

Date: September 10, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **Recommendation from Sustainable City Commission**

At its meeting on August 27, 2020, the Sustainable City Commission (Commission) received a presentation from the Coalition for Clean Air (CCA). The Commission voted to forward the recommendations from CCA on funding priorities for future oil tax revenues along with Commissioner input. Attached is a summary of Commissioner comments and recommendations on that item as well as the letter from CCA with its recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact Larry Rich, Sustainability Coordinator, at (562) 570-5839 or via email at Larry.Rich@longbeach.gov.

ATTACHMENTS

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
REBECCA G GARNER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK (REF. FILE #20-0687)



July 29, 2020

Mayor Robert Garcia and Council Members
Long Beach City Council
City of Long Beach
411 W Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: File item #20-0687: Oil Barrel Production Tax

Dear Mayor Garcia and Members of the Long Beach City Council,

The Coalition for Clean Air (CCA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposed oil barrel production tax increase. The demand to confront and uproot systemic racism is undeniable and must be heeded. One of the most significant injustices Long Beach residents face is environmental injustice. This is especially true for residents of the western, central, and northern portions of the city. It is also important to note that oil drilling, refining and use is the root cause for many of these injustices.

For more than a century, Long Beach has been impacted by oil drilling and refining. Though the city's oil resources have diminished over the years, pipelines, storage facilities, ocean-going tanker vessels and thousands of active, idle, and abandoned wells pollute the community. Emissions from oil and gas operations, which are mainly volatile organic compounds (VOCs)¹, not only help form smog but also have health impacts such as respiratory distress, organ damage, mental impairment and cancer.² Further, the City of Long Beach is situated next to three large oil refineries located in Wilmington and Carson. The confluence of oil drilling, production, refining, and transportation makes the oil industry one of the leading facility-based sources of particulate matter and VOCs in the region.³

In addition to the oil industry, Long Beach has other major air quality challenges. The city is home to the busiest seaport complex in the United States. While the ports are a major part of the city's economy and provide gainful employment for many of Long Beach's residents, they are

¹ SCAQMD, *Community Emissions Reduction Plan: Wilmington, Carson and West Long Beach*, <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ab-617-ab-134/steering-committees/wilmington/cefp/final-cep-wcwl.pdf?sfvrsn=8>, pg. 5e-2 (accessed June 24, 2020.)

² United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Volatile Organic Compounds' Impact on Indoor Air Quality* <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/volatile-organic-compounds-impact-indoor-air-quality> (accessed June 24, 2020.)

³ SCAQMD, *Community Emissions Reduction Plan: Wilmington, Carson and West Long Beach*, <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ab-617-ab-134/steering-committees/wilmington/cefp/final-cep-wcwl.pdf?sfvrsn=8>, pg. 3b-6 (accessed June 24, 2020.)

also the largest sources of pollution in the region. Port operations, drayage trucks, locomotives and other activities emit smog-forming and toxic air pollutants into the local community, as well as climate-damaging greenhouse gases. According to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), the primary toxic air contaminant affecting West Long Beach is diesel particulate matter,⁴ which is comprised of more than 40 cancer causing substances. SCAQMD's Multiple Air Toxic Exposure Study (MATES) shows relative cancer risk in Long Beach is highest near the ports and railyards, as well as in proximity to Interstate 710 and Route 91.⁵

The oil and gas and goods movement industries represent just a portion of Long Beach's air quality challenges. And air quality is just one of the many environmental challenges facing the city, which must also contend with the Los Angeles River, the breakwater, historic land use decisions and urban planning, as well as the growing climate emergency. What must not be forgotten is low-income communities and communities of color bear a disproportionate impact from pollution and climate disruption, both in terms of exposure^{6, 7} and effects.⁸ Examining the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's (OEHHA) CalEnviroScreen 3.0 tool reveals that Long Beach's most polluted areas overlap with its communities of color and low-income communities.⁹

We appreciate the City Council having this conversation and considering how to use the city's oil production tax revenues to begin the hard work of correcting environmental injustice. If Long Beach is to be successful in this work, the city must commit to sustained investment, empowerment, and transformation of its most environmentally burdened neighborhoods. To this end, we recommend the city consider the following policies and practices when deciding how to use the potential revenue:

- Specify a required minimum percentage of revenues to be spent directly within the city's disadvantaged and low-income communities. This reflects the SB 535 (de León, 2012) and AB 1550 (Gomez, 2016) requirements governing over California's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund revenues.¹⁰ This requirement, however, should be treated as a policy

⁴ SCAQMD, *Community Emissions Reduction Plan: Wilmington, Carson and West Long Beach*, <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ab-617-ab-134/steering-committees/wilmington/cefp/final-cep-wcwlb.pdf?sfvrsn=8>, pg. 3a-9 (accessed June 24, 2020.)

⁵ SCAQMD, *MATES IV Interactive Map*, <https://scaqmd-online.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=470c30bc6daf4ef6a43f0082973ff45f> (accessed June 24, 2020.)

⁶ Boyd-Barrett, Claudia, California Health Report, *People of Color and the Poor Disproportionately Exposed to Air Pollution, Study Finds*, <https://www.calhealthreport.org/2019/02/08/people-of-color-and-the-poor-disproportionately-exposed-to-air-pollution-study-finds/>, February 8, 2019 (accessed June 25, 2020.)

⁷ American Lung Association, *Disparities in the Impact of Air Pollution*, <https://www.lung.org/clean-air/outdoors/who-is-at-risk/disparities> (accessed June 25, 2020.)

⁸ Poon, Linda, Bloomberg, *Housing Discrimination Made Summers Even Hotter*, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-01-22/the-link-between-redlining-and-extreme-urban-heat>, January 22, 2020 (accessed June 25, 2020.)

⁹ OEHHA, *CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Map*, <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30> (accessed June 25, 2020.)

¹⁰ California Air Resources Board, *California Climate Investments: Priority Populations*, <http://www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov/priority-populations> (accessed July 7, 2020.)

floor rather than a ceiling, and the city should exceed any minimum investment requirement

- Work directly with the most impacted communities to develop collaborative solutions that have support from residents and other stakeholders through successful models such as, but not limited to, Participatory Budgeting
- Create grant programs to provide technical, outreach, programmatic and capacity support for nonprofit and community-based organizations seeking to organize, educate, or provide direct services to Long Beach's residents, particularly those living in disadvantaged and low-income communities
- Fund local projects that complement the AB 617 process being implemented by SCAQMD, which includes a localized Community Emissions Reduction and Monitoring Plans for West Long Beach, Carson, and Wilmington
- Maximize the effectiveness of the city's investments by requiring funded projects demonstrate climate, air quality, and public health benefits (as appropriate), and require funded projects to avoid potential harms to the community
- Support the aggressive deployment of zero-emissions transportation infrastructure for both light- and heavy-duty vehicles, as well as zero-emissions public transportation
- Support equity-focused active transportation and shared mobility projects and related infrastructure
- Create and maintain buffer zones and mitigation measures between pollution sources and residential areas and other sensitive receptors
- Help fund and support parks, green space, urban forestry, and urban farming projects in park-poor neighborhoods, as well as create safe active transportation routes to schools and other public spaces

Lastly, we urge the city to be consistent in its policies when addressing environmental injustices. While the desire to invest in disadvantaged communities is commendable, these communities will still be impacted by the pollution sources surrounding them. To truly rectify longstanding environmental injustices, the city must commit to reducing emissions at the source. Long Beach can take meaningful actions now that will yield real emissions reductions. These actions include:

- Opposing any Interstate 710 development project that fails to create zero-emissions truck lanes, protect residents from displacement, and hire local workers

- Incentivize the turnover of diesel-powered heavy-duty vehicles by instituting a higher port truck rate while protecting drivers from wage theft and employment misclassification
- Support near-term deployment of zero and near-zero emission heavy-duty trucks and shipping terminal equipment to maximize public health benefits and comply with state and federal air quality mandates
- Create and implement land use policies that will prevent and, over time, correct environmental injustices

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Christopher Chavez
Deputy Policy Director
West Long Beach resident representative to
the Wilmington, Carson, and West Long
Beach AB 617 Community Steering
Committee
6th District resident



Jennifer A. Lentz, Ph.D., *EcoDistricts AP*,
LEED Green Associate
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SUSTAINABLE CITY COMMISSION**

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Carla Dillon, Commissioner
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September 10, 2020

Honorable Mayor Garcia and City Council Members
411 W Ocean Blvd
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Oil Production Tax Revenue Recommendations

Honorable Mayor Garcia and City Council Members:

The Sustainable City Commission urges City Council to consider the recommendations in the attached letter from the Coalition for Clean Air. These recommendations should be incorporated into the resolution of intent for the use of oil production tax revenue. In addition, the Commission asks City Council to consider the following recommendations from Commission members:

1. It is important to include community based organizations from highly impacted areas in the decision-making process. Staff tasked with drafting the resolution of intent for how the oil tax revenue shall be spent should be required to conduct outreach to these organizations to include their input in the list of priorities.
2. Priority should be given to small and medium sized community based projects. Smaller projects are more difficult to measure but provide many co-benefits, such as opportunities for communities to come together and teachable moments for residents to learn about air quality and the environment in their neighborhood.
3. Community education is essential to solving systemic problems. This funding should support grassroots organizations in their efforts to educate the community and advocate for environmental stewardship.
4. Our urban forest is an essential resource providing many environmental benefits, including cleaning the air we breathe. Planting new trees and stewardship of our urban forest should be included in these funding priorities.
5. The City of Long Beach should participate in the Coalition for Clean Air's annual Clean Air Day celebration to help raise awareness of air quality issues within the City and educate residents about actions they can take to help clean the air.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sustainable City Commission