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June 23, 2020

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Long Beach acknowledging Racism as a Public Health Crisis and establishing a Framework for Reconciliation. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to the City Council's request on June 9, 2020, the City Attorney's Office, together with the City Manager and the Office of Equity, has prepared the attached Resolution for the Council's review and approval.

Communities across the world are now more than ever speaking out against the unjust treatment of people of color within the United States. These meaningful and necessary conversations followed the tragic killing of George Floyd after his arrest and detention by the Minneapolis Police Department on May 25, 2020.

This Resolution would ensure that the City of Long Beach, including its employees and staff, will take this crucial moment in history to receive and share with the public experiences with racial injustice to ensure equity and equality, as communities of color continue to face disparate treatment within our society.

There is a current failure of ensuring health equity and equality across the community. Diabetes, heart disease, and other serious medical conditions prevalent among communities of color are consistently ranked the leading causes of death in the United States. Such serious medical conditions are also considered high risk factors

for severe illnesses such as those resulting from COVID-19, an ongoing pandemic which is the subject of federal, state, and local public health emergencies. Thus, COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting communities of color who have a higher risk of serious illness or death if they contract the virus, including within Long Beach.

Accordingly, this Resolution would declare that the City of Long Beach acknowledges racism as a Public Health Crisis resulting in certain societal concerns and measurable detriments to communities of color, specifically with respect to the delivery of and access to wellness and healthcare, economic development and opportunity, public safety, housing, and education.

This Resolution would further establish, and direct the City Manager to implement, a Framework for Reconciliation to determine a path to move forward with respect to the existence and long-standing impacts of systemic racism in Long Beach and the country. The Framework for Reconciliation in Long Beach will center around four key steps:

1. Acknowledging the existence and long-standing impacts of systemic racism in Long Beach and the country;
2. Listening to accounts and experiences of racial injustice, inequity, or harm of community members;
3. Convening stakeholders to evaluate the feedback from the listening process and shape policy, budgetary, charter and programmatic reform ideas; and
4. Catalyzing action, presenting immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendations for the City Council's consideration.

The Resolution would recognize the need to immediately begin engaging in the public reconciliation process, internal policy review, and local action plan committing to these four steps.

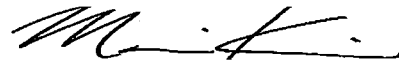
SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES PARKIN, City Attorney

By:



MONICA J. KILAITA
Deputy City Attorney

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RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LONG BEACH ACKNOWLEDGING RACISM AS A
PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND ESTABLISHING A
FRAMEWORK FOR RECONCILIATION

WHEREAS, on May 25, 2020, George Floyd was tragically killed in
Minneapolis, Minnesota, shortly after his arrest and detention by the Minneapolis Police
Department; and

WHEREAS, video footage of the killing of Mr. Floyd was circulated on every
news and media platform, sparking outrage in cities across the country and the world and
resulting in communities, such as Long Beach, coming together in protest of abusive police
activities and practices and systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, Long Beach, as well as those communities across the country
and beyond our national borders, are awakened and speaking out about the unjust
treatment of the Black community, and other communities of color, in the United States;
and

WHEREAS, Long Beach and other jurisdictions now face a three-part crisis:
the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which disproportionately affects communities
of color, seniors, and/or those with certain underlying health conditions; the historic loss of
jobs which perpetuates already existing economic disparities; and unlawful law
enforcement violence which demands intervention; and

WHEREAS, it is vital for the City of Long Beach, including its employees and
staff, to take this moment to receive and share with the public experiences with racial
injustice in our own lives, and more specifically, the ways we have experienced the
persistent effects of government, economic, and social systems designed to exclude
communities of color within our history as a nation and as a City, and how we can do better

1 to ensure equity and equality; and

2 WHEREAS, the City must first acknowledge its own history with racism and
3 begin working towards solutions that uplift and protect Black lives, as well as lives of other
4 communities of color, who have faced and continue to face disparate treatment within
5 society; and

6 WHEREAS, the City Council finds that racial injustice is as great of a threat
7 to the public health as is a global pandemic, as there is a current failure of ensuring health
8 equity and equality across the community; and

9 WHEREAS, health equity means that all residents have the opportunity to
10 attain their highest level of health, including but not limited to equal access to employment,
11 housing, education, health care, and public safety, regardless of their racial or ethnic
12 background; and

13 WHEREAS, a healthy community is only achieved through the health of all
14 individuals within said community, requiring the expansion of public health and social
15 support networks to decrease racial disparities in health outcomes; and

16 WHEREAS, communities of color are disproportionately impacted by social
17 determinants of health, including but not limited to poor air quality, lack of safe places to
18 walk, bike, run or recreate, unaffordable housing, and barriers to quality education; and

19 WHEREAS, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, and other serious medical
20 conditions prevalent among communities of color are consistently ranked the leading
21 causes of death in the United States, as well as are considered high risk factors for severe
22 illness such as those resulting from COVID-19, an ongoing pandemic which is the subject
23 of federal, state, and local public health emergencies; and

24 WHEREAS, accordingly, COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting
25 communities of color who have a higher risk of serious illness or death if they contract the
26 virus; and

27 WHEREAS, it is therefore the intent of this City Council to recognize systemic
28 racism as a public health crisis resulting in specific societal concerns and other measurable

1 detriments to communities of color; and

2 WHEREAS, additionally, although the City of Long Beach already has a
3 number of data-driven efforts that provide a starting point on advancing equity in
4 communities of color, including but not limited to the My Brother's Keeper Local Action
5 Plan, the Long Beach Office of Equity Toolkit, and the 'Everyone In' Economic Inclusion
6 Initiative Implementation Plan, and following the City's 2018 study entitled, "The Economic
7 Equitable Growth Profile of Long Beach," which highlighted disparities for communities of
8 color in the City, the City Council now recognizes an opportunity to set the example for
9 reconciliation; and

10 WHEREAS, by "reconciliation," the City Council is referring to bringing people
11 together to come to an agreement, a process by which the City may discover past
12 wrongdoings in hopes of resolving the ongoing crisis related to systemic racism and the
13 need for government intervention; and

14 WHEREAS, it is the intent of the City Council that the City of Long Beach
15 takes this pivotal moment to compare its internal practices to national best practices to
16 ensure the City is in line with widely approved and modern efforts, and assumes the
17 responsibility for disparities, remaining focused on changing the socioeconomic conditions
18 causing such disparities; and

19 WHEREAS, specifically, reconciliation shall be achieved by the City through
20 committing to four key steps: to acknowledge, to listen, to convene, and to catalyze; and

21 WHEREAS, the City must first acknowledge its collective community pain in
22 Long Beach to determine a path to move forward, and must listen to the experiences of
23 impacted community members, youth, and the public; and

24 WHEREAS, the City must further convene and begin discussions with
25 stakeholders on the framework for the future as it relates to redefining structural resiliency
26 and safety; and

27 WHEREAS, the City must also catalyze a plan to ensure a strong, resilient,
28 and equitable City, which may be done through actions such as planning for safer and

1 more secure communities through budget investments in housing, jobs, education, youth
2 development, healthcare, community centers, and open spaces; and

3 WHEREAS, the City shall set up a framework for reconciliation to build
4 community trust and redefine its relationship with law enforcement with additional
5 transparency and reform, including de-escalation tactics and expanding pre-arrest youth
6 diversion programs, such as the City's existing Promising Adults, Tomorrow's Home
7 (P.A.T.H.) Program; and

8 WHEREAS, the Framework for Reconciliation shall implement certain
9 structural and other changes, as prescribed for herein, to ensure Long Beach is a strong,
10 resilient, and equitable city; and

11 WHEREAS, ultimately, the City of Long Beach must unite in its commitment
12 to health equity and progress for a better and just future for all;

13 NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as
14 follows:

15 Section 1. The City Council of the City of Long Beach hereby
16 acknowledges that Racism is a Public Health Crisis that results in societal concerns and
17 measurable detriments to persons and communities of color in the delivery of and access
18 to wellness and healthcare, economic development and opportunity, public safety,
19 housing, and education.

20 Section 2. The City Council of the City of Long Beach further establishes
21 a Framework for Reconciliation in Long Beach, committing to frank and open discussions
22 of race and the impact of the decisions the City makes upon racial inequities in the Long
23 Beach community, as such discussions will be integrated into the City's daily work to
24 address issues of race and racial disparities in a full and direct manner. As such, the City
25 Council recognizes the need to immediately begin engaging in a public reconciliation
26 process, internal policy review, and local action plan committing to the following steps:

27 A. The City Manager shall issue a public statement on behalf of
28 the City of Long Beach condemning the murder of George Floyd in

1 Minneapolis, Minnesota, and acknowledging the existence and longstanding
2 impacts of systemic racism in Long Beach and throughout America;

3 B. The City Manager shall conduct a formal listening process to
4 hear accounts and experiences of racial injustice, inequity, and/or harm of
5 community members;

6 C. The City Manager shall convene stakeholders to evaluate the
7 feedback from the formal listening process and shape policy, budgetary,
8 Charter, and programmatic reform ideas; and

9 D. The City Manager shall catalyze action, presenting immediate,
10 short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendations for the City
11 Council to consider, including, but not limited to:

12 1. Potential ballot measures for future elections;

13 2. Reforms to modernize the City's Citizen Police
14 Complaint Commission to strengthen independence, transparency, and
15 oversight;

16 3. A review of implementation status of existing reforms
17 and plans that expand racial equity and community safety, including the
18 SAFE Long Beach Violence Prevention Plan, 'Everyone In' Economic
19 Inclusion Implementation Plan, Economic Empowerment Zone Program,
20 Long Beach Office of Equity Toolkit, My Brother's Keeper Local Action Plan,
21 and Language Access Plan;

22 4. Reforms to use of force policies, including mandatory
23 use of de-escalation tactics, and a zero-tolerance policy on uses of excessive
24 force;

25 5. Establish and modernize local Body Worn Camera
26 policies to add transparency and consistency;

27 6. Expand and standardize youth diversion programs, such
28 as the P.A.T.H. Young Adult Diversion Program;

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7. Review and reform Human Resources, hiring, and disciplinary practices within the Long Beach Police Department to ensure a "best in class" culture;

8. Budget reforms to ensure equitable investment in community safety, including youth development, housing, healthcare, public health, and economic equity;

9. Strengthen and realign the Office of Equity to add independence and expand capacity; and

10. Any additional recommendations concerning national best practices.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of _____, 20____, by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers: _____

Noes: Councilmembers: _____

Absent: Councilmembers: _____

Recusal(s) Councilmembers: _____

City Clerk