



Press Release

February 21, 2026

City of Compton honored retired ABC7 journalist Leslie Sykes with Key to the City

Compton, CA – The City of Compton celebrated one of its own on Saturday, February 21, by presenting legendary retired journalist and longtime ABC7 news anchor Leslie Sykes with a Key to the City during its Black History Month celebration.

Raised in Compton, Sykes spent more than 30 years at ABC7, where she represented her hometown on one of the largest media platforms in Southern California. Throughout her career, she consistently highlighted the people of Compton, its neighborhoods, schools, and culture, offering viewers a fuller and more authentic picture of the city beyond longstanding stereotypes. Her work reflected not only journalistic excellence but also a deep commitment to the community that helped shape her.

“Receiving the Key to the City of Compton was an unforgettable honor. It brought back vivid memories of my childhood—long summer days, neighborhood friendships, and the community that helped shape who I am today,” said Leslie Sykes.

During the celebration, the City recognized Sykes for her contributions, leadership, and dedication to service.

“Presenting Leslie Sykes with a Key to the City was a meaningful moment for Compton. Her achievements, leadership, and dedication to service reflect the very best of Black excellence and the lasting impact individuals from Compton continue to make locally and beyond,” said Compton Mayor Emma Sharif.

The event featured the official Key to the City presentation honoring Leslie Sykes, remarks from City leadership and guest speakers who have played meaningful roles in her life and career, and a photo display showcasing her life, legacy, and longstanding ties to the City of Compton.

###