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REVISED
REX
RICHARDSON

Date: September 15, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Rex Richardson, Ninth District

Subject: Neighborhood Maintenance Programs

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Manager to work with the Public Works and Development Services Departments, California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), and Los Angeles County, to prepare a report on the status of neighborhood clean-up programs and right-of-way maintenance as impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, request the City Manager to work with the City Health Officer and various Departments to present recommendations on how to safely restart the Long Beach Neighborhood Clean-Up Assistance Program and other neighborhood improvement programs that have been discontinued due the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion

It has been 6 months since the City of Long Beach declared a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The State of California and many local jurisdictions have since issued "Stay at Home Orders," limiting the operation of businesses and various services to ensure physical distancing and furthermore, reduce the spread of the virus.

COVID-19 poses both an economic and public health crisis that exasperates cuts to various services, as the City faced an estimated budget shortfall of at least \$25 million in the upcoming fiscal year. We can anticipate that these impacts will be felt in future budgets as well. Since March one of the most immediate impacts to Long Beach neighborhoods, has been the suspension of the Neighborhood Clean-Up Assistance Program and "Right of Way" clean ups by various governmental agencies, such as the Los Angeles County and California Department of Transportation.



Prior to the pandemic, community groups would traditionally partner with the Neighborhood Services Bureau and Public Works to facilitate monthly neighborhood cleanups to mitigate the accumulation of bulky, dumped items in alleyways, parkways, and on sidewalks. Neighborhood associations have been unable to assemble with a large dumpster and borrowed cleaning supplies since March, which significantly impacts the safety and cleanliness of residential streets. The lack of community-led cleanups also overwhelms Public Works' Refuse Division with service requests reported through Go Long Beach and the Call Center.

Long Beach neighborhoods are furthermore impacted by inactive right of way maintenance services from other government agencies, as encampments along the LA River and freeway embankments grow, debris and landscaping impede onto sidewalks and streets.

With anticipated budget shortfalls and the continuity of social distancing, it is important now more than ever that we find ways to maintain the cleanliness of neighborhoods. Whether the City reauthorizes the Long Beach Neighborhood Clean-Up Assistance Program or presents alternatives like robust communications and outreach on special refuse collections, and an inter-agency plan for right-of-way maintenance, it is necessary that we work together to maintain the quality of our neighborhoods.

Fiscal Impact

Due to the urgency of this item, no fiscal analysis was conducted.