

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
Long Beach, California

CHARLES PARKIN
City Attorney

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ORD-29

February 1, 2022

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution declaring an Inclusive Language Policy for all future Long Beach Municipal Code Ordinances, Ballot Proposals for Long Beach City Charter Amendments, City Council Resolutions, and City Council Policies; and

Declare an Ordinance amending the Long Beach Municipal Code by adding Section 1.08.150, relating to Gender References, read the first time and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council for final reading. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

Per the City Council's request on December 7, 2021, attached is a Resolution declaring an Inclusive Language Policy for all future Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC) Ordinances, Ballot Proposals for Long Beach City Charter amendments, City Council Resolutions, and City Council policies. Additionally, the accompanying Ordinance, if passed, would amend the LBMC by adding Section 1.08.150 to deem all current gender references in the LBMC as neutral and inclusive in form and context.


The Resolution and Ordinance, together, will further the City's crucial stance on non-discrimination by being inclusive of all people, regardless of their gender identities, gender expressions, and/or pronouns. The recommended action would exclude the use of gender-specific words in the aforementioned laws, resolutions, and policies, which, in turn, helps eliminate stigma and discrimination across all facets of society by embracing people of all gender identities and/or expressions for who they are.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney

By 
Monica J. Kilaita
Deputy City Attorney

MJK:vr

ATTACHMENTS:

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION
CITY COUNCIL ORDINANCE

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RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LONG BEACH DECLARING AN INCLUSIVE
LANGUAGE POLICY FOR ALL FUTURE LONG BEACH
MUNICIPAL CODE ORDINANCES, BALLOT PROPOSALS
FOR LONG BEACH CITY CHARTER AMENDMENTS, CITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS, AND CITY COUNCIL POLICIES

WHEREAS, the City of Long Beach government represents, supports, and
serves all residents throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, while the City acts on behalf of all Long Beach residents,
certain existing portions of the Long Beach Municipal Code, the City Charter, City Council
Resolutions, and City Council Policies do not fully reflect the diversity of the City's people,
as they do not currently include inclusive language which avoids the use of certain
expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people,
especially gender-specific words; and

WHEREAS, for instance, certain communities such as the transgender and
non-binary communities often face stigma surrounding who they are from an early age,
which is often rooted in inaccurate beliefs and politically motivated attacks on such
identities; and

WHEREAS, these stigmas erect barriers in virtually every facet of life,
denying people the equal opportunity to succeed and be accepted for who they are,
which could have long-term impacts on mental health and economic and housing
stability, especially where individuals experience familial rejection and isolation from
social support systems; and

WHEREAS, for many people, living openly with respect to gender identity
and expression can be its own act of defiance in a society that continues to set rigid

1 cultural norms for gender identity and expression; and

2 WHEREAS, all too often, violence against communities such as
3 transgender or gender non-conforming people goes underreported or misreported and
4 the City must do its part to address and eliminate stigma, as well as discrimination across
5 all facets of society, and embrace people of all genders for who they are; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2021, there were over 250 anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
7 Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) bills introduced into legislatures around the country
8 where the primary targets were our transgender and non-binary communities, specifically
9 transgender youth, and, similarly, in the last few years, there has been a rise in anti-
10 transgender and anti-non-binary discrimination across the country; and

11 WHEREAS, it is imperative that the City of Long Beach, recognized by the
12 Human Rights Campaign as one of the best cities in the nation when it comes to
13 supporting its LGBTQ community with local laws and policies, continues to promote an
14 inclusive environment in which all of its residents, visitors, and workers, no matter their
15 gender identities and/or expressions, feel valued and supported; and

16 WHEREAS, the City Council has periodically amended its policies and the
17 City's codes to reflect societal changes and the needs of all people it serves; and

18 WHEREAS, the use of the pronouns "he", "she", and "he or she", together,
19 when referring to individuals is not inclusive of all people, including but not limited to
20 people who may not ascribe to a particular, fixed, or certain gender, or people who
21 otherwise use different pronouns; and

22 WHEREAS, eliminating gender-specific language will further the City's
23 stance on non-discrimination by being comprehensive of all people regardless of their
24 gender identities, gender expressions, and/or pronouns; and

25 WHEREAS, as such, the City Council desires to declare an Inclusive
26 Language Policy for all future Long Beach Municipal Code Ordinances, Ballot Proposals
27 for Long Beach City Charter amendments, City Council Resolutions, and City Council
28 policies;

1 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as
2 follows:

3 Section 1. The City Council hereby declares and adopts an Inclusive
4 Language Policy for all future ordinances, resolutions, and ballot measures brought
5 before it, and for all future City Council policies it may adopt or approve. Specifically, all
6 future ordinances, additions, amendments, or other changes unspecified here to the Long
7 Beach Municipal Code, and all City Council Resolutions, shall utilize gender-inclusive
8 language, rather than gender-specific language, when brought forward to City Council
9 meetings for the City Council’s review and adoption. Further, all future additions,
10 amendments, or other changes unspecified here to policies of the Long Beach City
11 Council shall utilize gender-inclusive language, rather than gender-specific language.

12 Section 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption
13 by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall certify the vote adopting this resolution.

14 I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City
15 Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of _____, 2022, by the following vote:

17 Ayes: Councilmembers: _____
18 _____
19 _____
20 _____

21 Noes: Councilmembers: _____
22 _____

23 Absent: Councilmembers: _____
24 _____

25 Recusal(s): Councilmembers: _____
26 _____

27 _____
28 City Clerk

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ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING THE LONG BEACH
MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING SECTION 1.08.150
RELATING TO GENDER REFERENCES

WHEREAS, the City of Long Beach government represents, supports, and serves all residents throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, while the City acts on behalf of all Long Beach residents, the Long Beach Municipal Code does not fully reflect the diversity of its people, as it does not currently only contain inclusive language which avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people, especially gender-specific words; and

WHEREAS, for instance, certain communities such as the transgender and non-binary communities often face stigma surrounding who they are from an early age, which is often rooted in inaccurate beliefs and politically motivated attacks on such identities; and

WHEREAS, these stigmas erect barriers in virtually every facet of life, denying people the equal opportunity to succeed and be accepted for who they are, which could have long-term impacts on mental health and economic and housing stability, especially where individuals experience familial rejection and isolation from social support systems; and

WHEREAS, for many people, living openly with respect to gender identity and expression can be its own act of defiance in a society that continues to set rigid cultural norms for gender identity and expression; and

WHEREAS, all too often, violence against communities such as transgender or gender non-conforming people goes underreported or misreported and

1 the City must do its part to address and eliminate stigma, as well as discrimination across
2 all facets of society, and embrace people of all genders for who they are; and

3 WHEREAS, in 2021, there were over 250 anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
4 Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) bills introduced into legislatures around the country
5 where the primary targets were our transgender and non-binary communities, specifically
6 transgender youth, and, similarly, in the last few years, there has been a rise in anti-
7 transgender and anti-non-binary discrimination across the country; and

8 WHEREAS, it is imperative that the City of Long Beach, recognized by the
9 Human Rights Campaign as one of the best cities in the nation when it comes to
10 supporting its LGBTQ community with local laws and policies, continues to promote an
11 inclusive environment in which all of its residents, visitors, and workers, no matter their
12 gender identities and/or expressions, feel valued and supported; and

13 WHEREAS, the City Council has periodically amended the Long Beach
14 Municipal Code to reflect societal changes and the needs of all people it serves; and

15 WHEREAS, the use of the pronouns “he”, “she”, and “he or she”, together,
16 when referring to individuals is not inclusive of all people, including but not limited to
17 people who may not ascribe to a particular, fixed, or certain gender, or people who
18 otherwise use different pronouns; and

19 WHEREAS, eliminating gender-specific language will further the City’s
20 stance on non-discrimination by being comprehensive of all people regardless of their
21 gender identities, gender expressions, and/or pronouns; and

22 WHEREAS, it is important that the City of Long Beach amends the Long
23 Beach Municipal Code to ensure any existing gender references are deemed neutral and
24 inclusive so as to continue to represent and recognize all of its residents and visitors;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains as
26 follows:

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28 ///

1 Section 1. Section 1.08.150 entitled "Gender References" is added to
2 Chapter 1.08, "General Provisions", of the Long Beach Municipal Code to read as
3 follows:

4 1.08.150 Gender references.

5 Any gender reference in this Code shall be deemed neutral and
6 inclusive in form and context.

7 Section 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance by
8 the City Council and cause it to be posted in three (3) conspicuous places in the City of
9 Long Beach, and it shall take effect on the thirty-first (31st) day after it is approved by the
10 Mayor.

11 I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the City
12 Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of _____, 2022, by the following vote:

13
14 Ayes: Councilmembers: _____

15 _____

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18 Noes: Councilmembers: _____

19 _____

20 Absent: Councilmembers: _____

21 _____

22 Recusal(s): Councilmembers: _____

23 _____

24 _____

25 _____
City Clerk

26 _____

27 Approved: _____

28 (Date) _____ Mayor