



Legislation Text

File #: 23-0761, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to continue the local emergency caused by conditions or threatened conditions of homelessness within the City of Long Beach, which if not corrected, constitute an imminent and proximate threat to the safety of persons and property within the City; and

Receive and file an update on the emergency proclamation and associated activities and provide any additional direction to City staff regarding the emergency. (Citywide)

The City of Long Beach (City) has designated significant resources to address homelessness in Long Beach. Since 2020, more than 530 new interim housing units have been developed. The City opened the first year-round Atlantic Bridge Community Shelter, secured three hotels along with the County of Los Angeles (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 4 to 27, expanded hours for weekend outreach, enhanced the localized interdepartmental response, partnered to provide mobile health care services, and doubled Police Department Quality of Life teams. In 2023, the City has implemented mobile Multi-Service Center (MSC) outreach teams, will launch a mobile mental health and substance use treatment van, and will continue to focus on mental health prevention and treatment access.

The City continues to have 3,447 people experiencing homelessness throughout Long Beach, which is a 4.6 percent increase from 2022, the smallest increase Long Beach has reported since 2019. For reference, homelessness increased 7 percent from 2019 to 2020, and increased from 62 percent from 2020 to 2022 (the 2021 Count was canceled due to the pandemic). Of these 3,447 people, 2,456 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, leaving few options for those currently without shelter.

Proclamation of the Emergency

On January 10, 2023, the City Council proclaimed the local emergency, in accordance with the provisions of Long Beach Municipal Code Chapter 2.69. This item will be reviewed every fourteen (14) days until the City Council terminates said local emergency or amends requirements for reporting frequency. A local emergency must be terminated at the earliest possible date as the conditions warrant.

The Mission of the Emergency:

To reduce the number of persons experiencing homelessness in the City and the region by increasing housing opportunities and by enhancing current initiatives that provide field-based outreach, engagement, and supportive services while maintaining the safety and security of the people experiencing homelessness, the general public and staff, and improving overall public safety for the entire community.

The Everyone Home Long Beach Strategic Plan leads with the following statement of possibility: The experience of homelessness in Long Beach is rare and brief when it occurs. The Mission, goals and actions outlined in the local homeless emergency are aligned with the Everyone Home Long Beach Plan.

Actions Taken in the Past Three Weeks:

In the past three weeks, the City emergency structure has taken several actions and below is a summary of the major items worked on. Supporting information is included in Attachment A.

Increase access to services

- The Mobile Access Center (MAC) schedule for July was released and will operate Monday through Friday with varied hours and locations.
- Staff continue to provide case management services at the Queensway Safe Parking program Monday through Friday from 5 - 8 p.m.

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Interdepartmental team began to collect data focused on coordinated outreach and participation of other agencies.
- On June 22nd, the Interfaith Convening brought together faith-based organizations from across the City who are committed to supporting the efforts of not only the emergency response, but ongoing efforts after the emergency has been lifted.
- The Community Partnership Work Group solicited the help of the Community Engagement Work Group and assisted in the update of the City's Resource Guide, finalized all items for the Interfaith Convening (known as Elevate), and worked to categorize the areas of focus for the Community Champions.

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- The Intergovernmental Work Group identified leads to coordinate the various "policy pathways" and drafted a framework to guide the City's work for prevention policy and programs.
- On June 21st, the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee and Mayor Richardson were in Sacramento to advocate for the City's homelessness and housing priorities.
- On June 26th, Intergovernmental Work Group participated in the initial kickoff meeting

for the prevention policy work.

- The Intergovernmental Work Group submitted a support letter for SB 407 (Wiener), which would strengthen the resource family approval process for LGBTQ youth by requiring a caregiver who provides out-of-home care for children in foster care to demonstrate the capacity to meet the needs of a child, regardless of the child's sexual orientation or gender identity.
- The Intergovernmental Work Group submitted a support letter for AB 1657 (Wicks), which would place a \$10 billion bond measure on the March 2024 ballot to support the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing.

Focus Areas for the Next Four Weeks

Staff will provide an oral report on July 11, 2023, on some of the areas of focus for the next four weeks that contribute to the progress of the short-term goals. Topics will include:

Increase access to services

- Launch the second Mobile Access Center (MAC)
- Continue partnership conversations with LA County Department of Health Services and LAHSA
- Increase outreach with the Interdepartmental team to the downtown area, focusing on various cleanups and outreach with LA County Public Works
- A subgroup of the Interdepartmental team will convene to address the specific needs for outreach and clean around Lincoln Park and the Billie Jean King Library
- Housing Authority will continue working to update its Housing Choice Voucher List
- Coordinate outreach to RV's in the West Side businesses areas near the LA River and the Magnolia Industrial Group (MIG)

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Refreshing data on Homelessness Emergency Dashboard and include PIT Count Data on July 13th
- Complete and launch a timeline of the emergency to be posted on the website to further educate people to the work of the emergency

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- Continue evaluating Port of Long Beach and other properties that can support additional homelessness services
- Continue to work to commence construction activities on City-led capital improvements at the Multi-Service Center (Tiny Homes), Navigation Center, Best Western, and

Luxury Inn

- Work with Long Beach education institutions toward convening education institutions and ECE providers
- Continue researching policies related to preventing homelessness, coordinating with the appropriate subject matter experts, and drafting policy considerations

Increase interim and long-term housing access

- Finalize contracts with Rescue Mission for the 702 W Anaheim Site for the interim shelter

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani and Recovery Budget Officer Dee Okam on July 6, 2023.

City Council action is requested on July 11, 2023, in accordance with the Long Beach Municipal Code requirements for the review of the local emergency. In order to report back within 30 days and to allow time for updates with the actions within the review period, the item will generally be released on the Supplemental Agenda with a presentation with the latest information provided to the City Council and community during the meeting.

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. As the Citywide strategy is developed, and funding is identified, staff will return to the City Council with fiscal impacts and requests for appropriation. This recommendation will result in significant staffing impacts beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is expected to affect Citywide staffing workload and will cause priorities to shift due to this emergency. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER