

NB-39

June 6, 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, 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.

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 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 Two Weeks

In 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

- During the week of June 5th, we plan to provide individuals using the Queensway site with an invitation to transition to the new site within the same vicinity.

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Continue to explore translation options for Homelessness Dashboard
- Scheduled for Thursday, June 22 the Interfaith Convening with faith-based organizations across Long Beach who are committed to supporting the efforts of not only the emergency response, but ongoing after the emergency has been lifted

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- The Intergovernmental Work Group has identified leads to coordinate the various “policy pathways” and drafted a framework to guide the City’s work as it relates to prevention policy

Increase interim and long-term housing access

- Worked to identify an ongoing emergency shelter site
- Working to identify potential Homekey sites for state application

Focus Areas for the Next Two Weeks

Staff will provide an oral report on June 6, 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 RV Sanitation and Water Filling site
- Finalize location for an alternative Safe Parking site after the current Queensway site ends
- Housing Authority will continue to work to update its Housing Choice Voucher List

Engage community in data, planning and assistance

- Plan the June 22 Interfaith convening of faith organizations
- Prepare data update for June refresh that will take place on June 8th to allow for time for all relevant data to be included

Build capacity to address homelessness crisis

- Continue evaluating Port of Long Beach and other properties that can support additional homelessness services
- Continue to work to finalize plans and permitting to commence construction activities on City-led capital improvements at the Multi-Service Center (Tiny Homes), Navigation Center, Best Western, and Luxury Inn
- Work with Long Beach education institutions on feasibility of convening education institutions and ECE providers

Increase interim and long-term housing access

- Continue to conduct enhanced engagement with housing providers to boost housing access
- Work to identify a long-term emergency shelter site

- Review sites for a potential Project Homekey application

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Anita Lakhani and Recovery Budget Officer Dee Okam on May 31, 2023.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on June 6, 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

5/23/2023

Press Release # 052323-3FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Long Beach to Host Third Drive Thru Donation Event Saturday, May 27, to Support People Experiencing Homelessness

Community has donated more than 10,600 items to support people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach

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

Long Beach, CA – On Saturday, May 27, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. the City of Long Beach will host its third donation drive thru event as part of a monthly series, to collect essential items to distribute to people experiencing homelessness. The event will take place at the Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) Main Facilities Center, located at 2525 Grand Ave. Donations received during the event will be distributed at the Multi-Service Center to people experiencing homelessness and will also be available to local partner organizations to distribute.

“As the City continues to make great strides in addressing homelessness, our community has come together in a great way to support those in need,” said Mayor Rex Richardson. “I’m proud of our community members for coming together and caring for our neighbors who are in need by donating essential items.”

With the warm summer months quickly approaching, items such as sunscreen, hats, protective sunshades/umbrellas and reusable water bottles are in need, as are hygiene kits. Any of the following items are also welcomed for contribution:

- Hygiene kits or house-warming gift kits from the [Multi-Service Center Amazon Wish List](#).
- Backpacks filled with needed items such as hand warmers, flashlights, battery packs, batteries (usually D batteries), emergency blankets and charging cables.
- Pet care kits with things like pet food, treats, collars, leashes, pet toys or collapsible pet bowls.
- S, M, L, XL or XXL sweatpants, shirts, socks and men’s and women’s underwear, beanies, scarves, caps, hoodies, towels or blankets. Gently used items are appreciated, too.

- Welcome home kits with some of the suggested items above and a special hand-written motivating message to go in the kit.
- Food items like canned food, bottled drinks like juices or water, and snacks such as granola bars or power bars, instant oatmeal and instant soup.

While gift cards will not be accepted at the drive thru event, they can be donated at the MSC. To schedule a drop-off time, people can call 562.570.4586.

Since launching donation efforts in late February 2023, the City has collected more than 10,600 items generously donated by community members, including nearly 5,000 items during the City's first two donation drive thru events and close to 6,000 from drop-off bins available at Long Beach Public Library branches and other [locations](#).

To ensure these items can be distributed to as many people experiencing homelessness as possible, in April 2023 the City launched a [donation request form](#) for Long Beach-based organizations that support people experiencing homelessness to request items to further support their organization's mission. Local organizations are encouraged to submit the form based on their charitable outreach needs. More than half of the items have been distributed to the MSC and community organizations.

More information on how community members can get involved is available on the [Volunteer, Donate and Get Involved tab](#) at longbeach.gov/homelessness.

The City does not represent or warrant that any donations made to the City are tax deductible. Donors are encouraged to work with their tax professional. Receipts of donations are available at all drop off locations.

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](#).

REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

Date: June 2, 2023

To: Monique De La Garza, City Clerk

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Agenda of June 6, 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

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Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
1	Mary Zendejas	(Digital – attached email)
2	Cindy Allen	(Digital – attached email)
5	Megan Kerr	(Digital – attached email)