



DOWNTOWN LONG BEACH ALLIANCE

TIME TO BUILD AND REBUILD

The Greater Long Beach community and the individuals, organizations, and businesses that comprise it have a lot of hard work to do, and we must start now. One week ago, when looting broke out in our Downtown, we witnessed the destruction of dreams, crushing the hopes and livelihood of the hundreds of people who labor behind those storefront windows. These structures will inevitably be rebuilt, and we will help rebuild those dreams. But the greater priority is to start the conversation and begin the work to repair centuries worth of injustices against Black America.

These will not be easy discussions to have and some may not agree with our involvement. But we cannot continue to watch from the sidelines and expect different results. As a community-based organization working on behalf of and for the welfare of the Downtown community, the Downtown Long Beach Alliance must lead and participate in these conversations to help effect change.

Our process will center upon listening. We must:

Listen until there is a better understanding of the issues that have come to bear across our nation and in our own Downtown. Achieve a level of understanding that blossoms into compassion. And cultivate the necessary empathy to produce better practices and policies that support greater equity for our community.

While on the surface this may appear to be a simple approach, nursing an infected wound solely by applying bandages is not an option. Change will not happen overnight. Just as systemically as these issues are rooted in our society, it will take equally great strategy and unity to eliminate them. Let us start by recognizing the problems and then do something about it.

An unattended wound that predates the founding of our nation is eating away at the fabric of our society. Racism against Black Americans continues to inflame pervasive social injustices and inequities that persist in cities across the country, including Long Beach. So, it should come as no shock that our society is undergoing a massive upheaval aimed at unseating racism, injustice, and violence against Black Americans.

The weight of this trauma is heavy, but we must not let that weight prevent us from moving forward. Recovery is not going to be easy. We must come together to listen, learn, and address the realities of inequities and injustices that continue to eat away at American communities and our own Downtown.

The mission of the DLBA as a community-based nonprofit organization is to cultivate, preserve, and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous Downtown. We are failing in that mission when members of our community are at a disadvantage in remaining healthy, being safe, and obtaining prosperity because of the color of their skin. We must understand and take responsibility for the shortcomings of our own actions, and how we may have contributed to those systemic inequalities. We can and will do better.

DLBA is committed to fostering dialogue that will help move our city toward actionable solutions: towards equity, justice, and economic recovery for all members of our community. We hope you join us. The only way we move forward from this is together.