



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Memorandum

R-7

Date: August 22, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor Garcia and Members of the City Council

From: Stacy Mungo, Councilwoman, Fifth District *SM*
Suzie Price, Councilwoman, Third District *SP*
Daryl Supernaw, Councilmember, Fourth District *DS*

Subject: **AGENDA ITEM: NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to request City Manager within 90 days to develop a Neighborhood Engagement and Community Communications Plan that outlines the City's existing internal and external communication channels and public affairs efforts; reports on past City-wide surveys or other feedback mechanisms on the prioritization and citizen/user satisfaction of existing City services; aligns departmental coordination and public outreach within one of the five stated priorities of the City Council; and specifies how staff aim to expand the scope, reach and effectiveness of public communication to increase transparency and strengthen levels of civic engagement in the years ahead.

BACKGROUND

At its June 2, 2015 meeting, the City Council directed the City Manager to provide a report on the possibility of preparing a City-wide survey on the prioritization of City services and citizen/user satisfaction of existing City services. As part of this agenda item, the City Council requested that staff: review all current user survey mechanisms; explore a City-wide resource on service prioritization and user satisfaction in advance of the Fiscal Year 2016 budgeting process; and explore the possibility of circulating an annual survey that gauges citizen feedback on the City's core services.

As part of the currently proposed Fiscal Year 2018 Budget, there are requests for "one-time funds to conduct a community survey to gauge resident satisfaction/public opinion and collect data on City services" and for "increase[d] budget to support the City's growing media, social media and public affairs efforts, such as contract support for graphic design, marketing and communication materials."

Furthermore, in the City Manager's Department Overview, the Public Affairs and Communications' Fiscal Year 2018 Focus Area is to "maximize internal and external communication channels in order to provide accurate and timely information to internal staff, media and the public. Staff will utilize new innovative strategies in order to create greater awareness of programs and initiatives within the City to better inform and engage residents and stakeholders.

DISCUSSION

The introduction of the proposed Fiscal Year 2018 Budget begins with the “City Council’s Stated Priorities”, as amended October 9, 2007, and include: adopt an annual budget that is structurally balanced; improve the City’s infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, curbs, alleys and city facilities; enhance neighborhood economic development efforts, particularly on the commercial corridors; promote workforce and business development efforts to create new jobs and ensure Long Beach becomes more business friendly; and improve the transportation system to efficiently and effectively move goods and people through the city without negatively impacting the neighborhoods.

In the decade since these stated priorities were amended, the City has undertaken a variety of programs, policies and initiatives to “ensure that City policy creation is done in a transparent manner with extensive community involvement.” However, it would be advantageous to have a consolidated and integrated Neighborhood Engagement and Community Communications Plan that establishes a clear framework for the strategies and benchmarks utilized by the City in such public outreach efforts.

For example, although the City has expanded its communication mediums, the more layers by nature make it more difficult to know where to go to get reliable and timely information. A current sampling of the disconnected communication tools include but are not limited to:

Social Media

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Nextdoor

Media Coverage

- Press Releases
- News Advisories
- Press Alerts
- Weekly News Alerts

GO Long Beach Apps

Alert Long Beach & Nixle

Weekly Friday Newsletter

Memos to the Mayor & Council

LBTv

LinkLB

Year in Review

Surveys

Community Meetings

Departmental Correspondence

Signage / Digital Billboards

Issue Publications / Publications

It is important to know which of these have resulted in the most beneficial use of resources and which have been able to track the engagement level of our Long Beach community over the course of time. Reaching residents and community stakeholders is one step in the larger process of providing them with the opportunity to give input and take part in the development of decision making that impact their lives. A Neighborhood Engagement and Community Communications Plan would help to analyze and synthesize such City programs in accordance and alignment with Council priorities.

FISCAL IMPACT

The approval of the requested action is anticipated to have no significant fiscal impact.