

Date: January 10, 2022

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **Commission on Women and Girls**

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On September 7, 2021, the City Council directed the City Manager to create a plan for a Commission on Women and Girls, as recommended by the Equity and Human Relations Commission. This memorandum serves as the plan for the creation of a Commission on Women and Girls, outlining a process and the fiscal impact of establishing the Commission.

### **Background**

On March 1, 2016, the City Council adopted a Resolution in support of the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which aims to better inform local policy and empower communities to make policy changes necessary to lift more women out of poverty and violence. However, gender-based inequities continue to persist locally. According to reports from the Office of Equity, among all full-time workers in Long Beach, White men earn nearly twice as much as Latina women<sup>1</sup>, and 63 percent of Black women heads of household are considered rent-burdened, compared to 52 percent of White women heads of household<sup>2</sup>. A Commission on Women and Girls in Long Beach can serve as a space for specific education, outreach, and advocacy in our community for the advancement of women and girls in pursuit of the elimination of gender-based inequities.

In addition to the California State Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (CCSWG), there are 25 women's commissions in cities and counties throughout California, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Marin, and San Joaquin Counties. Cities including San Francisco, Pasadena, Glendale, and others have also established Commissions to advise their city Councils on the needs and concerns of women of all ages, races, religions, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Women's Commissions promote gender equity and the empowerment of women in their communities. In California and across the country, Women's Commissions are utilized to gain an understanding of the issues affecting women and girls in their communities and work to uplift and advocate for these issues. These Commissions have led initiatives targeting issues affecting women and girls like domestic violence, poverty, pay equity, incarceration, and economic advancement. In municipalities with Women's Commissions, they serve an important role in advocating for issues and leading policy priorities affecting women. Ultimately, Women's Commissions listen and learn from their community and ensure local women's experiences guide their policy choices<sup>3</sup>.

Reflecting on the work of Women's Commissions throughout the state and country, it is evident the important role these Commissions play in providing resources for women and girls in their

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<sup>1</sup> City of Long Beach Office of Equity Infographic [CLB Infographic v2 \(longbeach.gov\)](https://www.longbeach.gov/office-of-equity/infographic-v2)

<sup>2</sup> An Equitable Growth Profile of Long Beach: Summary [EP Summary-Long Beach web 02.07.19b \(1\).pdf \(nationalequityatlas.org\)](https://www.nationalequityatlas.org/ep-summary-long-beach-web-02.07.19b-1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Report to the Sacramento Board of Supervisors [Report to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors – BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION \(sacramentoblueribboncommission.com\)](https://www.sacramentoblueribboncommission.com/report-to-the-sacramento-county-board-of-supervisors-blue-ribbon-commission)

communities. Additionally, the CCSWG and local California Women's Commissions highlight the opportunities available to Long Beach's women and girls when connected to the larger network of Commissions on Women and Girls in the state. Following the best practices of Women's Commissions throughout the state and country, Long Beach can provide relevant resources and better serve women and girls in the City through the establishment of a Commission on Women and Girls.

### **Process to Appoint Commissioners**

The establishment of the Commission on Women and Girls should solicit applications from residents that express interest in serving on the Commission. Once the applications have been received, it will be the responsibility of the Mayor to review the candidates and appoint the appropriate number of Commissioners as outlined in Section 509 of the City Charter.

### **Community Outreach & Engagement**

To ensure that the Commission reflects the demographic makeup of Long Beach and that its mission is consistent with the diverse needs, interests, and concerns of women and girls in the City, the Commission should be shaped through a robust community engagement process.

In order to facilitate this initial community engagement, an Ad-Hoc Community Advisory Team (Advisory Team) will be established and will be comprised of community members who are interested in shaping the structure of the Commission. The Advisory Team will conduct community engagement sessions to obtain feedback about Commission priorities, member composition, purpose, and functions that will ultimately shape the Women's Commission Ordinance. This Ad-Hoc team will also inform community members of the opportunity to apply for a position on the Commission once the City is ready for recruitment.

A similar Advisory Team approach has been used in other jurisdictions, including Sacramento County, to explore the establishment of a Committee on Women and Girls<sup>4</sup>. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors established a Blue-Ribbon Commission on the Establishment of a Sacramento County Women's Commission to research the merits of a Sacramento Women's Commission. The Blue-Ribbon Commission researched Women's Commissions in California, identified best practices, conducted community outreach to learn about the issues important to women and girls in Sacramento, and created recommendations for the establishment of a Sacramento County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls based on this work<sup>5</sup>.

The Blue-Ribbon/Ad-Hoc model is a best practice model that helps to provide Commissions with an understanding of community interests and best practices for an impactful Women's Commission and ensures that the Commission is established to meet the unique needs of women and girls in Long Beach.

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<sup>4</sup> Blue Ribbon Commission on the Establishment of a Sacramento County Women's Commission ([sacramentoblueribboncommission.com](http://sacramentoblueribboncommission.com))

<sup>5</sup> Report to the Sacramento Board of Supervisors [Report to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors – BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION \(sacramentoblueribboncommission.com\)](http://sacramentoblueribboncommission.com)

To conduct this community outreach and engagement process, the Advisory Team will:

- Partner with Office of Equity Staff to plan and host community outreach
  - Share information about outreach and engagement opportunities with Councilmembers and City staff for disseminating the information to the community through District newsletters, community meetings, listservs, social media platforms, and the City's website
  - Engage organizations that serve women and girls, that include but are not limited to domestic violence serving organizations, LGBTQ+ serving organizations, women's and girls' health organizations, human trafficking organizations, women's professional organizations, women's and girl's leadership organizations, and organizations that serve mothers, and Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color
  - Utilize LBTV to disseminate information about the Commission and vacancies in non-written formats to be inclusive of communities that prefer verbal communications
  - Hold community engagement events outside of traditional working hours such as evenings and weekends
  - Engagement events should be held in community spaces throughout the City to reach a diverse set of community members, especially women who are affected most by gender-based inequities
  - Ensure language access in all community outreach and engagement events and communications
  - Disseminate flyers and other informational materials within laundromats, WIC clinics, beauty shops, and other locations throughout the City
- Create an online survey to collect feedback from those who cannot attend virtual or in-person meetings

### **Recommended Staffing**

The City will need to dedicate Staff resources and time toward administrative duties associated with supporting a Commission on Women and Girls, and its initiatives. Additional funding will be required to hire and support staff in these duties. The Office of Equity can absorb these staffing needs while using the recommended \$58,000 structural allocation to support the hiring of new FTEs and supplement existing FTE's hours that will be diverted to Commission duties. Staffing structure will include support from a Special Projects Officer (0.10 FTE), Program Specialist (0.25 FTE), and Admin Assistant (0.10 FTE).

Launching a Commission on Women and Girls in the City of Long Beach will require, at minimum, an ongoing structural budget for staff in the amount of \$58,000. Additional funding will be needed to accommodate Commission stipends, and community engagement facilitation and activities, which is estimated at an annual expense of \$57,200. Including all costs, the projected expense of launching a Commission on Women and Girls is \$115,200, annually.

| Item   | Ongoing/One-time | Amount              |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Advisory Commission Stipends (\$50 x 12 Commissioners x 12 months)                     | Ongoing          | \$7,200.00          |
| Special Projects Officer (0.10 FTE)  | Ongoing          | \$16,500.00         |
| Program Specialist (0.25 FTE)  | Ongoing          | \$31,500.00         |
| Admin Assistant (0.10 FTE)   | Ongoing          | \$10,000.00         |
| Advisory Team commission development and community engagement activities               | One-time         | \$25,000.00         |
| Community & Commissioner Engagement Activities (Supplies, food, commissioner training) | Ongoing          | \$25,000.00         |
|  | <b>Total</b>     | <b>\$115,200.00</b> |

**Commission Development Timeline**

The plan below outlines the steps necessary to create a Commission on Women and Girls in Long Beach.

| <b>Implementation Timeline</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Objective 1:</b><br/>Community Outreach and Engagement</p> <p><b>Timeframe:</b> February 2022 – May 2022</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocatoin of \$25,000 in one-time funds to support an Advisory Team</li> <li>• Establish an Advisory Team</li> <li>• Partner with community organizations to conduct outreach and engagement</li> <li>• Utilize Office of Equity staff support to plan and prepare for community outreach activities and survey(s)</li> <li>• Inform community members about the opportunity to become a Commissioner</li> <li>• Engage with a diverse set of women and girls in Long Beach to learn what needs and issues are most important to them</li> <li>• Learn what the community wants from a Commission on Women and Girls</li> </ul> |

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|--|--|
| <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Synthesis of Engagement</p> <p><b>Timeframe:</b> June 2022 – August 2022</p>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze feedback from survey(s) and community outreach events to understand the community’s comments regarding issues most important to women and girls in Long Beach and how the Commission could address these</li> <li>• Use community engagement and survey feedback to establish recommendations for the Committee’s priorities, member structure, purpose, and functions</li> <li>• Analyze feedback to recommend a Commission structure that best serves the needs of women and girls in Long Beach</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Objective 3:</b> Council Adoption and Formation of the Commission</p> <p><b>Timeframe:</b> September 2022- November 2022</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with City staff to draft an Ordinance based on community engagement and survey recommendations</li> <li>• Receive City Council approval of the Commission’s Ordinance</li> <li>• Review Commissioner applications and send recommendations to the Mayor and Council</li> <li>• Mayor recommends Commissioners for City Council adoption</li> <li>• The Commission on Women and Girls conducts its first meeting</li> </ul>   |

**Next Steps**

To continue with next steps toward the creation of a Commission on Women and Girls, a one-time allocation of \$25,000 will need to be approved to support expenses associated with the formation and deliverables of the Advisory Team. Approval of an allocation of \$25,000 in one-time funds is necessary to move forward with Objectives 1 and 2. Staff does not recommend moving forward with Objective 3 if structural/ongoing support is not identified.

If you have any questions, please contact Deputy City Manager Teresa Chandler at (562) 570-5116.

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