



*City of Needles*  
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Mayor, Janet Jernigan  
Vice Mayor Kirsten Merritt  
Councilmember Tona Belt  
Councilmember Ellen Campbell  
Councilmember Jamie McCorkle  
Councilmember JoAnne Pogue  
Councilmember Henry Longbrake  
  
City Manager Patrick J. Martinez

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PATRICK J. MARTINEZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 21, 2024

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1. **Today**, the City of Needles community gathered to celebrate the grand opening of Bob Belt Beach Park, formerly First Beach. The revitalized park is now open just in time for the summer season. Thanks to a \$2,179,702 grant from the State of California's Clean California Grant Program, we have transformed this space into a functional and engaging environment, aligning with our Council Goals. City Staff cleared the first and second beaches for fire abatement earlier in the week. This enhancement aims to attract more families and engage both residents and visitors. Please see the attached images of today's celebration.
2. On **Monday, June 17, 2024**, the Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony for U.S. Cannabis Laboratories, which recently opened its doors. As the first cannabis testing laboratory in Needles and San Bernardino County and one of only 29 in the entire state, U.S. Cannabis Laboratories plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety and quality of cannabis products. City officials, Chamber members, and community residents gathered to celebrate this addition to our local economy. This effort aligns with the City Council's goal of creating a thriving, pro-business environment that attracts diverse sectors. Please see the attached image from the event.
3. **Earlier this week**, ICMA announced that the City of Needles has been selected to join [ICMA's 2024 Economic Mobility and Opportunity Cohort](#), supported by the [Gates Foundation's Economic Mobility and Opportunity \(EMO\) initiative](#). This prestigious program includes 15 diverse local governments, each receiving a \$20,000 grant for initiatives to enhance residents' upward mobility. Needles will focus on a comprehensive housing study to identify community housing needs.

Over the coming months, the cohort will engage in service gap assessments, community needs assessments, action planning, and pilot programming to address challenges in housing affordability, workforce development, and financial security. We are proud to be recognized by ICMA, the world's leading association of

professional city and county managers, underscoring our commitment to fostering economic mobility and opportunity for all residents. Refer to the attached release for more information.

4. On **Thursday, June 20, 2024**, the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) Hydrogen Passenger Train stopped at the BNSF Railyard for a crew change. This new train is vital to SBCTA's efforts to advance its hydrogen infrastructure project ahead of California's Zero-Emission Multiple Unit (ZEMU) train service. As North America's first hydrogen passenger train, this pilot program aims to set a global precedent for successful hydrogen-powered rail transportation. Refer to the attached images for a visual description.
5. The City's Fleet Maintenance Public Works staff has taken over the maintenance of the City Contracted Sheriff's Vehicles. The City of Needles is fortunate to have Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified staff, which helps reduce labor costs for vehicle maintenance. This effort aligns with the City Council's goal of maintaining budgets. Refer to the attached images for more insights.
6. On **Monday, June 24, 2024**, the City's Animal Shelter will implement the Trap, Neuter, and Release Program. Last November, the shelter received a \$112,000 grant, which enabled it to acquire a new vehicle, hire a part-time staff member, and procure essential supplies. This initiative aims to enhance our community by managing roaming cats, curbing diseases, and boosting adoption rates, ultimately eliminating euthanasia at our shelter. Please see the attached images for a visual update. Residents can report roaming cats to the Needles Animal Shelter by calling 760-326-4952 or using the Needles Connect app, available on the [Apple App](#) or [Google Play Store](#).
7. **IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:**
  - **The Eagles** are hosting a free open swim for children aged 16 and under tomorrow, **June 22, 2024**, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the City of Needles Aquatics Center, located at 1101 Civic Center Dr. Don't miss out on this exciting event! For more information, call (760) 326-2599.
  - **Set Free Church in collaboration with TNT Fireworks**, will be selling safe and sane fireworks from noon on **June 28, 2024, through July 6, 2024**, at 1164 Needles Highway (formerly Miranda's Car Wash). For more information, call 760-326-2941.
  - **Needles Elks Lodge** is hosting the **Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Pool Party** from 12pm to 4pm at the City of Needles Aquatics Center. Free open swim for everyone.
  - **Palo Verde College** is hosting "Pirate Tuesday" on **July 26, 2024**, from 10am to 2pm at the Palo Verde Needles Education Center located at 725 W. Broadway (formerly Claypool's). This community outreach event will feature free food, snacks, and drinks. All are welcome to join! For more information, call 760-326-5033.



# 1. BOB BELT BEACH PARK RIBBON CUTTING



Image Source: Needles Desert Star



## 2. U.S. CANNABIS LABS RIBBON CUTTING



### 3. ICMA 2024 EMOC



Local governments selected for ICMA's 2024 Economic Mobility and Opportunity Cohort

Fifteen cities, towns, and counties representing diverse populations, geographies, operating budgets, and other local conditions have been selected for ICMA's 2024 Economic Mobility and Opportunity Peer Learning Cohort and Grant Program. In addition to professional development and networking opportunities for their team leaders, the selected local governments will each receive a \$20,000 grant to advance a local assessment, planning process, or program aimed at boosting upward mobility of residents. This program from ICMA is made possible by support from the [Gates Foundation's Economic Mobility and Opportunity \(EMO\) program](#).

Economic mobility refers to the ability of individuals and generations to move up the economic ladder over time, a concept often explained colloquially as “doing better than your parents.” While economic mobility is frequently associated with income, several factors can influence an individual's economic mobility outcome, and local governments are uniquely positioned to influence conditions that make it possible for all residents and households to access opportunities and get ahead. The following local governments were selected through an application process that gauged understanding of local needs and readiness to implement EMO strategies through the cohort program and beyond:

- Prescott Valley, AZ
- Needles, CA
- Redwood City, CA
- Miami Gardens, FL
- Newton, KS
- Gaithersburg, MD
- Lisbon, ME
- Tunica County, MS
- Thomasville, NC
- Washington County, OR
- La Marque, TX

## New, Reduced Membership Dues

A new, reduced dues rate is available for CAOs/ACAOs, along with additional discounts for those in smaller communities, has been implemented. Learn more and be sure to join or renew today!

[LEARN MORE](#)



## 4. SBCTA HYDROGEN PASSENGER TRAIN





## 5. FLEET MAINTENANCE SBCSO





## 6. ANIMAL SHELTER PROGRAM

