



# City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

CITY COUNCIL    NPUA    HACN    Regular    Special

**Meeting Date:** January 27, 2026

**Title:** Approve Route 66 Centennial Celebration (November 7, 2026) and Event Budget Not-to-Exceed \$7,500

**Background:** The year 2026 marks the 100th Anniversary of historic Route 66, which was officially established on November 11, 1926. Route 66 originally spanned approximately 2,448 miles from Chicago to Los Angeles and passed through eight states, including California and the City of Needles.

To ensure Needles is positioned as a must-stop destination for Centennial travel and celebrations, the City has been actively working to promote its Route 66 identity and develop year-long Centennial activities.

In October 2024, the City Council appointed Mayor Jernigan, Vice Mayor Campbell, and Councilmember McCorkle to serve on the Route 66 Centennial Committee to assist staff with coordinating Centennial planning, partnerships, and special events. The committee oversees the organization and promotion of activities that highlight Needles' Route 66 heritage, attract visitors, and foster community pride.

As part of the City's early promotional efforts, the committee placed a Route 66 Centennial advertisement in *Memories from the Mother Road: Celebrating a Century of Route 66*, directing travelers to the Needles Visitor Center and highlighting Needles as an original Route 66 town. In addition, the City has incorporated Centennial branding on City vehicles and through Route 66-themed street markings.

To commemorate the Centennial locally, the City intends to host a major Centennial Celebration on November 7, 2026. The event is anticipated to include a morning partnership activity with the Needles Unified School District (Holiday Fun Fair), followed by an afternoon and evening community celebration that may include food vendors, live entertainment, and fireworks (subject to feasibility and required approvals).

This event is intended to increase visitation, support local businesses, and generate additional Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue during the Route 66 Centennial year.

**Fiscal Impact:** An amount not-to-exceed \$7,500 is requested to support materials, equipment, and event services necessary for the November 7, 2026, Centennial Celebration. The Route 66 Centennial Committee will also seek sponsorships and donations to supplement City funding and expand event programming. The City's contribution will be funded from General Fund Reserves.

**Recommendation:** Authorize the City of Needles to host the Route 66 Centennial Celebration on November 7, 2026, and approve an event budget in an amount not-to-exceed \$7,500, funded from General Fund Reserves.

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

**City Manager Approval:** Patrick J. Martinez Date: 1/22/2026

**Other Department Approval (when required):** Mark C. DeMay, CGFM Date: 01/22/2026