



MAYOR ROBERT GARCIA CITY OF LONG BEACH

February 11, 2016

To the Members of the City Council:

For the last two decades, we have worked to make this community safer, healthier, and a better place to raise a family and open a business. Our progress as a City is only possible as a result of contributions from countless community leaders, educators, residents and business leaders that have come together to make our city stronger.

Our city is facing two pressing challenges. How we address these challenges will determine the kind of city we leave to future generations.

The first challenge is \$2.8 billion in unfunded infrastructure needs. While the City currently spends over \$65 million a year on capital infrastructure, it simply is not enough to meet our needs. Many of our streets, sidewalks and alleys are in desperate need of repair. We also have a tremendous need to upgrade city water systems for conservation and storm drain systems for neighborhood protection and water quality. Every year we fail to make needed investments, the cost to upgrade our public infrastructure increases.

Our second challenge is the need to hire additional police to combat increasing crime rates that are climbing across the state, and to restore fire staffing to maintain 911 paramedic response times at stations across the city. Maintaining and growing our emergency medical and public safety capabilities will be critical to our ability to meet the new safety challenges faced by our city and state.

Recently, a survey was conducted that showed our city's commitment to support additional revenue for infrastructure and to protect police and fire services. Two-thirds of local voters (67%) believe that Long Beach is headed in the right direction. This demonstrates the trust our residents have in our local leadership. However, while voters are optimistic about our future, two-thirds (66%) still believe the city needs additional revenue to meet current needs. Voters also identified protecting public safety resources and investing in infrastructure as their two most important priorities.

Voters are aware of the significant reductions that the City of Long Beach has made in the last decade, including reforming pensions to save the city more than \$250 million over 10 years, eliminating over 700 city positions, including 200 police officers, and leaning government to make it more efficient.

We have watched as the Council has discussed possible revenue measures to meet our needs in recent council meetings, study sessions, and at community meetings.

We care deeply about this city and believe that the vast majority of our community members and business owners want to find solutions to these challenge and that Long Beach residents should have a say in the future of their city.

Therefore, we are asking the City Council to place a temporary one-cent sales tax increase on the June ballot. The ten-year, temporary revenue measure would decrease to half a cent after 6 years, and sunset after 10 years.

While the survey shows that a large majority (64%) of Long Beach voters would support a permanent one-cent sales tax, we think it is much more prudent and responsible to have the sales tax measure end after 10 years.

This additional revenue will provide us with a historic opportunity to make repairs to our city's streets and sidewalks, our water systems, and to ensure that we protect our 911 response times and first responders. And a sales tax is shared by everyone, including visitors to our city.

In addition, if the Council chooses to put these measures in front of voters, we would ask that you place an additional measure on the ballot that would create a new rainy day reserve fund. This new fund would place the first 1% of any new revenue in a reserve fund that would provide long-term financial stability for the city and protect service levels in a prolonged recession.

We are looking forward to working with each of you to help pass a responsible sales tax measure if you choose to put one on the ballot.

Thank you for you consideration and for all you are doing to make Long Beach the best it can be.

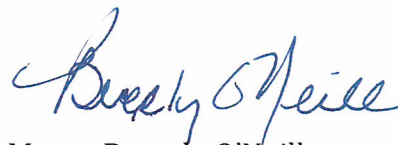
Sincerely,



Mayor Robert Garcia



Mayor Bob Foster



Mayor Beverly O'Neill