Health

Addressing the impacts of COVID-19, the Mayor spoke about strides in health and healthcare that the City has undertaken for the community. Mayor Garcia stated that 86% of adults in the city of Long Beach are now at least partially vaccinated, a number similar to the countywide percentage of 85.6% for all ages. He praised the city for being among the first in providing the vaccine to teachers, dockworkers, and other frontline professions back when supply was constrained. Last summer the City was administering an average of 750 tests per day, but to-date, the City is now administering an average of six thousand tests per day. To further address COVID-19, the City has increased testing sites, expanded hours of operation at these sites, and is partnering with the school district to make tests more available.

Economy

The Mayor stated that the unemployment rate in the city of Long Beach is dropping again. When he was first elected, the unemployment rate was at 9%, it was lowered to 4.6% prior to pandemic. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the rate peaked at 21%, but as of January 12, 2022, it has gone back down to 7.7%. The City continues to make strides towards economic recovery including plans like the Long Beach Recovery Act (LBRA). The LBRA is a $250M plan that received funding from the federal and state government.
Of that $240M, $64M is marked for economic recovery, $110M towards health and safety, and $76M to secure the financial future of the City of Long Beach.

Investing in key economic centers is also part of the economic recovery for the City of Long Beach. In 2021, the Port of Long Beach handled over 9M cargo containers, which is more than at any time in the City’s history. Currently, cargo processing is up 21% since 2005, and the City plans to continue investing in Port infrastructure and the workers. Part of this infrastructure improvement was the opening of the Long Beach International Gateway, which opened on October 5, 2020.

U.S. Transportation Secretary, Pete Buttigieg, toured the Port of Long Beach on Tuesday, January 11, 2022. He met with local officials while seeing firsthand efforts to deliver goods during the COVID-19 pandemic. The tour came as America’s maritime ports are set to receive an infusion of critical infrastructure funding, with $17B allocated for ports and waterways in the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The Port of Long Beach was awarded a $52M grant for the Pier B On-Dock Rail Facility.

The City is also investing in the Long Beach Airport by modernizing the campus from curb to gate. The first projects of the highly anticipated Phase II Terminal Area Improvements at Long Beach Airport are scheduled to be completed in 2022. The municipal airport’s new ticketing building is on track to open to travelers sometime in the first quarter of 2022. The building will feature about 30 ticketing kiosks where passengers can check in for their flights. The kiosks will be state-of-the-art touchless machines.

The building will also include 21 ticketing counters that can be utilized by any airline by simply changing the display screen based on demand. Behind the scenes of the ticketing facility will be offices and meeting rooms for the various airlines that operate out of Long Beach.

The ticketing building pairs with the checked-baggage inspection system, or CBIS, facility and the two will open at the same time. When luggage is checked in the ticketing building, conveyor belts carry them into the CBIS where they are screened prior to being loaded onto their respective aircraft. Combined, the ticketing and CBIS facilities cost $42M to construct.

A third project, the new $15M baggage claim area, is expected to open later in 2022. Additionally, Southwest Airlines is utilizing its full slate of 35 slots since last November 2021 and new nonstop destinations have been added to the Long Beach Airport including:

- Austin
- Chicago
- Dallas
Part of the City’s recovery has been the amazing efforts the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center (Convention Center) has undertaken to assist the community during this pandemic. In the last two years, the Convention Center has been a COVID equipment distribution center for the National Government, a mass vaccination site, and a migrant shelter for children that resulted in the reuniting of 1,500 children with their families.

Long Beach is also leading the state in space innovation and growth. The area that is now being termed as “Space Beach” houses companies such as:

- Boeing
- SpaceX
- Rocket Lab
- Relativity Space
- Virgin Orbit
- Spin Launch
- ABL Space Systems

In terms of housing, California continues to face a massive housing crisis. Building housing for families and those unhoused continues to be a priority for the City of Long Beach. In 2021, partnering with state and federal governments, three motel conversion projects in the city provided 280 additional units for unhoused people. A municipal run shelter opened in 2021 and has been running at capacity since.

In the last seven years, the City has built an additional 4,700 homes and continues to look to state and federal government for additional resources for more homes. Long Beach was tasked with creating space for over 26,000 new units by 2029 through the most recent regional housing needs assessment from the Southern California Association of Governments.

Safety

The Mayor stated that in 2022 the City must focus on full safety recovery. Due to shifts in unemployment, the pandemic, and increased access to guns, there has been a nationwide spike in crime. In the city of Long Beach there was a 7.7% increase in violent crime. But in 2021, the last six months were safer than first six months. In order to capitalize on this trend of decrease in crime, the Police Department will be expanding bike patrols,
neighborhood walks, and strengthening community partnerships. In addition, the City will be rolling out a new 911 response model designed for those who need mental health assistance and not police officers.

Map out the future

Several initiatives are set to roll out this year to assist the community.

The Guaranteed Income Pilot Program will help 500 single parents in our city who are living in poverty and struggling to meet basic needs. Direct payments will focus on the 90813 Zip code which is the highest concentrated area of family poverty in Long Beach and has a median household income 25% lower than any other Zip code in the city. The pilot program will provide up to 500 participants with $500 per month for 12 months.

Participants will be single-parent households, mostly consisting of single mothers, with incomes below the poverty line. The application will consider household income and hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to providing direct payments, each parent will receive free childcare, transportation support, workforce training and access to resources to support digital inclusion like cell phones and internet connection.

We are also working closely with the Office of Economic Research at California State University, Long Beach who provided analysis and recommendations to help develop this initiative. They will be studying the effects of the pilot program on families and communities to help lift people out of poverty — here in Long Beach and around the country.

Other new programs on the horizon include free bus passes for K-12 and community college students, a centralized enrollment system for universal pre-K and a Climate Action Plan, which outlines the phasing out of oil production by 2035.

To view the video of the Mayor’s State of the City 2022 Address, please click HERE.

City Council Meetings to Shift to Virtual Setting Due to COVID-19 Surge

Beginning Tuesday, January 18, 2022, Long Beach City Council meetings will be held virtually via Zoom. A Zoom link will be provided on the posted agenda. Members of the public will be able to join virtually from a smartphone/tablet app, computer, or phone.

Members of the public will be asked to use the “raise hand” feature before the Council item is read by the City Clerk and the speakers list will close by the time the City Clerk finishes reading the item. If there are under 10 speakers, they can each speak up to three minutes. After 10 speakers, the time will automatically set at 90 seconds to align with pre-
existing council rules. For people who join the webinar by phone, dial *9 to raise your hand.

Members of the public will continue to have the option to use eComment to provide comments on agenda items. Written comments may also be submitted by email to cityclerk@longbeach.gov.

City Council meetings will continue to be streamed online on the City’s Granicus page and Long Beach Television’s (LBTV’s) website, cable channels and YouTube Channel. For more information about Long Beach legislative meetings, visit http://www.longbeach.gov/cityclerk.

**FY 2023 Budget Development**

Mark your calendars and share with friends! The City of Long Beach is kicking off the FY 2023 Budget development process and we want you to join the conversation. RSVP to share your priorities on city services at one of the upcoming virtual community meetings. The community budget meetings were originally scheduled to be held in person at multiple locations throughout the city; however, due to the increased transmission of COVID-19, the City recently transitioned all scheduled in-person community outreach meetings to a virtual format as part of various City service modifications that were announced earlier this month. The virtual community budget meetings will be held on Tuesday, January 25, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., and Thursday, January 27, from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

To get the virtual meeting information or to RSVP to attend either of these meetings, please click HERE.

Additionally, there is a Budget Survey available to let your voice be heard.

Tell us what your budget priorities are for the City of Long Beach by taking this survey!

Comparta sus prioridades presupuestarias en la encuesta en línea.

Ibahagi ang iyong mga priyoridad sa budget sa isang online survey.

ចចករទិូពថវរបស់អក្មកនុងមតិមអ្◌ុ◌ីនឺណិត
The City of Long Beach is kicking off the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget development process. We want you to join the conversation and share your priorities on city services at one of the upcoming community meetings.

Tuesday
January 25
6:30pm – 8:00pm
Virtual

Thursday
January 27
5:30pm – 7:00pm
Virtual

RSVP: longbeach.gov/fy23
Interpretation services will be provided.

This year, the Budget development process for FY 23 (October 2022 – September 2023) will begin with early community engagement, including two virtual citywide community meetings and a general survey. Community feedback will be reported to City Council in early Spring 2022 prior to the Proposed FY 23 Budget being developed.

For more information, visit: longbeach.gov/FY23

Join the FY 23 Budget conversation on social media using #BudgetLB

Facebook: @LongBeachCity
Councilwoman Suzie Price announces she will run for mayor of Long Beach

Councilwoman Price announced on Monday, January 10, 2022, that she will run to replace Mayor Robert Garcia as the city’s next mayor. Councilwoman Price is Long Beach’s Third District City Councilwoman for the last eight years.

Councilwoman Price currently works as a prosecutor in the Orange County District Attorney’s office, has lived in the city of Long Beach for 30 years, and owns a small business on Second Street with her husband.

Please see the Third District’s website for more information about Councilwoman Price.

Also, please see the full article from the Long Beach Post about Councilwoman Price’s announcement to run for Mayor.

Natural Gas Prices in the City of Long Beach

National prices for natural gas have increased sharply this winter compared to last year. The past December 2021 month was the coldest December that Long Beach has observed in 10 years and January 2022 has begun with colder temperatures as well. Energy Resources (ER) has payment plans available for those customers who need assistance to spread their high bills over several months and all customers are encouraged to enroll in ER’s Level Pay Plan that calculates residential and business customer expected monthly usage and charges based on their past natural gas use and projected future rates for an entire year.

For more information, please visit the Energy Resources website.
Activate Your Arts Data

Bloomberg Associates invites you to a virtual conversation on the new guide, *Arts Data in the Public Sector: Strategies for Local Arts Agencies*.

Join local government leaders and arts advocates discussing the value of arts data in shaping policy, establishing equitable and inclusive practices, and affirming the role of arts and culture as a public service.

Thursday, January 27, 2022
3:00 – 4:00 PM EST
Register here

January 27th 12pm-1pm FREE

Cities are increasingly using data to help shape policy and identify service gaps, but data about arts and culture is often met with skepticism. Local arts agencies, the city and county entities at the forefront of understanding and serving their local creative communities, often face difficulties in identifying meaningful metrics that capture quality as well as quantity in this unique field. With the Covid-19 pandemic and intensifying demand for equity, the desire for reliable, longitudinal information will only increase in the coming years as municipalities with severely limited resources face critical decisions in their effort toward recovery.

So how can arts-minded cities leverage data to better serve grantees, promote equity in service delivery, and demonstrate the impact of arts and culture across a range of significant policy priorities, among other ambitions?

Produced by our Cultural Assets Management team, *Arts Data in the Public Sector* highlights the data practices of fifteen local arts agencies across the U.S. to capture a meaningful cross-section of constituencies, resources, and strategies. Through best practices and case studies, the Guide offers useful insights and practical resources that can assist and inspire local government arts funders and advocates as they work to establish more equitable and inclusive practices and to affirm the importance of arts and culture as a public service well into the future.

For the report click on this link. [https://assets.bbhub.io/dotorg/sites/38/2021/12/BA_ArtsDataInThePublicSector_12082021.pdf](https://assets.bbhub.io/dotorg/sites/38/2021/12/BA_ArtsDataInThePublicSector_12082021.pdf)
Links

City Council January 18, 2022 – To hear a recommendation to adopt a Middle-Income Housing Program

View the Economic Development Commission Meeting - January 10, 2022 Meeting

For more information, please contact Mary Frances Torres, SR/WA, Acting Real Estate Development Bureau Manager, Economic Development Department, at mary.torres@longbeach.gov.