



Legislation Text

File #: 23-1040, 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 the six-month update on the emergency proclamation and associated activities as well as report out on City Council request regarding policy options related to unlawful uses of public spaces, including camping, that contribute to public health issues, nuisance, and public safety concerns, 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. The local emergency is required to be reviewed every thirty (30) 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.

This presentation will provide:

- The six-month report of actions from January 10, 2023 through July 10, 2023, accomplishments and data aligned with the immediate, short, medium and long-term goals outlined early in the emergency operations as well as recent actions and activities currently underway.
- A response to the June 13, 2023 City Council item regarding policy options related to unlawful uses of public spaces, including camping, that contribute to public health issues, nuisance, and public safety concerns.
- A general approach for moving past the emergency proclamation and continuing an enhanced focus on homelessness into the future.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani on August 24, 2023 and by Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on August 23, 2023.

City Council action is requested on September 12, 2023, in accordance with the Long Beach Municipal Code requirements for the review of the local emergency.

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