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ORD-24

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May 3, 2022

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Declare an Ordinance amending the Long Beach Municipal Code by adding Section 16.16.140 to Chapter 16.16 relating to Prohibiting Adults Not Accompanying Children Under The Age of 12 From Park Playgrounds, 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 September 7, 2021, we have prepared the attached Ordinance amending the Long Beach Municipal Code by adding Section 16.16.140 to Chapter 16.16 relating to Prohibiting Adults Not Accompanying Children Under The Age of 12 From Park Playgrounds.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anita Lakhani".

By: Anita Lakhani
Deputy City Attorney

AL:vr

ATTACHMENT: CITY COUNCIL ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING CHAPTER 16.16 OF
THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING
SECTION 16.16.140 RELATING TO PROHIBITING ADULTS
NOT ACCOMPANYING CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 12
FROM PARK PLAYGROUNDS

WHEREAS, safe outdoor spaces are vital to the healthy development of
children, as they provide exercise and recreation areas, emotional and social enrichment
opportunities, and promote community use of public green spaces; and

WHEREAS, in playground design, everything from the height of the structure
to the type of surfacing used is based on guidelines that reflect use by toddlers and children
aged 2 to 5 and/or 5 to 12 years old; and

WHEREAS, adult use of playground equipment can result in structural
damage that may lead to safety hazards for the children who use the equipment after them;
and

WHEREAS, residents of the City of Long Beach ("City") have recently
reported adults misusing public playground spaces by engaging in other activities that
discourage proper use by children and their guardians; and

WHEREAS, given the recent upticks in vandalism and damage, and resident
concerns about the safety and availability of the City's playgrounds to children, it is
necessary for the City to promote measures for safe outdoor spaces; and

WHEREAS, one such measure is to establish "kids zones," at park
playgrounds, in which an adult not accompanying a child under the age of 12 is prohibited
from entering, which would seek to ensure the City's playground equipment and play areas
specifically designed for children remain safe and available spaces for use by children of

1 the aforementioned age groups; and

2 WHEREAS, these kids zones would be easily identifiable and enforceable
3 with signage identifying the zone area; and

4 WHEREAS, these kids zones would not cover other non-playground public
5 spaces in parks, including, but not limited to, benches, fields, and restrooms; and

6 WHEREAS, in establishing an ordinance prohibiting adults from entering or
7 remaining within these designated areas without accompanying a child under the age of
8 12, the City would be following suit of other jurisdictions in California, New York, Oregon,
9 Colorado, and Florida, in an effort to preserve such spaces and equipment for children for
10 which they were intended;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains as
12 follows:

13 Section 1. Section 16.16.140 entitled "Park Playgrounds—Adults not
14 accompanying children under the age of 12 prohibited" is hereby added to Chapter 16.16
15 of the Long Beach Municipal Code to read as follows:

16
17 16.16.140 – Park Playgrounds—Adults not accompanying children under the age of
18 12 prohibited.

19 A. No adult shall be present on any City park playground unless
20 the adult is accompanying a child or children under the age of 12, lawfully
21 under their custody or control, including a parent or guardian, babysitter,
22 caretaker or other designee of a parent or guardian having sole or joint
23 supervisory responsibility over the child, using such playground.

24 B. "Park playground" or "playground" for purposes of this section
25 means any park area which has been designated by the Department of
26 Parks, Recreation and Marine Director, or designee, as a "Kids Zone", and
27 on which clear and visible signage has been posted providing notice of such
28 "Kids Zone" status and the prohibition in subsection A.

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

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

Ayes: Councilmembers: _____

Noes: Councilmembers: _____

Absent: Councilmembers: _____

Recusal(s): Councilmembers: _____

City Clerk

Approved: _____
(Date)

Mayor