

Date: July 31, 2024

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **Ethics Commission FY 25 Budget Letter**

The attached letter expresses the Ethics Commission's budgetary requests and recommendations for consideration in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 (FY 25) Proposed Budget.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Van Wijk, Ethics Officer at (562) 570-7443.

ATTACHMENT – ETHICS COMMISSION FY 25 BUDGET LETTER

CC: DAWN MCINTOSH, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
APRIL WALKER, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
MEREDITH REYNOLDS, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
GRACE YOON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
TYLER BONANNO-CURLEY, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
KEVIN LEE, CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK
DEPARTMENT HEADS

**CITY OF LONG BEACH
ETHICS COMMISSION**

Margo Morales, Chair
Barbara A. Pollack, Vice Chair
Raul Añorve, Commissioner
Chief Coleman, Commissioner



Lani De Benedictis, Commissioner
J.P. Shotwell, Commissioner
Susan Wise, Commissioner

July 30, 2024

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City Manager Tom Modica
City of Long Beach
411 West Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Ethics Commission FY 25 Budget Letter

Honorable Mayor Richardson, Members of the City Council, and City Manager Tom Modica:

As indicated in our Mission Statement, the Ethics Commission (Commission) strives to advance public trust and confidence in the City's government through education and the development of policies and processes that promote each of the City's values of Accountability, Fairness, Impartiality, Diversity, Transparency, and Integrity.

We would like to thank the Mayor and Council for allocating one-time funding in the current budget for the development of an ethics strategic vision. The Commission is strongly committed to fostering an environment where all decisions are made through an ethical lens. We also recognize that instilling an ethical basis for decision making will require fiscal resources. As such, the following is to provide input from the Ethics Commission on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget (Proposed Budget.)

Request for Funding

The Commission respectfully requests an on-going allocation of \$75,000 for services necessary to train staff and Commissioners, and other activities necessary to advance the Commission's and Office of Ethics and Integrity's work.

Using the one-time funding allocated in the 2024 budget, the Office of Ethics and Transparency was able to engage the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics (Markkula) to support the development of a strategic vision for ethics in the City. Markkula interviewed much of the City's leadership and conducted a series of community outreach programs to solicit input for the strategic vision. We anticipate completion of the strategic vision by the end of the calendar year, which will result in new expenses in support of the rollout of the strategic vision. It is essential that funding is available to develop an information program so that staff, the community and leadership are cognizant of the strategic vision.

Additionally, the Commission is entering a time of transition. Former Mayor Robert Garcia's inaugural appointee, Margo Morales, and City Auditor Laura Dowd's inaugural appointees, Susan Wise and J.P. Shotwell, will all term out next June. In December 2023, the Commission selected Chief Coleman to fill an at-large vacancy. As you may be aware, the Commission has been very active in developing and reviewing policies and procedures since our first meeting in 2019 and there will be resources required to bring the new Commissioner up to speed. Additionally, with the growing emphasis on ethics in local government, staff have identified local training that would be beneficial to the Commissioners. At this time, specific funding is not available to support attendance of Commissioners at any training.

Commission Support for The City Attorney's Proposed Budget Recommendations

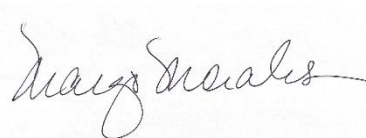
The City Attorney and her staff are a vital partner in the successful execution of policy and procedures proposals drafted by the Commission for your Council and the City Manager's consideration. The current budget included funding for one new Deputy City Attorney position. The Commission partners closely with the City Attorney's office and recognizes the inevitable impact of our requirements on City staff. The City Attorney will continue to assess the sufficiency of staffing on an on-going basis and is not requesting an additional position at this time. In light of all of the demands on the existing resources, there may be a need for additional position in the future.

Conclusion

The Ethics Commission recently passed its 5-year anniversary. Our first two years were consumed largely by selection of the members of the Independent Redistricting Commission, appointment of the 3 "at-large" Commission members, and the challenges of operating during the COVID pandemic. With the support of the City Council, we now have a new Code of Ethics in place, an education portal and training materials, a HelpLine, and liaison partners throughout City government. We look forward to the next phase of accomplishments following release of a Strategic Plan for the Commission.

We appreciate your support of this request and look forward to collaborating with you to translate the important work of the Ethics Commission into positive and noticeable results. Our incoming Chair, Barbara Pollack and Vice Chair Chief Coleman are available to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Margo Morales
Ethics Commission, Chair



Barbara A. Pollack
Ethics Commission, Vice Chair