




Date: September 16, 2016

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Patrick West, City Manager 

Subject: Long Beach Volunteerism Initiatives

The City of Long Beach believes that volunteerism is an important bridge between citizens and government, one that is imperative to finding solutions for pressing problems facing our neighborhoods and our city as a whole. Volunteerism and civic engagement is an ingrained part of Long Beach's culture and an essential part of what makes living and working here so special and unique.

The City provides residents with a number of potential volunteer opportunities across multiple departments year-round to make the City a more vibrant and attractive place to live and work. Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to, neighborhood clean-ups and tree plantings through the Development Services Department, serving as a "Senior Police Partner" with the Long Beach Police Department, and participating in a multitude of community outreach and beach beautification opportunities available through the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department.

In addition to the many City-sponsored volunteer opportunities, Long Beach is host to a number of non-profit and community-based organizations that provide ample opportunities for volunteers. Volunteers can dedicate their time to coalitions, neighborhood groups, "Friends of" organizations, and countless other community-based causes and initiatives. These causes include literacy, employment preparation training, assisting the homeless, and serving as a positive role-model for at-risk youth by being a coach, tutor, or mentor.

"Long Beach Serves" - the City of Long Beach Volunteer Campaign

As part of an ongoing effort to continue encouraging and promoting volunteerism in Long Beach, the City will be launching a citywide volunteer campaign, "Long Beach Serves." The campaign will begin on October 1, 2016 and culminate with the October 22, 2016 "National Make a Difference Day." The campaign will include one-three volunteer events taking place in each City Council District citywide. The volunteer opportunities that will be offered to the community as part of this campaign are still currently under development and are being designed to provide community members with a quality volunteer experience within existing staff resources. All volunteer opportunities will be open to any member of the public.

The City anticipates the campaign will engage anywhere from 3,000-9,000 volunteers. In recognition of their longstanding history with the City, as well as their expertise in volunteer management, the City has chosen to partner with the Volunteer Center South Bay, Harbor, Long Beach (Volunteer Center) to launch and promote the first annual City of Long Beach Volunteer Campaign and provide volunteers with the education and training necessary to participate in one or more volunteer events. In addition, the Volunteer Center will be launching a new volunteer opportunity online platform as part of the City's volunteer campaign, where residents and visitors can access volunteer opportunities year-round.

Participants are encouraged to RSVP for the "Long Beach Serves" campaign starting on September 20, 2016 through the Volunteer Center, using the following link (under "explore opportunities"): <https://volcenter.org/>

"Long Beach Serves": Cost

Currently, there are no funds in the City budget designated to support this effort. Departments are funding these volunteer opportunities through the use of existing resources. The goal is for departments to keep costs as low as possible by utilizing existing staff resources, as well as offering volunteers the opportunity to engage in established opportunities. If the City Council desires to continue this effort next year, City staff will need to review the costs expended and determine whether additional funds will be needed to support subsequent years of a "Long Beach Serves" campaign.

For more information about "Long Beach Serves," please contact Marley Williams, Management Assistant, at (562) 570-6190. For more information about ongoing volunteer activities taking place throughout the City year-round, please contact Melissa McCormick, Volunteer Services Director, Volunteer Center South Bay, Harbor, Long Beach, at (310) 212-5009.

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