



NEWS • News

LA City Council gives final OK for San Pedro waterfront amphitheater

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San Pedro's proposed 6,200-seat waterfront amphitheater received a final go-ahead from the Los Angeles City Council this week after considering last-minute objections by some hotel union members.

Councilmembers voted unanimously on Wednesday, Sept. 10, to back the plan, which the [Los Angeles harbor commission approved in June](#).

Before the council meeting, the city's Trade, Travel and Tourism Committee also voted unanimously to support the plans after hearing testimony about an unexpected, last-minute appeal filed by a hospitality union on Tuesday.

The appeal by Unite Here Local 11 — which did not speak at Wednesday's council meeting — raised a few issues regarding a lack of study into issues such as miles people might drive to use the proposed Ferris wheel and other amenities at the overall venue.

Following the council vote, Councilmember Tim McOsker, who represents the 15th District, said the amphitheater and West Harbor will have "a transformative effect on the Harbor Area and the whole south end of the city. It will create great economic benefits for the local businesses."

A large group of supporters turned out to speak in favor of the plan.

"We've struggled since COVID," said downtown business owner James Brown. "The amphitheater would not only be great for the waterfront but it will really help us."

Former Councilmember Joe Buscaino also spoke, saying a revitalized waterfront was a mission of his and the community during his term representing the area.

"This represents more than 20 years of work by this community," Buscaino said. "We all showed up, we all participated and we shaped this plan from the ground up."

The appeal, he said, was akin to challenging it "in the bottom of the ninth inning."

Rena Wasserman, senior vice president of Nederlander, which will handle bookings at the amphitheater and earlier handled bookings for the Greek Theater, said the company has a lot of experience in outdoor venues.

The company, she said, has navigated the challenges inherent with the venues. The amphitheater will feature a diverse lineup of music, from rock and pop to jazz and Latin music, she said.

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In the offseason, the space will operate as an open park area where graduations, fundraising galas and other gatherings can be held.

Elise Swanson, CEO and president of the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce, said that the board of directors has been a longtime supporter of West Harbor.

“This amphitheater will transform our waterfront into a world-class destination,” she said.

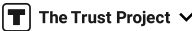
Eric Johnson, the senior project executive for the West Harbor development, said the amphitheater will offer some “100 shows a year with world-class music.”

He said later in a telephone interview that Construction will begin quickly, Johnson said in a phone interview, and the amphitheater is expected to open in summer 2026, when the entire West Harbor development will have its grand opening.

But in the meantime, ongoing activities at the waterfront site will continue leading up to that the grand opening through late 2025 and early 2026, he said.

An earlier version of this article indicated an incorrect year for the anticipated opening of the amphitheater. It is expected to be finished in summer 2026 when West Harbor also is expected to have its grand opening.

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