



MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PATRICK J. MARTINEZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 26, 2024

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1. During the City Council meeting on July 9, 2024, Michael Bracken of Development Management Group, Inc., the city's contract Chief Economist, presented an economic development update. His presentation detailed significant growth in Needles over the past decade.

Key highlights include:

- A 4.5% increase in the city's population.
- Growth in educational attainment, with high school and bachelor's degree holders rising by 4.4% and 38%, respectively.
- A 34% increase in median household income.
- A 31% increase in median home value.

In the past 5-10 years, the city has seen notable additions, including:

- An AutoZone and a Dollar General
- A \$45 million cannabis industry
- \$8 million Park improvements
- \$16 million water infrastructure
- Over 25 Tesla electric vehicle charging stations
- A Hampton Inn

Bracken emphasized that Needles faced severe financial challenges just a decade ago, but today, the city enjoys economic stability. These developments have positively impacted the community, enhancing the quality of life for its residents. Refer to the attached PowerPoint presentation or read the Needles Desert Star [article](#) for more details.

2. The City of Needles extends its heartfelt gratitude to Arrowhead Credit Union's ArrowHeart Foundation for their generous donation of over 100 JanSport school backpacks. These backpacks were distributed to the Parks and Recreation Department's Summer Day Camp participants, ensuring that each child had a new, high-quality backpack for the upcoming school year.

As summer draws to a close, the City proudly celebrates a successful season at the Needles Recreation Center. This year's diverse programs, including Summer Day Camp, Pee Wee Basketball, and swim lessons, saw enthusiastic participation. The aquatics center will continue offering morning lap swim and exercise four days a week through August 29, 2024 (Monday-Thursday).

Thank you to all City Staff and those involved for making this summer memorable and supporting our community's youth.

3. Rivers Edge Golf Course is celebrating the successful conclusion of its 2024 Summer Junior Camp, a rewarding 7-week program. The camp will wrap up next week with a 5-hole golf tournament, where participants will compete for exciting prizes. Throughout the program, 42 young golfers developed valuable skills, enjoyed the fresh air, and learned the basics of the game.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Jason Parnell, Needles High School Golf Coach, Don Johnson, a dedicated long-time volunteer, and the Touchstone Staff for their crucial roles in making this summer's camp a success. We also appreciate the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department for hosting a memorable putting contest on July 24, 2024. For highlights from the contest, please see the attached photos.

Additionally, Rivers Edge is excited to announce a photo contest with a chance to win a free round of golf. To participate, submit your entries by the end of the month to jjdeleon@golfneedlesca.com. For more information call 760-326-3931.

4. The City Manager recently had a strategic meeting with the Mohave County Manager. This meeting was a significant step towards achieving our Council's goal of fostering strong relationships with regional representatives.

The primary objectives of this meeting were twofold:

- **Securing Support for Economic Growth Initiatives:** We discussed potential collaborations and support mechanisms that could enhance regional economic development efforts. Building a robust partnership with Mohave County is crucial for advancing our shared economic growth goals.
- **Enhancing Emergency Response Coordination:** We explored ways to work collaboratively during emergencies. Establishing a cooperative framework will help ensure the safety and resilience of our communities during critical situations.

This initial meeting lays the foundation for ongoing dialogue and cooperation between our city and Mohave County, aligning with our commitment to regional engagement and community safety.

5. On **July 18, 2024**, Sheriff Dicus and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department revealed that San Bernardino, Victorville, and Fontana have

emerged as critical areas in California for the proliferation of unserialized or "ghost" guns. Following this, on **July 24, 2024**, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Colorado River Station issued an advisory urging firearm owners to maintain detailed firearms records on their guns.

In the past year, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Colorado River Station- Needles Police have seized 74 firearms, including handguns, rifles, and shotguns, in connection with various crimes. Many of these weapons were found to be unregistered, and at least one ghost gun was recovered. To aid in the recovery of stolen firearms, firearm owners are encouraged to document their guns' make, model, and serial numbers. This information is crucial for entering stolen weapons into the law enforcement database and identifying them if recovered. Without registration details, tracing and returning stolen firearms to their rightful owners can be challenging.

The Colorado River Station: Needles Police remains committed to enhancing community safety through proactive law enforcement, community engagement, and raising awareness of crime trends. For more information on California gun laws, visit [California Department of Justice Firearms](#) or refer to the attached press releases for further details.

6. IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

- **The Housing Authority of the City of Needles** will be accepting applications for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program from **July 1 to July 31, 2024**. The Public Housing waitlist remains **open year-round**. Applications can be obtained and submitted at 908 Sycamore Drive. For more information, call (760) 326-3222, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

1. ECONOMIC UPDATE

CITY OF NEEDLES, CALIFORNIA



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

JULY 9, 2024

PURPOSE OF UPDATE

- **Define Economic Development**
- **Economic Progress**
- **Discuss Community Demographics/Market Opportunity**
- **State of Retail & Housing**
- **Objectives for FY 24/25**
- **Invite City Council Communication/Comments/Feedback**

DEFINING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **“Any activity that increases the overall wealth of the community”**
 - **Housing**
 - **Employment/Jobs**
 - **Healthcare**
 - **Retail**
 - **Quality of Life**
(Parks/Recreation/Arts/Entertainment/Education)

DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON (2013 & 2024)

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2024</u>
• Population	4,909	5,133
• Median Age	38.6	45.5
• Education HS+	78.41%	81.86%
• Education BA+	8.72%	12.04%
• Median HH Income	\$29,852	\$40,021
• Employed	1,693	1,605
• Owner Occupied Housing	53.28%	51.96%
• Median Home Value	\$109,057	\$142,887
• Total Housing Units	1,950	2,142

Source: Claritas/DataQuick

STATE OF RETAIL

- **ICSC San Diego (9/23) & Las Vegas (5/24)**
- **10+ Meetings Retailers, Brokers, Developers**
- **Restaurant/Fast Food: Watching Impact of \$20 Minimum Wage on Price/Demand**
- **Retailers: Most on Hold in 2024 with Economic Stability Concerns + Interest Rates + Wage Increases**
- **All: Watching Job Growth, Traffic Counts, Government Stability**
- **ICSC Western (aka San Diego) to be held in Palm Springs late September, 2024, ACRE March 2025, ICSC-LV May 2025**

GROCERY/PHARMACY STORE UPDATE

- **Grocery Outreach includes:**

- **Retailers/Brokers/Developers**

- Aldi
 - Grocery Outlet
 - Smart & Final
 - Stater Brothers
 - Independents

- **Feedback:**

- Focused on Markets of 25,000+ people
 - Markets with high growth (significant residential home construction)
 - Infill Opportunity Markets (existing competitors)

- **Pharmacy/HABA**

- Industry going through reset (bankruptcies, mergers) Most not financially healthy, no current expansion happening at current. May see rise in independent

STATE OF HOUSING

- **Motel Conversion:** Planning Commission & City Council appear open to motel to micro-apartment conversion (blight elimination, increase in workforce housing stock)
- **Apartment Developers:** Rents currently do not justify new construction
- **Home Builders:** Riverfront Homes continue to see demand (2nd home/short-term rental). Tract or Made to Order Tract Builders have toured region in last 60 days and are showing interest cautiously (interest rates, cost of materials)
- **Best housing opportunity for investors:** purchase and rehab older 2-3 bedroom homes and rent/sell (more cost effective than new construction)

EXAMPLES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDLES (LAST 5-10 YEARS)



FY 24/25 OBJECTIVES

- **Housing:** Identify and work with regional home developers to attract them to Needles opportunity
- **Retail:** Continue working with brokers, developers and retailers to bring them to Needles
- **Hotel/Tourism:**
 - Work to attract additional hoteliers and work with existing to remodel/rebrand/expand.
 - Identify process, location/co-location and costs to host California Welcome Center
 - Determine viability of TBID or similar financial structure for joint marketing campaign
 - Regular Use of Instagram, Twitter, Facebook for City/Community News/Events
- **Industrial/Logistics:** Identify brokers/developers in Tri-State area with projects to attract to Needles
- **All:** Create Regional Economic Development Forum (Annual Event) w/ Laughlin, Bullhead City, Lake Havasu City, Fort Mohave, Tribe and City of Needles

FEEDBACK, COMMENTS & QUESTIONS



Development Management Group, Inc
Michael Bracken, Managing Partner/Chief Economist
41-625 Eclectic Street, Suite D-2
Palm Desert, CA 92260
michael@dmgeconomics.com

2. ARROWHEART FOUNDATION



3. RIVERS EDGE SUMMER JUNIOR CAMP



2024 Junior Camp Highlights

As we wrap up the 2024 Junior Summer Camp next Wednesday (July 31st) we would like to thank all of the participants this year even throughout the extreme summer heat. We hope everyone learned a lot and had lots of fun all together. Looking forward to 2025!

Rivers Edge Staff







[Book a Tee Time](#)

Rivers Edge Golf Course
144 Marina Drive

(760) 326-3931 www.golfneedlesca.com



Photo Contest at The Edge



**EVERY PHOTO SENT IN COUNTS
as 1 entry to our raffle to win a free round
of golf including a sleeve of golf balls**



**EMAIL PHOTOS TO
JJDELEON@GOLFNEEDLESCA.COM**

[Book a Tee Time](#)

Rivers Edge Golf Course
144 Marina Drive

www.golfneedlesca.com

5. SBSD UPDATE ADVISORY

Thursday July 18, 2024, 7:33 AM



SBSD - Headquarters

Advisory: San Bernardino County Home to Three of the Top 10 Cities for Unserialized Firearms

Dear patrick martinez,

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 18, 2024

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SHERIFF SHANNON DICUS ANNOUNCES SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MAKES UP THREE OF THE TOP 10 CITIES FOR UNSERIALIZED FIREARMS

SAN BERNARDINO, CA – The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and Sheriff Shannon Dicus announced three cities in San Bernardino County have been identified as leading areas in California for the proliferation of unserialized or ghost guns. This alarming trend highlights the growing concern over untraceable firearms that are increasingly being used in criminal activities and used against law enforcement officers throughout the County.

Ghost guns, which are firearms assembled from kits or 3D-printed parts without serial numbers, have posed significant challenges for law enforcement agencies across the state. These weapons bypass traditional legal firearm measures, making them nearly impossible to track. The surge in ghost guns has correlated with an increase in violent crimes within our county – including attempted murder of law enforcement officers.

The removal of ghost guns from our neighborhoods is critical due to the serious threat they pose by enabling prohibited persons, such as those convicted of violent felonies like child or animal abuse, to obtain a firearm. Ghost guns, which lack serial numbers and are untraceable, provide a dangerous loophole for individuals who are legally barred from purchasing firearms. This accessibility increases the risk of these untraceable weapons being used in further criminal activities.

In the California Department of Justice's annual Crime Gun in California report, three cities within San Bernardino County made the top 10 list, including the City of San Bernardino, Victorville, and Fontana.

- Sacramento – 435
- Los Angeles – 389
- San Diego – 350
- San Bernardino – 319
- Bakersfield – 263
- San Francisco – 205
- Stockton – 177
- Victorville – 168
- Modesto – 136
- Fontana – 132

According to the DOJ, a crime gun is defined as a firearm recovered by a law enforcement agency after it was used in a crime, suspected to have been used in a crime, or illegally possessed.

Additionally, San Bernardino County had the second-highest number of crime ghost guns behind Los Angeles County:

- Los Angeles – 1,914
- San Bernardino – 1,561
- San Diego – 804
- Riverside – 770
- Sacramento – 648

“The rise of ghost guns is a significant threat to the safety and security of our communities,” said Sheriff Shannon Dicus. “These untraceable firearms make it increasingly difficult for law enforcement to do their jobs and protect the public. We are committed to aggressively combating this issue and holding those who use these illegal weapons accountable while protecting the rights of lawful firearm owners.”

San Bernardino Police Chief Darren Goodman added, “The increase in ghost guns directly correlates with the rise in violent crime we are witnessing. Our officers are on the front lines daily, facing these threats head-on. We must address this problem with the seriousness it deserves.”

“The proliferation of ghost guns is a clear and present danger to our community,” said Fontana Police Chief Michael Dorsey. “These firearms are

being used in crimes with alarming frequency, and we must take strong, decisive action to stem the tide of this growing menace.”

The proliferation of ghost guns and minimal penalties for felons caught with firearms are creating additional obstacles for law-abiding citizens attempting to obtain firearms through State and Federally-regulated dealers. Law-abiding citizens are increasingly subjected to stringent regulations and scrutiny, while those with criminal intent exploit these legal loopholes. This disparity not only undermines public safety but also places undue burdens on responsible firearm owners who follow the law.

Due to the surge in crime and community concerns, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department developed Operation Consequences. This operation focuses on conducting targeted crime suppression operations to curb violent crime, disrupt and dismantle targeted criminal street gangs, and locate and arrest those who are illegally possessing, manufacturing, and trafficking firearms. From October 2022 to June 2024, Operation Consequences yielded 1,312 felony arrests, 2,194 firearm seizures, 3,492 traffic citations, 214.3 lbs of fentanyl, and 3,051.41 lbs of methamphetamine.

In June of 2024, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors reauthorized an ongoing contribution of \$3 million annually for the County's community concerns reserve, which funds specialized law enforcement services, including Operation Consequences, Operation Shelter Me, and Operation Smash and Grab.

To read the full California Department of Justice Crime Gun report, visit: <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ab1191-crime-gun-report-2024.pdf>

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is the law enforcement agency for the largest geographical county in the nation. Sheriff Shannon Dicus currently serves as San Bernardino County's 36th Sheriff-Coroner. The department serves over 2.1 million residents, with eight county and 14 contract patrol stations and over 4,200 employees to ensure the quality and safety of those we serve.

Contact: Public Affairs
PAffairs@sbcasd.org



For full details, [view this message on the web](#).

Wednesday July 24, 2024, 1:00 PM



SBSD - Colorado River Sheriffs Department

Advisory: In Light of Recent Report on Crime Guns in the County, Firearm Owners Encouraged to Keep Records on Their Guns

Dear patrick martinez,

DATE: July 24, 2024

Summary: With three cities in San Bernardino County leading the state in the recovery of unserialized guns, there is an increasing concern by law enforcement over the proliferation of untraceable firearms. Within the last year in the City of Needles, 74 firearms have been seized for various crimes. These include handguns, rifles, and shotguns. Most of the weapons have no registration record and at least one ghost gun was recovered.

As stated in the July 18, 2024, Sheriff's Department Press Release, "Ghost guns, which are firearms assembled from kits or 3D-printed parts without serial numbers, have posed significant challenges for law enforcement across the state. These weapons bypass traditional legal firearms measures, making them nearly impossible to track. The surge in ghost guns has correlated with an increase in violent crimes within our county – including attempted murder of law enforcement officers."

Firearm owners are encouraged to record the make, model, and serial number of all firearms so in the event of theft, weapons can be entered into the law enforcement stolen firearms computer system. Not all states have

gun registration requirements so, often when a firearm is recovered, unless the owner reporting it stolen has serial numbers, identifying the weapon as stolen and locating the rightful owner is problematic.

The Colorado River Station – Needles Police is dedicated to keeping the community safe through proactive law enforcement, community engagement, and community awareness of crime trends. More information on California gun laws may be found at www.oag.ca.gov/firearms.

For press releases, news and information, follow the Colorado River Station on X at: @CORiverStation, Facebook and/or Instagram @SBCSDColoradoRiverStation

Refer: Ross Tarangle, Captain

Station: Colorado River Station

Phone No: (760) 326-9200

SHANNON DICUS, Sheriff-Coroner
San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner Department



For full details, [view this message on the web](#).

Sent by **SBSD - Colorado River Sheriffs Department**
1111 Bailey Ave, Needles, CA 92363

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