

Date: August 25, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **Summary of Responses to Long Beach Budget Priority Survey**

The Long Beach Budget Priority Survey was launched on June 16, 2020, to obtain feedback from residents regarding their budget priorities for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 21). This year's response rate far exceeded those of prior years, with 4,710 responses received as of August 24, 2020. (Only 330 responses were received last year.) Given the high response rate, we are providing the results to you earlier than in the past to ensure you have sufficient time to review them prior to the September 1st Budget Hearing. The survey results will be updated for the presentation at the Budget Hearing.

Before reviewing the information provided below, it is important to reiterate that the Budget Priority Survey is not a formal survey with requisite controls and the results should not be considered representative of the public at large. The survey does not preclude multiple responses from a single individual, nor does it attempt to balance responses from all segments of the community.

Participants were asked to rate 36 different City services as being "very important," "somewhat important," "not very important," or "not at all important." This survey was available online (in English, Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog), at longbeach.gov and promoted via social media and at the citywide teleconference community budget meetings.

The following are demographic descriptors of the respondents:

Council District

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | Don't Know | Non-Resident | Skipped Question |
|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|--------------|------------------|
| 227 | 465 | 1,062 | 301 | 637 | 165 | 241 | 243 | 100 | 726 | 68 | 475 |
| 5% | 11% | 25% | 7% | 15% | 4% | 6% | 6% | 2% | 17% | 1% | -- |

Age

| 0-18 | 19-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60-69 | 70+ | Skipped Question |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|------------------|
| 200 | 894 | 973 | 705 | 716 | 575 | 42 | 21 |
| 4% | 20% | 22% | 16% | 16% | 13% | 10% | -- |

Household Size

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7+ | Skipped Question |
|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|------------------|
| 566 | 1,653 | 781 | 882 | 383 | 125 | 7 | 226 |
| 13% | 37% | 17% | 20% | 9% | 3% | 2% | -- |

Summary of Responses to Long Beach Budget Priority Survey

August 25, 2020

Page 2

Results

The following is the summary of survey responses, reflecting the relative percentages of responses for each service. A weighted ranking of each service has also been included to provide a means for comparison. A “very important” response received 3 points, a “somewhat important” response received 2 points, a “not very important” response received 1 point, and a “not at all important” response received 0 points. The services have been reordered from how they appeared on the survey form to reflect the weighted average.

| Service | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not at All Important | Weighted Average |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Providing emergency medical services (paramedics, EMS) | 3,580 | 905 | 109 | 44 | 2.73 |
| Providing fire protection services | 3,078 | 1,253 | 239 | 55 | 2.59 |
| Preparing the community for emergencies or disasters | 2,704 | 1,566 | 290 | 78 | 2.49 |
| Maintaining a low crime rate | 2,998 | 877 | 401 | 243 | 2.47 |
| Maintaining and repairing streets (fixing potholes, etc.) | 2,475 | 1,778 | 317 | 60 | 2.44 |
| Providing services and identifying solutions that address homelessness | 2,818 | 1,152 | 382 | 259 | 2.42 |
| Maintaining parks | 2,131 | 2,067 | 349 | 75 | 2.35 |
| Reducing ocean pollution by improving storm drains | 2,332 | 1,560 | 534 | 191 | 2.31 |
| Maintaining and repairing public buildings (community and senior centers, fire stations, libraries, etc.) | 2,036 | 1,997 | 472 | 114 | 2.29 |
| Providing free or low-cost recreation programs for youth and teens | 2,253 | 1,569 | 493 | 266 | 2.27 |
| Planning for the future of the city | 1,700 | 1,936 | 680 | 195 | 2.14 |
| Maintaining and repairing sidewalks | 1,674 | 1,967 | 799 | 167 | 2.12 |
| Collecting illegally dumped items | 1,568 | 2,029 | 771 | 168 | 2.10 |
| Providing library books, media, access to technology, programs and services (reading, homework help, etc.) | 1,930 | 1,493 | 770 | 425 | 2.07 |
| Enforcing traffic laws to protect the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers | 1,858 | 1,518 | 831 | 379 | 2.06 |
| Keeping the City attractive and eliminating blight | 1,618 | 1,861 | 792 | 287 | 2.06 |
| Providing affordable housing | 2,254 | 941 | 682 | 700 | 2.04 |
| Maintaining a strong budget reserve | 1,416 | 1,998 | 791 | 234 | 2.04 |
| Providing nuisance abatement programs (loitering, illegal drug activity, excessive noise, etc.) | 1,919 | 1,345 | 770 | 510 | 2.03 |
| Providing business assistance and supporting economic development | 1,625 | 1,778 | 796 | 359 | 2.02 |
| Providing access to libraries (hours of operation) | 1,735 | 1,612 | 875 | 379 | 2.02 |
| Providing environmental sustainability programs | 1,690 | 1,462 | 821 | 555 | 1.95 |
| Providing programs for seniors | 1,174 | 2,173 | 920 | 288 | 1.93 |
| Providing animal care/animal control services | 1,180 | 2,056 | 1,058 | 306 | 1.89 |
| Paying down the City's unfunded liabilities (pensions, health care, etc.) | 1,294 | 1,602 | 907 | 494 | 1.86 |
| Providing public access to the internet | 1,784 | 1,108 | 899 | 790 | 1.85 |
| Providing prompt graffiti removal services | 1,386 | 1,557 | 1,070 | 566 | 1.82 |
| Providing neighborhood police patrols | 1,784 | 1,095 | 747 | 930 | 1.82 |

Summary of Responses to Long Beach Budget Priority Survey

August 25, 2020

Page 3

| Service | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Not Very Important | Not at All Important | Weighted Average |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Providing specialized Police units (property crimes, directed enforcement, etc.) | 1,718 | 1,086 | 764 | 940 | 1.79 |
| Providing arts and cultural programs | 1,306 | 1,543 | 1,055 | 690 | 1.75 |
| Providing code enforcement services (citing blighted buildings, etc.) | 1,000 | 1,786 | 1,243 | 450 | 1.74 |
| Prosecuting all adult misdemeanor crimes committed in the City | 1,332 | 1,207 | 1,062 | 864 | 1.67 |
| Trimming trees on residential streets | 761 | 1,931 | 1,488 | 403 | 1.67 |
| Creating new parks and open space | 1,090 | 1,333 | 1,352 | 794 | 1.60 |
| Providing special events and programs for families | 798 | 1,635 | 1,417 | 674 | 1.57 |
| Providing translating services (Language Access) | 1,294 | 1,095 | 747 | 930 | 1.50 |

Comparison to Prior Year

Two services have been replaced in the “Top 10” this year. Services highlighted in yellow under 2020 have been elevated to the Top 10. Items highlighted in blue under 2019 have dropped out of the Top 10.

2020 (FY 21)

1. Providing emergency medical services
2. Providing fire protection services
3. Preparing the community for emergencies/ disasters
4. Maintaining a low crime rate
5. Maintaining and repairing streets
6. Providing services that address homelessness
7. Maintaining parks
8. Reducing ocean pollution by improving storm drains
9. Maintaining and repairing public buildings
10. Providing free or low-cost recreation programs for youth

2019 (FY 20)

1. Maintaining a low crime rate
2. Providing emergency medical services
3. Providing fire protection services
4. Maintaining and repairing streets
5. Providing services that address homelessness
6. Maintaining and repairing public buildings
7. Maintaining parks
8. Preparing the community for emergencies/disasters
9. Providing nuisance abatement programs
10. Enforcing traffic laws

The survey also allowed participants to provide comments regarding any of the survey items, or things the survey did not cover. More than 2,200 comments were received, regarding a wide range of issues (Attachment–direct, unredacted, comments from participants). Major themes in the comments are:

- Defund/Reduce Police
- Support for Police & Public Safety
- Homelessness/Mental Health
- COVID-19 Recovery
- Affordable Housing
- Streets, Infrastructure & Parks
- Employee Pensions
- Quality of Life Concerns (Parking, Trash, Traffic, Noise)
- Fireworks
- Library Services
- Youth Services
- Road Diets & Bike Lanes
- Environment/Sustainability
- Survey Format

Attachment

cc: Charles Parkin, City Attorney
 Doug Haubert, City Prosecutor
 Laura Doud, City Auditor
 Linda F. Tatum, Assistant City Manager

Kevin Jackson, Deputy City Manager
 Teresa Chandler, Deputy City Manager
 Rebecca Garner, Administrative Deputy City Manager
 Department Heads