



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0124, Version: 1

Recommendation to receive and file information regarding restoration of the senior meal program at Cesar E. Chavez and Silverado Parks. (Districts 1,7)

BACKGROUND

On March 1, 2016, the City Council requested staff to prepare a report on the feasibility of restoring the senior meal program at Cesar E. Chavez and Silverado Parks, as well as transportation challenges for seniors. This report will provide statistics and costs related to restoration of the senior meal program and information on changes to the bus route.

In July 2005, the Human Services Association (HSA), a nonprofit organization under contract with the County of Los Angeles (County), began serving congregate meals for seniors at several Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine (PRM) facilities. These facilities included McBride, Cesar E. Chavez, El Dorado West, Houghton, and Silverado Parks, and the Long Beach Senior Center on 4th Street. Prior to 2005, the City of Long Beach (City) worked with Volunteers of America to provide meals to various sites in Long Beach. When Volunteers of America closed their doors, the County asked HSA to pick up the Long Beach sites. HSA has had a contract with the County since the 1970s to provide congregate meal programs to other County areas.

In 2012, HSA notified PRM of its intent to eliminate the senior meal program at Cesar E. Chavez and Silverado Parks, beginning in June 2012. The decision to eliminate services came on the heels of funding reductions from the County that HSA anticipated for Fiscal Year 2013. At that time, the congregate meal program at Cesar E. Chavez and Silverado Parks, along with a site in the city of Lakewood, were chosen to be discontinued, primarily due to low attendance. Participation totals at the time these programs were discontinued are shown in the following table.

Human Services Association Congregate Meals - Long Beach Sites (Annual)						
Site	Meals Served YTD					
	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012 (thru March)
McBride (in Cambodian)	13,679	12,550	11,581	13,289	15,555	13,233
Cesar E. Chavez	6,480	5,992	6,585	6,281	5,279	3,801

El Dorado West	10,814	10,828	12,106	11,274	11,368	8,680
Houghton	6,188	7,405	4,684	4,142	6,760	6,339
Silverado	6,901	5,444	6,630	6,495	6,950	5,979
Long Beach Center	26,191	26,149	27,245	29,332	33,788	26,864
Totals	70,253	68,368	68,831	70,813	79,700	64,896

Participants in the congregate meal program are asked for a donation of \$2.25 per meal; however, it is considered a donation and federal funding regulations dictate that it cannot be mandatory. While many participants pay the suggested donation amount for their meals, some pay less and many pay nothing.

DISCUSSION

Meals are served Monday through Friday, which equates to approximately 250 days per year. The average daily congregate meal served at the four current sites in Long Beach has risen since 2012. The four sites are as follows:

- Houghton Park - 41 meals per day (10,250 yearly average);
- McBride Park - 51 meals per day (12,750 yearly average. Both standard and Cambodian meals are served at this location);
- El Dorado West - 49 meals per day (12,250 yearly average);
- Long Beach Senior Center - 116 meals per day (29,000 yearly average).

The total meals served at all four current sites is almost equivalent to the total number of meals served at the six original sites in 2012.

In addition to the congregate meal programs served at the above facilities, HSA also operates Meals-On-Wheels, a home-delivered meal program that provides homebound seniors in Long Beach with a daily hot meal and a reassuring friendly visit.

City Funding

Currently, the City does not contribute any funding to the congregate meal program or Meals-On-Wheels. The cost for each congregate meal provided by HSA is \$6.85. The typical County reimbursement to HSA is \$5.60 per meal. Other host cities subsidize their senior lunch program at \$1.25 per meal to help offset the full cost of the program and make the partnership sustainable to HSA.

In the past, the City made contributions to support the senior congregate meal program. In FY 08 and FY 09, the City contributed \$14,000 from the General Fund; in FY 11 and FY 12, the City contributed \$11,000 from Community Development Block Grants. No funding has

been provided since FY 13 due to budget limitations.

Per HSA, the cost to the City to restore a congregate meal program at Cesar E. Chavez and Silverado Parks is \$51,375 per site. This cost assumes serving an estimated 30 meals per day, per site, at \$6.85 per meal for 250 days annually. The total cost to restore a congregate meal program at both sites is \$102,750. Staff will continue to work closely with HSA and the County, as funding becomes available, to restore the senior meal program at the eliminated park sites.

Senior Transportation

The City Council also asked that this report address transportation linkages for senior communities, specifically related to any major changes that would have interrupted the senior communities' access to former food program locations in the City. PRM reached out to Long Beach Transit and confirmed that changes did occur to the free Passport bus route in 2012, and again, more recently, on February 7, 2016. These changes did not impact the senior meal program. It should be noted, however, that regular bus route service providing access to both Cesar E. Chavez Park and Silverado Park have not changed.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Linda T. Vu on January 30, 2017 and by Budget Management Officer Rhutu Amin Garib on January 25, 2017.

City Council action on this matter is not time critical.

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

MARIE KNIGHT
DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER