City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Date: August 20, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

Councilwoman Suzie Price, Third District

Councilwoman Jeannine Pearce, Second District

Vice-Mayor Dee Andrews, Sixth District

From: Councilmember Al Austin, Eighth District

Subject: Partnership with App for Real-Time Bed Availability Service

RECOMMENDATION

Request the City Manager evaluate the feasibility of working with Get Help, a California Public Benefit Corporation, or a similar service, to develop City of Long Beach specific mobile and web-based applications for City staff and City of Long Beach residents who work with or interact with those experiencing homelessness and/or addiction or other mental health issues and report back within 60 days. The tool would provide updated real-time data on bed availability for shelters, rehab, detox, medical detox, and other types of public, private, and non-profit beds. The mobile and web-based applications would provide additional information to City of Long Beach employees and residents about services such as food pantries, showers, or locations to get ID vouchers.

DISCUSSION

Homelessness continues to be one of the most significant issues facing the City of Long Beach. The City is committed to confronting this problem head on and does this through the hard work of countless City departments including, but not limited to, the Health and Human Services, Police, Fire, Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Marine, and City Prosecutor Departments. Long Beach has made major strides to develop creative approaches to address not only issues faced by individual people suffering from homelessness, but also the quality of life impacts our community feels as a result of homelessness. This includes developing a work program for homeless individuals to earn a day's wage,[1] efforts to reduce opioid addiction[2] and overdose,[3]

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[1] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5723823&GUID=A25A9CCB-6583-4A31-91E9-8C33328761DB

[2] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5480091&GUID=93216511-C9AB-4713-9219-CE0B1A15A72E

[3] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5486551&GUID=72E9F984-D062-47D4-BA7B-46FFD4560FE8

developing a comprehensive approach to homelessness,[4] [5] as well as creating a free online bike registration program,[6] [7] new ordinances on bike chop shops,[8] open space safety assessments,[9] funding additional Quality of Life Officers in the Police Department, and more HEART Units in the Fire Department.[10] The City has also dedicated staff in the Emergency Dispatch Call Center to address the issue of homelessness,[11] as well as pursuing a safe parking program,[12][13] creating a localized Neighborhood Impact Prosecutors Program to work more closely with police and judges to get people into services,[14] a clinician was added to our jails to offer services during a moment of respite,[15] a partnership with CSULB to study homelessness,[16] as well as the Everyone Home Initiative,[17] and the purchase of land for a homeless shelter.[18]

On December 4, 2018 the City Council gave direction to City Staff to provide information on the current status of a wide range of supportive beds that exist in the City ranging from shelter beds, to rehab, to medical detox, and sobriety beds.[19] On

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[4] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5165526&GUID=6A20DA30-3463-4E13-845A-9C3A3AFC5AB8

[5] http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2017/december-18--2017---city-strategy-for-addressing-homelessness-and-community-quality-of-life

[6] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5873547&GUID=44D27860-2B28-40ED-98A9-F573CE085D66

[7] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5247477&GUID=89686B3F-11FE-48A1-8F6E-6618A42B5132

[8] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5787394&GUID=57E4A757-20E2-4B16-BDF2-C898A631D666

[9] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6655246&GUID=D83551AA-7096-4495-9361-1C7233E74C6D

[10] http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/finance/media-library/documents/city-budget-and-finances/budget/budget-documents/fy-19-proposed-budget/fy-19-budget-in-brief_eng

[11] http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2019/february-6--2019---homeless-services-call-taker----pilot-program

[12] http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2017/june-1--2017---long-beach-safe-parking-program-feasibility-study

[13] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6624371&GUID=12704EAC-01BD-40B9-81D8-F7F500FB4647

[14] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=5573895&GUID=016B5F42-EF63-434A-863F-8AEFC041F6EE

[15] http://longbeach.gov/iteam/priorities/public-safety/clinician-in-jail/

[16] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7206842&GUID=8DB0B57C-7DA5-48CC-A8AF-4D7E43376B39

[17] http://www.longbeach.gov/everyone-home-long-beach/

[18] http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2018/october-3--2018---city-s-homeless-emergency-aid-program--heap--framework

[19] http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=6797145&GUID=802AF2DA-4235-4FE5-B570-B13C62EC8823

April 5th, a memo was released responding to this request.[20] Now, with this information available, we are able to begin utilizing this data in a new technology-focused way.

One of the difficult issues for our Homeless Outreach Team, Quality of Life Officers, and HEART units is finding beds that are available when someone is finally willing to accept services that will get them the help they need. It is documented that for a person struggling with homelessness to accept services, they need to be contacted for outreach an average of 17 times. This outreach is essential and is the most important part of getting people off the streets and back on track. So, when someone finally says "yes," and is willing to accept the help they need, our City outreach teams need to be able to quickly know where they can take them at the push of a button to get the specialized care and assistance needed.

Get Help, is an app company that is working with cities to put real-time bed availability information in the hands of emergency response teams that work with homeless individuals to cut down on the delays and better take advantage of that often short moment when someone is willing to commit to services and take those life changing first steps.[21] The Third Council District office with the City Manager's office, the Health and Human Services Department, Police Department, and Fire Department have met with this data and technology provider to receive information as well as ask questions about a City platform and begin the dialogue.

This web and mobile application-based technological approach to connecting individuals in need with services is an opportunity that the City of Long Beach should consider as we continue grappling with homelessness and its associated impacts. Making more efficient use of resources in Long Beach through the use of more agile technology can be an important way to make a significant difference in our fight against homelessness.

This matter has been reviewed by Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on August 9, 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation requests a report within 60 days on the feasibility of developing new mobile and web-based applications for City staff who support and respond to homelessness within the City. Preparing this report is anticipated to require a moderate impact on staff hours beyond normal budgeted scope of duties and a moderate impact on existing City Council priorities.

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[20] http://www.longbeach.gov/globalassets/city-manager/media-library/documents/memos-to-the-mayor-tabbed-file-list-folders/2019/april-5--2019---services-available-to-people-experiencing-homelessness
[21] https://www.gethelp.com/addiction-information/get-help-la-pilot