



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 20-0543, **Version:** 1

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Recommendation to request City Attorney to work with City Manager and Long Beach Office of Equity to draft a resolution that articulates the City's commitment to adopting the "Framework for Reconciliation in Long Beach," recognizing the need to engage in a public reconciliation process, internal policy review, and local action plan committing to the following four steps:

Request City Manager to issue a public statement condemning the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, acknowledging the existence and longstanding impacts of systemic racism in our America and in Long Beach;

Request City Manager to conduct a formal listening process to hear accounts and experiences of racial injustice, inequity, or harm of community members;

Request City Manager to convene stakeholders to evaluate the feedback from the listening process and shape policy, budgetary, charter, and programmatic reform ideas; and

Request City Manager catalyze action, presenting immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term present recommendations for the City Council to consider.

Request City Manager catalyze action, presenting immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term present recommendations for the City Council to consider, including, but not limited to:

- A potential ballot measure for the November 2020 General Election,
- Reforms to modernize the Citizen Police Complaint Commission to strengthen independence, transparency, and oversight,
- A review of implementation status of existing reforms and plans that expand racial equity and community safety, including the SAFE Long Beach Violence Prevention Plan, Everyone In Economic Inclusion implementation Plan, Economic Empowerment Zone Program, Long Beach Office of Equity Toolkit, My Brother's Keeper Local Action Plan, Language Access Plan
- Reforms to use of force policies, including mandatory use of de-escalation tactics, and a zero-tolerance policy on uses of excessive force,
- Establish and modernize local Body Camera policies to add transparency and consistency,
- Expansion and standardization of youth diversion programs, like P.A.T.H Young Adult Diversion program,

- A review and reforms of HR, hiring, and disciplinary practices within the Long Beach Police Department to ensure a “best in class” culture,
- Budget reforms to ensure equitable investment in community safety, including youth development, housing, healthcare, public health, and economic equity,
- Strengthening and realigning the Office of Equity, to add independence and expand capacity,
- And other national best practices.

### *The Problem*

On Monday, May 25, 2020, video footage of the killing of George Floyd, by four police officers in Minneapolis, circulated every news and media platform. The video sparked outrage in cities across the country and world, including Long Beach, as communities have come together in protest of police violence and systemic racism.

Long Beach, communities across the country, and those beyond our borders are awakened and speaking out about the gross injustice of the treatment of blacks in America. Through peaceful protest and civil unrest, we are living in a pivotal moment, and history will have its eyes on us in how we, as leaders, respond.

Long Beach and several other cities, now face a crisis on three sides. As COVID-19 disproportionately affects African-Americans and seniors, the historic loss of jobs perpetuates economic disparities, and the social justice emergency of law enforcement violence demands intervention.

For some of our residents, their eyes are being opened and beginning to comprehend issues of systemic racism and social justice. It is important that we take this moment to share our own experiences with racial injustice in our own lives, more specifically the ways we have experienced the persistent effects of government, economic, and social systems designed to exclude black and brown communities, within our history as a nation and as a city.

In 2018, the City of Long Beach commissioned a study, entitled “The Economic Equitable Growth Profile of Long Beach,” which highlights disparities for communities of color within the City and is attached as an addendum to this memo.

We need to ask ourselves, as a city, state, and country, how do we adapt for the future? How do we reconcile with the dark history of racial injustice? How do we address the three crises we are currently experiencing with an equitable response? What do we need to do to prevent passing this responsibility onto future generations?

### *The Opportunity*

Reconciliation is "the act of bringing people together to come to an agreement." Countries like Australia and Canada have employed Truth and Reconciliation Commissions to discover their nation's past wrongdoings in hopes of resolving conflict. These Commissions have helped governments respond to human rights violations after political change. One of the most successful Truth and Reconciliation Commissions The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) facilitated dialogues in post-apartheid South Africa.

Long Beach should take this moment to compare our internal practices to national best practices to ensure that Long Beach is a modern, 21st Century that takes responsibility for disparities and is focused on changing the socioeconomic conditions that contribute to a

narrative of a "tale of two cities."

Long Beach already has a number of data-driven efforts that provide a great starting point on advancing equity in communities of color, such as, the My Brother's Keeper Local Action Plan, the Long Beach Office of Equity Toolkit, and the 'Everyone In' Economic Inclusion Initiative Implementation Plan.

Long Beach has an opportunity to set the example for reconciliation by committing to four key steps - Acknowledge, Listen, Convene, Catalyze.

First, we need to start by acknowledging our history with racism and begin working toward solutions that lift and protect black lives. Acknowledge that racial injustice is as great of a threat to our public health as a global pandemic.

Second, we need to listen to the experiences of impacted community members, youth, and the people of the city. Determining a path forward requires us to listen to those affected and recognize our collective community pain. We should take him up on that offer and share your stories.

Next, we need to convene, and begin the discussions, with stakeholders, on the framework for the future as it relates to redefining structural resiliency and redefining safety. These conversations will be difficult.

Lastly, we need to catalyze a plan to ensure a strong, resilient, and equitable city. We can plan for safer and more secure communities through budget investment in housing, jobs, education, youth development, healthcare, community centers, and open spaces. We can set a framework to build community trust and redefine our relationship with law enforcement with transparency and reform, implement the mandatory use of de-escalation tactics, and expand pre-arrest youth diversion programs, like Long Beach's Promising Adults, Tomorrow's Home (PATH) Program.

We need to unite in our commitment to progress and shape our city's future for the better.

Lastly, enacting the recommendations as prescribed will catalyze structural changes to ensure a strong, resilient, and equitable city.

[Timing Considerations]

No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to the urgency and time sensitivity of this item.

Approve recommendation.

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APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA  
ACTING CITY MANAGER