





# City of Long Beach

Working Together to Serve

## Memorandum

**Date:** May 15, 2018

**To:** Patrick H. West, City Manager 

**From:** John Keisler, Director of Economic Development 

**For:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**Subject:** African American Cultural Center Update

On February 20, 2018, the City Council requested the City Manager to work with community stakeholders to identify potential City-owned sites in Long Beach for an African American Cultural Center that can serve as a hub for cultural and arts exhibits. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a short update on actions taken to identify potential sites that could be dedicated toward this purpose, and to provide recommendations for next steps.

### Potential Sites for an African American Cultural Center

Currently, the Economic Development Department (ED), Property Services Division is responsible for managing City-owned property. This responsibility includes the acquisition, disposition, lease, and management of property. Properties may include vacant land, unused or available buildings, and shared-use spaces. The following list of City-owned properties has been identified by staff as potential sites, depending on the specific needs of a future cultural center:

Location	Lot Size (SF)	Building (SF)	Current Zoning	Current Use	Obligations
2175 Atlantic	13,990	None	Planned Development 25, Atlantic Avenue (PD-25)	Vacant Land	Successor Agency: Future Development
7th & Alamitos	3,150	None	Planned Development 30 – Downtown Long Beach (PD-30)	Vacant Land	Successor Agency: Government Use
925-941 E. PCH (MLK/PCH)	15,795	None	Regional Highway Commercial (CHW)	Vacant Land	Successor Agency: Future Development
998 E. PCH (Poly Gateway)	10,038	None	Regional Highway Commercial (CHW)	Vacant Land/Poly Garden Gateway	Successor Agency: Government Use <i>*LUE proposed change to Open Space (OS)</i>

Location	Lot Size (SF)	Building (SF)	Current Zoning	Current Use	Obligations
854 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> (Armory)	41,200	25,000	Planned Development 30 – Downtown Long Beach (PD-30)	Available Building/Vacant	Resolving Mitigation Issues with State
5571 Orange (Library)	15,375	7,318	Multi-family Residential, Townhouse (R-3-T)	Available Building/Winter Shelter	RFP in Process (no obligations)
1858-1862 Atlantic	14,663	4,800	Planned Development 25, Atlantic Avenue (PD-25)	Available Building/Lease Termination in Process	Refuse Fund Reimbursement
6509 Gundry (Former Fire Station #12)	10,400	3,621	Single Family Residential, Standard Lot (R-1-N)	Available Building/CD9 Field Office	No Financial Obligations/Potentially Historic
5870 Atlantic (Library)	84,800	24,655	Neighborhood Commercial Automobile-Oriented (CNA)	Shared Space/Michelle Obama Library	Successor Agency: Government Use
4321 Atlantic (Expo Building)	40,970	19,137	Neighborhood Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial (CNP)	Shared Space/Expo Building	Successor Agency: Government Use

*\* Successor Agency properties require fair market value compensation to taxing entities.*

### Dedication of Public Property

There are a number of different models that the City utilizes to develop, operate, and maintain City-owned properties for the benefit of the public. For instance, the City has executed long-term lease and/or management agreements with private non-profit entities to develop and operate hospital facilities, historic ranchos, and museums of art that provide benefits to the public the City would otherwise be unable to provide.

Depending on the potential resources a private group may generate for the creation of an African American Cultural Center, the City Council may consider leasing, selling, or entering into a management agreement with the private organization. With significant fundraising by a private organization, the City Council may sell a vacant property for the construction of a new building. As an alternative, a private organization may take ownership of the property through a long-term lease agreement and then improve existing buildings if they agree to certain restrictions or covenants that ensure a benefit to the public over a specified period of time. Regardless of the model that is selected, City staff will work with the selected private organization to ensure that

the public is receiving the financial, in-kind services, maintenance, or investment in capital improvements equal to fair market value of the property.

### **Next Steps**

To make a more informed recommendation about the selection of an appropriate site for an African American Cultural Center, including the potential construction cost to the non-profit and ongoing maintenance and operating costs, staff recommends the City engage a subject matter expert with experience in the design, construction, operation, maintenance, and funding of historical/cultural institutions. Preliminary estimates for the first phase of stakeholder input are approximately \$25,000, a funding source has not yet been identified. Once funding has been identified, staff from the City Manager's Office will be responsible for coordinating the community engagement phase of the project.

As directed by the City Council, staff will continue to identify partners, sites, and funding sources for the development of an African American Cultural Center. Thank you for your support in this effort. Please contact John Keisler, Director of Economic Development, at (562) 570-5282 or via email at [john.keisler@longbeach.gov](mailto:john.keisler@longbeach.gov) with any questions.

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