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Subject: Pride 2022 public comment
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Good Morning CityCouncil

I am writing about Pride 2022.

Many of us have participated in WeHo Pride since Pride was a Protest.

I remember the intrusive presence of long lines of big black & white sheriff prison buses. They may as well have been in the parade, and, as the memes and signs say, Pride is Still a Protest. The WeHo Resist March of 2017, the Dyke Marches, the WeHo People's Pride March 2021, the Women's Freedom Festival, the Women's Marches, are demonstrating not only potential, but a growing demand for a different kind of gathering in the street from the CSW hours long parade.

We have all also watched other cities Pride events. We see the stark comparisons, from small brave communities, finally stepping into a public space, to bigger towns, proudly utilizing local talent and businesses, to global pride marches and parades being shut down by violent police, and citizens.

Big cities like NY, Chicago and London have already taken the lead with People's Pride Marches, taking back our streets, or at least offering an alternative to the gross commercialization and corrupt profiteering off our community. We have seen years, if not decades of this, in WeHo.

We are starting from scratch this year, but with a rich history to

draw from. Let's get back to our roots, and the roots of every movement, A People's Pride where communities gather, *in these streets*.

I see a people's march walking culminating into an open Santa Monica BLVD and park. Streets lined with local businesses, food, entertainment, non profits, accessibility to our elected officials, voter registration, community health and safety, resources and opportunities to get involved, careers, art, media outlets, jobs, volunteering.

Opportunities for community to meet face to face, not from a distant float, with representation from all aspects of our rainbow. Connections and organizations that continue 12 months of the year. Not just those who pay to play during Pride Month, with no redeeming value.

I am aware this may appear revolutionary to change gears, but let's get evolutionary, to go back to our roots of global family and community spirit. SANS the Corporate sponsors who love to wave our flags on floats and flaunt it in their advertising, then, the day after Pride Month, they drop the flag, go back to funding legislation and political groups that are anti lgbtqia.

Many find it difficult to watch WeHo Parade with people packed and confined to the sidelines, long hot hours of police ordering "stay on the sidewalk" while corporate floats throw and litter their advertisement trinkets on the street.

I appreciated when the Tongva People opened up Pride in 2019. A first! We are on Tongva Land. We were heading back to an organic and meaningful gathering of people.

I'm guessing the cost of policing the parade and endless floats (most people have already left before the last hour or so of

floats, anyway) could go to closing the street, Saturday and Sunday. Think of the connections that can be made, changes to come, by opening it up to everybody.

If memory serves, we came in under budget in 2019, with, the Saturday street closing for the street festival.

If any policing is going on, it should go to protecting the dogs who are also put on parade. Dogs should not be allowed walking on the hot hot streets. I did see an angry group gathering around a man who was dragging his overheated dog. I also personally had to jump into the street, to swoop up a lost dog. I found his owner with the help of strangers who saw what was happening.

I hope I don't sound like a party pooper, I'm just trying to get this party started, for everyone.

I don't think I could have read all this in two minutes, thank you for reading this far.

Maybe we should call this the Equality March, with Equality Riders, using bicycles and green machines. I better stop now

10 years ago the LA Marathon moved the Marathon from May to March, and now November, due to the unbearable heat. For these reasons, I vote for Pride to be earliest in the month, rather than later.

Thanks for representing, and reading this far

Mj Godges