

Re: Transformational Action Needed to Protect Long Beach from the Impacts of Climate Change

Honorable Mayor Garcia and City Councilmembers:

As your Sustainable City Commissioners, we are very proud to serve this great city and of all that has been accomplished. 2019 was another banner year for Long Beach, from completion of the stunning Civic Center and the Billie Jean King Main Library and reopening of the Metro Blue Line (now A Line), to increased trade at our “Green” Port, and the tremendous economic development citywide. However, while Long Beach is experiencing great fortune, our community continues to suffer from the challenges of homelessness and housing affordability. These challenges are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and its effects on the most vulnerable in our community. Each one of us will need to do even more than we thought possible to implement bold solutions that address the climate crisis and the injustices in our community.

We know the City prioritizes keeping our community safe, but the impacts of climate change are on the rise. In 2019 we are living with the continued threat of power shutoffs due to extreme heat and the devastating fires in our region, the **worst air quality in the nation**, and the **most polluted beach in LA County** (specifically the segment of beach immediately west of Belmont Pier according to Heal the Bay’s annual report card).

The talented staff of our various City departments are working to address some of these issues. To make this work effective, what is needed from you is clear policy direction and the commitment to elevate protection of our natural resources to the highest priority allowing us to work together to advance the community’s wellbeing, ensure climate resilience, and improve the quality of the air we breathe and the health of our marine environment.

Following the inspirational climate commitments made in 2015 and 2017, in 2018, the City embarked on the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) process to identify policy, infrastructure, and programmatic needs that lay out a roadmap for reducing the City’s carbon footprint and prepare Long Beach for the impacts of climate change. The City also continues to make Long Beach more livable through walkability and bikeability improvements in an effort to address climate change. Further, our Commission has examined electric vehicle adoption, and along with the Airport Commission, has explored plans to green the Long Beach airport. While these plans and incremental updates to our multimodal system are welcome steps in the right direction, **now is the time for Long Beach to take daring and transformational action to reduce emissions** from transportation, improve building energy efficiency, increase the supply of green energy, and facilitate change in our consumption patterns.

By utilizing a science-based plan we can put our city on the path to carbon neutrality by 2050, making Long Beach resilient to the impacts of climate change. However, that

timeframe is much too lengthy when the need for action is now. **Now is the time** for Long Beach to mobilize behind collective goals that can be achieved within the next decade, instead of three decades from now.

In 2020, we not only need to adopt the CAAP, we need to begin implementing it to deliver social, environmental, and economic benefits to Long Beach residents and businesses. Long Beach is in the national spotlight. We should use our prominence to turn the tide from business-as-usual to a movement towards a robust and sustainable future. In addition to the political clout Long Beach can lend to pollution prevention and sound climate policies at the State and Federal levels, **today**, Long Beach can:

- Adopt a resolution to oppose attempts from federal drilling proposals that endanger our coastal waters and public health,
- Fight the greed of the fossil fuel industry's expansion into the cheap plastic production arena by declaring the City free from single-use plastics,
- Decarbonize our transportation sector and continue making improvements to the trucking fleets that service the Port to protect our air quality, and
- Take control of our energy future by phasing out fossil fuel production and instead pursue local, renewable energy generation projects and programs like Community Choice Energy.

We know you understand that the stakes are high. The resources and know-how to implement these measures are available today. Real-time examples like the C40 Cities Deadline 2020 Initiative, plans for a Green New Deal in the City of Los Angeles, and the County's Sustainability Plan are all around us. We know that this vision can be achieved within the next decade, and ask that you rally the community and its business interests to do so in time for the 2028 Olympics.

The Sustainable City Commission believes in the "Long Beach For All" goal, and will continue to offer our expertise and input to encourage the City to make progress on molding the future we want for *all* of Long Beach; a city that benefits from an inclusive green economy - a healthier, more sustainable Long Beach.

Our love for Long Beach runs deep, and we know yours does as well. On behalf of the Sustainable City Commission, I thank you for your continued service to Long Beach and your serious consideration for all of the above. We look forward to working with you on these ambitious goals.

Sincerely,

Sona Coffee  
Chair, Sustainable City Commission  
City of Long Beach