

From: Victor Sanchez [<mailto:vsanchez@laane.org>]

Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:18 PM

To: LB Sustainability <Sustainability@longbeach.gov>; Council District 2 <District2@longbeach.gov>; Mayor <Mayor@longbeach.gov>

Cc: Karla Estupinian <Karla.Estupinian@longbeach.gov>; Diana Tang <Diana.Tang@longbeach.gov>; CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>

Subject: Joint Meeting of the Environmental Committee and Sustainable City Commission

-EXTERNAL-

Honorable Mayor, Councilmember Pearce and Commissioners,

Please find attached our comment letter ahead of today's joint meeting of the Environmental Committee and Sustainable City Commission.

Our work has focused on combating the persistent racial and economic inequities that have existed in Long Beach - inequities that are magnified by the climate crisis we also face. It's imperative that the City pass it's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) with the addition of a Resilient Jobs Program.

Thank you,

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Saludos,

Víctor Sánchez

Director

Long Beach Coalition for Good Jobs and a Healthy Community

P He, Him, His

E vsanchez@laane.org

T 213.977.9400 x 135

M 323.422.8583



June 25, 2020

Re: Joint Environmental Committee and Sustainable Commission Meeting

Dear City Commissioners, Councilmembers, and Mayor,

We applaud your efforts to revisit The Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) currently in draft form. The CAAP will help to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, prepare the community for the impacts of climate change, improve the quality of life, and enhance economic vitality in Long Beach. Long Beach strives to be a more sustainable and resilient city in the face of climate change impacts such as air pollution, extreme heat, drought, coastal storm surge, and sea level rise. **We ask that the city pass the CAAP quickly and include a Resilient Jobs Program.**

The impacts of the climate crisis are more clear today than ever before. We know the novel of the coronavirus pandemic that disproportionately affects African Americans, seniors and other vulnerable bodies in Long Beach. Black individuals are facing a death rate double that of White community members. The Black community is subjected to 66% more air pollution than other races. This pollution directly causes diseases and exasperates the impacts of viruses like COVID-19. To reverse the negative health impacts of diseases that affect everyone, especially communities of color, we **MUST ACT WITH URGENCY** to close the Climate Gap.

Unemployment has reached a peak in the last 50 years. Prior to the pandemic, Black community members in Long Beach faced poverty rates close to 35 percent. While the stark economic inequalities that exist in Long Beach are troubling, the City has recognized that changes need to be made to address the disparities that exist among communities of color. In November 2017, then-Vice Mayor Rex Richardson [noted](#) that *“five times as many Latinos and Native Americans live in high poverty neighborhoods compared to Whites, and that twice as many Black and Latino female adults are working full-time and still living below 150 percent of the poverty level than other adult females.”*

Last Tuesday, the City **declared racism as a public health crisis** and has begun working to reconcile structural racism through a [Framework of Reconciliation](#) that ultimately will deliver policy direction to the City Council on how to address structural racism specifically focused on Health, Economics, Policing, and overarching Structural Racism.

It's never been more clear that what we need is a **Resilient Recovery** that addresses the systemic racism towards communities of color, that's focused on closing the income gap and the climate gap.

In a letter last month to Gavin Newsom's, Task Force for Business and Jobs Recovery, the California State Legislature stated, *“We know the clean economy — transportation, housing, energy, water, manufacturing, waste, and natural and working lands — is one of the most cost-effective, resilient job creation sectors economy-wide.”* It is expected that funding will be made available for cities that have a plan in place for a Resilient Recovery. This keeps communities of color to remove barriers of good paying jobs.

Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation published on May 1, 2020, states that California and SoCal EV Industry is growing, giving the region global competitive advantage. In the five-county region of Southern California, 119,200 workers are employed in the EV industry, 43.4 percent of all statewide jobs (275,600) in the EV industry. “There's no other ecosystem like this in the US, and **we need to**

protect, support and build good policy to ensure this ecosystem thrives and continues to create great jobs,” said Judy Kruger, Senior Director of Advanced Transportation at the LAEDC.

Regardless of the job opportunities tied to the green economy, the draft CAAP is missing a job component. We ask the City work to develop a **Resilient Jobs Program** that brings **good green jobs** to communities of color. Model programs exist and the Building Trades is expanding apprenticeship programs. Programs to review include a Utility Pre-Craft Trainee (UPCT) program that is jointly operated by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 18. This is an earn-and-learn pre-apprenticeship training program in which entry-level trainees can work full time weatherizing homes and small businesses while learning skills and preparing for civil service exams, as well as career opportunities in the renewable industries.

We ask that the Environmental Committee, the Sustainable City Commission, the City Council, and the Mayor to prioritize the following:

- Pass the CAAP in the next 45 days.
- Include a **Resilient Jobs Program** that has a scalable plan for energy efficiency in low income census tracts, and is specifically focused on bringing Black community members into the growing green industries.
- This **Resilient Jobs Program** must be designed and implemented with a diverse coalition that includes labor unions, the California Conservation Corps, a Black Worker Center and other stakeholders.
- Staff to identify ways to fund the Resilient Jobs Program including staff, capital improvement projects, EV charging expansion, as well as home and small business improvements that reduce the City’s overall carbon footprint, thus creating access to local green jobs.
- Appoint a Climate Director to work across city departments to ensure climate goals are being met.

We know the climate crisis is the most deadliest crisis the city faces. According to the World Health Organization, between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250 000 additional deaths per year. The direct damage costs to health (i.e. excluding costs in health-determining sectors such as agriculture and water and sanitation), is estimated to be between USD 2-4 billion/year by 2030.

We do not doubt Long Beach’s commitment to reducing health inequities, increasing job opportunities for disadvantaged communities and reducing the economic impacts of the climate crisis. **We just ask that you move swiftly.**

We thank you for your leadership. We look forward to participating in the convening sessions for the Framework for Reconciliation where appropriate and we commit to be a resource to the City and policymakers in this process.

In Community,



Victor G. Sánchez

Director, Long Beach Coalition for Good Jobs and a Healthy Community