CITY OF LONG BEACH

Memorandum

Date: September 5, 2025

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager

From: Alison King, Director of Health and Human Services

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Veterans Affairs Commission FY 2026 Budget Letter**

At a Special Meeting on September 3, 2025, the Veterans Affairs Commission approved the attached letter sharing the Commission's budgetary requests and recommendations for consideration in the Proposed Fiscal Year (FY 26) Proposed Budget.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Gina Overholt, Veterans Affairs Commission and Office of Veterans Support Coordinator, at (562) 244-9072 or ginaoverholt@longbeach.gov.

ATTACHMENT

CC: DAWN MCINTOSH, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
APRIL WALKER, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY 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
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Kenneth Osborn, Chair
Antawnette Atkins Blade, Vice Chair
Jerry Earl, Commissioner

James Goodin, Commissioner
Hershell Hardimon, Commissioner
Nicholas Sramek, Commissioner

September 3, 2025

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

RE: Veterans Affairs Commission FY26 Budget Letter

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

The Veterans Affairs Commission, hereafter referred to as the Veterans Commission, identified a Veterans Banner Program as Goal 1, Objective 2 of the Veterans Strategic Plan, "Recognize Long Beach Veterans of different service eras utilizing a light pole banner program." This aligns well with one of the purposes identified in the enabling legislation for the Veterans Commission, "Honor Veterans' service and highlight the many achievements of those who have dedicated their lives to protecting the country."

The Veterans Commission would like to thank the Mayor and Council for allocating one-time funding in the FY 2024 budget for a pilot banners program and one-time funding in FY 2025 for a second consecutive year of Veterans banners. In FY 24, the $10,000 allocation made it possible to install 25 banners on Carson Street between Clark St. and Woodruff Ave. These banners were displayed for one year, starting on May 20, 2024. In FY 25, the $25,000 allocation made it possible to install 65 banners in three prominent locations – on Atlantic Ave. near St. Mary Medical Center, on Bellflower Blvd. near the VA Long Beach, and on Lakewood Blvd. near the Long Beach Airport – on July 10, 2025. Short bios of the selected honorees may be viewed here: longbeach.gov/vetsbanner

The following is to provide input from the Long Beach Veterans Commission on the City's Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

Funding Request

The Veterans Commission respectfully requests a one-time allocation of $25,000 in FY 26, which will fund a third consecutive year of the Veterans Banner Program. The Veterans Commission approved this request at a Special Meeting on September 3, 2025.

Veterans Banner Program

For FY 26, the Veterans Commission respectfully requests $25,000 to sustain the banners program. A banners program is a cost-effective way of honoring both the city's rich naval history and its Veterans for their service. The Veterans Commission believes interest in the program is robust and a third consecutive year of the banners program will aptly demonstrate the City's commitment to honoring Veterans in a very visible and accessible way.

The Veterans Banners Program continues to be positively received as evidenced by the calls and emails we receive, not only from the featured Veterans themselves and the families and friends who nominated them, but also from Long Beach residents who reach out to express their gratitude and "city pride." Positive feedback is not limited to Long Beach; we have fielded calls from other cities who are interested in starting their own Veterans' banner programs.

In 2024, the Veterans Commission received 64 applications for the banners program. In 2025, 147 applications were received, more than twice the amount received in 2024. The Veterans Commission believes that public interest in the program will only continue to grow in FY 26.

On behalf of the Veterans Commission, we appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to sustaining the Veterans Banner Program in FY 2026.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Osborn
Veterans Commission Chair

Antawnette Atkins Blade
Vice Chair