



## City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

CITY COUNCIL  NPUA  HACN

Regular  Special

**Meeting Date:** January 13, 2026

**Title:** Visitor Center Operating Hours

**Background:** At the prior City Council meeting, Council requested that the operating hours of the City of Needles Visitor Center be revisited. The Visitor Center is operated by the Needles Area Chamber of Commerce under an agreement originally approved in April 2021. The City Council established the Visitor Center Subcommittee in 2021 to provide ongoing oversight of Visitor Center operations and coordination with the Chamber of Commerce. The Subcommittee currently consists of Mayor Jernigan, Vice Mayor Campbell, and Councilmember Belt.

On October 10, 2023, the Visitor Center agreement was amended to establish operating hours of 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, along with other operational changes. In May 2024, staffing changes at the Visitor Center resulted in an informal adjustment by the Chamber to 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. During this period, Visitor Center staff observed that a significant number of visitors were arriving earlier in the morning. In response, operating hours were further adjusted to 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to better align with visitor demand.

As part of its ongoing role, the Visitor Center Subcommittee met with the Chamber of Commerce to review Visitor Center operations and analyze Q4 2025 visitation data, including visitation trends by day of week and time of day (see attached Chamber data). The data indicates that the majority of visitor activity occurs before noon, with peak visitation between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., while Tuesday and Wednesday experience the lowest visitation levels. Based on this information and operational considerations, the Subcommittee is proposing adjustments to the Visitor Center's operating schedule to better align staffing resources with demonstrated visitor demand.

**Fiscal Impact:** No additional fiscal impact. The recommended operating hours can be accommodated within existing contractual and staffing resources.

**Recommended Action:** Provide Staff Direction

**Submitted By:** Patrick Martinez, City Manager

**City Manager Approval:** Patrick J. Martinez

**Date:** 1/8/2026

**Other Department Approval (when required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_