



# **Mayor's Budget Recommendations Fiscal Year 2016**

*Presented July 28, 2015*



## **Mayor's Budget Message & Recommendations Fiscal year 2016**

### **Mayor Robert Garcia**

I am proud to present the City of Long Beach Budget for Fiscal Year 2016. The City Manager has prepared a sound and balanced budget that reflects my priorities including: fiscal responsibility, economic development, public safety, livability, and innovation. The budget also includes a surplus of more than \$600,000, despite the significant reductions in oil revenue funds. The City Manager, Department Heads, City Council and every staff person in the City should be applauded for prudently managing our funds to turn a projected deficit, when the fiscal year began, into a surplus in spite of this unanticipated loss of revenue.

In the message below, I will highlight some of the recommendations included in the budget the City Manager prepared and supplement those with some one-time enhancements to catalyze other important priorities with funding from the State Mandates Reimbursement funds. This budget leaves \$630,000 available to reduce next year's projected structural deficit, as well as \$630,000 in one-time dollars for the Council's Budget Oversight Committee to develop recommendations for the full Council's consideration and adoption.

### **FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Fiscal discipline is a hallmark of this City's Council and Management Team. This Council and Manager continue to build on the strong foundation they inherited and worked together to achieve a small surplus by following a path of fiscal responsibility. This Council has followed the lead of previous councils by avoiding commitments beyond what our structural budget allows, while making strategic investments with one-time funds and setting aside revenues to offset future liabilities through mechanisms such as the CalPERS Stabilization Fund, which now contains \$8.5 million and will help the City mitigate the affect of increasing pension costs in coming years.



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The proposed budget continues this City's trend of enacting fiscally prudent budgets, and will maintain service levels, but will also make critical enhancements to key services with minimal structural changes.

This budget is lean and maximizes our strengths as a city.

### **SUPPORTING BUSINESSES & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Enhancing economic growth and opportunity is one of my top priorities as Mayor. This budget is the first to reflect the \$3 million in funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies to support the Long Beach Innovation Team, whose first task is to enhance economic development efforts, which improve business services, support job growth, and enhance workforce development. I know this effort will make a lasting effect on our city.

#### ***Maximizing our Economic Development Department***

I fully support the proposed reorganization of Workforce Development from the Human Resources Department to the new Economic and Property Development Department. This change in our City's organizational structure will better align the City's workforce development with our efforts to enhance the City's focus on economic development, and further assist businesses in accessing a trained workforce and locate, expand or stay in Long Beach.

#### ***Supporting Small Businesses***

The City Council worked in the current budget year to develop a package of reforms to spur growth and attract new businesses to Long Beach. I am delighted the City Manager recommended an expenditure of \$200,000 in this budget to continue the small business incentive pilot program to support the businesses that really are the heart and soul of our local economy.



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The City has an incredible resource in the Small Business Development Center on Pine Avenue, which is predicated on a strong partnership between the City and Long Beach City College. With a modest investment in the building, this resource can have an even greater impact. Thus, I am recommending an investment of \$51,000 in one-time dollars into 309 Pine Avenue, a City-owned building, to improve the facility and to support development of an Innovation Hub that will have the capacity to host even more innovative partnerships and to assist entrepreneurs as they start or grow an existing business.

This budget also includes funding for the Open Counter software system to improve the experience of business owners and other license and permit applicants. The Open Counter software system will allow customers to more easily access zoning information to assess planning requirements for proposed projects, greatly improving staff efficiency and customer service.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Long Beach has seen a tremendous drop in crime rates over the past two decades, and I am committed to doing everything I can to see that trend continue. That means strengthening our police services by maintaining force capacity and enhancing training opportunities for all public safety personnel.

#### ***Police & Fire Academies***

To achieve the goal of strengthening our police and fire services by maintaining force capacity, I am pleased to support the Manager's recommendations for funding for both a police academy and a fire academy along with enhanced outreach and recruitment efforts to ensure our sworn personnel reflect the diversity of our community. I am also proposing the City Manager maximize the size of our future police academies to ensure we are training as many officers each year as possible to offset attrition through retirements and bring additional police officers onto the City's police force.



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### ***Strengthening Policing Citywide***

I also support the Manager's recommendation of \$2.2 million in one-time funds for preventing and responding to violent crimes, and I want to supplement this investment with an additional \$100,000 in one-time support for increased crime analysis to target our resources and personnel as effectively as possible – one of the most effective measures our Chief identified to combat crime. These resources would be available to the Chief of Police to address gang activity and other sources of violent crime, as well as property crime.

I also applaud the proposed \$150,000 in one-time funding included in the FY16 budget for training in community engagement strategies, de-escalation techniques, mental health and addiction training, and other issues relevant to 21st century policing. I also support the Manager's inclusion of positions to support disaster preparedness planning and community response teams to keep our city safe.

### ***Enhanced Violence Prevention***

As part of our continuum of public safety services, we also need to focus on prevention. I will ask the Council to fund the Be SAFE programs, with one-time dollars at a cost of \$186,000. These programs provide important structured activities for our young people in our parks during the summer. This proposal increases the program to expand services, so these programs do not depend upon Council discretionary accounts, and ensures the City invests in Be SAFE programming. The additional funding should also provide more opportunities to work with our community nonprofits. I encourage Parks, Recreation and Marine to work with the Police Department and the Safe Long Beach Program to identify the best locations for these programs in FY 16. I am also recommending the Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department develop ways to structurally fund these programs in the future.

I am also recommending the allocation of \$30,000 in one-time funds for the My Brother's Keeper project, which was initiated nationally by President Obama, and focuses on supporting safety, health, and good choices for young people so they can complete their education and transition to a career. These funds will be used to identify additional foundation and corporate resources that our community can use to ensure that every young person has a bright future.



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### ***Brighter Neighborhoods***

The Manager's budget also includes funds to allow citywide installation of new LED lights throughout our neighborhoods and business corridors, most of which is secured through grants and rebates. LED lights are more efficient, and cast a clearer, more pleasant light than the current streetlights. As part of this effort, I recommend the City Manager explore technology in priority locations to allow lights to be brightened as needed to support public safety needs. These LED lights are an example of enhancing community safety through investments in technology.

Public safety will not be achieved by policing alone but only through a comprehensive and citywide continuum of services.

### **LIVABLE CITY**

We have an opportunity to make our city more livable and improve the quality of life by providing important services and amenities for residents, some of which were cut back during the recession.

### ***Expanding Pre-school and Early Childhood Education***

The best investment we can make in education is in preschool and early childhood education. Investing early in children provides tremendous returns for every additional dollar spent on their education. The gains students make in these years are still measurable in high school. For that reason, I recommend the funding of a dedicated Early Childhood Education Coordinator – as the City used to do – through the realignment of a position within the existing budget of the Health and Human Services Department. This new staff person will work with the City's Early Education Committee to develop a new city-wide early childhood education plan, increase professional development opportunities, and improve cooperation between public and private providers to ensure that every child arrives in kindergarten ready to learn and succeed at their fullest potential.



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### ***Sunday Library Hours***

Libraries provide vital access for students and residents to support lifelong learning and access to critical services and information. Our libraries have endured significant budget cuts over the past few years, resulting in limited hours of operation. I am recommending an enhancement using one-time funds to create a city-wide pilot program to expand library hours to open three library branches on Sundays. This one-time pilot will cost \$183,000 and provide the opportunity to evaluate the effect of Sunday hours for our residents. The Bayshore Library Sunday program has been a huge success and this expansion will build off of that program.

### ***A Clean Long Beach***

Long Beach is a beautiful and welcoming city. Unfortunately, too many neighborhoods suffer from trash and litter on the streets. I am proposing the creation of two Long Beach Clean Teams using new and existing staff resources included in the Manager's budget and the Refuse Fund to purchase two new vehicles. The new Clean Teams will have branded City trucks that will move around Long Beach and pick up dumped items and trash, clear weeds, and clean up neighborhoods.

In addition, I am recommending staff examine how the Refuse Fund could be used to purchase additional trash cans and develop strategies for deploying and servicing trash cans in litter affected areas.

### ***Welcome to Long Beach***

To ensure a proper welcome to residents and visitors, this budget also includes funding to enhance and improve welcome signage at major entrances to our city.

### ***Investing in the Arts***

I am pleased to support the additional \$150,000 of one time funding recommended by the Manager for the Long Beach Museum of Art, which is a world-class museum, hosting many outstanding exhibits each year. This critical City-owned institution provides vital service to this community and deserves additional support from the City. The Museum, like all other areas of the city, had to make due with a significant reduction in funding through the recession. This one time investment simply brings



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FY16 funding levels back in line with pre-recession levels. It is my intention to permanently restore this funding in future budgets.

Last year, the City granted \$50,000 to the Arts Council to provide a pool of matching funds for marketing purposes. The Arts Council was able to match all \$50,000 and put those funds to good use in FY15. In order to support the continued marketing work of the Arts Council, I am also recommending allocation of \$50,000 in one-time funds as a matching grant to the Arts Council for Long Beach for the coming year.

### ***Easing Parking***

Parking is a significant challenge for many residents, especially in and around downtown. Some of this is unavoidable in a built-out, dense city like Long Beach. But one contributing factor is early morning street sweeping. In order to ease this challenge and create more available parking, I am delighted the Manager included \$950,000 in one-time support to implement the first street-sweeping rerouting in more than 30 years, continuing the effort that began with my first budget message. Shortening the time window and sweeping the streets in parking impacted neighborhoods later in the day will ease parking for residents while continuing to clean our streets to protect our beaches from debris, which would otherwise enter storm drains.

### **INNOVATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**

Long Beach is committed to maintaining and enhancing communication with the public and increasing access to information for residents, businesses and visitors. We have made important investments in technology and must continue to modernize our digital infrastructure and support innovation. The FY16 budget supports increased capacity to implement technology initiatives, including website management and the use of open data, increased resources to the Technology and Innovation Department and Commission, and the modernization of software.





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I applaud the additional staff already built into the Manager's budget to facilitate website design and administration, manage Open Data portals, assist the Technology and Innovation Commission, and support the City's use of surveillance cameras and WiFi, as well as implementation of a centralized Identity Management System to enhance security and access-management on City systems.

### ***A Single Phone Number for Long Beach***

A critical piece of improving service and making it easier for our residents to access services is providing a single point of contact for city services. I am proposing an additional \$100,000 in one-time funds available in the General Services Fund to initiate the creation of a single phone number, similar to a 311 system, which will allow residents, businesses, and visitors to use one phone number to access or inquire about city services. The new system will also allow for improved customer service management and real time monitoring and improved reporting of responses to increase transparency for residents and allow the City Manager and Department Heads to measure and improve response times.

### **CONCLUSION**

Taken together, the City Manager's budget with the recommendations contained in this message provide a sustainable budget that is within our means and will continue to move this City forward toward an even brighter future. I look forward to working with the City Council on the adoption of this budget and its implementation in the coming year.