

**Date:** November 7, 2017

**To:** Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

**From:** Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Ninth District *RR*  
Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Seventh District *R*

**Subject:** Development of a Veterans Affairs Commission Strategic Plan

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Respectfully request the City Manager to work with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Veterans Affairs Commission to develop a Veterans Affairs Strategic Plan that includes programs and policies designed to assist veterans in multiple capacities and build stronger connections between local veterans and the community.

**Discussion**

The creation of the City's Veterans Affairs Commission was approved by the Long Beach City Council in February 2016. The purpose of the Commission is to serve as an advisory body to the City Council, and provide recommendations on all matters pertaining to the affairs of veterans residing within the city.

In February 2017, the Office of Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, in partnership with local nonprofit City Fabrick, began a community-wide discussion on how to better honor our local Long Beach veterans. Over the course of this process, 5 focus groups were held with over 20 veteran services organization representatives, 22 neighborhood leaders, the entire Veterans Affairs Commission, and an online campaign that engaged hundreds and generated over 3 dozen ideas.

The process resulted in a comprehensive report, #LBHonorsVets, that presented a number of findings and recommendations on how we can better honor local veterans throughout the year, and focused on three key themes: sustainability, engagement, and programming. One of the main recommendations around engagement was for the Veterans Affairs Commission to take a more active role, and examine the feasibility of creating a Veterans Affairs Strategic Plan. By creating a Veterans Affairs Strategic Plan, the Commission can further develop and set its direction and focus, and establish priorities as a group to work on in years to come.

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no significant fiscal impact for this item.