



Legislation Text

File #: 23-1014, 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. 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.

Actions Taken in the Past Four Weeks:

In the past four 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

- Continued to provide case management services at the Queensway Safe Parking program Monday through Friday from 5-8 pm.
- Launched the Outreach Request Form for Water Distribution and invited Community Partners to support the distribution program through the Homeless Services Bureau.
- Temporarily increased emergency shelter operations for people experiencing homelessness in anticipation of Hurricane Hilary, providing more than 100 people experiencing homelessness with shelter and meals.
- Conducted outreach to people experiencing homelessness in the LA River and throughout the Long Beach Community, offering shelter and advising of potentially dangerous storm conditions.
- Implemented Spanish language notifications for the Long Beach homelessness text alert program to increase accessibility to services and resources.

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Began 5950 Long Beach Blvd (formerly Luxury Inn) outreach and canvassing.
- Increased outreach with the Interdepartmental team to the downtown area, focusing on various cleanups and outreach with LA County Public Works.

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- Notified of \$5.3 million for the second Encampment Resolution Grant to focus on BJK Library, Lincoln Park and other downtown areas. The focus will be on increasing

access to housing and services.

Focus Areas for the Next Four Weeks

Staff will provide an oral report to City Council on September 05, 2023, focusing on activities of the next four weeks that contribute to the progress of the short and medium-term goals. Topics will include:

Increase access to services

- Continue partnership conversations with Health Services Los Angeles County and Los Angeles Homelessness Services Authority.
- Continue to provide case management services at the Queensway Safe Parking program Monday through Friday from 5-8 pm.
- Continue to 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

- Refresh data on Homelessness Emergency Dashboard on September 7th.
- 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

- Plan for a convening to connect and brainstorm with Community Champions who are supporting homeless related services across the City to be held in October.
- Continue 5950 LB Blvd outreach and engagement to community members in the surrounding area.
- 5950 Long Beach Blvd Open House set for September 16th at 9 am - 11 am.

Increase interim and long-term housing access

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

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

City Council action is requested on September 5, 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