained. In the past I frequented Brussels Bistro and Moulin but have not been there since the street was closed off as it's too far to walk from parking. I go to the library several times a week and they have had to install security to ensure their parking is available for library patrons and I see the commission has included library parking as available after hours but who pays attention to that, cars will be parking there during the day to access the "promenade". The current "temporary Promenade" is virtually empty at many hours - many people have simply strayed over from the City's large and beautiful park directly across the street unless they have come to eat in one of the restaurants. Plus the City has avoided giving the public any cost estimates and has not divulged how they intend to pay for it. Residents should be allowed to vote on this issue. 90% of these closed-street affairs fail and are returned to open traffic. That will be another cost residents must bear.

Re: Promenade in downtown Laguna Beach

From Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Tue 8/5/2025 4:55 PM

To SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>; Palm, Jeffrey@Coastal <jeffrey.palm@coastal.ca.gov>

thanks, its mine

Janet Torres, Ph.D.

(They/Them/Elle)

Coastal Program Analyst

California Coastal Commission | South Coast District

(562) 590-5071

301 E. Ocean Blvd, Suite 300

Long Beach, CA, 90802

From: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:54 PM

To: Palm, Jeffrey@Coastal <jeffrey.palm@coastal.ca.gov>; Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: FW: Promenade in downtown Laguna Beach

Hi,

I believe this has to do with an august item, I wasn't sure which one.

-----Original Message-----

From: Nancy Rogers <nancyrogers46@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:46 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Promenade in downtown Laguna Beach

Hi to whom this may concern. I live on the 3rd and Forest Street.

I'm happy the way things are in downtown so I'm opposed to the proposal to expand it. Leave it alone the way it is otherwise it will be too crowded and parking lot will be an issue.

Please just leave it as it is. It won't be the same if you expand it further . Thank you reconsidering it.

Nancy

FW: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Date Tue 8/5/2025 4:50 PM
To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Chris Tebbutt <chris.tebbutt@compass.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:44 PM
To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Dear Coastal Commissioners,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to find a “Substantial Issue” with the appeal of the Promenade project in Laguna Beach and to grant a full and proper public hearing.

As a long-time resident and business owner in Laguna Beach, I am deeply concerned about the lasting impacts this project will have—not just on the character of our town, but also on the day-to-day accessibility for residents and visitors. The Promenade, as proposed, significantly limits access into the downtown village and, more importantly since being closed during the pandemic, restricts essential routes for residents trying to reach their own homes.

Our coastal downtown should remain open, inclusive, and easily accessible to all. Any project that curtails this access without thorough review and public input is cause for concern. Additionally, the potential impacts on businesses, coastal views, and public access deserve close scrutiny under the Coastal Act.

Laguna Beach is a unique and cherished community. Decisions that could permanently alter our coastal environment and public access points must be made with transparency and full public participation.

I urge you to ensure that the public’s voice is heard by granting a full hearing on this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris Tebbutt

504 Goff St

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

939.485.9898

Chris Tebbutt / Founder

540 S. Coast Hwy #202 / Laguna Beach CA 92651

Mobile [949.485.9898](tel:949.485.9898) / License 01993864

[Agent Profile](#) / [Chris Tebbutt Group](#)

FW: : Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

From SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Date Tue 8/5/2025 9:06 AM

To Torres, Janet@Coastal <janet.torres@coastal.ca.gov>

From: Johanna Felder <johanna@felders.net>

Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 8:46 AM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: : Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda Item Friday 11a - Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Janet Torres, Coastal Program Analyst

California Coastal Commission

Re: Agenda Item 11.a, August 15, 2025, South Coast District

Appeal No. A-5-LGB-25-0018, City of Laguna Beach

Dear Dr. Torres:

August 5, 2025

I am taking this opportunity to respond to significant parts of the Staff Report.

Grounds for an appeal to the California Coastal Commission include “allegations that the approved development does not conform to the LCP” (Appeal Information Sheet, p.

3). The Staff Report ignores two allegations fatal to its conclusion that the project approvals “are consistent with the policies of the certified LCP” (p. 2). **1) There is a required 85 percent target occupancy threshold in the Downtown Specific Plan, Local Coastal Program.**

The Staff Report ignores the specific metric in the LCP for determining whether parking spaces can be eliminated. The City’s own parking study—conducted *off-season*, not even in summer when demand is highest—demonstrates that the loss of parking on lower Forest Avenue exceeds the 85 percent target occupancy threshold in the downtown.

2) Laguna Beach’s LCP requires that all projects subject to design review “shall comply with *all applicable policies of the General Plan, including all of its elements, applicable specific plans, and the certified local coastal program*” (25.05.040(H)(5), emphasis added).

Please consider the above points as the Staff Report does not understand that under Laguna Beach’s LCP, conformity with the LCP is not achieved unless the project complies with “all” “elements” of the General Plan. The City never reviewed the project at any point in light of the Safety Element of the General Plan, even though the project is located within a FEMA-mapped floodway and Special Flood Hazard

The Village Laguna’s rebuttal focuses on abundant evidence of at least two keyways the City’s approvals are inconsistent with LCP policies. I believe their evidence and concerns raise a Substantial Issue.

Respectfully,
Johanna Felder
Laguna Beach, CA.

From: Patricia Halman-Menne <patmenne@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 2:53 PM

To: SouthCoast@Coastal <SouthCoast@coastal.ca.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on August 2025 Agenda item Friday 11a-Appeal no. !-5-LGB-15-0018 (City of Laguna Beach, Laguna Beach)

Hello - I urge the Commissioners asking them to find a "Substantial Issue" with the appeal and to grant us a full and proper hearing.

The Permanent Closure of Forest Ave will be a hardship on myself as a Senior Citizen - as the City is eliminating Vital On=Street Access and Parking to the Merchants. I have purchase medicine from Bushards Pharmacy, shoes at the Shoe Cellar and summer cotton clothing from Fresh Produce. This is a resident serving street and access - and should remain open to public access and parking. Also any ADA parking is hundreds of yards away from this street via a side alley and parking is limited.

Please approve the Appeal - and Deny the City of Laguna Beach to permanently close Forest Ave in Laguna Beach.

Respectfully

Patricia Halman-Menne

31988 10th Ave, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

949.246.6182

patmenne@gmail.com

resident since 1994.

Pat Menne

949-246-6182