



City of Needles

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Mayor, Janet Jernigan
Vice Mayor Ellen Campbell
Councilmember Tona Belt
Councilmember Jamie McCorkle
Councilmember JoAnne Pogue
Councilmember Henry Longbrake
Councilmember Zachery Longacre

City Manager Patrick J. Martinez

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PATRICK J. MARTINEZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 27, 2024

1. As we approach the end of 2024, I want to take a moment to reflect on the past year's accomplishments and extend my deepest gratitude to all of you for your unwavering dedication and hard work. Together, we have achieved remarkable progress in enhancing the quality of life for our residents, and your efforts have been instrumental in reaching our shared goals.

Here are just a few highlights of what we accomplished in 2024:

- **Enhanced Community Spaces:** This year, we secured and utilized over **\$5.2 million in grant funding** to improve public spaces and facilities across Needles. Among these achievements is the \$3,965,400 Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program grant, which supported significant upgrades at Duke Watkins Park, including a new bicycle pump track, splash pad, and additional amenities, including the expansion of the dog park. Additional grants contributed to beautification projects, infrastructure improvements, and recreational enhancements, reinforcing our commitment to creating vibrant, welcoming spaces for residents and visitors alike.
- **Infrastructure Excellence:** Needles was honored with the prestigious **American Public Works Association (APWA) Award** for innovative infrastructure projects. Furthermore, we earned the **Clean California Designation**, making us the only city in San Bernardino County to receive this recognition from the governor.
- **Economic Growth and Business Support:** Opening new businesses and significant investments in industrial and retail sectors have strengthened Needles as a pro-business community. These developments have bolstered our local economy, created new opportunities for residents, and positioned Needles as an attractive hub for business growth.
- **Community Engagement:** Our city hosted various community events this year, including the **Holiday Fun Fair** and the inaugural **Fall Festival**, which brought residents and visitors together in celebration. These

events highlight our dedication to fostering a connected, vibrant community and enhancing Needles' unique charm.

- **Adaptability and Resilience:** In response to the challenges presented by Rite Aid's closure, we worked diligently to ensure residents retained access to critical resources. This underscores our commitment to serving the community with care and responsiveness, even in adversity.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the extraordinary teamwork displayed by every council member and staff member. Your dedication drives our success, and I am truly honored to work alongside such talented and committed individuals. As we prepare to enter 2025, let us build upon the momentum we've created and continue striving to make Needles a thriving, welcoming city for all. Thank you for an incredible year of achievements. Here's to an even brighter and more prosperous year ahead!

2. The City Council has implemented goals that promote **cleanup initiatives** and **beautification efforts** to enhance the city's **appeal and livability** for residents and visitors. This past week, our **Public Works, Parks, Electric, Water, and Wastewater teams** came together to make significant progress toward these goals by addressing several key areas in the city. Their collaborative efforts included cleaning up **Train Park**, where they removed **dead cacti and trees**, spread **rocks**, cleared **DG paths**, eliminated **weeds**, cut back **trees along the fence line**, and cleared **debris** from cutter areas and roadways. **Sidewalks** were also thoroughly cleaned, improving both accessibility and aesthetics. Additionally, the land behind the **Lillyhill Apartments** and the **Senior Center** received much-needed attention, ensuring these spaces align with the city's standards for cleanliness and maintenance.

Further efforts included cleanup on the **J Street ramp**, where **litter** was removed, **sidewalks were cleared of debris**, and **trees were trimmed**. **CalTrans** will assist by removing the remaining **dead trees** when their team returns from vacation. **Street maintenance** also progressed, with **pole holes** completed on **San Clemente, Carty Way, Cali Hernandez, Lilly Hill, Parkway, and Coronado**, and additional **pothole repairs** scheduled next Friday on **Balboa, California Avenue, and Cortez**. Starting Monday, crews will begin **repainting red curbs**, focusing initially near **Carl's Jr.** and working systematically from the **west side of town to the north side**.

These efforts underscore the city's commitment to maintaining its **properties** and **public spaces**, reflecting the values of **collaboration, stewardship, and excellence** outlined in our council's goals. We encourage residents to join these efforts by reporting **public nuisances** to the **City of Needles Code Enforcement** at **760-326-2115 (ext. 123)** or through the **Needles Connect app**, from the [Google Play Store](#) for Android or the [Apple Store](#) for iOS devices. Your input is invaluable in helping us maintain and enhance the community. **Please refer to the attached images** for a snapshot of the crews' hard work and

dedication to improving our city. Together, we can ensure Needles remains a **vibrant and welcoming place** for all.

3. City staff is pleased to report that the program funding is nearing completion, with **13 homes revitalized** through the NBP totaling **\$260,000**. The project is set to conclude in February, having successfully exhausted all available program funds. On April 13, 2021, the **City Council of Needles**, acting as the **Successor Housing Agency** to the former Redevelopment Agency, approved policies for implementing and administrating the **Neighborhood Beautification Program (NBP)**. This program, funded by **\$260,000** of the **Low- and Moderate-Income Housing Asset Fund (LMIHAF)**, provides up to **\$20,000 per property** to address **exterior physical deficiencies**, including structures, fences, landscaping, and other visible improvements from public rights-of-way, with a priority on **code-related enhancements**. Earlier this year, **Tony Cossi Construction** assumed the role of licensed contractor for the NBP, succeeding **Brack Construction Inc.**, which held the position since 2022. To continue the momentum of this initiative, city staff will pursue **new funding mechanisms** through **grants** or **state housing dollars** to extend and expand the program's benefits. A formal presentation showcasing the program's achievements will be made to the **City Council**.
4. Duke Watkins Park continues to shine as a premier recreation destination. A world-renowned BMX professional recently visited with his family and praised the exceptional quality of the pump track and skate park, enthusiastically recommending them to others. Our city staff works tirelessly to maintain clean and welcoming parks. Attached is an image showcasing their efforts to keep the skate park in excellent condition. Residents can report any issues at our parks using the **Needles Connect app**, from the [Google Play Store](#) for Android or the [Apple Store](#) for iOS devices.. available on the Google Play Store and Apple App Store. Additionally, the City Council has approved **Ordinance 669-AC**, which promotes safety, cleanliness, and a positive experience at the Pump Track. Key rules include designated hours (5:00 AM–10:00 PM), age restrictions (for ages 5-12, with supervision required for those under 7), and mandatory helmets with recommended protective gear. **Allowed equipment is limited to bicycles**, while motorized bikes, skateboards, and scooters are prohibited. Spectators must remain outside the riding area, and all visitors are expected to help maintain a clean park environment. Thank you to the City Council and our city staff for your continued support in making Needles a standout destination for recreation and community engagement. Refer to the attached image for a glimpse of the park.
5. Over two dozen volunteers joined a **community cleanup** this past weekend, removing approximately **1.5 tons of litter**, including **50 bags of trash**, mattresses, tires, and branches. The event, organized by **Councilmember Longacre** with support from **Mayor Jernigan**, staff, and community members, demonstrated our shared commitment to keeping Needles clean and welcoming. The city will work with property owners to deter **illegal dumping** and

littering. Stay tuned for future cleanups, and check out the attached images to see our difference. Building on these efforts, the **Needles Pride Program** promotes clean, attractive neighborhoods through **property upkeep, code compliance**, and organized cleanups. The program encourages **well-maintained landscapes**, removal of **outside storage** and **abandoned vehicles**, proper **trash container placement**, and enforcement of **parking standards**. Residents can schedule up to **three free bulky item pick-ups annually** by calling **1-800-364-3754**. To stay informed about future cleanups and other community updates, download the Needles Connect app from the [Google Play Store](#) for Android or the [Apple Store](#) for iOS devices. With support from our **Public Works** and **Code Enforcement teams**, this initiative fosters community pride and collaboration to create **cleaner, safer Needles. Together, we can make a difference!**

6. **This past Saturday**, two special holiday events brought the Needles community together. They took place near each other and spread cheer throughout the day. The **Tri-State Community Healthcare Clinic Holiday Health Fair** featured community partners like the San Bernardino County Sheriff's and Fire Departments, the Needles High School Interact Club, and new businesses like Route 66 Pharmacy and Colorado River Home Health. Over 200 bags of food were distributed, with heartfelt thanks to everyone who made the event a success. Nearby, **Firehouse Ministries** hosted its **Annual Holiday Toy Drive Giveaway** at El Garces, where children received two Christmas presents each. These separate, well-attended events highlighted the city's commitment to fostering community connections, enhancing residents' well-being, and celebrating the holiday season together.
7. City Hall will be closed on **Tuesday, December 31, and January 1, 2025**, in observance of New Year's. **Regular operations** will resume on Thursday, **January 2, 2024, at 8:30 AM**. For emergencies during the closure, residents can contact City Staff at 760-326-5700, and our after-hours answering service will promptly direct calls to the appropriate staff member. **For public awareness, refer to the attached flyer that has been posted on the front door of City Hall.**
8. **IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:**
 - **January 7 – Housing Authority of the City of Needles** ribbon cutting ceremony at **11 am** located at **1624 W Broadway St, Needles, CA 92363**
 - **January 13 –Spring 2024 classes** begin for Palo Verde College Needles Center. **To view the class schedule, visit [Palo Verde College's Schedule of Classes](#).**
 - **January 25 – Community Clean-Up:** Dispose of trash and bulky items for free from **8:00 AM to noon** at various city locations: Gates (Safari Drive), North K (near underpass and BNSF Road), Vista (Nikki Bunch Ball Field), and Cibola (Robuffa near Public Works Yard). Note: Hazardous waste and specific materials are not accepted.

2. STREET MAINTENANCE



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2. BEAUTIFICATION INITIATIVE



4. DUKE WATKINS BEAUTIFICATION



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5. COMMUNITY CLEANUP



5. COMMUNITY CLEANUP



7. COMMUNITY CLEANUP



**THIS OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
TUESDAY DECEMBER 31, 2024, AND
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 1, 2025, FOR
THE NEW YEAR**

**WE WILL REOPEN ON THURSDAY
JANUARY 2, 2025, AT 8:30 A.M..**