

February 8, 2022

CIP

Annie Tulkin

Hello. My name is Annie Tulkin. I am a 6 year resident of Long Branch. I'm here today to talk about the proposed CIP budget and some specific impacts for our community.

I support full funding for the Recreation Department as well as funding for the Department of General Services. As you may be aware, the Long Branch recreation center and the Coffield center have been closed to the community since the beginning of the pandemic. The Long Branch Rec Center is currently being used as a men's homeless shelter, while the 19 other Rec centers in the county are open. Given the sacrifices our community has made, it's critical the refurbishment money for the Rec Department stay in the budget, and the refurbishment process for Long Branch be prioritized. DGS will also need funds for a building assessment and to make the necessary repairs. Rec and DGS need to be fully funded so the functions of our Rec center can be fully restored.

I'm also in support of restoration of funding for the Parks Department. Long Branch has 7 parks. Our community has been working closely with the Parks department and we hope to continue that work. Restoration of funding for the Parks Department will help ensure that money is available for:

- **Replacement of park equipment.** Many of the Parks in Long Branch are in need of updates and **funds to support ADA compliance** to ensure that parks in our community meet the needs of all community members and are accessible for people regardless of age and ability.
- **Functional, safe and accessible trails**, which will be essential for connectivity in our community especially as the Purple Line project moves forward.
- **Maintenance, updates, and upgrades** to athletic fields to support outdoor activity and increase mental health and wellness in our community
- **Community gardens and public amenities** that engage people in Long Branch and encourage a healthy lifestyle.
- **Initiatives to support cleaning up the water in Long Branch Creek**, a space that we use for recreation and learning with our friends from the Audubon Naturalist Society who have worked with the Latino population in our community to build interest and investment in the outdoors and conservation.

Full funding for these departments can support projects that are essential to quality of life in Long Branch and address some of the historic inequities and underinvestment in our community.