



Date: February 14, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, Acting City Manager *T. Modica*

Subject: **Reducing Homelessness in Long Beach Pilot Programs and Initiatives**

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Reducing homelessness and increasing affordable housing is a top priority for the City of Long Beach (City). This memorandum provides an update on pilot programs and initiatives being run by City departments to reduce homelessness citywide. This work is done collaboratively across all City departments that impact homelessness, including the City Manager's Office, the City Attorney's Office, Health and Human Services, Police, Fire, Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Marine, Library, and Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications.

### **Long Beach Continuum of Care and the Multi-Service Center**

Since 1995, the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) has led the Long Beach Continuum of Care (CoC), a local planning body funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that coordinates housing and services for homeless families and individuals. The Long Beach CoC is the second largest of the four CoC's in Los Angeles County, next to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), Glendale, and Pasadena. The Long Beach CoC is unique because it includes the Multi-Service Center (MSC), a facility that houses 12 public and private partner organizations working together to promote self-sufficiency and rebuild the lives of those experiencing homelessness. The Health Department continues to manage the Long Beach CoC, but has also increased its capacity by tapping into state and county resources over the past few years to leverage the already existing system of care with more services, outreach and case management capacity and the creation of new programs and opportunities to support getting people off the streets and into housing.

### **Everyone Home Long Beach**

In May 2018, the City launched the Everyone Home Long Beach (EHLB) Initiative, which convened the Everyone Home Long Beach Taskforce. The charge of the EHLB Taskforce was to build on the City's comprehensive homeless services and affordable housing efforts already underway and to identify innovative approaches to provide new pathways into housing and to prevent residents from becoming homeless. From the Task Force sessions, the Everyone Home Long Beach citywide plan evolved to address homelessness in Long Beach. The plan provides a vision, sets goals and makes recommendations for addressing housing and homelessness within the City.

## **Pilot Programs and Initiatives**

There are a number of pilot programs and initiatives underway in the City to reduce homelessness. A brief summary of each is provided below:

### Interjurisdictional Collaborative Pilot

The Interjurisdictional Collaborative (IJC) was funded as a pilot by Los Angeles County Supervisorial District IV to increase Long Beach's capacity to address homelessness and its impacts in a systematic and sustainable manner. The primary purpose of the IJC is to create an interjurisdictional approach to addressing homelessness in areas of overlapping jurisdictions (e.g., along river beds, near railroads, under bridges, etc.) and where feasible and appropriate, collaborate with regional partners to carry out activities that will increase the effectiveness of the response. The IJC partners include: Long Beach Interdepartmental Team, Los Angeles County Public Works, Union Pacific Railroad, CalTrans, Compton Sheriff's Department, Supervisor Hahn's staff overseeing homelessness in the district, Southern California Edison, Port of Long Beach, and private property owners. The grant-funded program will operate from January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020, and will continue contingent upon further funding.

### Workforce Efforts Focused on Homelessness

The Health Department is working in partnership with the Pacific Gateway Workforce Network (Pacific Gateway) to develop, implement, and assess a pilot program to employ residents who are currently experiencing homelessness, known as the PACE program. The goal of the PACE program is to engage both sheltered (living in homeless shelters or precariously housed) and unsheltered residents in steady, subsidized employment that provides them with base earnings and equips them with skills needed to secure competitive employment. Participants in the pilot program will also have an opportunity to compete for City employment opportunities, and will be assisted in the application process. This pilot program is funded through the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). Other related workforce efforts under the coordination of Pacific Gateway include a partnership with Mental Health America to serve 100-150 individuals annually who have experienced housing insecurity and are living with a mental illness; the HOME program, which is funded by Los Angeles County Measure H to subsidize employment for individuals who are homeless; and, an employment program where individuals can participate in as they leave the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program, a Housing Authority program that enables low-income families achieve independence by addressing family needs for housing, education, employment, and supportive services..

### Safe Parking Pilot Program

The Health Department is working in partnership with Feed Long Beach, a faith-based organization in West Long Beach, to open Safepark LB, a safe parking lot for individuals and families who are currently living out of their vehicles. All participants will be referred through the MSC, and will be connected to case management and other support services. Safepark LB will not only provide a safe and legal place to park and sleep overnight, participants will also be connected to case management, housing navigation, and financial assistance through the MSC. The site will offer security services, light food items, clean restrooms, and hand washing stations. This pilot program is funded through HEAP.

### Long Beach Public Library Social Work Internship Pilot Program

To better meet the needs of patrons of the Long Beach Public Library (LBPL) who may be experiencing homelessness, mental illness, or have substance use challenges, LBPL is partnering with the Health Department to explore models of integrating social work into its existing services. With support from the Health Department's Trauma and Resiliency-Informed Long Beach (TRI-LB) initiative, LBPL now has two Master of Social Work student interns who are working to connect LBPL patrons with social services, including mental health care, legal support, food security benefits, and housing resources. The primary role of the interns is to build trust with all library patrons and, ultimately, connect them to critical resources, if needed. The interns are based at the Mark Twain and Billie Jean King Main Libraries. The pilot program is anticipated to end in May 2020. Upon completion of the pilot program, program outcomes will be evaluated to determine the viability of a more comprehensive social work program at LBPL.

### Outreach Pilots and Extensions of Service Weekend Outreach Pilot Program

During the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY 20) Budget process, the City Council inquired about the feasibility of extending the homeless outreach and response services to the weekend. In response to this request, a pilot program was implemented from October through December 2019 to provide weekend service. The teams were comprised of two outreach workers from the Health Department, one Quality of Life Officer (Police), one Clean Team, and a HEART team (one day per weekend). This pilot program is proposed to be extended through September 2020 using \$300,000 in FY 19 year-end savings; however, modifications are being made to ensure a more cost-effective approach to providing proactive outreach and response throughout the City.

### The Homeless Services Call Taker (HSCT) Pilot Program

The Homeless Services Call Taker pilot program was designed to alleviate some of the burden that the Emergency Operations Center (EOC or Police Dispatch) carries in dealing with homeless related issues. Outreach workers were trained by the City's 911 Dispatch team to be available to answer calls regarding encampments, debris, or individuals seeking resources; all of which are non-emergency matters. From February through April 2019, the Outreach workers were stationed at the EOC three evenings per week from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and responded to questions, provided information, and gathered information to inform the outreach team members for further follow up. During this three-month period, staff received 19 phone calls in total. Most concerns were related to homeless encampments.

### Tidelands Outreach Pilot Program

During the FY 20 Budget process, the City Council set aside \$150,000 of Tidelands funding for focused outreach efforts across the Tidelands areas. This focused outreach will take place during the summer months when more people are populating the beaches. This pilot program will begin in March 2020 and will continue through the fall. Lifeguards will be trained on homeless outreach practices and resources, and will work in partnership with the Police and Health Departments to conduct proactive outreach throughout these areas.

### Standby Bed Pilot Program

From January through December 2019, the Standby Bed Pilot paid for two motel rooms per night to ensure emergency shelter capacity for people experiencing homelessness who were camping in public spaces. In addition, Beacon for Him provided on-call transportation for clients to the motel. The service was provided 7:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., seven nights per week. The benefits of the pilot program included freeing up Police Officer time from transporting people across town and handling the check-in process at the motel; provided opportunities for more direct contact with participants; and, a care package was provided with information about Homeless Services. This pilot program has ended. However, five beds continue to be available each evening at the Rescue Mission, and the Winter Shelter is available through March 31, 2020, as needed.

### Atlantic Farms Bridge Housing Community (ABC) – Year-Round Shelter

On February 5, 2019, the City Council approved the acquisition of the Atlantic Farms property in North Long Beach, to operate a bridge housing and emergency shelter facility for people who are experiencing homelessness. The City identified this site to develop a state-of-the-art village-style campus for homeless housing and services. The campus will be developed in two phases. Phase one includes the development of the Atlantic Farms Bridge Housing Community (ABC, Year-Round Shelter). The property purchase was funded through HEAP. An additional \$3.4 million in grant funding was received from Los Angeles County Measure H funds for capital improvements to open the facility, with a proposed \$1.75 million from the City using FY 19 year-end savings. The ABC 125-bed facility is scheduled to open by summer 2020.

### Navigation Center

Using HEAP funding, the City purchased a building at 1718 Hayes Avenue to serve as a “Navigation Center,” where people can store their belongings when they are engaging in homeless services. The Navigation Center will include a 10-15 bed shelter site for Transition-Aged Youth (TAY). Navigation services are scheduled to begin by fall 2020. The facility currently serves as one of the Service Planning Area 8 regional winter shelters, in partnership with Los Angeles County, open from December 6, 2019 through March 31, 2020. The winter shelter at this facility is proposed to be extended with approximately 40 beds from April 1, 2020 until the Year-Round Shelter opens, using \$120,000 in FY 19 year-end savings.

### Public Health Nurse as part of the Outreach Team

Utilizing Measure H funding, the Homeless Services Division (HSD) hired a Public Health Nurse to enhance the outreach services for the City. The Public Health Nurse works side-by-side with the HSD outreach team to make referrals for service, conduct face to face health related education, support linkages to care coordination and case management, and provide overall support to clients who may need more assistance managing their health conditions.

### Tow Fee Waiver Program

The City has implemented a One-Time Towing and Parking Waiver for Homelessness Policy for persons experiencing homelessness. The intent is to provide a one-time courtesy to forgive their parking, towing, and impounding fees, and to encourage them to take advantage of City services available to them. This policy was developed as a joint effort between the Financial Management and Health Departments, and the City Attorney’s Office.

### New App Technology for the Homeless Count

Starting January 2020, HSD moved from a bi-annual Homeless Count to an annual Homeless Count. In past counts, volunteers collected data using a paper census. For this year's count, HSD worked with University of Southern California and Akido Labs to pilot a digital census via an App volunteers could access on their smart phones. A paper census was taken simultaneously for accuracy. Moving to a digital census allows for a more effective count process overall. If all goes well with the pilot program, next year's count will be collected solely in the digital format.

### Office of Civic Innovation (Innovation Team)

In January 2018, the City launched a first-of-its kind Justice Lab to provide new tools for first responders to divert residents in need out of the criminal justice system and toward much-needed resources like treatment and care. The Justice Lab was developed through a partnership between the City's Innovation Team, or "i-team," and the Long Beach Public Safety Continuum. The Public Safety Continuum consists of Police, Fire, Health, and Development Services Departments, the City Prosecutor's Office, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, and residents who work collaboratively to make Long Beach a better and safer place. After analyzing over 100,000 offenses in Long Beach during a five-year period, the i-team determined that 85 percent of repeat offenses are not violent crimes, but rather low-level misdemeanors. Until now, first responders have had few tools to help individuals who often wind up in a deepening cycle of arrest and incarceration.

The Office of Civic Innovation has been asked to build upon their previous work and assist in developing quick response services, utilizing data analytics and developing program innovation in reducing homelessness in Long Beach. They have begun their research and analytics as outlined below:

- The Homeless Services System Map will visually represent interactions with individuals experiencing homelessness across jails, government agencies, nonprofit providers, and hospitals. This infographic will serve as a catalyst to educate people experiencing homelessness, service providers, City staff, and the community at large. It will effectively provide a visualization of the homeless services referral and services process.
- The Sunlight Foundation, in partnership with the City team, will use strategic data engagement (user centered design) to help collect qualitative data, utilize quantitative data, and engage stakeholders to form a pathway forward to keep people housed so they do not end up falling into the homeless system. Informed by the Everyone Home Taskforce, the research action items include conducting key informant interviews, focus groups, intercepts, surveys, synthesizing findings alongside City staff, and co-drafting an Actionable Opportunities Report to mitigate homeless prevention efforts citywide.
- CSULB MBA Project, which is aligned with the Everyone Home recommendations, will develop a YES in My Back Yard (YIMBY) education model that uses data to build the case for increasing affordable dwelling units, affordable housing development on private property, and renting rooms to increase housing affordability, while reducing homelessness. The final report will be publicized through a website portal that documents progress, celebrates successes, and mobilizes support.

- Implementing the Communications Plan - the Office of Civic Innovation, Health Department, and Public Affairs Office are partnering to develop a multiprong communications plan. The plan will engage City staff, community members, businesses, and providers to inform the community about City homeless services and how they can be a part of the solution.
- APP Consolidation (Real-Time Bed Count, Street Outreach, etc.) - City staff have been exploring the development of a real-time app to refer and case manage people experiencing homelessness that interact frequently with Police, Fire, Health Homeless Outreach, Clean Team, and the City Prosecutor. This real-time app would provide street outreach teams with direct referral to services, and notations for each interaction to ensure clear communication among first responders. In addition, City staff are considering how to incorporate app features to streamline the referral process. Three organizations have responded to the City's Start up in Residence process and final recommendations are being made; the most qualified agency will submit a trial app for the City to use.

As the Office of Civic Innovation works on a cost recovery model, these efforts are proposed to be funded using \$200,000 in FY 19 year-end savings.

### Multi-Disciplinary Team

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) convenes City and County service providers to better coordinate and reduce the burden on individuals accessing and navigating services such as mental health, substance abuse, and homeless services. The MDT has provided the following:

- *Clinician in Jail*: A partnership between the Police Department and The Guidance Center that provides a mental health professional in the jail who assesses, connects, and diverts individuals to care.
- *Data-Sharing Agreement*: A set of established policies and procedures regarding data-sharing among City departments. The agreement enables City-based providers to access needed information to better serve residents who frequently interact with the justice system. This agreement is being reviewed and will be updated, as needed, to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness cycling in and out of City services.
- *Data Warehouse (Open Lattice)*: A program that brings together multiple data-sets to cross-check information from the Police, Health and Fire Departments, and City Prosecutor's Office to help identify high utilizers of the systems.
- *Long Beach GUIDES (Government User Integrated Diversion Enhancement System)*: A system led by City Prosecutor that equips first responders with needed information to quickly identify what services are most appropriate for residents in need.

### Expungement Events

The Police Department has participated in multiple warrant and expungement servicing events throughout the city. These events offer individuals, including those currently experiencing homelessness, the opportunity to clear non-violent misdemeanor warrants and/or convictions from their record. Non-violent misdemeanor warrants and convictions can serve as a barrier for individuals seeking to secure employment, housing, public benefits, or other basic needs.

By working to clear these records, the Police Department is helping to remove challenges for people at risk of, or currently experiencing homelessness.

In 2019, the Police Department hosted two expungement clinics, where a total of 74 warrants and convictions were cleared. An estimated 35 to 50 percent of these individuals were experiencing homelessness at the time of expungement.

### **Next Steps and Recommendations**

City departments will continue to work as a team, and in collaboration with community stakeholders, to enhance the current system of care by continuing to weave existing best practices and innovative recommendations, and to strategically prioritize the opportunities that best align with the needs of Long Beach residents. The Long Beach system of care is a dynamic leader in the field and will continue to work together toward creating a Long Beach where homelessness is rare and brief if it occurs.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Interim Deputy City Manager Teresa Chandler at (562) 570-5116 or [Teresa.Chandler@longbeach.gov](mailto:Teresa.Chandler@longbeach.gov).

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