

R-19

January 10, 2023

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution proclaiming the existence of a local emergency caused by conditions and threatened conditions of homelessness within the City of Long Beach, which if not corrected, constitutes an imminent and proximate threat to the safety of persons and property within the City. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

The City Manager has been requested by Mayor Rex Richardson and Councilmember Mary Zendejas to bring a declaration of a Citywide State of Emergency on homelessness. City of Long Beach (City) has designated significant resources to address homelessness in the City. Since 2020, more than 530 new interim housing units have been developed. The City opened the first year around ABC Shelter, secured three hotels along with the County, and recently purchased the 78-bed Luxury Inn and more than 30 modular shelter units. The City also implemented three Restorative Engagement to Achieve Collective Health (REACH) teams, increased the number of outreach staff and call takers from four to 27, expanded hours for weekend outreach, begun to conduct localized interdepartmental response, partnered to provide mobile health care services, and doubled Police Department Quality of Life teams. The New Year, 2023, will include mobile Multi-Service Center (MSC) outreach teams, a mobile mental health and substance use treatment van, as well as continuing focus on mental health prevention and treatment access.

The City continues to have approximately 3,300 people experiencing homelessness Citywide, which is a 77 percent increase since 2017 and a 62 percent increase from 2020 to 2022. Of the 3,300 people, more than 2,000 are unsheltered. The City and local community-based organizations provide approximately 1,300 interim shelter beds, and most of these shelters are operating at capacity. This leaves few options for those currently without shelter.

Homelessness has disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander Long Beach residents who are approximately three times more likely to experience homelessness than other populations. Black people comprise only 13 percent of the population of the City but, in the most recent homelessness count, completed in February, 2022, accounted for approximately 36 percent of people experiencing homelessness. The City also noted a 48 percent growth in the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness since 2019.

Based on the City's 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count of those experiencing homelessness, more than 40 percent have experienced violence or trauma in their lives, and 6 percent were

fleeing violence when they became homeless. It is also estimated that 31 percent of people experiencing homelessness in the City are affected by a chronic health condition, 29 percent are affected by substance abuse, 37 percent are affected by a serious mental illness, 36 percent are affected by physical disabilities, 23 percent are affected by developmental disabilities, and 24 percent are affected by traumatic brain injuries. The number of people with severe mental illness has more than doubled to 1,200 people and those with a substance use disorder has increased by 70 percent to 950 people. The needed treatment access has strained the City's ability to provide appropriate shelter and housing and requires assistance from the County Health and Mental Health Departments to provide the necessary public services.

In 2022, 101 people experiencing homelessness died while living on the street before they could access the services and housing they need. The average age of those who died while homeless was 47 years old and over 75 percent of the causes of death were unnatural. This represents a drastic 225 percent increase in comparison to the number of people who died in 2017.

Shelter and housing is particularly important during these coming winter months when people experiencing homelessness in the City are likely to face heightened exposure and dangers from living outdoors, and heightened dangers from the combination of COVID-19, flu outbreak and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). It is projected that the City will face an acute shortage of winter homeless shelters through March 2023, with fewer than half the number of shelter sites available in the County of Los Angeles as in the winter of 2021-2022 and nearly two-thirds fewer shelter beds.

The County and State's eviction moratorium, which has protected many Long Beach residents from falling into homelessness, ends concurrently with the end of the California's State of Local Emergency regarding the COVID-19 pandemic on February 1, 2023. The State's COVID-19 State of Emergency, which has provided resources to keep many Long Beach residents from falling into homelessness also ends in February of 2023, thus requiring immediate action to create replacement and additional housing and shelter.

If the City Council proclaims a local emergency, in accordance with the provisions of Long Beach Municipal Code Chapter 2.69, the City Clerk shall include the matter of the necessity for continuing the local emergency on the City Council agenda for review at least every fourteen (14) days until the City Council terminates said local emergency. A local emergency must be terminated at the earliest possible date as the conditions warrant.

This Resolution requests the City Council adopt a Resolution and find that there is a need for proclaiming the existence of a local emergency caused by conditions or threatened conditions of homelessness within the City of Long Beach, which if not corrected, constitutes an imminent and proximate threat to the safety of persons and property within the City for a period of six months, subject to being renewed. If approved, the City Council's approval will (1) facilitate requests by the City to other local jurisdictions, the County of Los Angeles, the State of California and the federal government; (2) request the Governor and State

Legislature to declare a state of emergency to combat homelessness and direct resources to support the efforts of major cities in the state of California to address this problem; (3) allow the City Manager, or officials designated by the City Manager, to take preventive measures necessary to protect persons and property within the scope of the local emergency.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani and by Revenue Management Officer Geraldine Alejo on December 29, 2022.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on January 10, 2023.

FISCAL IMPACT

The full fiscal impact is unknown at this time, and will be based on the work required and projects implemented to respond to the homelessness crisis. The Adopted Fiscal Year 2023 (FY 23) Budget includes additional one-time and structural funding specifically designated to address the homelessness crisis, including additional REACH team staffing, a mobile mental health and substance use treatment van, and support for mental health prevention and treatment access. During FY 23, it is anticipated that funding required to support current City costs to increase and expand Citywide efforts will be covered within existing department resources, as well as available General Fund one-time funding. In addition, staff will also continue to pursue County, State and Federal funding for these efforts. As the Citywide strategy is developed, and funding is identified, staff will return to City Council with fiscal impacts and requests for appropriation. Execution of the recommendation will result in staffing impacts beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is expected to affect Citywide staffing workload and cause priorities to shift due to the emergency. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER

ATTACHMENTS – Resolution

- A – Mayor Rex Richardson Press Release
- B – Official City of Long Beach Statement

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY
DAWN MCINTOSH, City Attorney
411 West Ocean Boulevard, 9th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802-4664

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RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH PROCLAIMING THE EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY CAUSED BY CONDITIONS AND THREATENED CONDITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS WITHIN THE CITY OF LONG BEACH, WHICH IF NOT CORRECTED, CONSTITUTES AN IMMINENT AND PROXIMATE THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY IN THE CITY

WHEREAS, Long Beach Municipal Code section 2.69.060.B. provides that the City Manager may request the City Council to declare the existence and threatened existences of a local emergency as a result of any occurrence which, by reason of its magnitude, is or is likely to become beyond the control of the normal services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the City; and

WHEREAS, California Senate Bill 330, approved by the Governor on October 09, 2019, provided that California has a housing supply and affordability crisis of historic proportions, where “[t]he consequences of failing to effectively and aggressively confront this crisis are hurting millions of Californians, robbing future generations of the chance to call California home, stifling economic opportunities for workers and businesses, worsening poverty and homelessness, and undermining the state’s environmental and climate objectives”;

WHEREAS, the California legislature has acknowledged the importance of combating homelessness and the crisis of housing supply which is supported by California Labor Code Section 1720(c)(4) where prevailing wage rates do not apply to the construction of rehabilitation of affordable housing units for low or moderate income persons;

1 WHEREAS, in efforts to combat the housing crisis, the California
2 Legislature has recognized that local governments play a key role in the development of
3 affordable housing, evidenced by California Government Code Section 65584, which
4 mandates California cities, towns and counties to undertake all necessary actions to
5 promote and facilitate the development of housing for its residents, for all income levels;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, in conjunction with the State’s directives to combat
8 homelessness and address the housing crisis, the City of Long Beach has designated
9 significant resources to address homelessness in the City, but the threat to life and
10 property remains at stake beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and
11 facilities of this City, requiring the combined forces of other political subdivisions to
12 combat this crisis; and

13 WHEREAS, the City of Long Beach (City) has at any given time
14 approximately 3,300 people experiencing homelessness Citywide; and

15 WHEREAS, according to City’s 2022 Point in Time Count, the number of
16 people experiencing homelessness in the City increased dramatically in recent years,
17 with an overall rise in homelessness of 77 percent since 2017; and

18 WHEREAS, homelessness has disproportionately impacted Black,
19 Indigenous, and Pacific Islander Long Beach residents who are approximately three
20 times more likely to experience homelessness than other populations. Black people
21 comprise only 13 percent of the population of the City but, in the most recent
22 homelessness count, completed in February 2022, accounted for approximately 36
23 percent of people experiencing homelessness; and

24 WHEREAS, more than 40% of people experiencing homelessness have
25 experienced violence or trauma in their lives, and 6% were fleeing violence when they
26 became homeless; and

27 WHEREAS, the number of veterans experiencing homelessness has
28 grown by 48% since 2019; and

1 WHEREAS, people experiencing homelessness suffer disproportionately
2 from mental and physical health ailments and require assistance from the County Health
3 and Mental Health Departments to provide the necessary public services. Specifically, it
4 is estimated that 31 percent of people experiencing homelessness in the City are affected
5 by a chronic health condition, 29 percent are affected by substance abuse, 37 percent
6 are affected by a serious mental illness, 36 percent are affected by physical disabilities,
7 23 percent are affected by developmental disabilities, and 24 percent are affected by
8 traumatic brain injuries. The number of people experiencing homelessness with severe
9 mental illness has more than doubled to 1,200 people and those with a substance use
10 disorder has increased by 70% to 950 people. This strains the City’s ability to provide
11 appropriate shelter, housing and wrap-around services. The prevalence of extreme need
12 significantly stresses the City’s public services; and

13 WHEREAS, 101 people experiencing homelessness died in 2022 while
14 living on the street. The average age of those who died while homeless was 47 years old
15 and over 75% of the causes of death were unnatural. This represents a drastic 225%
16 increase in comparison to the number of people who died in 2017; and

17 WHEREAS, notwithstanding that the State of California has enacted a
18 Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court to address the crisis
19 of untreated mental illness, the beds and necessary access to acute and subacute care
20 for mental illness is still in development and steps must be taken in the interim to provide
21 increased access to housing and care; and

22 WHEREAS, the homelessness crisis has strained the City’s public safety
23 resources. Among other things, occurrences of fires related to homelessness have
24 doubled between 2019 and 2022, and now constitute over one-third of all fires to which
25 the Long Beach Fire Department responds. In addition, a number of fires have taken
26 significant fire resources and caused damage to adjacent structures and vehicles; and

27 WHEREAS, the homelessness crisis confronting the City has grown both
28 incrementally and exponentially, leading to death, illness, and deplorable living

1 conditions; and

2 WHEREAS, shelter and housing is particularly important during these
3 coming winter months when people experiencing homelessness in the City are likely to
4 face heightened exposure and dangers from living outdoors, and heightened dangers
5 from the combination of COVID-19, flu outbreak and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). It
6 is projected that the City will face an acute shortage of winter homeless shelters through
7 March 2023, with fewer than half the number of shelter sites available in the County of
8 Los Angeles as in the winter of 2021-2022 and nearly two-thirds fewer shelter beds; and

9 WHEREAS, California Government Code Sections 8698.1 and 8698.2 allow
10 local jurisdictions to declare a shelter crisis; the City of Long Beach's most recent shelter
11 crisis is set to expire March 31, 2023; and

12 WHEREAS, the County and State's eviction moratorium, which has
13 protected many Long Beach residents from falling into homelessness, ends concurrently
14 with the end of California's State of Emergency regarding the COVID-19 pandemic on
15 February 1, 2023; and

16 WHEREAS, the State of California's COVID-19 State of Emergency, which
17 has provided resources to keep many Long Beach residents from falling into
18 homelessness, ends in February of 2023, thus requiring immediate action in order to
19 create replacement and additional housing and shelter, and in order to support the
20 necessary infrastructure and laws required to protect and provide that shelter and
21 housing; and

22 WHEREAS, the displacement of the number of people living on the streets
23 of the City today is a daily recurring emergency, empowering the City Council to declare
24 a state of emergency, no less than if the emergency was caused by an earthquake, fire,
25 or flood; and

26 WHEREAS, the City's ability to mobilize local resources, coordinate
27 interagency response, accelerate procurement of housing units, use mutual aid, and seek
28 assistance and potential reimbursement by the State and Federal governments will be

1 critical to successfully responding to this homelessness crisis; and

2 WHEREAS, during the pendency of the existence of a local emergency, the
3 City Council shall retain its full authority to consider a variety of City ordinances to codify
4 the measures necessary to address this homelessness crisis; and

5 WHEREAS, the City expanded interim bed access by 535 beds since 2020;
6 there are currently more than 1,300 interim housing beds citywide and the City Council
7 continues to prioritize the building of interim and permanent supporting housing, yet need
8 continues to outpace demand; and

9 WHEREAS, the City projects it will soon have a total of 15,346 supportive
10 and affordable units, of which 1,546 have been recently completed, 319 are currently
11 under construction, and more than 500 are in pre-development; and

12 WHEREAS, notwithstanding that Council has been and is acting with
13 urgency, including implementing a roadmap to house thousands of Long Beach residents
14 and building an unprecedented number of supportive housing units and shelter beds, an
15 emergency declaration is necessary to mobilize resources, save lives, and provide for the
16 public health, welfare, and safety of all; and

17 WHEREAS, the City has responded to the rapid increase in its homeless
18 population with unprecedented investments into homelessness solutions, including a
19 more than \$80 million commitment in the 2022-2023 City budget for the expansion of
20 bridge housing, an additional Restorative Engagement to Achieve Collective Health
21 (REACH) team, call takers, library outreach workers, two mobile MSC units, a mental
22 health and substance use treatment van, a winter shelter partnership, and the hiring of
23 professionals to address the homelessness crisis and, notwithstanding these efforts, the
24 number of those experiencing homelessness in the City continues to increase and
25 outstrip the resources and services that the City has provided; and

26 WHEREAS, the magnitude of loss of life, the persistent and
27 disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the persistent discriminatory
28 impacts of a lack of housing warrant and necessitate that the City Council declare the

1 existence of a local emergency; and

2 WHEREAS, the benefits of this emergency declaration, coupled with past
3 and future actions by the City Council to address the homelessness crisis, will help
4 ensure that this local emergency will be of a temporary nature;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Long Beach resolves as
6 follows:

7 Section 1. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 8630 and
8 Long Beach Municipal Code Section 2.69.060, the City Council hereby finds and
9 proclaims the existence of a local emergency caused by conditions or threatened
10 conditions of homelessness in Long Beach which, if not corrected, constitutes a threat to
11 the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of the City beyond the
12 control of the services, personnel equipment, and facilities of the City.

13 Section 2. The City Manager is hereby authorized to furnish information,
14 to enter into agreements, including, but not limited to, applications and agreements for
15 grant funding, and to take all actions necessary to obtain emergency assistance from
16 State and federal agencies to implement preventive measures to protect and preserve
17 the City within the scope of the local emergency hereby declared. Chapter 2.85 of the
18 Long Beach Municipal Code contains the established procurement practices of the City
19 during a proclaimed local emergency. City staff are hereby directed to provide the City
20 Council with a report of actions taken under this Section as the next practicable
21 opportunity, and no less than on a monthly basis.

22 Section 3. The City shall coordinate its efforts to address this proclaimed
23 emergency with the other local jurisdictions, the County of Los Angeles, the State of
24 California, and the federal government.

25 Section 4. The City of Long Beach requests the Governor and State
26 Legislature to declare a state of emergency to combat homelessness and direct
27 resources to support the efforts of major cities in the State of California to address the
28 problem.

1 Section 5. In accordance with the provisions of Long Beach Municipal
2 Code Chapter 2.69, the City Clerk shall include the matter of the necessity for continuing
3 the local emergency on the City Council agenda for review at least every fourteen (14)
4 days until the City Council terminates said local emergency. The need to continue the
5 state of emergency shall be evaluated, in coordination with City Council, by achieving
6 measurable results in the following metrics:

- 7 A. Decrease in number of persons experiencing unsheltered
8 homelessness;
- 9 B. Increase in housing placements;
- 10 C. Increase in starts on new affordable housing options;
- 11 D. Increase in temporary and permanent housing units (including
12 utilization of Housing Choice Vouchers);
- 13 E. Increase in outside aid for access to mental health and
14 substance use beds;
- 15 F. Decrease in disproportionality in which Black, Indigenous and
16 Pacific Islander persons experience homelessness;
- 17 G. Decrease in number of persons that die in unsheltered
18 situations;
- 19 H. Decrease in number of persons falling into homelessness;
- 20 I. Increase in regional partnerships to address the homeless
21 crisis; and
- 22 J. Increase in multijurisdictional efforts to reduce violence on or
23 perpetuated by people experiencing homelessness.

24 Section 6. This Proclamation of Emergency shall sunset in One Hundred
25 Eighty (180) days from the date of adoption, subject to being renewed. The setting of a
26 specific time frame allows for actions to be taken to make permanent, necessary
27 structural changes.

28 Section 7. Pursuant to Government Code section 3100, in protection of

1 the health and safety and preservation of the lives and property of the people from
2 emergencies which result in conditions of extreme peril to life, property and resources, all
3 public employees are hereby declared disaster service workers subject to such disaster
4 service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law.

5 Section 8. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this resolution by
6 the City Council of the City of Long Beach and it shall thereupon take effect.

7 Section 9. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption
8 by the City Council, and the City Clerk shall certify the vote adopting this resolution.

9
10 I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the City
11 Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of _____, 2023 by
12 the following vote:

13
14 Ayes: Councilmembers: _____
15 _____
16 _____
17 _____

18 Noes: Councilmembers: _____
19 _____

20 Absent: Councilmembers: _____
21 _____

22 Recusal(s): Councilmembers: _____
23 _____

24
25
26 _____
City Clerk

27
28



MAYOR REXRICHARDSON

December 21, 2022

PRESS RELEASE

Media Contact: Shawna Stevens, Chief of Staff

Phone: (562) 570-6801

Email: Shawna.Stevens@longbeach.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In First Act, Mayor Rex Richardson Requests City Manager to Declare State of Emergency on Homelessness

Mayor Richardson Announces New Homelessness Dashboard and Calls for Partnerships with Local Organizations, City, County, and Region

LONG BEACH, CA — In his first act as Mayor of Long Beach, Rex Richardson requested City Manager Tom Modica to bring a declaration of a Citywide State of Emergency on homelessness before the Long Beach City Council at their next meeting on January 10th, 2023.

In a letter addressed to the City Manager (attached), Mayor Richardson and Downtown Councilwoman Mary Zendejas called for the City to be “all in” on addressing homelessness collaboratively and asked all nine City Councilmembers to commit to welcoming services that bring relief to those living on the streets in their districts.

In partnership with Mayor Richardson and Councilwoman Zendejas, the City of Long Beach will also unveil a new homelessness website, which will serve as a comprehensive resource for the community on homelessness. The site will combine resources into one dashboard and include links to available services, data, community engagement opportunities, and other resources intended for both persons experiencing homelessness and housed residents.

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About Mayor Richardson: Rex Richardson is a husband, father, and the 29th Mayor of Long Beach.

Mayor Richardson’s history in Long Beach is grounded in empowering communities to have a seat at the table. He believes that everyone, no matter their circumstance, deserves the opportunity to thrive. He works to change the culture of city hall to be smarter, more inclusive, and more responsive to the needs of our neighborhoods, businesses, and families while ensuring an equitable future for all.



MAYOR **REXRICHARDSON**

December 21, 2022

City Manager Tom Modica
421 W. Ocean Blvd
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear City Manager Modica,

Long Beach has long been a leader in serving people experiencing homelessness with compassion, a housing-first service-based approach, and long-term solutions. But clearly the COVID-19 pandemic, record unemployment during those dark times, and most importantly the lack of housing in all income categories has pushed more and more of Long Beach and regional residents into homelessness. Last year, our City reported a 62% increase in homelessness. While this number is significant, the number of people placed in shelter and emergency housing solutions grew by double that, a 123% increase, demonstrating Long Beach's commitment and effectiveness in creating housing solutions. But clearly, more must be done. Our City, County, and non-profit partners together in Long Beach have over 1,300 emergency and interim housing beds available to those who need our help the most, with over 500 of those shelter beds added in just the past two years. It is clear that, with resources and focus, our community has the compassion and the ability to help get people off the streets.

To be successful, we need our City to be more nimble, bringing more resources faster to those who need it the most. We need every area of the City to be "all in", with a specific commitment from each of the 9 Councilmembers to do their part to welcome services that bring relief to those suffering on our streets. We need our business community to continue to activate our business corridors, bringing people to shop and dine in our restaurants, while also supporting and embracing services to those who need our help. We need property owners willing to allow us to temporarily or permanently utilize land to open safe parking sites and build housing. We need to reengage our clergy and faith leaders, to work together to bring non-governmental resources to bear to address this moral dilemma.

We need our partner agencies, from our educational institutions to our transit agencies, Port and Water Departments to creatively look at how they can help, whether it be offering land, services, or any other support to tackle our joint challenge. And with those experiencing severe mental illness at an all-time high, we need the County to bring real, dedicated, and long-lasting resources to Long Beach and show leadership to require all cities to do their part to address both mental illness and services for people experiencing homelessness.

We must start by bringing people together with a sense of urgency and purpose. To that end, we are requesting you to bring the Mayor and City Council a declaration of emergency for the first meeting in January to speed our response to homelessness and make it a top priority for our City team. Next year, we have plans for several new solutions to address homelessness. These include the creation of a new 78 bed Luxury Inn shelter, a third REACH team which partners nurses, mental health practitioners and outreach staff together with additional Police Quality of Life Officers; expansion of outreach to evening and weekend hours; launching mobile Multi-Service Centers to bring case management and connect to

562.570.6801 — Mayor@LongBeach.gov — @LongBeachMayor
411 W. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, California 90802



MAYOR **REXRICHARDSON**

services directly to affected communities as well as a mobile substance use and mental health treatment van; and much, much more.

But we need more speed to address this issue and a heightened sense of urgency for all our City teams and partner agencies. Our City team needs the tools to remove barriers to hiring and procurement, the ability to construct and contract quickly to build shelter, and a structure to implement solutions and speed delivery of information, data, and results. We are requesting a plan to address interim shelter needs, regional referral systems, SAFE parking plans, and identification of personnel resources and funding. This plan should include engaging our clergy, business community, and partner agencies. This plan must also address public safety concerns and support businesses and neighborhoods who are impacted by our homelessness crisis.

We expect this declaration of an emergency related to Homelessness will bring us focus and resources and create a temporary bridge to the additional services and personnel who are being brought on board to assist those experiencing homelessness, while we grow the regional response in all our surrounding cities through partnerships with those cities and of course the County of Los Angeles.

As the newly elected Mayor, and as a former Councilmember representing one of the areas experiencing significant impacts from the nation's housing crisis, we request that you bring this item to the City Council on January 10 with a plan of action for the City Council to consider.

Rex Richardson

Mayor

Mary Zendejas

Councilmember, 1st District

[SELECT LANGUAGE](#)

PRESS RELEASE

City of Long Beach
Public Information Office
411 W. Ocean Blvd,
Long Beach, CA 90802

12/21/2022

Press Release # 122122-2FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Official City of Long Beach Statement Regarding Forthcoming City Council Consideration of Local Emergency in Response to Homelessness Crisis

Office of Public Affairs and Communications
562.570.NEWS(6397)
LongBeachMedia@longbeach.gov

Today, Dec. 21, 2022, Mayor Rex Richardson, in partnership with Councilwoman Mary Zendejas, requested City Manager Tom Modica to bring an item before the City Council for consideration requesting the Council to proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a local emergency related to homelessness. The emergency proclamation, in response to the City's homelessness crisis, will allow the City to mobilize local resources, coordinate interagency response, accelerate procurement of housing units and seek assistance from the State and Federal governments.

The City has been diligently responding to homelessness from many angles, adding more than 500 shelter beds through the Atlantic Bridge Housing Community and by purchasing and leasing motels as well as extended use of the winter shelter. Homeless services also hired mental health clinicians for the Multi-Service Center (MSC), launched and expanded the Restorative Engagement to Achieve Collective Health (REACH) team and continued providing outreach and case management. Outreach staff has been heavily invested in, growing from four to 27 people. However, more must be done and at greater speed and urgency, which an emergency proclamation will help support. An emergency proclamation will allow increased focus, funding and resources for the City's response efforts and implementation of emergency assistance programs and initiatives.

Resolving the homelessness crisis locally is the top priority of the City of Long Beach. Even one person living without shelter is unacceptable and we will continue to do everything we can to work with people who are unhoused to help them onto a path to permanent stable housing and provide the supportive services they need to thrive.

The City Manager will request the emergency proclamation at the next meeting of the City Council on Jan. 10, 2023. For more information on emergency request from Mayor Richardson and

Councilmember Zendejas, please go [here](#).

BACKGROUND

Homelessness in Long Beach has grown by 56% from 2017 through 2022. Of those experiencing homelessness, we see an over representation of people of color and increasing numbers of veterans and people with physical and mental illness as well as substance use issues and those experiencing violence in their lives. Homelessness also creates public health and public safety risks in our city.

According to the City's 2022 Point in Time Count, conducted on Feb. 24, 2022, Black, Indigenous and Pacific Islander Long Beach residents are three times more likely to experience homelessness than other populations. Black residents comprise 13% of the population in the city but accounted for 36% of people experiencing homelessness. The number of veterans experiencing homelessness has grown by 48% since the previous Point in Time Count in 2020. More than 40% of people experiencing homelessness have experienced trauma or violence in their lives, and 6% were fleeing violence when they became homeless.

People experiencing homelessness suffer disproportionately from mental and physical illness. Adequately treating physical and mental illness requires assistance from the County Departments of Mental Health and Health Care Services. The 2022 Point in Time Count found that approximately 31% of people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach are affected by a chronic health condition, 29% by substance misuse, 37% by a serious mental illness, 36% by physical disabilities, 23% by developmental disabilities, and 24% by traumatic brain injuries. The prevalence of extreme needs significantly stresses the City's public services.

Shelter and housing are particularly important during these winter months, when people experiencing homelessness in the city are likely to face heightened exposure and dangers from living outdoors as well as heightened dangers from the combination of COVID-19, the flu outbreak and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

For more news, pictures, videos and announcements of what's happening in Long Beach, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).