The Long Beach Latino Cultural Center Community Engagement **DRAFT REPORT**

Presented By Centro CHA

Overview

Section I **Executive Summary**

Section II **Community Engagement Process**
- Engagement Process
- Outreach Methods
- Demographic Data

Section III **Community Engagement Results**
- Most Popular Community Topics
- Primary Findings
- Conclusion

Section IIII **Latino Cultural Center Advisory Committee Polling**

SECTION I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

- Long Beach residents care about the culture in their city and want to take greater ownership of their community. Not just the people directly involved in the arts and culture scene, but those from every neighborhood and every walk of life. Nearly everything in the city is influenced by culture.

- The concept of culture in this process can be understood as the frame through which diverse practices, expression, and creativity are seen, respected, and supported in the city. There are traces of traditions and practices, power, dominance, and reclamation that are often forgotten. This space can serve as a reminder that these memories do not disappear.

- Cultural Placemaking promotes the creation of quality public spaces that positively impacts community health, happiness, potential, well-being, pride, and acceptance. An urban Latino Cultural Center can provide residents with a sense of belonging, identity, and recognition that can be integrated to address long-standing socioeconomic and environmental inequities.

- Long Beach has a unique opportunity to adopt and execute a new narrative about the importance of recognizing and engaging its multitude of people and cultures.

- **Equity is the driving force, culture is the framework, and overall belonging is the goal!!!**

Organizations Engaged in the Focus Groups

- Latino Employee Organization (LEO)
- Boys and Girls Club
- For the Child
- The Child Guidance Center
- Interval House
- YMCA
- Habitat for Humanity
- Miguel Hidalgo Deportivo
- Conservation Corps of Long Beach
- Long Beach Arts Council
- United Cambodia Community
- Cambodia Town Long Beach
- African American Cultural Center
- Washington Neighborhood Association
- AOC7 Neighborhood Association
- Latinos in Action
- California State University Long Beach
- Long Beach City College
- Millikan High School
- Long Beach Unified School District
- Ready to Rise Youth Participants
- MOLA
- Centro CHA Seniors
- Latino Cultural Center Steering Committee

15 Key Informant Participants

- Chief Robert G. Luna, Chief of Long Beach Police Department
- Mario Cordero, Executive Director Port of Long Beach
- Randal Hernandez, Executive Director, External Affairs Verizon and Long Beach Economic Partnership Chair
- Mary Zendejas, Long Beach 1st District Councilmember
- Cindy Allen, Long Beach 2nd District Councilmember
- Roberto Uranga, Long Beach 7th District Councilmember
- Dr. Mike Munoz, Interim Superintendent-President Long Beach City College
- Dr. Jill Baker, Superintendent Long Beach Unified School District
- Marcelle Epley, President and Chief Operating Officer Long Beach Community Foundation
- Susana Sngiem, Executive Director of the United Cambodia Community
- Kraig Kojian, President and Chief Operating Officer Long Beach Alliance
- Blair Cohn, Executive Director Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association
- Steve Goudling, President and Chief Operating Officer at Long Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Chris Brown, African American Cultural Center Chair and personal advisor to Long Beach 8th District Councilmember Al Austin
- Dr. Lordes Ramos, President and Chief Operating Officer at Long Beach Museum of Latino Art

SECTION II

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Engagement Process

- The planning process began in Fall 2020 by establishing an advisory group and steering committee in the city and developed a comprehensive timeline to initiate planning for the community engagement report, business plan, and feasibility study.

- There are typical processes to create a comprehensive plan for a cultural center.
  1. Beginning with hosting community meetings to hear concerns and ideas;
  2. Using surveys to cast the net wider
  3. Drafting a demographic sketch of respondents and quantify findings
  4. Doing research about historical and current conditions
  5. Scanning the broader environment to shed different lights on the local landscape.

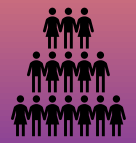
- The cultural planning process provided us a unique opportunity to reflect on current conditions and recent contexts, in addition to an opportunity to review our history and trace the steps of how we got where we are.

Focus Group Questions

The following are the four questions used to guide the non-formal discussions in each focus group. The topics included: Spaces and Facilities; Programs, Exhibits, and Services; Community Education and Economic Development; and Overall Concepts and ideas.

1. How would you create an ideal Latino Cultural Center?
    1. What concepts, facilities, and spaces are necessary?
2. More specifically, what services, programs, classes, or exhibits would you include to best serve the community through a cultural lens?
3. Do you think there is a way to support Latino community empowerment by promoting education, health access, social connectedness, workforce development, or economic development?
4. In your opinion do you envision or propose a way that we make this space inclusive for all backgrounds to learn and celebrate the diverse Latino culture?

Community Outreach Methods



19 Focus Groups

- **263** community members engaged
- **25** organizations represented
- English and Spanish events

2 Online Surveys

- **77** responses from participants around the community

15 Key Informant Interviews

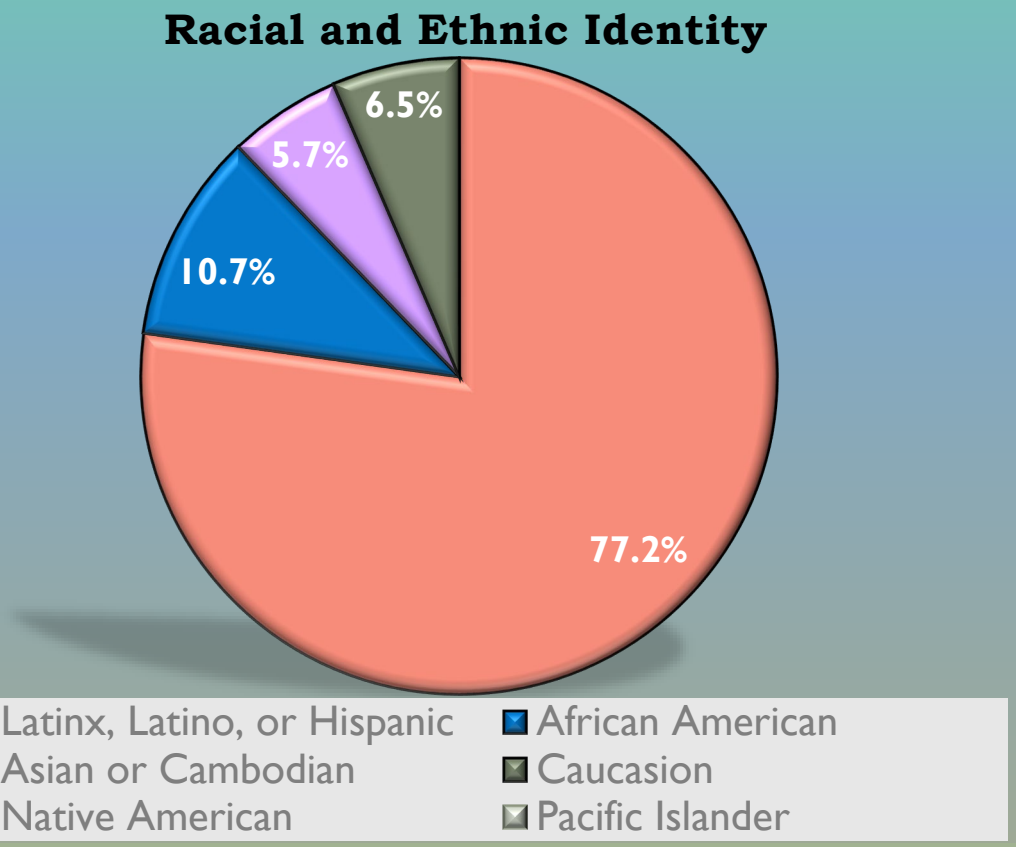
- **15** interviews with various community experts and leaders in Long Beach

CSULB MBA Student Research Study

"Economic Opportunities from the Designation of a Latino Cultural District"

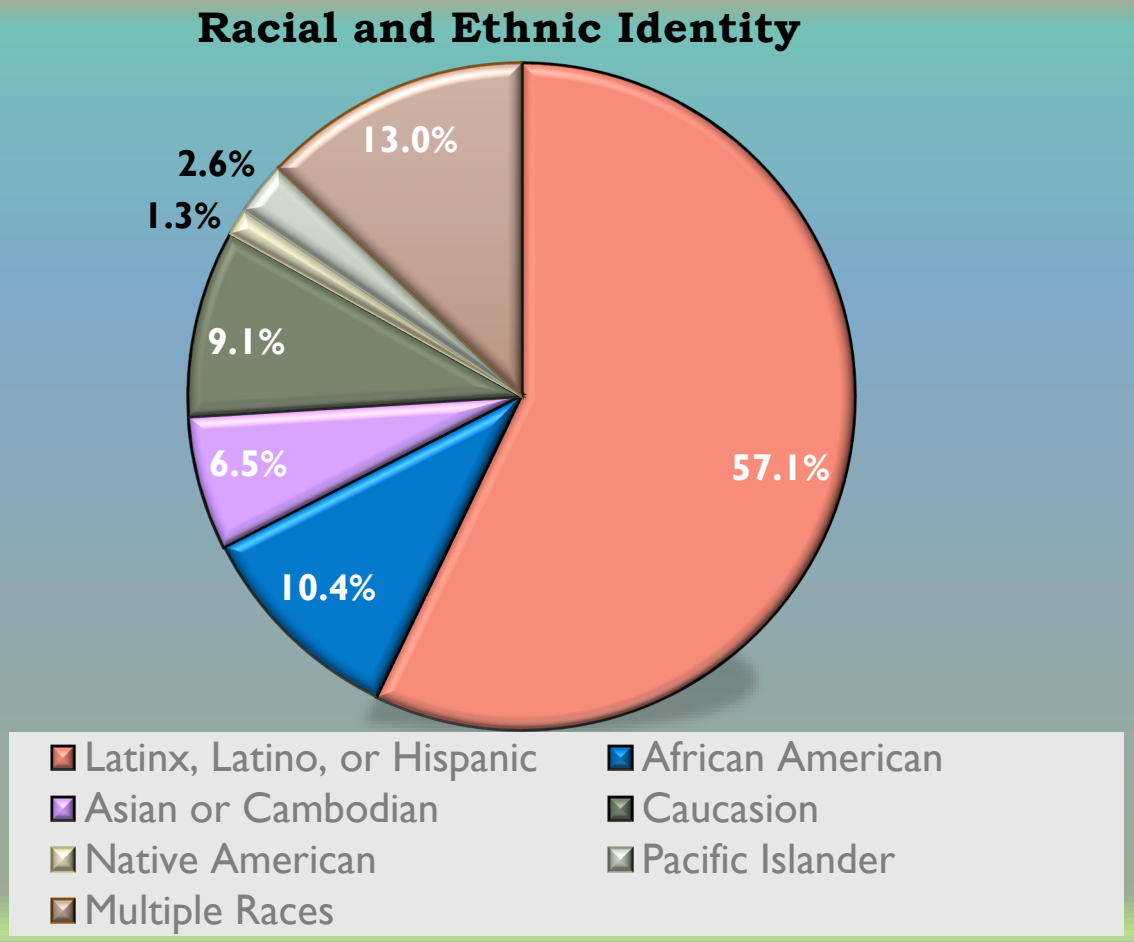
- **12** MBA Marketing Students
- **3 Professors** Ingrid Martin, Ph.D, Wade Martin, Ph.D, and Prof. Rod Smith
- James Rojas, Urban Planner "Place It"

How the Focus Group Participants Identified



- **263** Participants
- **83%** Residents
- **22%** Seniors over the age of 55
- **18%** College Students
- **28.5%** Born and Raised in Long Beach
- **64.3%** Have lived in the city for 5 years or more
- **47.5%** Raising children or grandchildren in Long Beach
- **63%** Identified as female
- **37%** Identified as Male
- **77%** Work in Long Beach

How the Online Survey Participants Identified

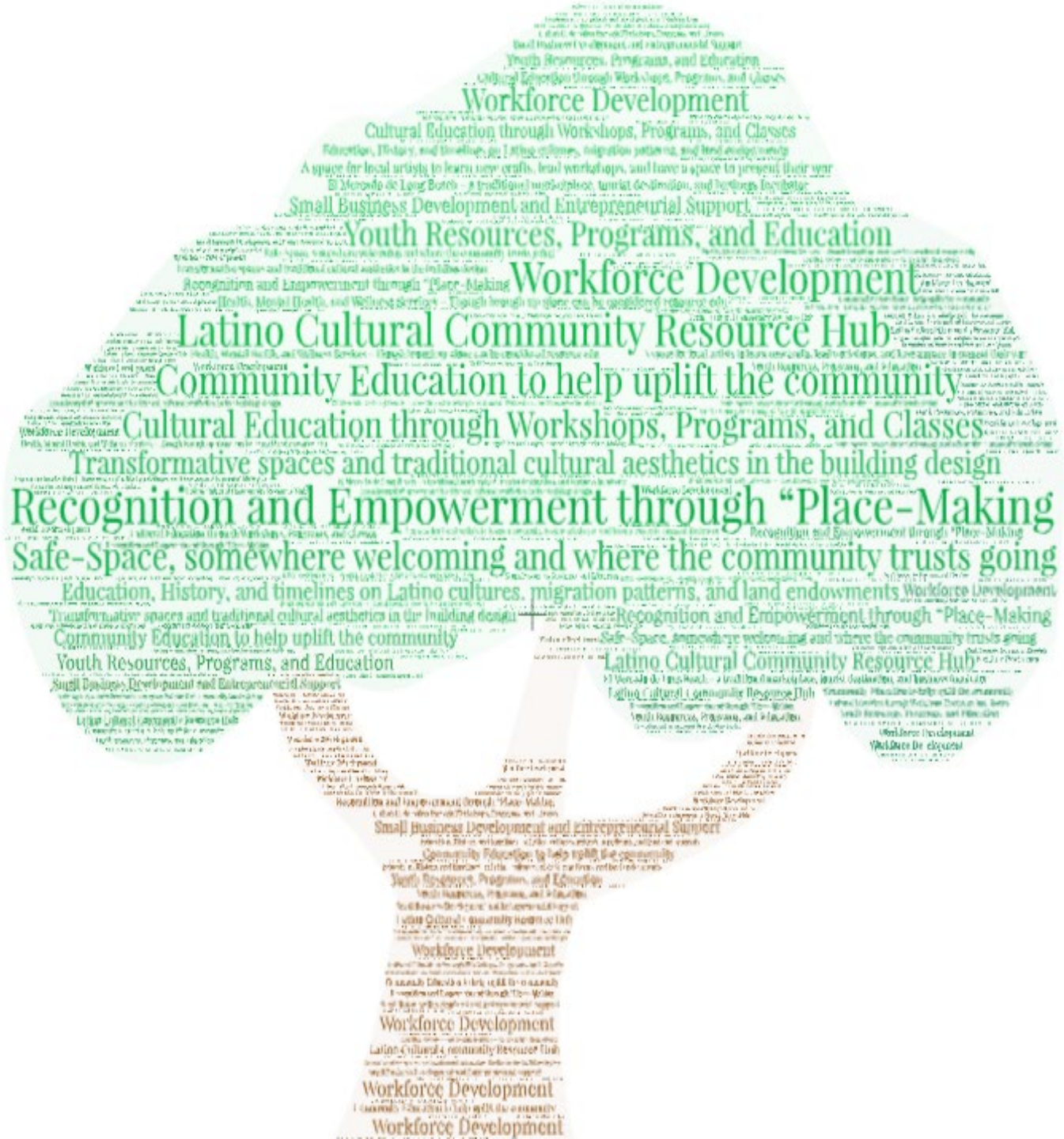


- **77** Participants
- **75%** Residents
- **10.4%** seniors over the age of 55
- **20.8%** Parents
- **45.5%** Students
  - **37.7%** High School (14-17)
  - **7.8%** College (18-26)
- **45%** Work in Long Beach
- **57%** Female
- **40%** Male
- **3 %** Non-Binary

SECTION III

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Most Popular Topics Identified by the Community



Prioritizing the Projects for the Latino Cultural Center

First, we will present the results, which were narrowed down by identifying the most popular concepts, ideas, and topics that the community suggested.

Second, we will ask each member to participate in ranking the ideas for prioritization

We must phase in the concepts, as not everything can be uplifted at once.

Finally, we will discuss the voting results and how this will influence the development of operations in each phase of the Latino Cultural Center.

Then, next steps.

Findings by Category

SIX MAIN TOPIC CATEGORIES
1. Concepts and Ideas
2. Architecture and Design
3. Facility and Space
4. Exhibits and Artwork
5. Community Arts, Health, and Wellness
6. Community Education and Economic Development

Major Concepts and Ideas

Most Popular Community Ideas	# of times mentioned
1. "Safe-Space" • A trusted space where people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, criticism, harassment, or any other emotional or physical harm	**132**
2. Cultural and Multi-Cultural Celebrations • A dedicated location to host large gatherings, community celebrations, and cultural events for inter and intra cultural exchange.	**106**
3. Inclusivity • Create the space so that it is welcoming for all racial and ethnic backgrounds, genders, and ages.	**96**
4. Partnerships and Service Agreements • Utilizing local expertise, service providers, and resources to bring forward services and programming. There are education institutions, service providers, community organizations, and businesses that can partner to bring these ideas together.	**84**
5. Student and Youth Internship and Volunteer Work • Hiring and supporting local students to fill positions in the center.	**69**

Architecture and Design

Most Popular Community Ideas	# of times mentioned
1. Architecture, Aesthetics, and Artwork • Latino influence from the past and present captured through architecture, structures, the buildings design, statues, sculptures, and murals. • Cultural symbols and style such as flags, Vibrant colors, décor, fabrics, and furniture.	**269**
2. Transformative rooms and spaces • Large spaces (indoor and outdoor) with flexible designs to accommodate rotating programs, workshops, activities, and exhibits to provide diverse program options.	**121**
3. Arts and Place Recognition though "Placemaking" and "Place Keeping" • Establishing a Latino landmark that promotes "Cultural Placemaking", a creative way of acknowledging cultural, physical, and social identities that define a place and its people. • Provides a sense of pride and acceptance to the community.	**117**

Facility and Space Most Popular Community Ideas	**# of times mentioned**
1. Community Resource Hub and General Community Gathering Space • A space in the center to serve as a hub or central community connection to various community resources and social assistance. • A space for children, youth, families and seniors to engage and congregate safely in communal areas. • Children center focused on childcare and activities for young children.	**279**
2. Community Commercial Kitchen and Community Garden • A multi-use community kitchen that can be used for community education, nutrition, and training or certifications.	**148**
3. Community Computer Center • A space to provide computer access and computer courses for different age groups, professional groups, community members, and skill level.	**114**
4. El Mercado de Long Beach • A traditional Latino Marketplace to activate the area, host trendy pop-ups, help incubate small businesses, support entrepreneurs and vendors.	**112**
5. Outdoor Venue and Amphitheatre • Large open green space to host large festivals, cultural celebrations, music performances, film screenings for local artists, and family movie nights.	**110**
6. Outdoor Recreational spaces • Designed for outdoor physical activities. Exercise classes (Zumba, salsa, yoga), youth and adults sports, a playground or space for kids to play, and other outdoor activities.	**49**

Exhibits and Artwork Most Popular Community Ideas	# of times mentioned
1. Historic Exhibits (murals, artwork, statues, films, and installations) • Timelines • Primary Community History • Latino Community and Professional Accomplishments • Latino Heritage and Genealogy • Community Photographs	**419**
2. Space for Local Artists • A permanent space for local artist residencies at the center. The idea of the residency is to rotate artist and host each exhibit for designated lengths of time. • A space for performing artists (musician, poets, or film makers)	**130**
3. Cultural and Educational Art Exhibits • Various exhibits focused on Latino cultural art and education.	**94**
4. Speaker Series • An exhibit to host guest speaker series or community talks about various expertise including artists, historians, educators, professionals, and more.	**78**

Community Arts, Health, and Wellness Most Popular Community Ideas	**# of times mentioned**
1. Cultural Arts • Cultural arts, dances, artwork, music, language, fashion, hair styles, traditional cooking, and gardening for all ages.	**141**
2. Cultural Education • Community education on the diverse customs, traditions, beliefs, and influence across Latino cultures.	**128**
3. Health and Wellness • Broad programs, support services, and education around "health, mental health, and wellness". Programs to connect the community to health services, trauma and mental health counseling, and community support groups.	**114**
4. Cooking Courses • Cultural culinary dishes, courses on improving healthy habits through nutrition, and a space for aspiring cooks and vendors to train and earn certifications.	**99**
5. Youth Programs • Providing education specifically for the youth in culture, arts, language, health and wellness, cooking, computers, finances, and more.	**97**
6. Violence Prevention Programs • To provide violence prevention education, community outreach, and counseling support.	**33**

Community Education and Economic Development Most Popular Community Ideas	**# of times mentioned**
1. Workforce Development programs and services • Skills training, Work readiness, higher education, job placement services	**172**
2. Small Business Incubator and Entrepreneurial Development • Programs and services to support small businesses, entrepreneur, and street vendors.	**159**
3. Financial Literacy • Financial planning, bank account services, retirement, 401k plans, financial wills, and property ownership	**119**
4. Computer and Digital Literacy • Computer literacy, software and programs, and navigating the internet.	**110**
5. Immigration Integration and Undocumented Services • Trusted legal consultation services, USCIS Citizenship and DACA application services, ESL and civics classes, and workforce development.	**90**
6. Re-entry and Diversion Services • Re-entry integration, mentoring, mental health, and employment services for justice system involved youth and adults	**84**
7. Student Support and Mentorship • Students' internship opportunities, academic coaching, professional and career life transitions.	**80**
8. Social Assistance Service and Support • Access to rental assistance, food security, financial support, health services, and access to COVID relief - vaccine and testing.	**80**
9. Parent resources and services • Cultural parenting education and civic engagement to help navigate the education and health system	**73**

Community Engagement Conclusions

- Community members expressed excitement in the idea of "Cultural Place-Making" through the creation of a Long Beach Latino landmark dedicated to uplifting and celebrating the diverse community.
- Most of the community expressed a desire for a center that goes beyond the scope of a traditional museum.
- The Long Beach Latino community is seeking opportunities to heal and prosper following unforeseen challenges, including disproportionate COVID impacts, villainization from the previous administration, and numerous long-standing disparities.
- Long Beach Latinos are not only struggling with a sense of belonging, they also struggle with trauma, financial burdens, job insecurities, disparate health impacts, educational achievement gaps, family struggles, and a digital divide.

Community Engagement Conclusions

- There is a vocalized need for a comprehensive cultural center that provides not only cultural recognition and arts but a space that promotes wellness and equity by providing equities in social economic justice, historical connections, resource assistance, healing services, and opportunities for recovery.

- Long Beach has the opportunity to uplift a public-private and community partnership to develop a cultural center that focuses on “cultural empowerment,” “institution,” and “community” through place making using localized, community, asset-based approaches to strengthen its cultural sector and to support the emerging and diverse Latino population.

- Rather than simply looking at the budget size and paid staff as indicators of capacity, we should focus on stability and horizontal connectedness indicators with a cultural equity focus, broader community engagement, and stronger collaborations for upward economic mobility and resiliency.

SECTION IIII

LATINO CULTURAL CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE POLLING

POLL: Favorite Dish (Test Question)

1. Enchiladas
2. Tacos
3. Tamales
4. Menudo
5. Mariscos
6. Birria

POLL: Facility and Space	# of times mentioned
1. Community Resource Hub and General Community Gathering Space • A space in the center to serve as a hub or central community connection to various community resources and social assistance. • A space for children, youth, families and seniors to engage and congregate safely. Communal areas where people can interact with family, friends, neighbors, and other community members. • Children center for childcare and general activities for children.	**279**
2. Community Commercial Kitchen and Community Garden • A multi-use community kitchen that can be used for community education, nutrition, and training or certifications.	**148**
3. Community Computer Center • A space to provide computer access and computer courses for different age groups, professional groups, community members, and skill level.	**114**
4. El Mercado de Long Beach • A traditional Latino Marketplace to activate the area, host trendy pop-ups, help incubate small businesses, support entrepreneurs and vendors.	**112**
5. Outdoor Venue and Amphitheatre • Large open green space to host large festivals, cultural celebrations, music performances, film screenings for local artists, and family movie nights.	**110**
6. Outdoor Recreational spaces • Designed for outdoor physical activities. Exercise classes (Zumba, salsa, yoga), youth and adults sports, a playground or space for kids to play, and other outdoor activities.	**49**

POLL: Exhibits and Artwork	# of times mentioned
1. Historic Exhibits (murals, artwork, statues, films, and installations) • Timelines • Primary Community History • Latino Community and Professional Accomplishments • Latino Heritage and Genealogy • Community Photographs	**419**
2. Space for Local Artists • A permanent space for local artist residencies at the center. The idea of the residency is to rotate artist and host each exhibit for designated lengths of time. • A space for performing artists (musician, poets, or film makers)	**130**
3. Cultural and Educational Art Exhibits • Various exhibits focused on Latino cultural art and education.	**94**
4. Speaker Series • An exhibit to host guest speaker series or community talks about various expertise including artists, historians, educators, professionals, and more.	**78**

POLL: Community Arts, Health, and Wellness	# of times mentioned
1. Health, Wellness and Nutrition • Broad programs, support services, and education around "health, mental health, and wellness". Programs to connect the community to health services, trauma and mental health counseling, and community support groups. • Nutritional Health and Professional cooking courses	**213**
2. Cultural Arts • Cultural arts, dances, artwork, music, language, fashion, hair styles, traditional cooking, and gardening for all ages.	**141**
3. Cultural Education • Community education on the diverse customs, traditions, beliefs, and influence across Latino cultures.	**128**
4. Arts and Place Recognition • "Place-making" and "Place-Keeping". Creating a landmark where the community feels a sense of pride, acceptance, and sustainability.	**116**
5. Youth Development Programs • Cultural, arts, language, wellness, and economic development.	**97**
6. Violence Prevention Programs • To provide violence prevention education, community outreach, and counseling support.	**33**

POLL: Community Education and Economic Development	# of times mentioned
1. Business Incubator and Workforce Development • Skills training, Work readiness, higher education, job placement services • Programs and services to support small businesses, entrepreneur, and street vendors.	**331**
2. Financial Literacy • Financial planning, bank account services, retirement, 401k plans, financial wills, and property ownership	**119**
3. Computer and Digital Literacy • Computer literacy, software and programs, and navigating the internet.	**110**
4. Student Support and Mentorship • Students' internship opportunities, academic coaching, professional and career life transitions.	**80**
5. Social Assistance Service and Support • Access to rental assistance, food security, financial support, health services, and access to COVID relief - vaccine and testing.	**80**
6. Parent Resources and Services • Cultural parenting education and civic engagement to help navigate the education and health system	**73**

DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

THANK YOU
Centro CHA