

Date: April 15, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: LEED for Cities Local Government Leadership Program: 2021 National Cohort

The City of Long Beach (City) has been selected to participate in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Cities Local Government Leadership Program: 2021 National Cohort (Cohort). The Cohort, which is a program of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), convenes a group of 15 U.S. local governments as they register, certify, and continuously improve in the LEED for Cities and Communities certification program. USGBC plans to announce the new national cohort in a press release later this month. A City Council item to authorize the City Manager to execute a grant agreement with U.S. Green Building Council, Inc., is planned for the May 4, 2021 City Council agenda.

The LEED for Cities and Communities certification encompasses social, economic, and environmental performance indicators and strategies with a clear, data-driven means of benchmarking and communicating progress. LEED for Cities and Communities follows a structure consistent with other LEED rating systems allowing cities and communities to select the focus areas most important to their local stakeholders through credits and points while setting a baseline through prerequisites. Strategies are organized around the following categories: Natural Systems and Ecology, Transportation and Land Use, Water Efficiency, Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Materials and Resources, and Quality of Life.

As a participant in the Cohort, the City would collaborate and exchange ideas with peers while getting organized, setting goals, collecting data, and applying for certification. Later this month, the Cohort will commence with a virtual training program for representatives from each local government. The Cohort will meet regularly throughout the year to report progress and share best practices. For the City, this work will be completed by an interdepartmental certification team that will have representatives spanning seven departments, coordinated by the Office of Sustainability. Each participating local government will receive a dedicated USGBC coordinator who will provide feedback and support. The expected end date of the formal program year is March 31, 2022.

The certification process will develop a framework to identify potential cross departmental sustainability standards and strategies and establish a baseline for continuous monitoring that will help determine areas of improvement in environmental health and social well-being in the Long Beach community. The City will be able to use the data collected to inform the monitoring and implementation efforts for the city's climate, equity, and sustainability initiatives. LEED for Cities and Communities would consolidate the various key metrics necessary for tracking progress toward City priorities in one comprehensive space, allowing for the concurrent monitoring of conventional environmental sustainability and efficiency metrics alongside important quality of life standards.

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April 15, 2021

Page 2

If you have any questions, please contact Larry Rich at larry.rich@longbeach.gov or (562) 570-5839.

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