

RESOLUTION NO. RES-20-0076

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LONG BEACH ACKNOWLEDGING RACISM AS A
PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND ESTABLISHING A
FRAMEWORK FOR RECONCILIATION

WHEREAS, on May 25, 2020, George Floyd was tragically killed in
Minneapolis, Minnesota, shortly after his arrest and detention by the Minneapolis Police
Department; and

WHEREAS, video footage of the killing of Mr. Floyd was circulated on every
news and media platform, sparking outrage in cities across the country and the world and
resulting in communities, such as Long Beach, coming together in protest of abusive police
activities and practices and systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, Long Beach, as well as those communities across the country
and beyond our national borders, are awakened and speaking out about the unjust
treatment of the Black community, and other communities of color, in the United States;
and

WHEREAS, Long Beach and other jurisdictions now face a three-part crisis:
the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which disproportionately affects communities
of color, seniors, and/or those with certain underlying health conditions; the historic loss of
jobs which perpetuates already existing economic disparities; and unlawful law
enforcement violence which demands intervention; and

WHEREAS, it is vital for the City of Long Beach, including its employees and
staff, to take this moment to receive and share with the public experiences with racial
injustice in our own lives, and more specifically, the ways we have experienced the
persistent effects of government, economic, and social systems designed to exclude
communities of color within our history as a nation and as a City, and how we can do better

1 to ensure equity and equality; and

2 WHEREAS, the City must first acknowledge its own history with racism and
3 begin working towards solutions that uplift and protect Black lives, as well as lives of other
4 communities of color, who have faced and continue to face disparate treatment within
5 society; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2012, the Black Community published a State of Black Long
7 Beach outlining many of the health, income, housing, and policing gaps with the City's
8 Black Community, and we honor the work that led to this moment and acknowledge the
9 following statistics:

- 10 • 13 percent of Long Beach's total population is Black;
- 11 • Black residents and those who identify as mixed-race face greater
12 barriers in finding employment and have a higher than average
13 unemployment rate of 12.2 percent;
- 14 • Black workers tend to face higher unemployment rates regardless of
15 education level;
- 16 • At nearly 33 percent, Black residents in Long Beach continue to have
17 the highest poverty rates compared to other racial and ethnic groups;
- 18 • One-quarter of Black residents in Long Beach are homeowners, the
19 lowest rate compared to other racial and ethnic groups;
- 20 • Black women have the highest rate of rent burden, which is defined
21 as paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent, as Black women are
22 paying 63 percent of their income;
- 23 • Black residents have higher mortality rates compared to other racial
24 and ethnic groups, due to educational, economic, and housing segregation,
25 as well as environmental racism;
- 26 • The Black Community in Long Beach has the highest rates of
27 hospitalization for heart disease, diabetes, and asthma compared to other
28 races/ethnicities, and Black residents are hospitalized for asthma 9.4 times

- 1 more than White residents;
- 2 • Long Beach has a life expectancy that differs by 17 years depending
 - 3 on where one lives in the City;
 - 4 • One-quarter of very low birth weight babies are born to Black mothers;
 - 5 • 44 percent of those arrested by the Long Beach Police Department for
 - 6 cannabis enforcement were Black even though they represent 13 percent of
 - 7 the population;
 - 8 • In 5 years, from 2015 to 2019, there were 191 use of force complaints
 - 9 filed against Long Beach Police officers, including 21 complaints in 2019; and
 - 10 • In 7 years, from 2014 to 2020, the City spent \$31,489,108.00 in
 - 11 alleged Police excessive force settled lawsuits since January 2014; and

12 WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Long Beach affirms that Black
13 Lives Matter; and

14 WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that racial injustice is as great of a
15 threat to the public health as is a global pandemic, as there is a current failure of ensuring
16 health equity and equality across the community; and

17 WHEREAS, health equity means that all residents have the opportunity to
18 attain their highest level of health, including but not limited to equal access to employment,
19 housing, education, health care, and public safety, regardless of their racial or ethnic
20 background; and

21 WHEREAS, a healthy community is only achieved through the health of all
22 individuals within said community, requiring the expansion of public health and social
23 support networks to decrease racial disparities in health outcomes; and

24 WHEREAS, communities of color are disproportionately impacted by social
25 determinants of health, including but not limited to poor air quality, lack of safe places to
26 walk, bike, run or recreate, unaffordable housing, and barriers to quality education; and

27 WHEREAS, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, and other serious medical
28 conditions prevalent among communities of color are consistently ranked the leading

1 causes of death in the United States, as well as are considered high risk factors for severe
2 illness such as those resulting from COVID-19, an ongoing pandemic which is the subject
3 of federal, state, and local public health emergencies; and

4 WHEREAS, accordingly, COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting
5 communities of color who have a higher risk of serious illness or death if they contract the
6 virus; and

7 WHEREAS, it is therefore the intent of this City Council to recognize systemic
8 racism as a public health crisis resulting in specific societal concerns and other measurable
9 detriments to communities of color; and

10 WHEREAS, additionally, although the City of Long Beach already has a
11 number of data-driven efforts that provide a starting point on advancing equity in
12 communities of color, including but not limited to the My Brother's Keeper Local Action
13 Plan, the Long Beach Office of Equity Toolkit, and the 'Everyone In' Economic Inclusion
14 Initiative Implementation Plan, and following the City's 2018 study entitled, "The Economic
15 Equitable Growth Profile of Long Beach," which highlighted disparities for communities of
16 color in the City, the City Council now recognizes an opportunity to set the example for
17 reconciliation; and

18 WHEREAS, by "reconciliation," the City Council is referring to bringing people
19 together to come to an agreement, a process by which the City may discover past
20 wrongdoings in hopes of resolving the ongoing crisis related to systemic racism and the
21 need for government intervention; and

22 WHEREAS, it is the intent of the City Council that the City of Long Beach
23 takes this pivotal moment to compare its internal practices to national best practices to
24 ensure the City is in line with widely approved and modern efforts, and assumes the
25 responsibility for disparities, remaining focused on changing the socioeconomic conditions
26 causing such disparities; and

27 WHEREAS, specifically, reconciliation shall be achieved by the City through
28 committing to four key steps: to acknowledge, to listen, to convene, and to catalyze; and

1 WHEREAS, the City must first acknowledge its collective community pain in
2 Long Beach to determine a path to move forward, and must listen to the experiences of
3 impacted community members, youth, and the public; and

4 WHEREAS, the City must further convene and begin discussions with
5 stakeholders on the framework for the future as it relates to redefining structural resiliency
6 and safety; and

7 WHEREAS, the City must also catalyze a plan to ensure a strong, resilient,
8 and equitable City, which may be done through actions such as planning for safer and
9 more secure communities through budget investments in housing, jobs, education, youth
10 development, healthcare, community centers, and open spaces; and

11 WHEREAS, the City shall set up a framework for reconciliation to build
12 community trust and redefine its relationship with law enforcement with additional
13 transparency and reform, including de-escalation tactics and expanding pre-arrest youth
14 diversion programs, such as the City's existing Promising Adults, Tomorrow's Home
15 (P.A.T.H.) Program; and

16 WHEREAS, the Framework for Reconciliation shall implement certain
17 structural and other changes, as prescribed for herein, to ensure Long Beach is a strong,
18 resilient, and equitable city; and

19 WHEREAS, ultimately, the City of Long Beach must unite in its commitment
20 to health equity and progress for a better and just future for all;

21 NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as
22 follows:

23 Section 1. The City Council of the City of Long Beach hereby
24 acknowledges that Racism is a Public Health Crisis that results in societal concerns and
25 measurable detriments to persons and communities of color in the delivery of and access
26 to wellness and healthcare, economic development and opportunity, public safety,
27 housing, and education.

28 Section 2. The City Council of the City of Long Beach further establishes

1 a Framework for Reconciliation in Long Beach, committing to frank and open discussions
2 of race and the impact of the decisions the City makes upon racial inequities in the Long
3 Beach community, as such discussions will be integrated into the City's daily work to
4 address issues of race and racial disparities in a full and direct manner. As such, the City
5 Council recognizes the need to immediately begin engaging in a public reconciliation
6 process, internal policy review, and local action plan committing to the following steps:

7 A. The City Manager shall issue a public statement on behalf of
8 the City of Long Beach condemning the murder of George Floyd in
9 Minneapolis, Minnesota, and acknowledging the existence and longstanding
10 impacts of systemic racism in Long Beach and throughout America;

11 B. The City Manager shall conduct a formal listening process to
12 hear accounts and experiences of racial injustice, inequity, and/or harm of
13 community members;

14 C. The City Manager shall convene stakeholders to evaluate the
15 feedback from the formal listening process and shape policy, budgetary,
16 Charter, and programmatic reform ideas; and

17 D. The City Manager shall catalyze action, presenting immediate,
18 short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendations for the City
19 Council to consider, including, but not limited to:

20 1. Potential ballot measures for future elections;

21 2. Reforms to modernize the City's Citizen Police
22 Complaint Commission to strengthen independence, transparency, and
23 oversight;

24 3. A review of implementation status of existing reforms
25 and plans that expand racial equity and community safety, including the
26 SAFE Long Beach Violence Prevention Plan, 'Everyone In' Economic
27 Inclusion Implementation Plan, Economic Empowerment Zone Program,
28 Long Beach Office of Equity Toolkit, My Brother's Keeper Local Action Plan,

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and Language Access Plan;

4. Reforms to use of force policies, including mandatory use of de-escalation tactics, and a zero-tolerance policy on uses of excessive force;

5. Establish and modernize local Body Worn Camera policies to add transparency and consistency;

6. Expand and standardize youth diversion programs, such as the P.A.T.H. Young Adult Diversion Program;

7. Review and reform Human Resources, hiring, and disciplinary practices within the Long Beach Police Department to ensure a "best in class" culture;

8. Budget reforms to ensure equitable investment in community safety, including youth development, housing, healthcare, public health, and economic equity;

9. Strengthen and realign the Office of Equity to add independence and expand capacity; and

10. Any additional recommendations concerning national best practices.

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1 I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City Council
2 of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of June 23, 2020, by the following vote:

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4 Ayes: Councilmembers: Zendejas, Pearce, Price,
5 Supernaw, Mungo, Uranga,
6 Austin, Richardson.

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8 Noes: Councilmembers: None.

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10 Absent: Councilmembers: Andrews.

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12 Recusal(s) Councilmembers: None.

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16 City Clerk

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
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