

Date: September 17, 2021

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



From: Robert G. Luna, Chief of Police



For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Gun Buyback Program**

On July 6, 2021, the City Council directed the City Manager to work with the Police Department to conduct a gun buyback event accessible to all parts of the city within the next 90 days. To support the event, \$75,000 in funding for this program was approved by the City Council on July 20, 2021 as part of the Long Beach Safety Recovery Plan. This memorandum provides information on how the Police Department will implement the requested gun buyback event, as well as answer additional questions that were asked by the Councilmembers.

Gun Buyback Operations

The goal of a gun buyback operation is to reduce the number of guns in our community by giving community members an opportunity to surrender their guns in exchange for an incentive; in many cases, a gift card. Providing both the opportunity and incentive for community members to surrender their firearms ultimately eliminates the chance of these firearms being stolen, ending up in the hands of prohibited possessors, and/or being used unlawfully.

Neighboring Cities and Alternate Operational Gun Buyback Programs

Recently, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has conducted two gun buyback programs and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) has conducted one gun buyback program. Staffing at these programs consisted of sworn personnel as well as numerous volunteers. Participants were compensated with a gift card for turning in a firearm. The guns were then separated by type and sent out for destruction. The LAPD gun buyback was funded solely by the Police Department, with some local businesses donating gift cards for use as buyback incentives. The LASD gun buyback was jointly funded by the Sheriff's Department and the Los Angeles County Supervisor in whose area the event was held.

Gun Buybacks by Nonprofit Organizations

Staff researched the possibility of a nonprofit organization hosting our event. However, we were unable to find an organization that would do so.

LBPD Gun Buyback Programs

The Police Department hosted a gun buyback program in 2013, offering gift cards in exchange for surrendered guns. The goal was to impact violent crime by reducing the number of guns in the public domain. The 2013 operation cost approximately \$50,000 for incentive gift cards and

staffing of necessary police personnel to facilitate the event. The buyback program offered a \$50 gift card for non-functioning firearms; a \$100 gift card for handguns, rifles, and shotguns; and a \$200 gift card for assault rifles. The event yielded a total of 168 firearms, including five assault weapons.

For FY21, the Police Department will hold one event on Saturday, October 2, 2021, at a location in the West Patrol Division. This location was chosen based on data showing that this is where frequent gun violence has occurred both this year and historically. The event itself would run for eight hours, with staff and volunteers working pre- and post-event for set-up and break-down.

In addition, the Department will be conducting a robust outreach and social media campaign to promote the event, including a news release announcing the event; posting on the LBPB homepage and the City event's page; multiple posts on LBPB social media channels; coordination with the City Manager's Office for promotion on City of Long Beach accounts; coordination with CSULB for promotion on CSULB accounts; distributing the flyer to residents and businesses through our Patrol Divisions, community partners, and the Neighborhood Resource Center; distribution to City Council offices to be shared in their newsletters; promotion in the LBPB Community Beat newsletter; and facilitating media interviews between an LBPB representative and local media to promote the event.

The Police Department estimates a total cost of \$64,000 for the event. Staffing costs are estimated to be \$24,000 and the gift cards being purchased from Albertsons and Target would total \$40,000. The incentive gift card amounts will remain unchanged from 2013.

As in the past, the Police Department is working with the City Attorney's Office to review the plans and provide recommendations regarding any liability issues. If you have any questions, please contact me or my Chief of Staff Patrick O'Dowd, at (562) 570-7301.

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