Legislation Details (With Text)

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Recommendation to receive and file a report on the Long Beach Women and Girls' Community Survey Findings. (Citywide)

On September 7, 2021, the City Council directed the City Manager to create a plan for a Commission on Women and Girls (Commission), as recommended by the Equity and Human Relations Commission. The City Manager released a memorandum outlining the process and fiscal impact of creating a local Commission on January 10, 2022. On March 7, 2023, the Office of Equity presented updates on those efforts, which included partnering with an Ad Hoc Community Advisory Team (Advisory Team) to develop a community engagement plan, apply for grant funding to support the creation of the Commission, hire a Program Specialist to facilitate the community engagement efforts, create the Women and Girls' Community Survey (Survey) to identify the Commission's priorities, and an overview of the Survey's preliminary findings. In alignment with previous reports, all references to 'women and girls' includes those who identify as female: cis and trans, and those who identify as gender-expansive: non-binary, non-conforming, and genderqueer.

Survey Development and Outreach

The Office of Equity and Advisory Team used the Equity Toolkit to design a comprehensive data collection tool to inform the mission and priorities of the Commission. Using quantitative and qualitative questions, the Survey treats the respondent as a subject-matter expert on the needs and aspirations of Long Beach women and girls to identify policies, programs, and resources that align with six overarching quality of life indicators:

• **Intersectionality** - the way our social identities overlap based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class, etc.
• **Economic Stability** - having the resources necessary for a healthy life, such as affordable

housing, living wages, worker protections, healthcare, and reliable transportation.
• **Health** - the complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being.
• **Family** - Intimate and domestic connections like marriage, living together, and other economic and social responsibilities.
• **Connectedness** - Social and resource connection, such as community, social networks, and access to support, feeling seen, heard, and valued.
• **Safety** - Efforts to reduce violence against women, including emotional, environmental, physical, sexual, mental, or other harm.

Each section provided participants with the opportunity to disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, and agree with statements that represented each quality of life indicator. Additionally, open-ended questions were posed, allowing participants to provide written responses on each quality of life category, suggesting priority areas for Long Beach women and girls.

On November 23, 2022, the City of Long Beach (City) published the Survey and incentive platform inviting women and girls to participate. The Survey was available online using the Qualtrics survey platform and in-person in English, Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog at open Long Beach Public Libraries and King, Chavez, and Houghton Parks. The Survey deadline was extended to January 30, 2023, to accommodate the holiday season.

Throughout this period, the Advisory Team and other community partners facilitated additional community engagement by disseminating the Survey to their respective networks. Office of Equity staff shared the Survey with other City Departments, using email, social media, and electronic newsletters to notify the public. Additionally, Office of Equity staff canvassed Long Beach neighborhoods, tabled at various public events, corresponded with, and presented to multiple women-led and serving organizational partners to recruit participants. Some of these interactions were with: the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Bienestar Long Beach, California State University Long Beach, The Center Long Beach, Centro CHA, CSULB Latino Community Health, Earthlodge, Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC), Immigrant Defenders Law Center, Khmer Girls in Action, Long Beach Branch of NAACP, Long Beach Forward, Long Beach Grey Panthers, Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition, Long Beach Suffrage 100, Long Beach Youth Services Network, Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade and Celebration, More Mothers, National Council of Jewish Women Greater Long Beach and West Orange County, Puente Latino Association, St. Mary's Medical Center, Youth Advisory Council, and the YMCA of Greater Long Beach.

Data Analysis

Following the close of the Survey, Dr. Amber Johnson and a research team from California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) analyzed the responses, providing a quantitative and qualitative review, which includes demographic indicators, participants' agreement with the quality of life statements stratified by race/ethnicity and by zip code, and major themes (or priorities) identified by the participants.

Online survey recruitment efforts resulted in 1,917 total survey responses, which included bot submissions, uncompleted surveys, and surveys submitted beyond the geographical area of Long Beach (e.g., Seattle, Washington, London, England). The survey platform provided the latitude and longitudinal coordinates of survey participants to determine the geographical area of survey participants, which the Research Team used to exclude responses from outside Long Beach. Incomplete survey responses were also excluded from the final analysis, as the final report evaluates 743 valid online survey submissions including 42 paper surveys.

Demographics

Participants could select all categories representing their demographic identities: race/ethnicity, languages spoken, identified disability, gender expression, and sexual orientation. This data was analyzed to describe the percentage of all races/ethnicities, languages spoken, and identified disabilities among survey participants. However, the analysis does not indicate multiple response patterns (e.g., specific multi-racial identities or multiple languages spoken) for each participant.

• Most participants indicated their gender expression as female (89.5%) compared to male (4.0%), non-binary or gender expansive (1.4%), transgender (2.4%), or two-spirit (0.4%).
• Participant's sexual orientation varied with most participants identifying as straight (77.3%). Participants also identified as asexual (0.5%), bisexual (6.6%), gay (1.4%), lesbian (4.3%), pansexual (2.0%), and queer (2.3%).
• Survey participants represented all zip codes in Long Beach. The largest percentage of participants resided in zip codes 90803 (13.4%), 90815 (11.3%), 90802 (10.3%), and 90807 (9.9%)
• Respondents' ages ranged from 12-75 years or older. The largest percentage of participants were between the ages of 25-34 years (18.5%), 35-44 years (23.2%), and 45-54 years (17.7%). Additionally, 12.6% were 55-64 years old, 13.9% of participants were 65-74 years old, and 6.5% were 75 years or older.
• Most participants spoke English (87.7%), whereas Khmer, Spanish, and Tagalog speakers accounted for 2.0%, 9.3%, and 0.5%, respectively.
• Racial/ethnic identities of survey participants were Asian/Pacific Islander (11.1%), Black/African American (11.9%), Hispanic/Latinx (28.9%), and White (38.1%) though 2.1% of participants identified as Middle Eastern, Southwest Asian, or North African and 2.7% identified as Native American, Alaskan Native, or Indigenous.
• 159 participants indicated living with a disability. Most indicated that they lived with a physical (31.4%) or mental disability (23.9%). Others expressed living with a cognitive (1.3%), hearing (6.9%), or visual (7.5%) disability.

Quality of Life Indicators

Quality of Life Indicators consisted of statements which participants had the opportunity to disagree (1), somewhat disagree (2), somewhat agree (3), and agree (4) with. Responses

were averaged to determine how much participants agreed with each statement and were reported as mean scores (M) ranging from 1-4. A mean of 1 represents more participant disagreement with each statement, and a mean of 4 represents more participant agreement. Furthermore, the Research Team stratified responses by zip codes and race/ethnicity to further understand how participants' agreement may vary by place and race/ethnicity.

• **Intersectionality:** The highest agreement among participants was related to participants' belief that women and girls encounter discrimination based on their sexual orientation/gender (M=3.35). Participants indicated more disagreement with statements related to the availability of services and programs available to older women (M=2.38) and women and girls with disabilities access to Long Beach services and amenities (M= 2.46).

• **Economic Stability:** The highest agreement related to economic stability was participants' belief that women must leave their careers or have trouble finding a job to care for their families (M=3.43). Participants generally disagreed that women could find employment with adequate health insurance (M=2.04), women and girls have access to affordable healthy foods (M=2.03), women feel comfortable advocating for equity job pay (M=1.90), and single women and head of households have access to quality affordable housing (M=1.78).

• **Health:** The highest agreement was participants' perception that women and girls have access to preventative healthcare (M=2.62) followed by perceptions that women and girls felt safe discussing reproductive health with medical providers (M=2.44). Participants reported more disagreement with statements related to access to safe and affirming health care for transgender women (M=2.12), women's and girls' access to mental/emotional health support (M=2.08), and perceptions that women and girls are empowered to advocate for their health (M=2.15).

• **Family:** The highest agreement to statements on family was participants' belief that COVID-19 heightened stress for women and girls (M=3.69) followed by their belief that women often prioritize the needs of their family before their own (M=3.60). Participants reported lower agreement with the belief that women and girls are supported by their partners, family, and friends (M=2.77). Participants had the lowest agreement with the perception that quality childcare is accessible in Long Beach (M=1.95).

• **Connectedness:** The highest agreement was participants' perception that Long Beach has many safe, competitive sports and recreational activities available for women and girls (M=2.71), followed by Long Beach women and girls are empowered to lead and advocate for the issues affecting their community (M=2.58). The lowest agreement was to the statement that women and girls have someone to talk to and/or confide in about the issues most important to them (M=2.43).

• **Safety:** Participants reported the lowest agreement that women and girls feel safe moving around their neighborhood after dark (M= 1.54) and the highest agreement to the perception that women and girls' mental health relies on feeling safe (M=3.64).

Priorities

Participants were encouraged to respond to open-ended questions pertaining to all quality of life indicators, identifying resources and programs, and topics they would like to prioritize.

The Research Team reviewed and coded the qualitative information to identify six primary themes.

• **Economic Support:** A total of 184 responses in the Topic Priority open-ended questions about economic support, representing 20.5% of responses, focusing job opportunities, pay equity, job training, and skills for women and girls in Long Beach.

Sub-themes include pay equity, career support, childcare support, and housing support.
• **Safety:** A total of 185 responses in the Topic Priority open-ended questions pertained to safety, which represented 19% of responses, focusing on creating a community where women feel safe.

Sub-themes include domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, self-defense, and ensuring safe communities
• **Health Access and Equity:** A total of 183 responses in the Topic Priority open-ended questions pertained to health access and equity, which represented 18.5% of responses, focusing on increased access to healthcare, health resources and services.

Sub-themes include mental health support, reproductive care, specialized clinics, free and/or affordable healthcare, more diverse and inclusive medical professionals, and better access to current options.
• **Support Under-Resourced Communities:** A total of 42 responses in the Topic Priority open-ended questions pertained to supporting under-resourced communities of girls and women, which represented 8.5% of responses, focusing on supporting women and girls from traditionally under-resourced communities, including genderqueer, language diverse, people of color, undocumented, and/or younger women and girls in Long Beach.

Sub-themes include gender equity, language equity, race-related concerns, support for undocumented individuals, and support for youth.
• **Support and Develop Programming:** A total of 37 responses in the Topic Priority open-ended questions pertained to programming for women and girls, which represented 7.5% of responses, focusing on supporting existing programs and developing additional programs geared toward women and girls in Long Beach.
• **Educational Support:** A total of 52 responses, which account for approximately 6% of the total responses for the Topic Priority open-ended questions, focused on supporting educational pursuits for girls and women in Long Beach.

Sub-themes include mental health education, sex education STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education, financial literacy, and career education.

Priorities and Recommendations
The Community Survey sought to identify priorities that guide the forthcoming Long Beach Commission for Women and Girls. Upon completing the data analysis, the Research Team proposed four recommendations that considered survey participants' quantitative and qualitative feedback on women's and girls' economic equity, safety, health, and education.

These recommendations intend to guide the forthcoming Commission in its efforts to eliminate gender-based inequities in Long Beach through intentional advocacy, outreach, programming, and policy-based intervention, outlining policy and program solutions to support each recommendation.

Recommendation 1: Employ multi-level strategies that facilitate individual, community, and structural changes that promote economic equity for women and girls in Long Beach.

Recommendation 2: Develop Comprehensive gender-responsive policies and practices that promote the safety of women and girls in both public and private spaces in Long Beach.

Recommendation 3: Promote equitable access to inclusive healthcare services, health education, and support to improve the quality of life for women and girls in Long Beach.

Recommendation 4: Expand and create opportunities to promote gender equity in education for women and girls in Long Beach.

Upon completion of the Survey analysis, the Office of Equity and Advisory Team created recommendations for the Commission for Women and Girls' purpose, duties, and membership.

Purpose: The Commission for Women and Girls serves as an advisory body to the City Council on establishing and maintaining equal rights, equity, social justice, representation, and opportunities for all regarding gender, specifically serving women and girls who live or work in Long Beach. This includes all who live as female-identified: cis and trans, and those who identify as gender-expansive, non-binary, non-conforming, and genderqueer.

Duties:

• To gather, assess and evaluate the needs and concerns of women and girls in Long Beach within the broader context of gender equity;

• To inform and advise the City Council on issues and inequities affecting women and girls in Long Beach: o Creating meaningful changes in the conditions, policies, and programs that lift women and girls, ensuring gender equality;

o Recommending policies, programs, and practices that promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all genders;

o Protecting and promoting visibility for women who are mothers, caregivers, and older adults.

o Identifying matters of discrimination, prejudice, health, and safety of all women and girls;

o Encouraging the participation, visibility, and leadership of all women and girls.

• To advocate for policy change using an intersectional feminist lens, ensuring that women's overlapping identities - including but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability, class, religion, and marital status - are considered in decision-making related to City policies, programs, and resource allocation;

• To consult and coordinate with other public agencies, commissions, and organizations serving women and girls on matters relevant to the Commission;

• To conduct studies and surveys on the status of women and girls related to gender equity, as requested by the Mayor and City Council, and advise thereafter;

• To submit an annual report of Commission activities and recommendations to the Mayor and City Council.

Membership:
The Commission for Women and Girls shall consist of eleven (11) commissioners, as defined above, who demonstrate a commitment to advocating and advancing the well-being of Long Beach women and girls. It is the intent that the Commissioners appointed shall be from a diverse cross-section of Long Beach including women of all racial backgrounds, ethnicities, sexual orientation, age, disability, class, religion, and partner status.
There shall be one (1) commission member appointed to represent each of the nine (9) City Council districts and two (2) at large members. These commission members will be nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council.
This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani on June 30, 2023, and by Revenue Management Officer Geraldine Alejo on June 29, 2023.

City Council action is requested on July 18, 2023.

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation. The Community Survey findings identifies priorities which will guide the creation of the Long Beach Commission for Women and Girls. The total cost to develop and conduct the survey, including community engagement efforts, is $50,000 and is supported by the General Fund Group and state grant funding. One-time and structural funding to support the Commission was approved as part of the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY 22) and FY 23 budget processes, which include $30,112 for staff support. After a reassessment of the staffing needs to support this new commission, it is clear that additional ongoing support will be needed. Commissions require dedicated staffing to both prepare and facilitate the meetings, as well as conduct research and support Commission requests for information and production of materials related to the agenda.

If the City Council moves ahead with this item as recommended, the City Manager will be seeking an additional $55,295 in structural funding for a Clerk Typist III to provide administrative support to the Commission in the FY 24 budget and identify solutions to address this additional fiscal need.

Approve recommendation.

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER