

# Director's Highlights

## Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services November 2024 Highlights

Prepared by Director Brent Dennis

1. October came to a fun close with Halloween programs throughout our park system with "Trunk or Treat" events at our community centers with youth and seniors catching the spirit of the holiday. Our Employee Recreation Committee hosted a great Halloween Potluck Luncheon and Costume Contest that brought out the creativity and culinary delights from our Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services team. Following Halloween, the City's celebration of Dia De Los Muertos Parade and Arts Festival downtown on Pine Avenue and onto Marina Green on Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> saw a tremendous turnout for the parade.
2. The El Dorado Nature Center will be offering its popular Annual California Native Plant Sale November 5 – 26 on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 am – 1pm or while supplies last. Enhance your garden, patio or balcony, while increasing habitat for wildlife. Select from hundreds of beautiful and beneficial California native plants. For more information, call (562) 570-1745.
3. The new Scherer Park Vision Plan is scheduled to be on the Long Beach City Council meeting agenda for Tuesday, November 19, 2024. The Vision Plan was presented and supported by the Parks and Recreation Commission earlier this year following extensive community outreach and engagement. As District 8 Councilman Al Austin heads into the final weeks of the conclusion of his 12 years of leadership and service as a Long Beach Councilmember, the Scherer Park Vision Plan, coupled with the ribbon cutting celebration of Davenport Park on Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, are great examples of the effectiveness of his advocacy and support of parks and open space in Council District 8. The Davenport Park ribbon cutting event is scheduled for 1pm on November 12<sup>th</sup> at 2910 E. 55<sup>th</sup> Way, Long Beach.
4. IMPORTANT SPECIAL EVENT REMINDER: Thursday, November 21, 2024, at 10am, our Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services team will pause to gather in Good Neighbor Park at the Department's Memorial Tree to read the names of those co-workers, past and present, who have passed away. With a Department-wide team that can exceed 1,000 individuals at the peak of summer season, coupled with the realization that hundreds of team members have lengthy terms of service, it seems like an unfortunate occurrence that we find ourselves mourning the passing of a co-worker. Along with immediate family members, whose deaths also create great sadness and emotional challenges for our Department family.

This annual event has proven to be an important moment of additional healing and at times, closure to the range of emotions related to the passing of someone close.

5. While some in the community may feel like our Marine Bureau team is rushing the holiday season, the truth being known is that we are installing the popular local holiday tradition of Trees on the Bay throughout our waterways, lakes, and parks this month. Introduced this year, are ten solar-powered, LED illuminated trees in the Colorado Lagoon. The 68 floating iconic holiday trees will be lighted the night of Thanksgiving.
6. Still pending is a final announcement for the long-awaited dedication of the Junipero Beach Sports Courts. Unfortunately, some important finishing details within the project contractor's work were not completed in time for a previously scheduled ribbon cutting, that event was postponed to a date and time to be determined, most likely in the early part of the new year. The project brings a new basketball court and roller skating plaza to this popular beachfront active recreational area.
7. Pickleball continues to grow in popularity across Long Beach and our facilities are becoming heavily patronized. A request for proposals (RFP) for management of the El Dorado Tennis Center and the Billie Jean King Tennis Center will transition the operations of both facilities to tennis and pickleball centers. Joining the popular dedicated pickleball courts in DeForest Park and Veterans Park will be the addition of dedicated pickleball courts in Silverado Park.