

Agenda Item 3 9/24/2020 SCC Emailed Public Comment

From: Marianne Buchanan

Sent: 9/23/2020 at 8:19pm

Thank you for asking for recommendations to the City Council to encourage stronger actions on climate.

After the debacle at the city council meeting on 8/25/2020, regarding Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), I recommend the Sustainable City Commission request the City Council to transition the study of CCA for Long Beach out of the purview of Energy Resources and into Development Services.

Here are my arguments:

1) Energy Resources and Finance have had their say. They made their position clear--they are fearful of taking Long Beach into a renewable future. They wanted to delay for two years, and I am sure they are not happy with being directed to return with a further report in six months. But it is reasonable to take a newly awakened look at CCA through the lens of the City's Frameworks for Resilience and Reconciliation. I recommend this commission advise our city leaders to start getting real about the facts that environmental justice is racial justice is economic justice. In other words, we have studied the megawatts and the dollars, now let's take a look at the health of our citizens and the racial consequences of climate chaos.

2) It is time to shift the focus onto the present and future health of Long Beach citizens, especially our frontline communities who are burdened disproportionately and dispassionately. Who better to pick up the CCA reins than Development Services? These are the people who know climate, who have been researching and drafting the city's Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP) for years. In addition, several council members expressed concern about the lack of community outreach on the subjects of climate change and CCA in particular. Development Services is adept at community outreach, at presenting forums, and can discuss CCA as an integral part of the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan when it is finally presented to City Council. Development Services is a good fit, and many local environmental groups are already familiar with the staff and aligned with many of the CAAP goals.

3) And finally, I am concerned that the City is taking a risk in so openly associating itself with Southern California Edison (SCE) during the CCA process. There is a Code of Conduct (SB790) in place which specifically prohibits SCE from interfering with or hampering a community as it explores the risks and benefits of a CCA. Is Edison allowed to advertise their rate structures? Yes indeed, just not at a Council meeting or in presentations to a community forum that try to persuade a city from forming at CCA. Yet, I was shocked to see Energy Resources had invited an SCE employee to advise and speak at the 8/25/2020 council meeting. An early agenda item read: "City Manager to continue the City's partnership with Southern California Edison to raise awareness of existing programs that provide Long Beach residents and businesses with various options to purchase a greater mix of renewables and utilize energy more efficiently. (Citywide)"

The city should not be spending our tax dollars to do SCE's advertising for them. SCE has an ample budget to promote their programs, but most Long Beach residents are not enrolled in a greener program because we have never heard of it. At best, the City could be accused of a conflict of interest since Energy Resources staff have already stated their antipathy toward a CCA for Long Beach and their alliance with SCE. At worst, it could be, for SCE, a violation of The Code of Conduct (SB790). Let's avoid that whole discussion and simply hand the continuing CCA process over to another department for a closer look.

Respectfully,
Marianne Buchanan (D3)

From: Padric Gleason Gonzales
Sent: 9/22/2020 at 6:25pm

Dear Sustainable City Commission:

Thank you for sharing the 2021 Work Plan for the Long Beach Office of Sustainability. As you prepare for the upcoming year, please consider the following priorities from me, a concerned citizen:

1. Expand physically protected bike lanes and micro-mobility infrastructure:

The Long Beach Bicycle Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in 2017, committed to increasing the share of bicycle trips to 30% of all solo trips by 2040. It

called for "*a complete network of 8-80 bikeways... with facilities to support...*" In July 2020, the City Council passed the Safe Streets Action Plan. Specifically, these plans highlighted exclusive right of way bikeways (currently, these are only present around the perimeter of the city), lane reconfigurations (Broadway is the *only* major on-street implementation to date), secure bicycle parking facilities, and best practice street design. I'm concerned that the city has slowed its implementation of these improvements and lost focus. In fact, the majority of residents and cyclists remain in the "interested but concerned" category, even as they seek options for outdoor recreation during the pandemic. They're waiting for action to ensure their safety before taking to the streets. Worse yet, cyclists are suffering from collisions and even death when they're forced to share the road with motor vehicles. We deserve more options than just the Shoreline Bike Path and the L.A. River Bikeway.

2. Increase urban tree canopy to reduce toxic air and reduce surface

temperatures: As this commission has cited in multiple public declarations and recommendations to the City Council, Long Beach has the worst air quality in the country. West Long Beach has been called "asthma alley" and a "diesel death zone" in national publications. In 2016, the City Council passed a recommendation to "conduct a street tree canopy assessment... [and develop] a street tree lifecycle management plan." In 2017, the City Manager announced that the assessment had identified 126,144 suitable tree sites. And then? Nothing. Today Long Beach's Tree Planting Program consists of a "Fruit Tree in Front Yard" application (inexplicably, this has a waitlist) and a "Permit to Plant Street Tree" (which *itself* has a 6 month wait time). Maintenance for these trees is almost entirely volunteer-run and is woefully inadequate. These two passive programs- they rely on residents to apply, wait, then execute- do not demonstrate a serious commitment to reducing toxic air and reducing surface temperatures.

3. Reduce waste flowing into our waterways and onto our beaches: This commission noted in its 2019 letter to the City Council that Long Beach has the most polluted stretch of beach in L.A. County (Alamitos Beach west of Belmont Pier). That's disgraceful. We have to do more to prevent contamination from the L.A. River, reduce stormwater drainage directly onto the beach from Long Beach storm drains, and to clean up the mess when it does pollute our sands, particularly in the winter. One solution for the L.A. River is to install an underwater bubble curtain or bubble tubing. Bubbles are commonly used in marine demolition and oil and offshore gas extraction. The bubbles create a permeable barrier that contains sediment and contamination without impeding fish and wildlife. A demonstration bubble barrier installed in Amsterdam in 2019 diverts 42 tons of plastic per year,

the equivalent of two full garbage trucks. Think of the hours spent on beach cleanups, trash boats, and more. Long Beach must do more to divert waste sooner and keep our beaches clean if we want to compete with other Beach Cities.

4. It's not ok that we don't have a citywide green bin or composting program.

Long Beach offers resources and incentives for homeowners to create backyard compost, but there is no organized and sustained effort on the part of City Staff to collect and repurpose yard trimmings and food waste. That's wildly out of step with cities of an equivalent size and stature. We need to do more on this. When Los Angeles created their green bin program *in 1990*, it quickly grew to be one of the most successful recycling programs in the country. This was followed in 2013 with the launch of LA Compost, whose decentralized community compost model now diverts 480,136 lbs of organics from landfill each year- that's more than 53,300 shovelfuls of soil. This isn't just a sustainability policy, but it also saves money in waste disposal costs.

In conclusion, the Sustainable City Commission must do more to hold City Staff accountable for delivering on the priorities and programs passed by the City Council. We know what needs to be done. We've studied each issue in depth and developed plans over and over again. But City Staff has scuttled the plans or deprioritized the work. It's this Commission's job to provide oversight and demand progress.

Regards,
Padric
