

Date: March 7, 2023

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **Homeless Emergency Response Update - Community Engagement and Roundtable Discussion**

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As the City of Long Beach (City) navigates through the emergency proclamation response to address homelessness, local and regional partners play an integral role in how we effectively create opportunities for housing and service provisions for those who are experiencing homelessness throughout Long Beach. Just over two months into the emergency response effort, it is important to acknowledge many of the lessons learned and future opportunities in how we connect with community partners, both housed and unhoused, as we roll out programs and service models. The City acknowledges that in our efforts to move quickly and efficiently to address the immediate housing need, we also must be efficient in our community outreach practices while also thinking through the equity implications at the forefront of the decision-making process.

Under the Emergency Operations Command (EOC) structure, the Community Partnerships workgroup is collaborating with City leadership and the Mayor's Office to connect and coordinate with community stakeholders who span across sectors, including our faith based community, non-profit partners, for profit businesses, health care systems, education systems, and community associations at a variety of connection points. A community partnership form has been sent and posted online in multiple languages to elicit support from people and organizations who would like to contribute to the efforts. City leadership is working alongside the Mayor's Office to host a series of roundtable discussions (seven in total) through the month of March into early April to engage partners in conversations on what they see as barriers and opportunities in this response. These will include the Mayor, the Councilmembers for the regional areas, and invited stakeholders to participate in a small group roundtable discussion. We are asking partners to discuss how to effectively address the immediate need, while planning for the medium- and long-term efforts to ensure that those who are experiencing homelessness in Long Beach can be connected to services and housing as quickly as possible.

The first roundtable discussion was hosted at Century Villages at Cabrillo on Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Mayor facilitated this conversation, Councilmember Uranga provided insight, and City staff supported by providing context, and responded to inquiries about the City's process. It was a great discussion, as the City team walked away with many ideas for partnership as well as insight for future planning of the overall emergency response.

Over the past week, the City team has been working on a set of commitments to guide the work of siting shelters that has been informed by a variety of input and was discussed at the

first stakeholder meeting as well. Those critical commitments to the community include four key focus areas:

1. Going forward, the City will conduct community engagement prior to making decisions about program specifics that have potential impacts, even for temporary operations.
2. The City will not program at locations that are providing existing community services.
3. The City commits to leaving locations in a better state than how they were found, making a net enhancement to the community.
4. Programs and projects will be spread across Long Beach and not concentrated only in one area.

Information gathered from these discussions are being synthesized and will be provided in a memo and recommendations will be utilized to enhance the emergency response process going forward. Best practices and recommendations will be incorporated into the current structure of the EOC to not only enhance the work that is already being done, but to ensure we are addressing homelessness as a united community because we are all in this together.

The City's regular livestream to the community that regularly happens on Tuesday's at 11:00 is being cancelled today. However, we are encouraging the community to tune in to today's Council meeting at 5:00 where we have an agenda item on the emergency to update the City Council. Further, we will discuss with the City Council the outreach activities that occurred this past week and the four community commitments recommended above.

If you have any questions, please contact Teresa Chandler at (562) 570-5116.

CC: DAWN MCINTOSH, CITY ATTORNEY  
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR  
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR  
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER  
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
KATY NOMURA, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
APRIL WALKER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
KEVIN LEE, CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK  
DEPARTMENT HEADS