

NB-40

May 2, 2023

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

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 declaration and associated activities and provide any additional direction to City staff regarding the emergency. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

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, began conducting 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 approximately 3,300 people experiencing homelessness throughout Long Beach, which is a 77 percent increase since 2017 and a 62 percent increase from 2020 to 2022. Of these 3,300 people, approximately 2,300 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.

Declaration 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 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 Two Weeks

Over the past two 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

- Beginning on April 26th, Mental Health After Hours will be offered Monday through Friday from 6 to 9pm. Mental Health Clinicians will support congregate and non-congregate facilities in Long Beach.

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Hosted the second drive-thru donation event at Main Health Department (2525 Grand Ave.) on April 29th from 9 am to 1 pm.
- Outreach to Education Partners at LBCC, CSULB, and LBUSD to identify partnership opportunities.

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- Met with Speaker Rendon's staff to discuss Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) funding.
- Met with LA Metro to discuss the LA Metro Service Hub.
- Participated in Gateway Cities Council of Governments Homelessness Technical Advisory Committee to discuss regional efforts to address homelessness.
- Engaged with consultants to identify grants to support efforts.

Increase interim and long-term housing access

- Received 79 new Housing Authority stability vouchers for people who are experiencing

or at-risk of homelessness.

- Opened a Temporary Emergency Shelter with 85+ beds for people experiencing homelessness

Question from April 18, 2023

At the last hearing of this item, there were several questions from the dais. Some were answered in person, and the following question staff have a response below:

- *What is the updated emergency housing voucher data?*
 - *Response: 529 people have been housed utilizing the Emergency Housing Vouchers for a 91 percent match rate.*

Focus Areas for the Next Two Weeks

Staff will provide an oral report on May 2, 2023, on some of the areas of focus for the next two weeks that contribute to the progress of the short-term goals. Topics will include:

Increase access to services

- Continue partnership conversations with LA County Department of Health Services and LAHSA.
- Increase outreach and education regarding availability of the safe parking site and RV Sanitation and Water Filling site.

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Plan an Interfaith convening of faith organizations from across the City who are committed to supporting the efforts of not only the emergency response, but ongoing after the emergency has been lifted.
- Outreach to Early Childhood Education stakeholders to engage a larger Education discussion.
- Launch expanded data dashboard.

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- Continue evaluating potential Airport and Port of Long Beach properties that can support additional homelessness services.
- Continue to staff up the Homeless Services Bureau to address case management and public health nursing needs.
- Continue to engage LA County on request to support emergency activities.

Increase interim and long-term housing access

- Continue to conduct enhanced engagement with housing providers to boost

participation in Emergency Housing Voucher Program.

- Continue evaluating other properties citywide (both public and private) that could be temporarily used or acquired to further support homeless services housing opportunities.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani and Recovery Budget Officer Dee Okam on April 26, 2023.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on May 2, 2023, in accordance with the Long Beach Municipal Code requirements for the review of the local emergency. In order to report back every two weeks and to allow time for updates with the actions of the past two weeks, 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.

FISCAL IMPACT

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.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER

Attachments: A – Supporting Documentation on Actions Taken in the Past Two Weeks



PRESS RELEASE

City of Long Beach
Public Information Office
411 W. Ocean Blvd,
Long Beach, CA 90802

4/27/2023

Press Release # 42723-1 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Long Beach Releases Results of the 2023 Homeless Point in Time Count

Slowest Growth in Homelessness Since 2020; Number of people experiencing homelessness increased 4.6%, or 151 individuals

City of Long Beach Joint Information Center
562.570.NEWS
JIC@longbeach.gov

Findings of the 2023 Homeless Point in Time Count reveal that Long Beach identified 3,447 people experiencing homelessness in January 2023, compared with 3,296 people in 2022. This number signifies a 4.6% increase from last year, the smallest increase Long Beach has reported since 2019. For reference, homelessness increased 7% from 2019 to 2020, and increased from 62% from 2020 to 2022 (the 2021 Count was canceled due to the pandemic).

"While the slowdown in growth reflected in the point in time count is encouraging, we must remain focused on the urgent need to address the systemic causes of homelessness," said Mayor Rex Richardson. "Together, we can continue to make a difference and ensure that every member of our community has a place to call home."

The 2023 Homeless Count, which was conducted on Jan. 26, just 16 days after the emergency was proclaimed, will be used as the yardstick by which policies and programs instituted during the emergency will be measured. In comparison to the 2022 Count, the number of people experiencing first-time homelessness increased by 18%, from 1,549 to 1,827. 53% of those surveyed report experiencing their first episode of homelessness, while 39% are experiencing chronic homelessness. Of the surveyed respondents who are experiencing first-time homelessness, 59% are sheltered, 18% are living in a vehicle and 19% report experiencing homelessness for less than a year. An analysis found that those experiencing homelessness for the first time are more inclined to accept shelter.

The largest percentage of those surveyed identified as Latinx (35.2%), followed by Black (32.4%) and white (23.1%). Those living in encampments or on the street increased minimally by 6%. People experiencing homelessness who are now living in interim housing has decreased by 2%

due to the reduction in non-congregate shelter funding for programs, such as [Project Roomkey](#), which allowed for master leasing of motels. Those living in interim housing are still defined as homeless. 83.4% of people were living in Long Beach and Los Angeles County before becoming homeless, and 91.4% became homeless in California.

Despite the small increase in the overall population of people experiencing homelessness, there was a 20% reduction in veterans experiencing homelessness, from 451 in 2022 to 361 this year, reflecting a concerted coordination between the City of Long Beach, the [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#) and other partnering agencies to find permanent housing for veterans.

“Addressing the issue of homelessness is of top priority in Long Beach,” said City Manager Tom Modica. “The City is working diligently and has taken a number of meaningful actions to tackle the crisis, working across departments and collaborating with regional partners, but we know there is much more work to be done and we will remain steadfast in our efforts.”

Since 2020, the City has significantly increased the number of locally funded interim beds, going from 60 to 520. The City has long maintained a winter shelter during the coldest months, and since 2020 has added 317 non-congregate interim housing beds via Project Homekey and other grant programs, plus 125 new congregate interim housing beds via the [Atlantic Farms Bridge Housing Community](#). In addition to providing a safe place to sleep, these shelters are designed to match people to housing options as they become available, with supportive services to help people move into permanent housing as quickly as possible.

Further, this year, the City's [Multi-Service Center](#) was temporarily [utilized](#) to offer 60 warming beds each night for people experiencing homelessness to have a warm and safe place to sleep through the consistently cold and wet months experienced this past winter. And earlier this month, the City [announced](#) plans to open a new temporary emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness. The shelter will offer more than 85 beds and several amenities and services through July 28, 2023.

Since January 2022, the City has also sheltered approximately 57 people per night in motels. In November 2022, the City acquired the 78-bed Luxury Inn, which is expected to open by the end of the year. In addition, plans are underway for the development of 33 new modular non-congregate shelter units, known as [Tiny Homes](#), to safely house people experiencing homelessness. Long Beach is committed to providing shelter beds to its residents who are unhoused, both through municipal shelters and beds provided by its partners, and will continue exploring new opportunities for additional interim housing as well as permanent supportive housing. Currently, there are approximately 1,300 beds across Long Beach provided by the City and its partners.

The [Development Services Department](#), together with [The Long Beach Community Investment Company](#), has continued to ensure the production of new affordable housing units with supportive services for people experiencing homelessness. The [Spark at Midtown](#), [Bloom at Magnolia](#), [Vistas Del Puerto](#) and [Las Ventanas](#) have collectively added 121 units; and another 190 are in development. Further, two new projects have recently been [proposed](#), which would provide an additional 156 new units for those who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The City is dedicated to engaging local housing providers in meaningful discussions to explore new creative strategies to aid in efforts to combat homelessness.

Outreach efforts have also continued to expand significantly. The [Department of Health and Human Services](#) (Health Department) Outreach staff has more than quadrupled, from four people in 2020 to 18 at present, with a total of 27 positions budgeted. Over the past three years, the total number of staff serving within the Homeless Services Bureau has increased from 25 to 90 once fully staffed, and the Bureau's budget has increased from \$10 million to nearly \$50 million in annual services with significant capital funding to create long-term interim and permanent housing capacity. Earlier this month, the Health Department was [awarded](#) \$5.2 million to support the City's rapid rehousing and permanent housing efforts for people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the [Housing Authority of the City of Long Beach](#) has allocated a total of 582 [Emergency Housing Vouchers](#) to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These vouchers include supportive services through other funding that the City has received and, to date, more than 539 people have moved into housing.

"The Health Department leads a multi-pronged, coordinated approach to provide thoughtful and compassionate service-based solutions," said Health Department Director Kelly Colopy. "The additional support brought on by the emergency proclamation enables us to continue expanding capacity and service delivery for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness."

A critical component of addressing and preventing the homelessness crisis is better understanding the major causes of first-time homelessness. Of surveyed respondents who are newly homeless, 43% report domestic violence as the leading cause for experiencing homelessness. Research shows that domestic violence is one of the main drivers into homelessness, particularly for women, in Los Angeles County, a reality that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Locally, we have also seen evidence that domestic violence has grown: the number of people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach who report being victims of domestic violence in their lifetime has risen tremendously since 2020 – from 217 to 949.

While construction and investment have increased to pre-pandemic levels over the past year and the unemployment rate dropped from 13% in 2020 to 4.4% in 2022, rising rents have worsened the homelessness crisis. Overall, 35.4% of people surveyed reported unemployment or financial reasons as the main contributing factor for their homelessness – a 9% decrease when compared to the 2022 Count.

This year, 34.7% of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness report having a serious mental illness, and 31.8% report having a substance use disorder. The Health Department has convened a mental health advisory group to explore ways to increase access to services in Long Beach. The City has also committed to adding a third Restorative Engagement to Achieve Collective Health (REACH) team with extended hours, providing alternative response to certain calls for services related to people experiencing homelessness.

Additionally, the [Long Beach Police Department doubled](#) its Quality of Life (QOL) team, with eight full-time QOL officers specifically trained to assist people experiencing homelessness and augment citywide efforts to address homelessness. So far, in 2023, the QOL team has engaged with over 2,800 people experiencing homelessness, leading to 91 people receiving temporary housing and six people moving into permanent housing. The QOL team also participated in more than 250 clean-ups throughout the city, a critical component to public health and safety that is done in conjunction with meaningful outreach to people experiencing homelessness conducted by Homeless Services Bureau staff.

Addressing the issue of homelessness is a leading priority for the City. On Jan. 10, 2023, the Long Beach City Council [proclaimed](#) a state of emergency for homelessness in Long Beach. Since then, the City has [established](#) an Incident Command structure, led jointly by the Health Department and [Public Works Department](#) and comprised of nine work groups consisting of more than 100 City staff to take on the various aspects of homelessness emergency response and taking several notable actions to tackle the homelessness crisis.

The City's Mobile Access Center (MAC) [extended](#) its outreach efforts in different areas of the city. This enables staff to conduct meaningful engagement and start the intake process right on the street. To date, the MAC has 921 recorded engagements with people experiencing homelessness, and of those engagements, services have been provided to more than 500 people, including referral and transport to shelter, enrollment into the homeless services system, connections to community resources and basic medical services.

Long Beach is continuing to support people who are unhoused and currently sheltering in vehicles. The City last month [expanded](#) its Safe Parking Program, which provides a safe, dignified environment for people to park overnight while receiving access to basic needs and being connected to services. The City also continues to operate a [sanitation and water-filling site](#) for people experiencing homelessness and living in recreational vehicles, allowing people to properly dispose of sewage and access clean water and filling stations.

The City also launched a new [Long Beach Homelessness Text Alert program](#) to connect residents who are unhoused with housing and support services and other resources. The new communications method will enhance the City's existing outreach by providing timely updates directly to people needing the services, as research indicates a significant number of people experiencing homelessness have cell phones. This additional method of outreach will increase the City's direct access to these individuals and connect even more to housing and support services. Those interested in signing up to receive text notifications can text keyword HOME to 99411.

And a new [data dashboard](#) was unveiled in March 2023 showcasing local homelessness data, including demographics of people experiencing homelessness and data on the various housing and support services offered by the City. The dashboard is being used to further inform the City's ongoing efforts to address the homelessness crisis and support the City's mission to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach by increasing housing opportunities, enhancing current initiatives and addressing and improving overall public safety for the entire community.

More than 300 volunteers came together in the early hours on the day of the homeless count to participate in this important work. A mandatory orientation session before the count provided technical training for data collection and engagement techniques, and the volunteers were led by experienced guides.

The full report from the 2023 Homeless Count, along with more detailed information about what the City is doing to help people experiencing homelessness, is available on the City's homelessness website under the [Annual Homeless Count tab](#).

For more information on the City's efforts to reduce homelessness in Long Beach, people may visit longbeach.gov/homelessness and follow @lbhealthdept and @longbeachcity on social media and follow the hashtag #EveryoneHomeLB.

For more news, pictures, videos and announcements of what's happening in Long Beach, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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PRESS RELEASE

City of Long Beach
Public Information Office
411 W. Ocean Blvd,
Long Beach, CA 90802

4/19/2023

Press Release # 041923FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Long Beach to Receive \$5.2 Million in Grants to Support Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Housing Opportunities for People Experiencing Homelessness

City of Long Beach Joint Information Center
562.570.NEWS
JIC@longbeach.gov

Long Beach, CA – The City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) will receive \$5.2 million in grants over a three-year period from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), according to an [announcement](#) made by HUD on April 17. Funding will be utilized to support the City's rapid rehousing and permanent housing efforts for people experiencing homelessness.

"Addressing the homelessness crisis in our region will require thoughtful collaboration across sectors and levels of government. Over the past few months, we have engaged with the Biden Administration and HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge to advocate for additional federal support to bolster our local homeless emergency response," said Mayor Rex Richardson. "This funding will allow us to implement focused tactics that support rapid rehousing, permanent housing and other critical supportive services for unsheltered individuals and families experiencing homelessness."

Funding will be utilized by the Health Department's Homeless Services Bureau to:

- Provide rapid rehousing and support for 45 families, in partnership with the nonprofit organization Illumination Foundation.
- Provide permanent supportive housing to 140 people, in partnership with the Long Beach Housing Authority and Los Angeles County.
- Provide outreach and connection to mental health services, in partnership with Mental Health America of Los Angeles.
- Help support Coordinated Entry System operations.

Late last year, HUD [announced](#) a special notification of funding opportunity to enhance communities' capacity to humanely and effectively address unsheltered homelessness by

connecting vulnerable individuals and families to housing, healthcare and supportive services. Entities selected to receive funding will implement coordinated approaches, grounded in Housing First and public health principles, to reduce the prevalence of unsheltered homelessness and improve services, health outcomes and housing stability among highly at-risk individuals and families experiencing homelessness. In total, the City has been awarded \$5,193,648, for a three-year period. The City anticipates receiving the first round of funding around July 1, 2023.

“Implementing long-term housing solutions for people experiencing homelessness is a critical component to ending homelessness,” said Health Department Director Kelly Colopy. “This grant will make a huge impact in our ability to connect individuals and families to permanent housing, which is life-altering for the recipients of these services.”

For more information on the City’s efforts to reduce homelessness in Long Beach, people may visit longbeach.gov/homelessness and follow @lbhealthdept and @longbeachcity on social media and follow the hashtag #EveryoneHomeLB.

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PRESS RELEASE

City of Long Beach
Public Information Office
411 W. Ocean Blvd,
Long Beach, CA 90802

4/18/2023

Press Release # 041822-2FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Long Beach to Open a Temporary Emergency Shelter with 85+ Beds for People Experiencing Homelessness

City of Long Beach Joint Information Center
562.570.NEWS
JIC@longbeach.gov

Long Beach, CA – The City of Long Beach will open a temporary emergency shelter for people experiencing homelessness at the end of April. The new emergency shelter, located at 702 W. Anaheim St., will have space for more than 85 beds and will serve as a critical resource for people experiencing homelessness after the Community Hospital Winter Shelter concludes operations at the end of April, per the lease agreement. People who are currently sheltering at the Community Hospital site will receive priority to receive placement at the emergency shelter.

“This temporary shelter will allow us to continue to provide for people experiencing homelessness with a safe, warm place to sleep, food and access to essential services,” said Mayor Rex Richardson. “While shelters like this are critical resources, our efforts must also focus on connections into permanent housing. Those who participate in our shelter program can work closely with a case manager to work toward these permanent opportunities.”

In an ongoing response to the City’s State of Emergency on Homelessness, opening an emergency shelter site will help ensure that the City can support people experiencing homelessness with access to ongoing care and services with the goal of connecting them into permanent supportive housing. Prior to finalization of the new emergency shelter, the City looked at available facilities within the city of Long Beach with minimal impact to the surrounding community and determined that this location was the most viable option based on the space and features available to meet the operational needs of the shelter. This location was also used several years ago as a site for the Winter Shelter Program.

“We are confident this temporary emergency shelter will provide relief to some existing shelter program participants and others who may be seeking shelter in the next few weeks and months,” said First District Councilwoman Mary Zendejas. “The First District is proud to do our part and host

this facility in the hopes of helping our unhoused neighbors find a pathway to permanent housing.”

In addition to amenities including three meals per day, onsite showers and restrooms, an enclosed outdoor area and space for service animals and pets under 30 pounds, shelter participants will also have access to a variety of services, including housing-focused case management, screening for housing programs, referrals to year-round shelter programs, assistance obtaining identification and documents and connections to behavioral health resources. The emergency shelter will be operated by the nonprofit organization First to Serve Outreach Ministries and will operate for a period of three months, from April 28 through July 28, 2023, with the possibility for services to be extended at the site in the future. While the shelter will currently operate temporarily, it may be considered for a permanent shelter facility in the future.

Prior to finalization, the City conducted community outreach to residents, businesses, nonprofit and community organizations and other key stakeholders to share information and plans about the proposed shelter and also hosted a community meeting on April 13 where residents could learn more and share their input. If the City were to look at extending the utilization of the site, a separate outreach process would occur regarding any future use of the site past July 28, 2023.

The temporary emergency shelter will be funded by a mix of City and Los Angeles County funds, covering the building lease, shelter operations, services, transportation and security services.

In order to access emergency shelter services, people will first need a referral from the Multi-Service Center (MSC) or Mobile Access Center in order to access the shelter. Participants will be able to access the Emergency Shelter via the shuttle bus, which will make daily pick-ups at the MSC, located at 1301 W. 12th St. in the mornings and will return people to the shelter in the evenings.

More information about the emergency shelter is available on the [FAQs](#), with additional information about other shelter beds and interim housing offered by the City and its partners at longbeach.gov/homelessness/homeless-services.

This action was put in place in accordance with the Emergency Powers granted to the City Manager through the Proclamation of Local Emergency related to homelessness.

For more information on the City's efforts to reduce homelessness in Long Beach, people may visit longbeach.gov/homelessness and follow @lbhealthdept and @longbeachcity on social media and follow the hashtag #EveryoneHomeLB.

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REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

Date: April 28, 2023

To: Monique De La Garza, City Clerk

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of May 2, 2023

Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.03.070 [B], the City Councilmembers signing below request that the attached agenda item (due in the City Clerk Department by Friday, 12:00 Noon) be placed on the City Council agenda via the supplemental agenda.

The agenda title/recommendation for this item reads as follows:

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 declaration and associated activities and provide any additional direction to City staff regarding the emergency. (Citywide)

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
1	Mary Zendejas	(Digital – attached email)
3	Kristina Duggan	(Digital – attached email)
5	Megan Kerr	(Digital – attached email)