



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0706, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to receive a presentation on the proposed Long Beach Safety Recovery Plan (Plan), provide input and policy direction, and approve the Plan and its priorities to address the public safety impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic utilizing available federal relief funding; and

Authorize City Manager, or designee, to allocate in Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 21) the expenditure of up to \$5 million in the General Fund Group to implement the proposed Plan. (Citywide)

Like many major cities, Long Beach began 2021 with a significant increase in gun violence. This is a national issue that has stemmed from greater economic distresses, unemployment, and upheaval to society experienced over the past year. Gun sales have increased nationally by 64 percent, and the Police Department has had an increase in seized firearms of 51 percent. While murders and assaults have not spiked in Long Beach, they have in most of the country. A recent survey released by the Major Cities Police Chiefs Association shows that 67 percent of cities report seeing an increase in murders, and 71 percent have seen an increase in aggravated assaults.

As of July 13, 2021, reported firearm assaults in Long Beach were up 60 percent year-to-date (YTD) compared to 2020. While the increase is significant, it is far below the increase seen in January, and indicative of the ongoing success of the Police Department's community-based prevention and intervention programs.

Possible systemic causes are impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and changes to the criminal justice system, including the release of large numbers of inmates and repeat offenders to reduce their risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus; elimination of bail requirements; criminal court proceeding delays; reduced youth programming; and, a record number of gun sales. Business districts and corridors are also experiencing increases in violent crime-nuisance complaints related to people experiencing homelessness, as well as disorderly conduct and vandalism.

Earlier this year, the City Council requested that the Police Department assemble a strategy for addressing increased levels of violent crime. The Police Department began this work in early 2021, and reported on those efforts in a memorandum to the Mayor and City Council dated [March 17, 2021 <https://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2021/march-17--2021---strategies-](https://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2021/march-17--2021---strategies-). Those efforts included a focus on neighborhoods and partnerships, a data driven approach to allocating additional overtime and resources, a Coordinated Response Team (CRT), and implementation of policies, procedures, and partnerships through the Office of Constitutional

Policing.

The Police Department has developed and implemented data-driven initiatives, which will reduce crime while strengthening relationships within our community. These programs are proactive, creative, and flexible enough to be implemented throughout Long Beach and can easily be modified as circumstances dictate.

Through the Long Beach Safety Recovery Plan (Plan), the City Manager is proposing both investments in additional policing resources as well as additional violence prevention work. These areas of focus are listed in the table below and described in detail in the following pages.

Long Beach Safety Recovery Plan Overview

Safety Programs One-Time Investment	
Coordinated Response Team (CRT)	\$ 1,750,000
Calls for Service - Base Staffing Level	\$ 1,000,000
Neighborhood Walks Program	\$ 400,000
Neighborhood Safe Streets - Bikes	\$ 400,000
Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement	\$ 400,000
Entertainment and Business Districts	\$ 300,000
Community Youth Engagement	\$ 250,000
Gun Buy Back Program	\$ 75,000
Subtotal	\$ 4,575,000
Violence Prevention Programs One-Time Investment	
Be SAFE Expansion	\$ 110,000
Safe Passage - Violence Interruption	\$ 100,000
Office of Youth Development- Summer Engagement Program	\$ 60,000
Increase Funding to Current Building Grantees	\$ 60,000
Teen Program Enhancement	\$ 60,000
Career Exploration - Exploring Space	\$ 35,000
Subtotal	\$ 425,000
Total Proposed Plan Funding	\$ 5,000,000

Long Beach Recovery Act - Violence Prevention and Safe Cities Funding

While the Plan proposes \$4.575 million in safety funding and \$425,000 in additional violence prevention, it is important to note that the City Council has already invested significantly in violence prevention through the Long Beach Recovery Act. Below is the list of projects as proposed in the Proposed FY 22 Budget from the Long Beach Recovery Act that will be

developed and help create a longer-term strategy for violence prevention. These dollars, on top of the \$5 million proposed Safety Recovery Plan, will total \$8.63 million for safety and violence prevention.

Long Beach Recovery Act - Violence Prevention and Safe Cities Fund	
Youth Academic Programming	\$ 810,000
Youth Life Coaching and Mentoring	\$ 300,000
Youth Health and Safety Program	\$ 990,000
Community Interventionist Program	\$ 450,000
Re-Entry Program Pilot	\$ 540,000
Mental Health Crisis Response Pilot	\$ 540,000
TOTAL	\$3,630,000

PROPOSED PLAN DESCRIPTIONS

Coordinated Response Team (CRT) \$1,750,000

Created in February 2021, the CRT is staffed by a lieutenant, sergeants, police officers, gang detectives, a crime analyst, forensic specialists, and media and community engagement staff, all temporarily reassigned from their primary duties. The CRT responds to, and investigates, active firearm assault incidents and uses current crime analysis and intelligence techniques, which have led to 65 arrests, of which were 36 prohibited firearm possessor arrests. Since the inception of this program, 22 search warrants have been served and 61 firearms recovered, including 13 ghost guns. ***The Police Department proposes continuing the CRT through FY 22, which will require one-time funding to backfill the positions of the team members assigned to CRT, and \$1.75 million in funding is needed to continue this effort through FY22.***

Calls for Service - Base Staffing Levels \$1,000,000

To remain within the constraints created by FY 21 budget reductions, the Police Department must implement reductions in both citywide Patrol Bureau base staffing levels and beats. This reduction would be a decrease of 33 shifts per week and would likely result in increased response times. Given the increase in violent crime and the need for continued proactive community policing, the Police Department recommends additional funding to maintain existing beat and base staffing deployment levels. The increased funding would also serve to keep response times consistent with past years, which is key to impacting crime, as well as strengthen public trust and confidence in our Department. ***The Police Department proposes funding of \$1,000,000 to maintain base staffing levels.***

Neighborhood Walks Program (NWP) \$400,000

In 2021, the Police Department piloted the NWP with the objective of increasing outreach and community engagement with residents, businesses, and faith-based and community-based organizations, and reducing violent crime. Staff for the NWP include one sergeant and four

police officers who are assigned, on overtime, to specific geographical beats to walk and to interact with community members. This strategy allows officers an opportunity to get to know the people who are living and working in the area while additional officers answer calls for service. During the Washington Neighborhood pilot program alone, officers recorded over 300 community contacts during the 186 hours spent walking the neighborhood. ***The Police Department proposes one-time funding of \$400,000 to expand and support this program through FY 22.***

Neighborhood Safe Streets (NSS) Initiative - Bikes

\$400,000

The NSS funds, provided by Measure A, allow the Police Department to implement community policing strategies, which impact violent and property crime trends throughout Long Beach. Funding has allowed the Police Department to implement community-based initiatives that continue to strengthen the relationship between the Police Department and our community. Among the programs supported by NSS is the deployment of bike patrol officers who can move quickly and effectively throughout the city and are, therefore, routinely deployed in entertainment districts, waterfront areas, tourist areas like the convention center, business districts, and any other areas impacted by crime. This type of deployment and soft appearance promotes community policing, enabling bike officers to easily connect with our community. The Police Department proposes expanding these investigative and community policing strategies, including additional bike patrol officers at \$100,000 for each of the four police divisions. ***One-time funding of \$400,000 is needed to support this effort through FY 22.***

Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement Training (ABLE)

\$400,000

The Active Bystander Law Enforcement (ABLE) Project, Georgetown University Law Center's national training and support initiative for U.S. law enforcement agencies, is committed to building a culture of peer intervention that prevents harm. The goals of the program include preventing misconduct, avoiding police mistakes, and promoting officer health and wellness. Participation in the program requires a dedicated Program Coordinator to oversee the program. ***The Police Department proposes to allocate \$400,000 in one-time funding to match federal assistance expected to support this program.***

Entertainment and Business Districts

\$300,000

As our City emerges from the pandemic, the Police Department is seeing a significant increase in the utilization of, and demand for, public safety services in the entertainment and business districts. Calls for service involving fights, violent crime, disorderly conduct, vandalism, and incidents involving unhoused individuals are increasing. ***The Police Department proposes a one-time restoration of \$300,000 for these efforts to provide additional public safety response in entertainment and business districts through FY 22.***

Community Youth Engagement

\$250,000

Activities such as Midnight Basketball, Playground Partners, and Summer Nights-type programs, where sworn staff can engage with the city's youth in a fun, low-pressure environment to support building rapport and trust, are crucial in developing relationships with youth who represent the

future of our city. The Police Department proposes to implement partnerships with local community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide opportunities for Police Department staff to engage and make connections with community youth in a safe and fun environment. Funding is needed to cover the participation of CBOs and overtime hours for officer participation in each police division ***The Police Department proposes one-time funding of \$250,000 for this program through FY 22.***

Gun Buyback Program

\$75,000

With the goal of reducing the number of guns on the streets, the Police Department has been directed to conduct a Gun Buyback Operation in the near future. Gift cards would be given to participants in exchange for unwanted guns. ***The anticipated cost for staffing and gift cards is a one-time cost of \$75,000.***

PROPOSED YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAMS

Over the course of the last several months, youth and emerging adults have been highly impacted by the increase in gun violence, both from a victim and perpetrator perspective. The following recommendations are intended to divert at-risk youth and provide them pathways that increase social connectedness, economic mobility, and provide families experiencing gun violence with trauma-informed resources. The program recommendations are in partnership with Pacific Gateway - Workforce Development in three categories: youth violence prevention, career exploration, and family-community level resourcing.

Be S.A.F.E. Expansion

\$110,000

As Long Beach continues its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects from months of isolation, loss of economic security, and program and service disruption remain. Communities are also struggling to overcome tensions raised from the social uprising and rise in hate crimes against people of color. In many ways, Long Beach has led the way in implementing strategies that expedite the recovery process in an equitable manner. The recent uptick in violence underscores the need to focus on providing spaces and opportunities for youth and families to congregate and participate in safe and positive activities. Redirecting funds and resources toward programs that provide these opportunities, specifically in neighborhoods disproportionately affected by the pandemic and rise in violence, will help ensure that Long Beach continues to model the road to recovery for all its residents.

The Parks, Recreation and Marine Department (PRM) has operated the Be S.A.F.E. program for five years. The program offers activities such as games, sports, arts and crafts, and movies that children, teens, and adults can enjoy during the summer evening hours. The Be S.A.F.E. program aligns with the strategies presented to the City Council on April 20, 2021 on Public Health Approaches to Violence Prevention by providing safe spaces that support healthy development for the whole family. Be S.A.F.E. has proven to be vital to residents that want to enjoy their neighborhood park with their children, neighbors, friends, and fellow community members. PRM currently offers the BE S.A.F.E. program at 11 park sites throughout the city.

PRM has taken a phased approach in bringing back popular programs and community events to ensure risk reduction measures are in place in accordance with Health Orders, but demand for more in-person recreational opportunities has surged. Additional funds would allow for the expansion of the program to parks in the Central/West and North Long Beach neighborhoods where dense populations require more opportunities for safe recreational opportunities. The funds would also allow PRM staff to provide additional resources that focus on mental health, parenting skills, and family relationship activities. **PRM proposes one-time funding of \$110,000 to expand the Be S.A.F.E. program resources.**

Safe Passage - Violence Interruption

\$100,000

The objective of a Safe Passage program is to create a multi-agency enforcement partnership to provide safety from gang-related crimes against youth and families on specific streets, schools, at bus stops, and public spaces (parks, open spaces, etc.). A Safe Passage program can stand alone, however, it is most successful if implemented as one component of a multi-faceted community safety strategy such as a violence interrupter model. A structured Safe Passage program allows schools, law enforcement, and community residents to pinpoint "hot spots" for gang and related trouble on and around school campuses, parks, and other identified spaces. The Safe Passage program has been previously implemented by the City and the intent now is to expand the program to parks and other commercial spaces. This program places community residents as the solution-makers in their neighborhoods and works best when paired with the violence interrupter model (Be S.A.F.E.). PRM proposes funding four neighborhoods at \$25,000 each. **PRM proposes one-time funding of \$100,000 for this program.**

Office of Youth Development - Summer Neighborhood Engagement Program \$60,000

Modeled after Chicago-based [My Block My Hood My City <https://www.formyblock.org/>](https://www.formyblock.org/), youth will participate in civics training and leadership development activities designed to raise awareness of local resources, raise historical knowledge, and increase community pride. Youth will be trained on how to coordinate community tours that further foster a sense of pride in neighborhoods such North Long Beach and the Washington Neighborhood. This work will be led in partnership with local CBOs such as the Youth Leadership Institute, Californians for Justice, and Historical Long Beach Society. Possible City department partnerships include PGWIN, Library Services, Development Services, and Health. This project can have high visibility and will require the coverage of some City staff time, leadership materials and youth stipends, and the partnership with a local CBO. **Proposed one-time funding of \$60,000.**

Increase Funding to Current Building Youth Social Capital Grantees

\$60,000

The City will soon award eight organizations, who applied through a competitive process, funds to provide youth with work or project-based experiences in nonprofit settings. The organizations are: Youth Leadership Institute, Mental Health America Los Angeles, Earthlodge, Pools of Hope, California for Justice, Ronnie's House, and Books and Buckets. Providing additional resources through these selected entities can increase their engagement under current programming. **Proposed one-time funding of \$60,000**

Teen Center Program Enhancement

\$60,000

PRM operates six Teen Centers in Long Beach. During the summer, Teen Centers expand their normal operating hours from 4 to 6 hours to allow for more activities and time for teens to connect and socialize. The onset of the COVID -19 pandemic and the subsequent Safer-At-Home Health Orders led to long periods of isolation for youth. Although schools implemented Distance Learning, most educators agree that it did little to meet the need for social interaction among youth. The long periods of screen time and lack of in-person support from a teacher may lead to a rise in academic setbacks for students. While the pandemic did briefly suspend Teen Center programs, PRM was able to open them last summer. However, early health protocols called for the reduction of maximum capacities of participants. PRM staff are just beginning to see the return to pre-pandemic attendance levels, but additional resources are needed to adequately address the needs brought on by the trauma of the pandemic. PRM is requesting funds to provide resources such as trauma-informed workshops, mentorship opportunities, and academic enrichment. PRM would also collaborate with Health, Libraries and Workforce Development to widen the scope of youth development activities and enhance the teen program experience. ***PRM is proposing one-time funding of \$60,000 to expand Teen Centers programming.***

Career Exploration - Exploring Space Beach

\$35,000

To enhance connectedness to school and the emerging Long Beach aerospace industry, Pacific Gateway will coordinate a variety of work-based learning activities that will include facility tours, industry speaker sessions, expert interviews, and project-based learning activities that will raise awareness of careers and academic opportunities. Outcomes will be captured in a youth-produced podcast. Partners will include Virgin Orbit, Relativity Space, and more. This project will involve Economic Development - Workforce, and the Office of Youth Development. ***Proposed one-time funding of \$35,000.***

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Michael J. Mais and Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on July 15, 2021.

STATEMENT OF URGENCY

City Council action is requested on July 20, 2021, as the departments responsible for implementing the proposed Plan will need City Council approval to initiate the programs as quickly as possible to address the ongoing public safety issues in the community.

EQUITY STATEMENT

The proposed Plan incorporates recommended strategies from the City's Equity Toolkit, as directed by the City Council on April 21, 2020. Increased violent crime is a national problem that has stemmed from the greater economic distress, unemployment, and upheaval to society experienced over the past year. Like the Long Beach Recovery Act Programs for Violence Prevention and Safe Cities, the proposed safety programs, will be designed and reviewed with

an equity lens, using similar racial, health, and economic criteria to enhance safety in our community, particularly those most vulnerable to, and impacted by, the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the City Council requested the Police Department to prepare a strategy for addressing increased levels of violent crime. The proposed Long Beach Safety Recovery Plan is a response to this request.

This recommendation requests authorization in FY 21 to expend up to \$5 million in the General Fund Group for the Long Beach Safety Recovery Plan. These costs are anticipated to be funded from the Long Beach Recovery Act. As part of the Long Beach Recovery Act's allocations, funding was set aside to cover budget shortfalls in FY 21 and FY 22 as well as to replenish reserves that have been severely impacted due to pandemic related revenue loss and expenses. Due to improved revenue projections, however, it is anticipated that not all the funds set aside will be needed and, as a result, it is expected that these one-time expenditures for the Plan in FY 22 can be funded through the Long Beach Recovery Act without impacting other proposed allocations in the Long Beach Recovery Act. The Plan uses are all one-time expenditure requests for FY 21 and not ongoing structural enhancement requests. For any item to be added structurally, an ongoing funding source or an alternative expenditure reduction would need to be identified and incorporated as part of future budget development processes.

This recommendation is not requesting an increase to departmental appropriation at this time. Any increases in appropriation that may be needed in departments because of these authorized expenditures will be evaluated as part of FY 21 year-end review and will be brought back to City Council at a later time. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER