

Daily Breeze

West Harbor marks completion of first building in San Pedro's waterfront development

It marks another milestone in what has been a longer-than-anticipated road to create an updated gathering spot overlooking the Port of Los Angeles' Main Channel.



A group of realtors was given a hard hat tour of West Harbor as Building A is close to completion and tenants will then be free to start making their own improvements to their spots in San Pedro on Thursday, July 25, 2024. This area will house mixed food offerings. (Photo by Brittany M. Solo Press-Telegram/SCNG)

By [Donna Littlejohn](#) | dlittlejohn@scng.com | Daily Breeze

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With tentative plans now to add in a hotel, a Ferris Wheel or similar ride — and possibly a roller rink over the water — San Pedro's waterfront developers hosted a hard-hat tour for area real estate representatives on Thursday, July 25

The occasion: Completion of the development's first building, [Building 1A](#).

It marks another milestone in what has been a [longer-than-anticipated](#) road to create an updated gathering spot overlooking the Port of Los Angeles' Main Channel. A grand opening — which already had been pushed from 2024 to 2025 — now looks like it won't happen until 2026, said Valerie James, vice-president of Business Development for West Harbor.

"There have been some hurdles," she said, noting the planning process with the city of Los Angeles takes time.

The [groundbreaking was held in November 2022](#).

But developers are finding ways to [open up](#) parts of the linear, 42-acre footprint along the waterfront — where [Ports O' Call Village](#) once stood — going south from the Los Angeles Maritime Museum and a town square on Harbor Boulevard between Sixth and Seventh streets.

The so-called pop-up activities have included craft sales, community gatherings and the opening of the waterside promenade for casual walks and ship-watching. And the [San Pedro Fish Market](#) currently operates from a temporary space, awaiting a more permanent spot once the \$170 million development gets closer to finishing.

Harbor Cruises also is onsite as one of the earliest tenants to sign, providing harbor tours. There is also [Wheel Fun Rentals](#) with wheeled surries and bikes available.

News that the first of what will be several buildings is essentially done — but still needs vendor work on individual spaces — was encouraging enough for local Realtor Lee Williams that he invited realtors from the Palos Verdes Peninsula to come take a look. The walk-through drew about 80 participants.

“I didn’t hear any negative opinions, which was pretty amazing,” said Williams, who also sits on the Port of Los Angeles Harbor Commission.

That’s not to say everyone in town loves the plan or design — particularly when it comes to the industrial, open warehouse-style architecture of the buildings that will house multiple vendors. When final plans were rolled out with those renderings, critics weren’t pleased with the [sharp contrast from the homier Ports O' Call Village it was replacing](#).

But developers and supporters within the community are banking that once it’s up and running, the new West Harbor will be a very big hit.

When the original Ports O’ Call was built, Lee said of the development that opened in the early 1960s, it was not uncommon for buildings to look like something from another part of the country.

“So we got a New England fishing village,” he said of the Port’s O’ Call design. “We’re not New England.”

It also was designed in an era when Disneyland was the biggest attraction in Southern California.

“I think the warehouses and the way this looks has an industrial feel,” Lee said. “It’s as authentic to San Pedro (and the port) as I can imagine.”

The walking tour, he added, seemed to win some folks over.

“I think some opinions were changed” with the tour, Lee said later. “People from ‘the Hill’ love to go to Redondo Beach and Manhattan Beach,” he said. “The thought of having something right here — and not in the other direction — is enticing.”

James, who brought some 200 visitors from an L.A. tourism gathering down for a tour some months ago, said work also has begun to prepare the site on the north end of the development for a membership dog park, [Bark Social](#), and a pickle ball vendor.

“We’ll see some soft (tenant) openings in 2025,” she said.

Also proposed for the southern-most point of the project is a 6,200-seat amphitheater, with plans for that expected to be released for additional public review later this year.

Tenants include [a variety of dining and entertainment](#) businesses.

The penciling in of a 150-room hotel was a late addition and is still tentative and under consideration, James said. It would be built just south of the Maritime Museum on the northern-most portion of the waterfront parcel.

For information and updates, go to westharborla.com

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West Harbor site plan. (Courtesy West Harbor)