

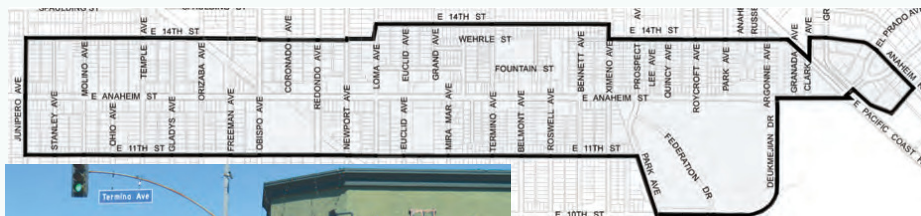
East Anaheim Street Business Alliance

By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Senior Writer

The East Anaheim Street Parking and Business Improvement Area, a business-based assessment district, recently launched its new branding as Zaferia – a name harkening back to the area’s historical roots as a laborers’ village in the early 1900s. Now that the area has been rebranded and a new website launched, new Executive Director Kristine Hammond is focused on business outreach, streamlining the budget and adjusting the East Anaheim Street Business Alliance’s (EASBA) priorities.

Zaferia is bounded by Junipero Avenue to the west, Pacific Coast Highway to the east, 11th Street to the south and 14th Street to the north. Its main thoroughfare is Anaheim Street, which is one of the oldest commerce routes in Los Angeles County, according to a historical report from the alliance. Businesses in the area include furniture stores, service companies, professional offices for services like architecture and law, bars, restaurants, creative agencies and more.

Business owners in Zaferia are assessed based on their type of business and their number of employees. Retail, recreation, entertainment and “unique” businesses pay a base rate of \$300 per year and \$15 per employee (up to \$300). Service, vending, professional, wholesale, contracting, manufacturing and mobile businesses pay a base rate of \$200 annually or \$120 if they hold a secondary license, plus the same rate as retailers for each employee. “Non-residential space rental businesses” pay \$120 per year and no employee fee.



Executive Director Kristine Hammond
East Anaheim Street Business Alliance

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www.zaferia.org

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The total annual assessment for the district is \$145,000, but Hammond said about \$10,000 of that is identified as non-collectible, so the total is closer to \$135,500.

The rebranding of the area as Zaferia began before Hammond came on board this year. A new logo – a design of the letter Z in a shade of bright green – is the unifying iden-

tifier for the region and now appears on banners throughout the district, as well as on the new website. The green color used in the logo will be implemented throughout the district, such as on bike racks.

“We’re hoping to get this area known as Zaferia. People would say, ‘Let’s go get a drink in Zaferia,’” Hammond said. “My take is that previous efforts were trying to call the area EASBA, but nobody knows what that is.”

In the process of putting together a directory for the website, Hammond began calling businesses in the district only to discover that “some of the members don’t even realize they’re members” even though they’ve been paying the assessment, she said. “It’s interesting. About eight out of ten people I talk to don’t realize they’re members,” she added. For this reason, Hammond is focusing efforts on outreach to businesses in the area.

Hammond has been digging down into the budget to reassess spending priorities. For example, the district’s primary marketing strategy has been the production of a four- to eight-page magazine about the area, which is being discontinued. “From what I understand, they just distributed it to the members. So I don’t know how effective that was, because you’re just sort

of marketing yourself to yourself,” she said.

Other expensive printed materials are also on the chopping block. “I’m told my predecessor . . . involved a marketing company that he had

an interest in,” Hammond noted. An annual event, Discover Zaferia, also might not be effective to continue, according to Hammond. “You block the street. People are there for the stuff under the tents out in the street rather than visiting the businesses. So I think that money can be better spent in different promotions,” she explained.

Hammond and the board are looking into bringing people to the area with new events. On July 23 and 24, for example, the EASBA is paying the Long Beach Playhouse to put on “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” at Recreation Park, which will be free and open to the public. Attendees will be given a program that includes coupons to Zaferia businesses. “There will also be an insert listing the types of businesses that are in our area,” Hammond said.

Another potential new promotion to highlight local businesses might involve music. “One of the things I’m looking at in October is to promote “Rocktober” and advertise for all of the entertainment places with live and recorded music, and push that out, particularly to Cal State Long Beach students who are back in school,” Hammond explained.

EASBA is continuing to contract with the Conservation Corps of Long Beach for litter removal and weed abatement services, Hammond noted. To promote further beautification of the area, the organization helps local businesses take advantage of the city’s facade improvement program, she said. ■

Magnolia Industrial Group

By **SAMANTHA MEHLINGER**
Senior Writer

The Magnolia Industrial Group (MIG) Property and Business Improvement District (PBID) is unique among the other business districts in Long Beach in that it is in an industrial zone. Unlike other business improvement districts, the assessment fees paid by property owners in the area go to one major purpose: private security.

Founded in 1996, the Magnolia Industrial Group PBID is bounded from west to east by the Los Angeles River and Magnolia Avenue. The southern border stretches to an undeveloped parcel past 12th Street, and the northern boundary is Pacific Coast Highway.

Owners of properties measuring less than 20,000 square feet pay an annual assessment of \$744.06, while owners of larger properties pay an additional assessment of slightly more than \$0.01 per square foot. The total assessment fee is capped at \$1,488.12. The total annual assessment is \$85,350.

The Magnolia Industrial Group is comprised mostly of port-related and manufacturing businesses. Goodwill, Serving the People of Southern Los Angeles County is also headquartered there and has training facilities and a retail store. There are 100 property owners within the district, which is run

by a volunteer, unpaid board of directors.

“Years ago, we had issues with crime, vandalism, graffiti, prostitution,” Board President Bill Townsend, who is also president of Long Beach real estate firm INCO Commercial, told the Business Journal. “It was hard to get tenants and buyers to invest in that part of town.” So the area property owners and Townsend – who works in the area as a broker – banded together with the

assistance of the City of Long Beach to form an improvement district.

“The owners really took it on themselves,” Townsend said of the effort. “We had tremendous help from the city forming this. I think it was one of the first industrial BIDs that was ever done.” Townsend said the PBID has proven to be a success, and that “owners see it’s a good return on their investment.”

The PBID’s assessment dollars go to-

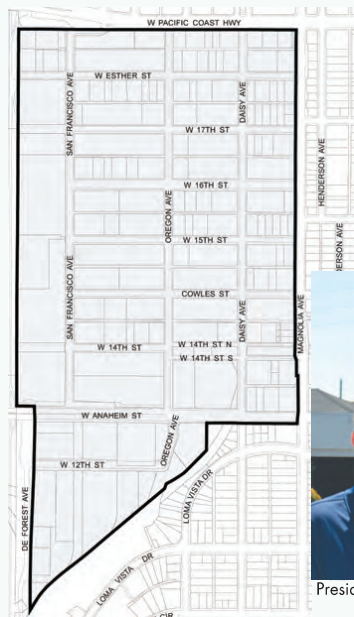
wards night security for the district, which is contracted through Platt Security, a Long Beach business. “We work very well with the Long Beach Police and it’s a really good partnership with the city, the owners and our security firm,” Townsend said. “We’re all working together for the same goal.”

Industrial areas in general seem to have less crime, despite increases in crime rates in other parts of the city, Townsend noted. “Our crime is very low. There is certainly graffiti and things like that, but it’s handled immediately,” he said. “Having security in the area at night keeps the crime away.”

As a real estate broker, Townsend keeps track of vacancies and turnover in the district – both of which he said are minimal. “There are small businesses that come and go,” he said. “But overall, the core businesses have been there for years. It’s a very stable area.”

Having a low vacancy rate keeps crime down, Townsend noted. It does, however, create pressure on sales prices of properties and rental rates, making it expensive for businesses to locate there. In general, though, real estate prices are high throughout the state, he said.

“The number one success is that we have a very secure area,” Townsend said. “As you’re improving the neighborhood, it helps real estate values go up, and it helps attract tenants and buyers,” he explained. The city has also helped to improve the area by planting trees and repaving streets, he pointed out. “Owners feel secure in buying in the area. It’s a solid investment.” ■



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magnoliaindustrialgroup.com

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President Bill Townsend, left, with Treasurer Mike Zupanovich
Magnolia Industrial Group