



The Week in Review

City Manager Grace K. Leung
January 7, 2022

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, January 11

City Council Meeting

City Hall, Council Chambers
100 Civic Center Drive
4 p.m.

[\(Insider's Guide\)](#)

Wednesday, January 12

Harbor Commission Meeting

City Hall, Council Chambers
100 Civic Center Drive
5 p.m.

Thursday, January 13

Zoning Administrator Meeting

Via Zoom

[\(Register here\)](#)

10 a.m.

Community Members:

As the surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the Omicron variant continues, the City has temporarily modified some of our operations to ensure we continue to maintain all services to the community.

Beginning on January 3, we temporarily closed City Hall to the public, shifting some in-person services to online and phone only. Our permit counters continue to serve customers through drop-off bins placed outside City Hall, which were utilized as part of previous COVID protocols. City libraries are open, but no in-person meetings or programs will take place at libraries until further notice. Bill paying and other revenue operations will be conducted online and by phone. Recreation classes will continue as scheduled; community centers will be limited to programs participants only. The January 11th City Council meeting will be in person and open to the public, with the Community Room open for additional seating.

Our highest priority is to maintain staffing so that services and service levels to the community continue during this time.

We anticipate these protocols will be in place at least through mid-January. However, we are carefully monitoring the COVID Omicron outbreak in consultation with Hoag Hospital and County health officials, and will adjust as necessary.

COUNTY STRONGLY URGES PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

The Orange County Public Health Care Agency underscored the severity of the COVID-19 surge this week, noting that the cases are reaching levels that haven't been seen previously during the pandemic.

Visit the City's website for a complete listing of meetings and events at newportbeachca.gov/events.

The County reports that between December 30 and January 5, the seven-day average COVID-19 case rate in Orange County jumped from 25.5 to 67.5 per 100,000 people and the average number of daily COVID-19 cases rose from 822 to 2,179. The positivity rate also increased from 6.5 to 16.2 percent, hospitalizations from 453 to 673, and ICU admissions from 89 to 114 per day.

The majority of people who are hospitalized due to COVID-19 continue to be among those who are unvaccinated, at 87%. In addition to getting vaccinated, Orange County residents and visitors are encouraged to take the following preventative measures against COVID-19:

Get tested 24 hours before and 3-5 days after gathering or traveling:

- Self-collection, at-home COVID-19 Test Kits are available at no cost to people who work or live in Orange County, and can be ordered online at ochealthinfo.com/covidtest.
- An email address is required for each individual requesting a test kit.
- Each kit comes with a prepaid shipping return label and results are provided within 24-48 hours upon receipt of the specimen.

People without symptoms, or who have mild symptoms and are at low risk of severe disease, should not go to the hospital or emergency room to obtain screening testing. Hospitals are focused on people who are sick and need urgent care. Rapid tests are currently in short supply nationwide; people who are in need of quicker test results are encouraged to check with their healthcare provider or local retail pharmacy for availability of rapid tests.

California mask mandate extended to February 15:

- According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), universal masking indoors is now [required](#) through February 15, 2022 to slow the spread of COVID-19.
- For full guidance on effective masks as well as guidance for improved fit and protection, click [here](#).
- For additional frequently asked questions about the State's universal masking mandate, click [here](#).

Follow COVID-19 safety precautions:

- Limit or avoid large gatherings, especially indoors
- Keep a safe distance from others who may be unvaccinated
- Wash and sanitize your hands often and thoroughly
- Ensure good ventilation by keeping doors and windows open
- Regularly self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; and
- Stay home if you are sick

Recommendations for Pfizer Booster and Additional Primary Doses

On [January 4](#) and [January 5](#), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued the following recommendations for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to be administered:

- As a booster dose in individuals ages 12-17
- As a booster dose 5 months after primary vaccination, for individuals age 12 and older
- As a third additional primary dose for moderately or severely immunocompromised children ages 5-11, 28 days after their second dose

The recommendations apply only to the Pfizer vaccine, not to the Moderna or Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccines.

Vaccines continue to be widely available throughout Orange County for walk-in, same day and future appointments. Individuals who are not yet vaccinated or boosted against COVID-19, or are eligible for a third dose (due to immunocompromise conditions) are encouraged to visit a local pharmacy or healthcare provider, or go online to [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://www.myturn.ca.gov) or [Othena.com](https://www.othena.com), to schedule a vaccination appointment.

For more information on COVID-19 information and resources, including case counts, vaccination and testing in Orange County, visit ochealthinfo.com/covid.

COVID-19 Cases in Newport Beach

As of January 6, the total cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Newport Beach was 5,415, an increase of 1,348 cases since December 16. The total number of cases in Orange County as of January 6 was 368,432, an increase of 50,050 cases since December 16. The number of recovered COVID-19 patients countywide as of January 6 was 311,519. These figures are provided to Orange County by the California Department of Public Health. The County's daily, weekday update of COVID-19 case information is [available at this link](#). Those seeking vaccination options can visit the HCA page [at this link](#).

Free Christmas Tree Pickup Continues Through January 15

If you would like free pickup and recycling of your Christmas tree, please remove all lights, ornaments, and bases, and place the tree near your trash carts on the same day as your regular collection service between now and January 15. Trees must be six feet or less, so you may need to cut trees larger than six feet.

Sculpture Exhibition in Civic Center Park, Phase VII – Public Poll

The Newport Beach City Arts Commission invites members of the community to vote on the final selection of sculptures in Phase VII of the rotating exhibition in Civic Center Park. Facilitated by Arts Orange County, the public survey is open to Newport Beach residents only and will remain open until January 10, 2022.

The sculptures selected for public vote were chosen by the City Arts Commission, and curatorial panel members May Sun, a freelance artist and professor at the California Institute of the Arts, and Brian Peterson, a muralist, former industrial-designer at Kia Design Center America, and founder of the nonprofit organization, The Faces of Santa Ana. Panelists discussed criteria for artwork under consideration and reviewed sculpture applications. The panel evaluated the works in four critical areas -- artistic merit, durability, practicality, and site appropriateness -- and then selected artworks of various sizes, mediums, and subject matter for the public online survey.

The public's vote will select the final ten sculptures that will be installed for Phase VII of the sculpture exhibition. These sculptures will be reviewed by the City Council at the February 8, 2022 Regular Meeting for final approval. Selected sculptures will be on loan to the City of Newport Beach for two years. Sculptors, whose artworks are chosen for installation in Civic Center Park, will receive a small honorarium. The City is responsible for installing the art, while artists are responsible for the maintenance and repair of their work. The outdoor exhibition attracts an audience of all ages, including schoolchildren, the local community, and visitors from Southern California and beyond.

[Take the public online survey to vote for your favorite sculpture.](#)

Balboa Boulevard Median Improvements Underway

Construction for the Balboa Boulevard Median Improvements project is now underway. The City's contractor, Green Giant Landscape, will be reconstructing the medians on Balboa Boulevard from 12th Street to Medina Way between now and May 2022. Construction is scheduled to be completed prior to the busy summer season. The improvements include widening the existing raised medians, installing new median hardscape, a new median irrigation system and new median landscaping, slurry sealing the roadway, installing new traffic signing and striping, and adjusting utilities to grade. Temporary parking restrictions and lane closures will be in place to facilitate construction activities. These median improvements are a continuation of the improvements previously completed in 2017 on Balboa Boulevard between 21st Street and 12th Street.

In addition, a separate utility construction contract will also be in progress in the same vicinity. Asplundh Construction will be installing fiber optics lines on Balboa Boulevard.

Homelessness Update

- 20 people who had been experiencing homelessness in Newport Beach are now sheltered in the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.
- City Net, the City's contract homeless services agency, helped several clients obtain Emergency Housing Vouchers. Emergency Housing Vouchers, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, allow people to pay affordable rent based on their fixed incomes. Nine people experiencing homelessness in Newport Beach have been awarded vouchers. The voucher program is administered by the Orange County Housing Authority. City Net is assisting Newport Beach clients with completing the necessary paperwork, obtaining bank statements, touring potential rental apartments, and more.
- City Net completed housing paperwork for two people who obtained housing opportunities through the County's Coordinated Entry System of care. The Coordinated Entry System matches people with permanent housing opportunities based on their needs and income.
- City Net completed an application with a client to obtain a permanent resident card as an identifying document for housing navigation.
- City Net connected a newly housed person with housing stabilization services to ensure a successful transition.
- Staff continues to provide food gift cards, support, and case management to people sheltering in motels while they await placement into permanent, supportive housing with Emergency Housing Vouchers.

To donate to those experiencing homelessness in Newport Beach, please visit our [Good Giving Program web page](#).

Insider's Guide for the Newport Beach City Council Meeting on January 11, 2022

Our next City Council meeting is Tuesday, January 11. Items that may be of interest are highlighted below. The entire agenda, and all reports, can be viewed [here](#).

A closed session will begin at 4 p.m.

The regular session begins at 5 p.m., with the following items of note:

Consent Calendar:

- A resolution to create a steering committee to help oversee the development of the City's General Plan Update. The committee will help shape the scope of the General Plan update, participate in the selection of a consultant and provide periodic reports to the City Council, among other tasks. The last comprehensive update to the General Plan was in 2006.
- A contract amendment with Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc., in the amount of \$85,765, for services related to the Newport Bay trash wheel project. The goal of the trash wheel project is to capture a significant portion of floating trash and debris that now flows from the San Diego Creek into Newport Bay and the harbor. The device is modeled after the successful trash wheel installed in Baltimore's Inner Harbor in 2015. It is a moored vessel that uses booms to collect trash and move it to a rotating trash wheel, where it is then transported to a conveyor belt and into a dumpster for collection and disposal. Construction of the trash wheel is expected to begin in late 2022 and be completed in Spring 2024.

- Amendments to the City’s municipal code related to the operation of residential group home sober-living facilities. The proposed amendments would standardize application requirements for group facilities and establish standard conditions of approval. The application requirements may include intake procedures, relapse policies and staff qualifications. Potential conditions of approval may include transportation responsibilities for residents upon program completion or eviction, facility inspections, and onsite Narcan requirements. The requirements would only apply to care facilities that fall under City land use authority (facilities that serve seven or more occupants). The City has no regulatory jurisdiction over residential care facilities that serve six or fewer occupants, which are permitted by the state.

Current Business:

- Council will consider a new, 8-year agreement with the City’s trash and recycling contractor, CR&R. The City’s residential waste collection program is being modified to meet recent changes in state law. Among other requirements, the new state law mandates that all cities implement organic waste recycling. This will require a three-cart, source-separated, collection program for solid waste, mixed recyclables, and organic waste recycling, which includes food waste and landscaping waste items. City staff is requesting Council approval of a Residential Solid Waste Collection & Recycling Contract with CR&R that reflects the new, State-mandated program components and consolidates two existing contracts into one (previously the Newport Coast area was serviced under a separate CR&R contract). The new contract will provide required organic waste collection and recycling cart services in addition to the mixed recyclable cart services for all residents, bringing the City’s refuse program into compliance with state mandates. The initial increase to the City’s waste collection and recycling costs will be about \$2.9 million per year, partially offset by \$1.3 million in additional recycling fees approved in March 2021. The net increase to the City’s General Fund will be about \$1.5 million a year. As part of the proposed contract, CR&R will update its collection routes to provide greater efficiency, cost savings and safety, as well as reducing truck traffic and emissions. As a result, about 14,000 residences will have their collection days changed, beginning in February 2022. Residents affected by the changes will be notified by the City and CR&R in advance. For more information on organics recycling and Frequently Asked Questions, visit <http://www.newportbeachca.gov/recycle>.
- In a separate action, the Council will consider street sweeping route changes to align with the new trash and recycling collection routes. These changes will avoid conflicts, address parking conditions, and maintain street sweeping effectiveness. The areas affected are portions of the Balboa Peninsula and Corona del Mar. Staff is also recommending the establishment of parking restrictions for street sweeping purposes on a portion of Narcissus Avenue, and in the City’s industrial area on West 16th Street, Production Place, Monrovia Avenue and Babcock Street.

