



**Date:** April 5, 2022

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

**From:** Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, 9<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Cindy Allen, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Councilmember Suely Saro, 6<sup>th</sup> District

**Subject:** Request for REACH Teams Update

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Direct the City Manager to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to provide an update on progress of the City's REACH Teams, explore the feasibility of expanding the program in FY 2023, and report back to city council and the Public Safety Committee within 60 days.

**Discussion**

**Background**

Long Beach's homelessness crisis lies at the intersection of so many issues that have impacted the City for the last 20-30 years – housing, public safety, and mental health. In order to uplift our 2,000 residents who experience homelessness, and the many more who move in and out of stable housing, this crisis needs to be addressed with an eye towards all three of these issues.

Long Beach rose to these challenges by creating the Framework for Racial Equity and Reconciliation, which was released after extensive community engagement and supported by the full City Council on June 23<sup>rd</sup> of that same year.







This framework laid out an approach to outreach to residents experiencing homelessness that takes into account concerns regarding public safety, mental health and substance abuse, as well as the principal goal of getting unhoused residents into permanent housing. Under Goal #3 in the report, "Redesign police approach to community safety", the first strategy listed was to, "Explore non-police alternatives to law enforcement emergency response." The strategy called out three potential actions in line with this goal:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Framework for Racial Equity and Reconciliation" June 23, 2020.  
<http://longbeach.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4564033&GUID=BA5FC844-7D8C-4F70-B53B-356F1BB90190>



1. Create non-police, civilian emergency response teams to respond to non-violent calls for service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Explore existing best practice models of civilian emergency response teams.
2. Create an alternate phone number and dispatch system for non-violent emergency calls for service, with the engagement of mental health professionals in trauma-informed crisis response. Effectively outreach and publicize the alternate response team and non-violent emergency phone number to the entire City.
3. Address homelessness with the primary focus on coordinated service delivery of homeless support services led by non-law enforcement providers such as outreach workers, medical personnel, mental health workers, and others.

Strategy 1:	Potential Actions	Time Frame	Information Source
Explore non-police alternatives to law enforcement emergency response.	A. Create non-police, civilian emergency response teams to respond to non-violent calls for service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Explore existing best practice models of civilian emergency response teams.	Medium Term	 
	B. Create an alternate phone number and dispatch system for non-violent emergency calls for service, with the engagement of mental health professionals in trauma-informed crisis response. Effectively outreach and publicize the alternate response team and non-violent emergency phone number to the entire City.	Long Term	 
	C. Address homelessness with the primary focus on coordinated service delivery of homeless support services led by non-law enforcement providers such as outreach workers, medical personnel, mental health workers, and others.	Immediate and On-Going	 

Thankfully, although the first two goals were listed as medium-to-long term, there has been significant progress towards their implementation in the past two years.

The second step toward implementing a model like this came on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, when Councilmember Jeannine Pearce and a group of co-authors including Vice Mayor Richardson gave a presentation on various mobile crisis intervention service models designed to address homelessness, mental health, 911 and non-emergency medical calls.<sup>2</sup> The Public Safety Committee then took up a report on one of the programs called out in Pearce’s report, Eugene, Oregon’s CAHOOTS program, on September 16<sup>th</sup> for further study.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> “Mobile Service Crisis Intervention Models” Sept. 8, 2020.  
<http://longbeach.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8756610&GUID=482607BF-534F-4E42-B13F-E8427ABECF86>

<sup>3</sup> “Report on the CAHOOTS program & potential Long Beach feasibility” Sept 16, 2020.  
<http://longbeach.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4630768&GUID=E72282CF-2F12-4756-AB1F-00BBFF81A1A2>



The Department of Health and Human Service launched its first two REACH teams (Restorative Engagement to Achieve Collective Health) on August 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2021. They were structured to be the eventual vessel to achieve Goal 3, Strategy 1, and have made significant progress thus far towards many of the potential actions listed in the report.

Each REACH team is composed of a public health nurse, a mental health clinician, and two outreach workers to appropriately address the needs of people experiencing homelessness. Our two REACH teams serve as a best-practice alternative response model with the goal of increasing access to services for people experiencing homelessness, while working to reduce the number of calls for emergency response for mental and physical health-related situations. Currently, teams are dispatched by a call to the Multi-Service-Center or via rerouting by 911 dispatchers and are available from 7am to 5pm on weekdays.

Council would benefit greatly from an update on these teams and the progress they've made in addressing the City's homelessness crisis, in order to provide further guidance regarding constituent use of the teams, understand their impacts on homelessness, and better inform the public about their availability.

### **Fiscal Impact**

No Financial Management review was able to be conducted due to the urgency and time sensitivity of this item.

### **Equity Lens**

As mentioned in the "Background" section, this directive calls for an update regarding a policy first proposed in the Framework for Reconciliation, Goal 3, Strategy 1.

### **Suggested Action**

Approve recommendation.



*City of Long Beach Memorandum*  
*Working Together to Serve*

## REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

**Date:** April 5, 2020  
**To:** Monique De La Garza, City Clerk  
**From:** Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, 9<sup>th</sup> District  
**Subject:** Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of 4/5

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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:

Direct the City Manager to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to provide an update on progress of the City’s REACH Teams, explore the feasibility of expanding the program in FY 2023, and report back to city council and the Public Safety Committee within 60 days.

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
9	Rex Richardson	
2	Cindy Allen	
6	Suely Saro	

cc: Office of the Mayor