Date:       June 18, 2021
To:         Mayor and Members of the City Council
From:       Thomas B. Modica, City Manager

Subject:    Congressionally-Directed Spending Requests

For the first time in a decade, Congress is considering congressionally-directed spending requests, commonly referred to as earmarks, in the appropriations process for the upcoming fiscal year. The House announced the return of earmarks in late February and members have submitted their initial priority lists. The Senate followed suit in late April and is currently reviewing projects. This memorandum outlines the project requests submitted by the City, based on City Council-approved plans and priorities.

Background

Earmarks allow elected members to request funding for specific projects within their districts through the federal appropriations process. To expand transparency and accountability, both the House and Senate have established certain guidelines for earmark requests. The total spent on earmarks will be capped at 1 percent of discretionary spending in the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY 22) Budget. Furthermore, all member requests must be posted online, funds will not be provided to for-profit entities, and members must certify that they do not have a direct financial interest in the projects.

There are two types of earmark requests this year:

- **Community projects:** These types of projects vary significantly but must align with non-defense-related appropriations bills for FY 22. Each appropriations account is tied to specific federal departments, and there are certain requirements and limitations for what projects are eligible depending on the account. Funding for community projects often range in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars to a couple million dollars (in rare cases). Members can submit up to 10 community project requests each. However, there is no guarantee that member requests will be approved by the appropriations committee.

- **Infrastructure projects:** In addition to the community projects requested through the annual appropriations accounts, members can submit larger infrastructure requests to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee as they negotiate the reauthorization of the surface transportation program. Infrastructure requests are focused on highways and transit projects through the Highway Trust Fund.

These earmarks are separate from the Biden Administration’s proposed investments in infrastructure through the American Jobs Plan. At this point, it remains unclear whether there will be an opportunity to submit additional infrastructure earmark requests as legislation is drafted for this plan.
Community Project Requests

The City has put forth the following community project requests in line with Council-approved plans and priorities. Requests meet the interest of the Congressional member, and what staff believes could be eligible and best suited to the specific accounts that are able to fund projects. If the request has been included in a member's request list, it will be noted below the request description.

- **Library Services: $3 million**
  - This request seeks to improve equitable access to the City's library services in line with recommendations outlined in the City Auditor's Library Services Performance Audit of 2020 Operations. Funding would be used to advance language access; adjust library hours to meet community needs; increase adaptive technology available at all libraries; create a data collection system to track program use and feedback through satisfaction surveys on an annual basis; and, utilize, increase, and improve multilingual promotional tools to advance community awareness of library services and programs.
  - **Status:** Congresswoman Barragan has included $250,000 for the Michelle Obama Library in her request list for appropriations.

- **Violence Prevention: $2.1 million**
  - To mitigate increases in violence due to the COVID-19 pandemic, community project funding is requested to create additional programs at parks and teen centers to provide youth safe and developmentally appropriate places to engage in educational, recreational, and social activities. On March 16, 2021, the City Council unanimously approved the Long Beach Recovery Act (LBRA), which outlines priority needs for violence prevention funding. Furthermore, Goal 2 in the Racial Equity and Reconciliation Initiative—Initial Report, unanimously approved by the City Council on August 11, 2020, is to design and invest in community safety and violence prevention.

- **Public Safety Training and Resources: $1.2 million**
  - Funding is requested to implement the renowned training project facilitated by Georgetown Law University, the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement Project. The proposed training for LBPD will help change work culture, improving safety and reducing bias in policing. The Racial Equity and Reconciliation Initiative—Initial Report includes strategies to design and invest in community safety and violence prevention, and to reimagine the police approach to community safety.

- **Los Angeles River Open Space: $2 million**
  - Following unanimous City Council approval on February 2, 2021, the City conducted a feasibility study of acquiring open space for public park development along the Los Angeles River consistent with the Long Beach
Empowerment Zones: $1 million

- Empowerment Zones generate resources in focused geographical areas and economic sectors of the city experiencing lower levels of investment. These zones are critical to the City’s long-term Economic Recovery Strategy to address the economic impacts of COVID-19 in marginalized communities. On March 16, 2021, the City Council unanimously approved the LBRA, which outlines priority needs for ongoing economic recovery through the pandemic, including the establishment and investment in economic empowerment zones.

Digital Inclusion—Technology-Enabled Parks and Libraries: $2 million

- Technology-enabled parks and libraries benefit residents by bringing high-speed internet connectivity to them, whether that be from stronger facility connections extending to their residences or in their neighborhood public amenities. This funding would expand the number of park and library facilities that have fast reliable public wi-fi needed to become a community learning hub, enhance existing public wi-fi systems, and install and program City Hall Kiosks throughout the City in community-facing buildings.

Silverado Park Signature Playground: $1.5 million

- This project would install a signature playground at Silverado Park, one of the last major areas in Long Beach to not have a signature playground with age-appropriate facilities and structures. This park will provide children with opportunities for play and build a healthy community by creating stable neighborhoods and strengthening community development.

- Status: Congressman Lowenthal has included this $1.5 million project on his request list for appropriations.

Houghton Park Signature Playground: $1.5 million

- Funding would support the installation of a signature playground at Houghton Park. This project would create a much-needed resource for the communities near and surrounding Houghton Park. Community benefits include increased ADA accessibility through site-work improvements, enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities, provide age-appropriate playground structures, and promote active and healthy lifestyles.

Infrastructure Project Requests

The City has applied for the following infrastructure priority projects. Projects have to be transportation-related, available to receive federal investment, and be able to be delivered and implemented. Staff focused on gap funding for major projects currently being planned in order to complete major priority projects and gain a competitive advantage.
• **ADA Curb-Ramp and Sidewalk Improvements: $8 million**
  o This project would facilitate the installation of ADA-compliant curb ramps, access ramps, sidewalks, and other accessibility improvements citywide in accordance with a settlement agreement that requires the installation of approximately 2,500 additional curb ramps by October 2022. Community benefits include improved ADA accessibility and pedestrian safety.
  o **Status:** Both Congressmembers Barragan and Lowenthal have included $1,450,000 for this project on their request list for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

• **Shoemaker Bridge Replacement: $410 million**
  o The Shoemaker Bridge replacement is an early action of the regional I-710 Corridor Project. The existing bridge was built in 1954 and has structural and operational deficiencies. Replacement of the bridge will meet current State Highway structural and geometric standards, reduce accident rates, improve safety and operations, improve connectivity between Long Beach and regional transportation facilities, and is compatible with planned freeway improvements and regional development projects (Drake-Chavez Park Master Plan, I-710 Corridor, and LB-MUST) in a disadvantaged and low-income community.

• **Anaheim Street Corridor Improvements: $12 million**
  o The Anaheim Street Corridor Improvements project is a multi-effort safety improvement initiative for a three-mile stretch of Anaheim Street from the Anaheim Street Bridge over the Los Angeles River at San Francisco Avenue to Termino Avenue, a major regional travel corridor. The project improves safety in mobility with upgrades to traffic signals, construction of pedestrian refuge medians, and turn restrictions in historic collision hotspots. This corridor is aligned with the Safe Streets Long Beach and Pavement Management Program.
  o **Status:** Congressman Lowenthal has included this $12 million project on his request list for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

• **Artesia Great Boulevard Project: $22 million**
  o Artesia Boulevard is a major regional travel corridor in North Long Beach, and the corridor has been identified as deficient in many locations, with a wide range of technical issues. The Artesia Great Boulevard Project will implement a series of operational and complete street improvements along the 3.2-mile length of Artesia Boulevard from Harbor Drive to Downey Avenue. The project will be designed and constructed to address safety and severe congestion and operational issues along a regionally significant arterial street. Additionally, a series of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements will be provided to increase mobility for all modes of travel.
Congressionally-Directed Spending Requests
June 18, 2021
Page 5 of 5

- **Status:** Congresswoman Barragan has included $8 million for this project on her request list for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

- **Studebaker Corridor Improvements: $32 million**
  - Studebaker Road is a major regional travel corridor in east Long Beach. The Studebaker Corridor Improvements project will improve Studebaker Road and Loynes Drive for all modes of transportation by rehabilitating the pavement, constructing a transit boarding island, separating existing bike lanes from traffic, and shortening pedestrian crossing distances. In addition, the project will increase high-visibility crosswalks, upgrade traffic signals, and connect the entire corridor with fiber optic communications. Funding would help advance the street improvements recommended by the Safe Streets long Beach initiative.

- **Airport Infrastructure: $18.5 million**
  - Long Beach Airport is currently developing a Phase II of the Terminal Area Improvements Program, which is a design-build project that primarily focuses on enhancing the pre-security customer experience. Part of this comprehensive plan is construction of a consolidated baggage claim area, a new baggage service office, and canopies for passenger protection from inclement weather at the Long Beach Airport. This project is part of the City’s 8 by 28 priority list in preparation for the 2028 Olympics.

**Next Steps**

Over the coming months, the Congressional offices will be working through the FY 22 appropriations process to finalize the projects that will receive direct funding. In order to be final, the House and the Senate need to agree on the projects, approve of them, and the bill has to be signed by the President. The new fiscal year will begin October 1, 2021. Staff will continue to advocate for the City’s projects and will provide status updates as appropriate.

If you have any questions, please contact Tyler Bonanno-Curley, Manager of Government Affairs, at (562) 570-5715 or Tyler.Curley@longbeach.gov.

cc: Charles Parkin, City Attorney
    Douglas P. Haubert, City Prosecutor
    Laura L. Doud, City Auditor
    Linda F. Tatsum, Assistant City Manager
    Kevin Jackson, Deputy City Manager
    Teresa Chandler, Deputy City Manager
    Rebecca G. Garber, Administrative Deputy City Manager
    Monique De La Garza, City Clerk
    Eleanor Torres, Harbor Director of Government Affairs