



THE CALIFORNIA HEIGHTS

NEWS FROM THE CALIFORNIA HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Promoting Public Knowledge and Preservation of Historic and Architectural Resources in the California Heights Historic District



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Historic Home Tour Update	1
President's Message	3
Savoring Community— Supporting Our Local Restaurants	4
From the 5th District	5
Cal Heights in Pictures	6
Historic District Design Guidelines Friendly Reminder	8
Orange Avenue Bikeway Update	9
In the Know'lls	10
Calendar & Important #s	12



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Historic Home Tour Update and Looking Ahead to 2027

by Tara Riggi

We want to share an important update regarding the California Heights Historic Home Tour. After thoughtful discussion, the CHNA Board has made the decision to postpone the 2026 tour to 2027. This was not an easy decision, and we sincerely apologize to our neighbors and supporters who were looking forward to participating this year.

Ultimately, we were unable to secure enough homes to create the caliber of tour our neighborhood has come to expect and deserves. The Historic Home Tour is a signature event for California Heights, and we believe it is important to present a well-rounded and inspiring experience that truly showcases the architectural character and pride of our community.

The good news is that 2027 will mark the 30-year anniversary of the California Heights Historic Home Tour, and we are committed to making it a truly momentous event. Our goal is to feature a larger and more diverse collection of homes, along with added perks, special programming, and elevated experiences for both attendees and participating homeowners. This milestone year gives us the opportunity to create a tour that honors the past while celebrating the future of our neighborhood.

To make that happen, we need the support of our community. The success of our Historic Home Tour depends entirely on residents who are willing to open their homes and gardens for the day. Volunteering your home is one of the most meaningful ways to support California Heights. The tour is one of CHNA's largest fundraising efforts, and the proceeds are reinvested directly back into our neighborhood through programs like Clean Streets, lamppost maintenance, community events, and other neighborhood improvements.

If you have ever considered participating, now is the time. We would love to hear from homeowners who may be interested in being part of this special anniversary tour. If you are interested in participating in the 2027 Historic Home Tour or would like more information, please contact us at info@calheights.org. 🐾



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President's Message

Happy New Year, California Heights,

As we begin 2026, I want to thank our residents for the continued pride, care, and involvement you show in our neighborhood. California Heights remains a special place because of the people who live here and the time and energy they invest in keeping our community connected, welcoming, and thriving.

With the new year comes new opportunities to get involved. The California Heights Neighborhood Association is actively seeking residents who are interested in volunteering and joining our board. Whether you have time to help with events, neighborhood initiatives, or long-term planning, your perspective and participation truly matter. Serving on the board is a meaningful way to contribute to the neighborhood and help shape the work we do together. If you are curious or would like to learn more, please reach out to us at info@calheights.org.

I also want to encourage everyone to stay connected with us throughout the year by following our social media accounts. You can find us on Instagram at [@calheights](https://www.instagram.com/calheights) and on Facebook at *California Heights Neighborhood Association*. These platforms are where we share event updates, volunteer opportunities, neighborhood news, and important announcements in real time.

Thank you for being part of what makes California Heights such a vibrant and engaged community. I look forward to another year of working together and strengthening the neighborhood we all call home.

Warm regards,

Tara Riggi President
California Heights Neighborhood Association



Interested in volunteering? We are looking for:

- **Webmaster**
- **Home Tour Coordinator**
- **Social Media Guru**

If you are looking to help the neighborhood, reach out at info@calheights.org!

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Savoring Community—Supporting Our Local Restaurants

by Eniko Bolivar-Murphy

Our California Heights neighborhood has always taken pride in the vibrant, diverse, and delicious food scene that surrounds us. From beloved neighborhood coffee shops to the breweries that have become local favorites, our community’s restaurants are places where neighbors meet.

Yet right now, many of these vital community spaces are facing unprecedented challenges.

In a recent *Longbeachize* article, food writer Brian Addison highlights the struggles hitting casual and mid-range restaurants across Long Beach including rising costs, shrinking customer demand, and difficult economic conditions that have forced closures, menu cuts, and reduced hours.

Choosing to dine locally makes a real difference. Whether it’s grabbing your morning coffee, meeting friends for dinner, or ordering takeout, every visit helps keep these treasured spots thriving.

Here are simple ways you can help support our neighborhood restaurants:

- Choose local first—make a regular habit of eating dinner at a nearby spot.
- Explore new places—try a restaurant you haven’t visited yet and tell your friends about your experience.
- Leave positive reviews—small actions can make a big difference in visibility.

California Heights and surrounding neighborhoods are lucky to be surrounded by so many excellent restaurants and cafés. Let’s show our appreciation for those who make California Heights a great place to live. 🍷

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From the 5th District

Councilwoman Megan Kerr



Happy New Year, Cal Heights Neighbors!

I hope you've all had a wonderful start to the new year and are looking forward to what lies ahead in 2026.

As of this January, I am pleased to welcome two new Public Service Fellows to our CD5 Team! As part of the Long Beach Workforce Innovation Network's Public Service Fellowship program, two Cal State Long Beach students will assist with our office operations as they gain valuable hands-on experience in the field of public service. Stop by our table at events like First Fridays or community meetings to say hello!

In 2026, my office will continue hosting monthly CD5 Community Meetings at alternating locations within the district. The first one was held on Thursday, Jan. 29th at Wardlow Park, where we were joined by LBPD Chief Wally Hebeish as he discussed department news and answered community questions. We hope to see you at the next meeting, on Thursday, Feb. 26th at the Expo Arts Center, featuring Fire Chief Dennis Buchanan.

This year, traffic safety and infrastructure improvements remain top priorities for the City. Per the recent staff report providing an update to the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, the Traffic Engineering Team has recommended speed limits on Orange Avenue be reduced from 30/35mph to the State standard of 25mph and the addition of refuge islands and new striping on Bixby Road from Orange Avenue to Cherry Avenue.

Additionally, the Carson Street Complete Street Project—which will improve road conditions, safety, and accessibility along the corridor—is officially underway! At the time of writing, tree removals are scheduled and construction work is set to take place from January 19 to May 15, 2026. Expect major impacts to traffic and plan your routes accordingly! Learn more about the project and its features at longbeach.gov/pw/projects/carson-complete-street-project.

As always, I appreciate your continued engagement with me and my office. For more routine CD5 updates, I encourage you to subscribe to our weekly digital newsletter by signing up at longbeach.gov/district5. Please continue to share questions, concerns, and ideas with me by calling (562) 570-5555 or emailing district5@longbeach.gov.



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Cal Heights in Pictures

All images by Tom Underhill



1. Ambitious Ales (located at 4019 Atlantic Avenue) making some new brews
2. Wine and other goods at Meat and Vino Market (located at 901 E. Wardlow Road)
3. Friendly faces and pastries at Jongewaard's Bake n Broil (located at 3697 Atlantic Avenue)
4. Fresh sushi at Sushi Nikkei (located at 3819 Atlantic Avenue)
5. Lovely outdoor patio at Nonna Mercato (located at 3722 Atlantic Avenue)
6. Fresh bread and other baked goods at The Merchant (located at 4121 Long Beach Boulevard)



10. Enjoying some brews from Dutch's BrewHouse (located at 4244 Atlantic Avenue)



- 7. Lola's team serving Mexican cuisine at a pop-up event (restaurant located at 4140 Atlantic Avenue)
- 8. Yummy breakfast dishes from Blackbird Cafe (located at 3405 Orange Avenue)
- 9. Legendary and local restaurant-Phil Trani's (located at 3490 Long Beach Boulevard)

Come Visit the Dana Neighborhood Library!

Dana Neighborhood Library Hours:

- Tuesdays: 12:00pm-7:00pm
- Wednesdays: 12:00pm-6:00pm
- Thursdays: 12:00pm-7:00pm
- Fridays: 10:00am-5:00pm
- Saturdays: 10:00am-5:00pm

Weekly Programs:

- Thursdays: Teen Program @ 2:30pm
- Fridays: Toddlers' Storytime @ 10:30am

Monthly Programs:

- Crochet Workshop
- Adult Book Club
- Other Events

Address: 3680 Atlantic Ave. Long Beach, CA 90807
 For more information, please call the Dana Library at (562) 570-1042.

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Historic District Design Guidelines Friendly Reminder

by Karen Highberger

We want to take this opportunity to remind California Heights residents that Long Beach has design guidelines for all of our 18 Historic Districts. The areas that seem to generate the most questions involve windows and fencing.

WINDOWS

The City does not allow vinyl, fiberglass, composite or aluminum-clad wood windows in Cal Heights. Most of the homes were built with wood windows which are of first growth lumber which is very dense and strong as compared to farmed wood. If you have original wood windows that are in bad shape, you can have them restored by a company like Window Restoration and Repair or if you are a do-it-yourself type, you can tackle the project yourself. If you want dual paned wood windows, they are available and meet current Title 24 guidelines for energy conservation. This type of window is required in new additions. Despite the barrage of advertising of Anderson Renewal windows in the neighborhood, they are not an approved window and are not allowed. Original style windows are a key character defining feature of Historic District homes and replacing them with an incompatible type threatens the historic fabric of our homes. Two local companies, Castillo Sash & Door and Omnicraft Enterprises, Inc. can supply and install new wood windows that meet the requirements.

FENCES

Few properties in Cal Heights have existing front yard fencing. An open front yard area without front fencing is a character-defining feature of the district. Where they do exist, they are typically a wood picket fence painted to match the home or a low stucco retaining wall necessitated by the lot grade. Installing a new fence on the street-facing elevation is not recommended without sufficient documentation to indicate that it existed historically. As so few of the properties in the district have front fencing, the introduction of this feature would disrupt the visual continuity of the district. Rear fencing is acceptable. Height restrictions may apply and vary by location. Appropriate rear fencing materials include vertical wood planks, dog-eared fencing, board and batten fencing or other vertically orientated wood fencing. The use of concrete block, vinyl, or chain link are not permitted. You can have a concrete block wall as long as it is finished with an application of stucco and painted to match the home.



...SHOP LOCALLY

It is important for residents to follow the Historic District Guidelines for our district. Any new work valued at \$600 or more requires a building permit and any project, including new windows, fences, and exterior paint require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Repair and maintenance of existing features do not require a permit. Failure to follow the proper procedures can result in a citation and the requirement to remove the unapproved/un-permitted work as well as a fine. You can find detailed information about the guidelines at <http://www.longbeach.gov/lbds/planning/preservation/districts/guidelines>.

The Historic District Guidelines are in place to protect the character and historic fabric of the neighborhood. Please be respectful of your neighbors and let's all work together to keep Cal Heights beautiful. 🐾

Orange Avenue Bikeway Update

by John Moreland

On October 14, 2025, the Long Beach Public Works Department decided to move forward with "Alternative 2" for the Orange Avenue Bikeway. For those that may have missed previous meetings or articles, Alternative 2 is where the center turn lane will be removed and two bike lanes (one in each direction) will be striped next to where cars currently park. The Mobility, Port, and Infrastructure held a hearing on this bikeway on November 19, 2025 where the same recommendation was discussed.

Currently the bikeway is undergoing a specific design phase for the entire stretch of Orange Avenue that is in the City of Long Beach. It is anticipated that construction would start in the Fall of 2026. With the planned improvements to Carson Street already underway, there will be a lot of construction within Cal Heights and surrounding areas. Please drive slowly and avoid distractions in construction areas as travel patterns will change.

For detailed information related to the Orange Avenue Bikeway, please see: <https://www.longbeach.gov/pw/projects/orange-avenue-backbone-bikeway>.

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IN THE KNOW'LLS
What's New? What's Happening?

by Blair Cohn, Executive Director BKBIA

Hey, Neighbors:

Writing this article way in advance and hoping that January was as mellow as we hoped. Last January turned out to be more frantic than expected. Hoping for calm, joy, and peace for the start of your new years.

And we find ourselves back in February, the month for love (and Alissa Cohn's birthday). It's also a month for the Superbowl and for presidents. A month for Black History. A month for groundhogs. A month of Chinese New Year. And Ash Wednesday.

Our Black History Month Celebration at First Fridays, February 6th, will be extra special. Not only will the Expo Arts Center have great cultural music and "Learn Something" exhibitions and profiles, but...

February is also a milestone month. Did you know that the Bixby Knolls Strollers just turned 18 and have walked roughly 3,556 miles together, which is just about from Long Beach to Quebec City! The Bixby Knolls Literary Society turns 18 this month and my 93-year-old-father will lead the anniversary discussion like he has for years. Our Knights of the Round (Turn) Table turns 8 and is diving into the greatest records ever made. We have maintained our core services of our Clean Team (litter and weed abatement) and CSI Patrol Service continues its security patrols around our district (increasing the patrols thanks to the donations to our Foundation). Consistency is key and is now a model for other districts.

The wheels go round and round. We have also begun planning Women's History Month in March with

our "Women of Bixby Knolls" (business owners) features, and our favorite Long Beach County Fair at First Fridays in April. We will soon be planning our summer concert series. Be on the lookout for more flash events and other "women's walk" through the neighborhood. Our annual "State of the Business District" meeting is set for later this month where we speak specifically about what we did in 2025, what we plan to do in 2026 (especially with the state grant from Senator Gonzalez).

AND...Let love rule this month and do not forget your sweethearts on Valentine's Day! You have plenty of options in the business district for dining, fun gifts, and flowers (Melinda McCoy's Flowers, Bixby Petals, And Then Boutique, Rooted, The Better Half Boutique, Long Beach Clothing Co., Sala Coffee & Wine, Euca Beauty Lounge, Willmore Wine Bar, Bundts on Melrose, See's Candies, The Vintage LBC, Fingerprints, Urban Sugar Salon, Eclipsed Emporium, AndyLiz, Gems and Jewels, Lucy's Boudoir, Semilitas, The Merchant, Alsace Lorraine Bakery, Nonna Mercato, Stateside Crafts, Corked, Liquorland, and MANY other great options). You can also buy gift cards from just about any business around to share with your loved one.

Business Feature: Have you all been to Ancestros yet? 3550 Long Beach Boulevard. Ancestros Mexican Cuisine was born from a family's passion for sharing traditional Mexican recipes with the vibrant community of Long Beach. The journey started with a dream to bring the rich, diverse flavors of Mexico to California. "We cater to a diverse clientele – from locals seeking a taste of home to food enthusiasts craving genuine Mexican cuisine. Our restaurant is a hub where every guest is treated like family, creating memorable dining experiences for all." Grab the family and head there for your next meal.

Again, we highly recommend you sign up for our newsletters if you haven't done so already. Please go to www.bixbyknollsinfo.com. You will be fully "in the Know'lls" with what's happening around the district.

Happy Birthday Alissa Cohn!

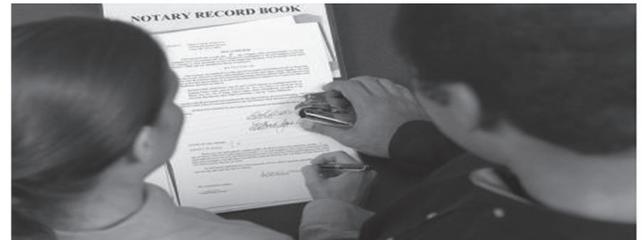
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First Friday of each Month: First Fridays in Bixby Knolls.
firstfridayslongbeach.com

Every Second and Fourth Saturday: Hazardous Waste Collection at EDCO, 9:00am to 2:00pm. longbeachrecycles.org



Thank you to all the volunteers who make Cal Heights the best in the west!

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Lena Gonzalez, State Senate 33rd District
562-256-7921

Gavin Newsom, Governor
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Nanette Diaz Barragán, 44th House District
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Dana Branch Library
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