

# Press-Telegram

SERVING THE SOUTHLAND

## Commission unveils report on family diversity in L.B.

**By Robin Hinch**  
Staff writer

LONG BEACH — Hoping to keep their report on family diversity from falling into receive-and-file obscurity, members of the city's Human Relations Commission held a formal reception Monday to present the 100-page document to Mayor Ernie Kell.

"This report has an impact on so many parts of the city, we wanted to spotlight how important we think it is," said the Rev. Donald Fancher, chairman of the commission.

The report, which contains 63 recommendations for improving family life in the city, addresses a wide range of issues, from making more buildings wheelchair-accessible to including domestic partners in the city's definition of family. It goes today to the City Council, which is expected to refer it to the council's Quality of Life Committee, headed by Councilman Clarence Smith.

Kell said he hadn't read the report yet, and then joked that "Councilman Smith has agreed to read it this afternoon and give me a three-page condensed version."

"I have to read it," replied Smith. "It's my committee."

Titled "Strengthening Family Relationships in Long Beach: An Assessment of Family Diversity in Community Life," the report was prepared by the Spectrum Institute in Los Angeles, a non-profit agency that conducted a similar project for the city of Los Angeles two years ago. The Long Beach report, funded by grants from Target Stores, Kaiser Permanente and the Ledler Foundation, is based on more than 12 hours of public testimony gathered at three hearings held last summer.

Those testifying made it clear

that families today are no longer just mom, dad and the two kids. There are grandmothers raising children, lesbian and gay male parents, single mothers and fathers, foster parents, domestic partners and other adults, related or not, who share a home.

Smith said the Quality of Life Committee will begin discussing recommendations in the report in about 30 days.

"It will probably take us several meetings to go over each recommendation," he said. The committee then will present a final list of recommendations for approval by the full council.

Thomas Coleman of Spectrum Institute said he'll ask the council today "to create a comprehensive family policy for city programs and services. The city doesn't know who's in its work force — how many single parents there are or how many dependent elders. I hope the city is willing to take the risk of finding out who their workers are and if their needs are being met."

Report summaries and some copies of the full report are available free from the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 333 W. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach.

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