

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT**

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**DOWNTOWN  
LONG BEACH  
ALLIANCE****IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE FEATURED TOPIC IN  
APRIL'S "DOWNTOWN DISCUSSIONS"***Local experts to address current and future impact of climate change on Downtown Long Beach in April 27 Webinar*

**(LONG BEACH, CA – April 23, 2021)** In recognition of Earth Day [Downtown Long Beach Alliance's Downtown Discussions](#) is dedicated to “Climate Change & DTLB” and will be held on Tuesday, April 27 at 10:00 AM. The virtual Zoom session will also be livestreamed on DLBA’s Facebook account [@downtownlongbeach](#).

The Downtown Discussions program features a panel of local environmental experts who will analyze issues surrounding climate change on the microcosm of Downtown Long Beach. Panelists will provide a closer look at the effects of climate change locally, as well as the mitigation and adaptation measures embraced by the City, local Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private enterprises.

Moderated by Stephen Groner, President at SGA, a strategic marketing firm in Downtown Long Beach, the panel is expected to discuss the effects of climate change already seen in the region, the approach of Long Beach’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, and what role the local community can play in addressing the impact of climate change on the local economy.

“As the largest downtown waterfront between San Diego and San Francisco, our community is more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This webinar provides a way to stay informed especially as our region experiences rising sea levels, more frequent extreme weather events and the environmental impact from adjacent ports,” said Groner.

Panelists are listed below and their respective biographies are provided at the end of this press release.

**Moderator:** Stephen Groner, President at SGA

**Panelists:**

- Matt Arms, Director, Environmental Planning Division, Port of Long Beach
- Dr. Peter Kareiva: President and CEO at Aquarium of the Pacific
- Todd Lemmis JD: Founding Partner at Pacific 6
- Jennifer Ly, Planner at City of Long Beach
- Alison Spindler-Ruiz, Advance Planner, City of Long Beach

“We are pleased to provide a way for the community to check the pulse of Downtown Long Beach when it comes to climate change,” said DLBA President & CEO Kraig Kojian. “The DLBA is constantly working to create a healthy, safe and prosperous Downtown and that includes anticipating potential impacts on our local economy from effects of climate change. This month’s Downtown Discussions webinar is a great way to plug into the current status, think about climate change on our local economy and what proactive measures we should take to protect our future.”

To participate in the free Zoom webinar, register at [downtownlongbeach.org/downtown-discussions](#). A question-and-answer session will take place following the roundtable discussion. Viewers on Zoom may submit questions through the Q&A feature, and viewers on other platforms may post their questions as comments on the livestreamed video.

Downtown Discussions is a monthly free virtual webinar series hosted by the DLBA. Its goal is to connect the community with experts on topics of importance to them, from racial inequities to economic development, the digital divide, and more. Visit [downtownlongbeach.org/downtown-discussions](#) for more information and to view past events.

## **Participant Biographies**

**Matt Arms:** Director, Environmental Planning Division in the Planning and Environmental Affairs Bureau for the Port of Long Beach, California. He was named to the post in May 2020, having served as Acting Director since October 2018. Mr. Arms joined the Port in 2003 as an Assistant Environmental Specialist, taking on a series of larger roles before being named to lead the Water Quality Group in 2007 and spearheading the development (2008-2009) of the Port's Water Resources Action Plan. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from Washington State University and worked with the Seattle environmental consulting firm, RETEC, before beginning his career at the Port.

**Stephen Groner:** Founder and president of the strategic communications firm SGA. Stephen has experience working within government and as a consultant directing community engagement programs on various issues including water, housing, environmental justice, public health and other issues. He is also experienced working with non-profits on strategy both within the organization as a board member and as outside counsel. He is an Environmental Engineer by training; however, the marketing firm works specifically on environmental behavior change issues.

**Dr. Peter Kareiva:** President and CEO at Aquarium of the Pacific. Dr. Kareiva joined the Aquarium of Pacific in August 2020. He comes to the Aquarium from his position as director of the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA. He also served as the vice president of science for The Nature Conservancy and has held faculty positions at several universities and the National Marine Fisheries Service. He holds a B.A. in zoology, M.S. in environmental biology, and Ph.D. in ecology and evolutionary biology. He has written dozens of articles, papers, and books and received numerous appointments and awards, including the Aquarium's most prestigious honor, the Ocean Conservation Award.

**Todd Lemmis JD:** Founding partner at Pacific6. Lemmis is a Navy veteran, musician, lawyer, HR guy, author, and founding partner of Pacific6 Enterprises, a Long Beach, California based impact investment/development firm. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy from UCLA and a Juris Doctorate from Southwestern Law School. He lives in Long Beach, California with his wife and three children.

**Jennifer Ly:** Planner at the City of Long Beach Department of Development Services. She is staff lead on the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). Previously, she worked at the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation where she supported the bus electrification and transit service expansion plan, and at the City of Richmond, California, where she helped build the City's environmental sustainability and health equity program. Jennifer earned a Master in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Bachelor's degree in Conservation & Resource Studies from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Alison Spindler-Ruiz:** Advance Planning Officer for the City of Long Beach. She oversees the Advance Planning Division in the Department of Development Services, which is responsible for long-range and environmental planning, as well as the City's historic preservation program. This includes updating policies, plans and zoning regulations to better address community needs related to housing, health and well-being, access to jobs and services while helping move the City to a more equitable, low-carbon, climate resilient future. Current efforts include developing Long Beach's first-ever Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), updating the City's Housing Element and implementing recent General Plan updates such as the Land Use Element. Alison holds dual Masters in Urban Planning and Public Administration from the USC Price.

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**About the Downtown Long Beach Alliance:** DLBA is a non-profit, community-based organization whose mission is to cultivate, preserve and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous Downtown. By balancing the interests of the residents, as well as businesses, the DLBA creates tangible progress by way of vested interest and solidified partnerships across local, municipal, and commercial lines. For additional information, visit [www.downtownlongbeach.org](http://www.downtownlongbeach.org), or follow on Facebook @downtownlongbeach, and on Twitter and Instagram @DLBA.