



# The Week in Review

City Manager Grace K. Leung  
August 20, 2021

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## Upcoming Events

**Sunday, August 22**  
**2021 Concerts on the Green**  
[DSB, Journey tribute](#)  
6 – 7:30 p.m.

**Monday, August 23**  
**Library Lecture Hall Design Committee Meeting**  
[\(Zoom webinar\)](#)  
9 a.m.

**Monday, August 23**  
**Board of Library Trustees Meeting**  
Central Library  
1000 Avocado Avenue  
5 p.m.

**Tuesday, August 24**  
**Newport Beach Public Facilities Corporation Meeting**  
City Hall, City Council Chambers  
100 Civic Center Drive  
4 p.m.

**Tuesday, August 24**  
**City Council Meeting**  
City Hall, City Council Chambers  
100 Civic Center Drive  
5 p.m.

**Thursday, August 26**  
**Zoning Administrator Mtg.**  
City Hall, City Council Chambers  
100 Civic Center Dr.  
[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)  
10 a.m.

## Community Members:

Congratulations to all the Team USA athletes who represented our country so well in the Tokyo Olympics – and particularly Newport Beach’s hometown competitors! I’m very pleased that the City Council has decided to recognize the Team USA athletes who either live in Newport Beach or have a close connection to our city. Mayor Brad Avery will be awarding City proclamations at the August 24 Council meeting to:

- Two-time Olympian and Newport Beach resident [Charlie Buckingham](#) (Sailing), who was born and raised in Newport Beach, is a member of Newport Harbor Yacht Club and graduated from Newport Harbor High School.
- Two-time Olympian, two-time gold medalist and Newport Beach resident [Kaleigh Gilchrist](#) (Water Polo), who was born and raised in Newport Beach, graduated from Newport Harbor High School, and is a graduate of the Newport Beach Junior Lifeguard Program.
- First-time Olympian and Olympic gold medalist [Stephania Haralabidis](#) (Water Polo), who graduated from Corona del Mar High School.
- Three-time Olympian and Newport Beach resident [Sam Mikulak](#) (Gymnastics), who was born and raised in Newport Beach and graduated from Corona del Mar High School.
- Two-time Olympian and two-time Olympic gold medalist [Maddie Musselman](#) (Water Polo), who was born in and resides in Newport Beach, and is a graduate of the Newport Beach Junior Lifeguard Program.
- First-time Olympian and Newport Beach resident [Coryn Rivera](#) (Cycling), who earned a seventh-place finish in the 2020 Olympics Road Racing event.
- Three-time Olympian and three-time Olympic medalist [April Ross](#) (Beach Volleyball), who graduated from Newport Harbor High School.

Visit the City’s website for a complete listing of meetings and events at [newportbeachca.gov/events](http://newportbeachca.gov/events).

- First-time Olympian and Olympic gold medalist [Alys Williams](#) (Water Polo), who graduated from the Newport Beach Junior Lifeguard program and whose father, Robert Williams, served with the Newport Beach Fire Department as Lifeguard Operations Assistant Chief.

### **COVID-19 Cases in Newport Beach**

As of August 19, the total cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Newport Beach was 4,515, an increase of 123 from August 13. The total number of cases in Orange County as of August 13 was 278,417, an increase of 5,503 cases from August 13. The number of recovered COVID-19 patients countywide as of August 19 was 256,640. These figures are provided to Orange County by the California Department of Public Health.

### **Record-Setting 2021 Junior Lifeguard Summer Program Concludes**

The 2021 Newport Beach Junior Lifeguard Program saw record enrollment, with about 1,650 junior lifeguards this year. While some activities were modified to accommodate evolving COVID-19 safety protocols, the energy and excitement were high as junior lifeguards participated in a more normal summer schedule.

In 2021 we were able to return to a full 7-week program based at the Balboa Pier and Newport Pier locations. We also saw the return of the Regionals Competition, Junior Lifeguard Open House, and the much-anticipated Monster Mile event, during which junior lifeguards run a mile and swim a mile.

Special thank you to Lifeguard Training Captain Mike Ure, Lifeguard Officer Andy Matsuyama, and Recreation Coordinator Cynthia Haritatos for their leadership and overall program management. Thank you also to our lifeguard instructors and group leaders who guided and shaped another wonderful summer for these kids.

### **Residents Urged to Conserve Water as Drought Conditions Worsen**

More than 95% of the state of California is now experiencing [severe drought conditions](#), and 47% of the state is in “exceptional drought” status, the worst category in the national drought monitoring system.

So far during this water year (measured from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30), rainfall in Orange County is 5.7 inches, only 45% of normal. Northern California is at 47% of normal.

To combat the drought, Governor Newsom has declared a Drought Emergency in 50 northern and central California counties, which includes mandatory reductions in water use. In July, Newsom signed an executive order asking all California residents to voluntarily reduce their water use by 15% compared to 2020 levels. State officials recommend simple actions such as reducing landscape irrigation, running dishwashers and washing machines only when full, finding and fixing leaks, installing water-efficient showerheads, and taking shorter showers.

Southern California has so far avoided mandatory water restrictions thanks to adequate groundwater and reservoir reserves. The groundwater basin managed by Orange County Water District, which supplies 75-95% of Newport Beach’s water, is currently at, or just below, recommended operating levels. The remaining 5-25% of Newport Beach’s water supply comes from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which has reassured local agencies that the region has enough supply in reservoirs for the coming year.

However, another dry water year with higher temperatures could quickly put Newport Beach and other Orange County cities in a declared drought similar to the one in 2015-2017. At this time Newport Beach has not enacted any water restrictions beyond the state’s voluntary 15% reduction. We encourage all residents to do their part to conserve water and meet the 15% voluntary reduction goal. For ways to cut back your household water usage, please visit our [water conservation webpage](#).

## **Housing and Circulation Elements Update EIR Scoping Meeting and Comment Period**

The City held an in-person scoping meeting to seek public and interested agency comments on what environmental impacts should be studied in the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for updating the Housing and Circulation Elements. About 16 people attended the meeting and commented on potential impacts on infrastructure, aesthetics/views, schools, and traffic, as well as increased demand on recreational opportunities.

If you could not make it to the meeting, written comments on the scope will also be accepted until 5 p.m. on September 9, 2021. To provide your comments, please email Senior Planner Benjamin Zdeba at [bzdeba@newportbeachca.gov](mailto:bzdeba@newportbeachca.gov).

To view the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the draft EIR, please visit [www.newportbeachca.gov/gpupdate](http://www.newportbeachca.gov/gpupdate) or check out [www.NewportTogether.com](http://www.NewportTogether.com).

## **Homelessness Update**

- City Net completed Emergency Housing Voucher application packets with two clients. The Emergency Housing Vouchers are funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and allow people to pay affordable rent based on their fixed incomes. Six people experiencing homelessness in Newport Beach have been awarded vouchers so far and are working with a housing navigator to locate apartments. The voucher program is being administered by the Orange County Housing Authority.
- The City's Homeless Liaison Officer delivered a new bicycle, purchased with generous donations to the City's Good Giving program, to a recently housed man. The man experienced homelessness for 12 years before entering the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter this summer. The shelter staff prepared a housing plan for the man and he now resides in his own apartment in Tustin. The bicycle will help the man commute to his new job.
- 14 people who had been experiencing homelessness in Newport Beach are now sheltered in the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.
- Five people experiencing homelessness in Newport Beach were enrolled into City Net services. City Net case managers ordered identifying documents for them, such as birth certificates and Social Security cards.
- City Net transported a client to a Telecare appointment. Telecare provides several programs to assist people with serious mental health conditions.
- Staff continues to provide food gift cards, support, and case management to a person sheltering in a motel while she awaits placement into permanent, supportive housing.

For a comprehensive look at the City's ongoing efforts to address homelessness, please visit our web site [at this link](#). To donate, please visit our [Good Giving Program web page](#).

## **Insider's Guide for the Newport Beach City Council Meeting on August 24, 2021**

Our next City Council meeting is Tuesday, August 24. Items that may be of interest are highlighted below. The entire agenda, and all reports, can be viewed [here](#).

There is no Study Session.

The Regular Meeting begins at 4 p.m. with a closed session. The Council will reconvene at 5 p.m. for open session, with the following items of note:

On the Consent Calendar is:

- A proclamation to end a local emergency regarding the infestation of an invasive algae species, *Caulerpa Prolifera*, in Newport Harbor. The Council declared the local emergency in May after a patch of the invasive algae was discovered near the China Cove area of Newport Harbor. The

plant, which is commonly used in aquariums, is not toxic to animals or humans but can quickly overtake native habitats and cause significant environmental damage. Newport Beach supported multiple state and local agencies and contract divers who removed the *Caulerpa* in July. The cleanup effort was successful, and the state agencies and the City will continue to monitor the harbor floor to ensure that the *Caulerpa* does not return.

- Visit Newport Beach, Inc. (VNB), a business unit of Newport Beach & Company, which provides destination marketing services to the City of Newport Beach under contract agreement has submitted their fiscal year 2022 business plan, annual budget, and fiscal year 2021 performance standards report. Under the agreement, VNB is required to submit business plans, budgets and performance reports to the Council on an annual basis. The agreement with VNB runs through December 31, 2024.

Public Hearings and Current Business include:

- The Council will hear a request to remove and replace two lemon-scented gum eucalyptus trees, designated as special neighborhood City trees, in the public right-of-way at 1317 and 1323 Ashford Lane. After City staff initially denied the request, the applicant appealed the decision to the Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission. In June, the Commission upheld staff's decision to deny the removal request. The Commission's decision is now being appealed to the City Council for consideration.
- The Council will consider an appeal of a determination made by the City's Community Development Director, issued on April 30, interpreting that resort hotels may allow residential uses under certain conditions. The determination was made in accordance with City Council direction under [Council Policy K-4](#) (Reducing the Barriers to the Creation of Housing). The determination was appealed by Stop Polluting Our Newport (SPON) to the City's Planning Commission, which denied the appeal and upheld the Director's determination. Following the Planning Commission's decision, SPON filed an appeal to the City Council. The Council will consider whether the Director's determination is consistent with Council Policy K-4.
- In response to neighborhood safety concerns, a proposal to close Tustin Avenue at Cliff Drive to vehicular traffic, on a trial basis, will be considered by the Council. City staff has consulted with residents on potential safety improvements and is proposing a trial closure, to vehicular traffic only, at the north end of Tustin Avenue at Cliff Drive. Staff will conduct a traffic analysis during the four-month trial period, which will be used to help determine whether the temporary closure should be made permanent.

