

Date: November 9, 2023

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



Subject: **Update on Tiny Homes**

On April 9, 2022, the Long Beach City Council adopted a resolution to authorize the City Manager to apply and participate in the State of California's Homekey Program towards the purchase, construction, and operation of 33 modular shelter units at the Long Beach Multi-Service Center. On June 28, 2022, the City was awarded \$5,616,752 in grant funds towards the project. City Staff from the Departments of Health and Human Services, Public Works, Economic Development, Development Services, Financial Management, Fire, and the City Manager's Office have been implementing the procurement, design, and construction of the project.

Due to unforeseen challenges over the course of the development process, City and Port of Long Beach staff determined that the initial location at the Long Beach Multi-Service Center will no longer be viable due to potential impacts on surrounding Port construction projects from introducing residential use. In order to maintain the same program scope and not lose State funding, City Staff immediately began urgently searching and surveying suitable replacement locations, while also notifying the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the grant funder, of this setback. The City Team has also worked to inform and engage community stakeholders, through the Mayor's Homelessness Livestream on September 26, 2023 and a [community information session](#) on October 30, 2023.

The City Team has identified the vacant commercial lot on the southeast corner of E Spring St. and California Ave (APN: 7212009914) as the final proposed location for the Long Beach Tiny Home Shelter Program. With the location identified, City Staff have begun and will continue engaging community members, agencies, organizations, and businesses most impacted by the relocation of this important program.

While the City Team feels strongly that this is the best available location for this project, full implementation of the project will be dependent on the State's review and final approval of the new site. City staff will provide an update to Council and the community once the State makes a final decision.

Proposed New Location

The vacant lot on Spring and California is City-owned and currently in use as a commercial lot with an active oil well and pump jack on one side of the property. The General Plan Designation is Commercial (CCA), while the zoning is Open Space. Once the need for Tiny Home Shelters has completed, and the 15-year commitment from the Homekey Program has been satisfied, City Staff intend to permanently transition the site, including the existing and proposed site improvements such as landscaping, parking lot, and office, to park space, incorporating it into

the adjacent Willow Springs Park. The modular tiny home shelters, which are rated for 50 years of use, would at that point be transitioned to a new location.

City Staff identified this as the best available location for this project relative to other possible sites, due to the following characteristics:

- The location is City-owned, reducing time and resources needed for property acquisition and increasing likelihood of State approval.
- The location is larger than the area at the MSC, allowing for additional amenities such as parking lot and case management/admin office, warming kitchen, and cafeteria, while maintaining the previously designed layout of modular tiny home units.
- The location is vacant, and has been underutilized for many years, without need for demolition of any current facilities.
- The location is proximate to existing utilities infrastructure, including water, sewage, and power.
- The location is paved and leveled, reducing costly and unpredictable site improvements.
- The location is centrally located and proximate to crucial amenities for program participants, including:
 - 0.3 miles from closest bus stop and 1 mile from closest Metro A-line stop (Willow St. Station)
 - 0.5 miles from closest grocery store
 - 0.7 miles from closest hospital facility
 - 1.1 miles from closest library
 - Shopping Center, including restaurants, clothes stores, and dollar store, located across the street
 - Easy access to open space in the neighboring park area, and two other parks less than 1 mile away
- The location is in an area with relatively fewer homeless services facilities, increasing geographic equity and continuing the City Team's commitment to developing services across the City.

Attached is a draft site map that helps show the potential layout of the facilities on the Spring Street Tiny Homes Site.

The City has previously conducted Phase I and II environmental reviews, each of which indicate the site is feasible. Preliminary conversations with Building and Safety and Fire Department staff indicated that design considerations and setbacks of structures will mitigate any potential

issues posed from the active oil well on-site. City Staff intend to utilize provisions under the City's Homelessness Emergency Declaration as a statutory exemption to satisfy CEQA obligations.

Long Beach Tiny Home Shelter Program

The Long Beach Tiny Home Shelter Program will provide 33 units of non-congregate shelter, providing interim housing for adults experiencing homelessness, prioritizing those experiencing chronic homelessness. The overall goal of the program will be to provide stabilizing shelter and supportive services while connecting individuals with permanent housing resources.

The program will be made up of 33 single occupancy units, including six units accessible to those with mobility, hearing, or seeing disabilities. Each unit will have a private, in-unit restroom and showers, bed and storage space, individual HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) system, connection to water, power, and sewage system, and fire suppression system (including sprinklers and fire-resistant materials). Site amenities will include an office building with space for case management and administrative services, a warming kitchen and communal gathering space for meal service, a parking lot and bicycle storage for staff and participants, security improvements such as lighting, fencing, and controlled entry with security station, and landscaped open space for use by participants.

The City conducted a competitive request for proposals for the design, manufacture, delivery, and installation of the modular tiny home shelter units. HOME EC Inc., dba Connect Homes, was selected and contracted to provide the 33 shelter units, which are currently being manufactured.

This will add to the nearly 1,300 units in Long Beach of temporary housing for people experiencing homelessness and will allow the City to test this new model of Tiny Homes, which will be the first in the City.

In light of the relocation of the program, City Staff intend to procure a contracted service provider to operate the program. The program will provide security and residential supervision 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, three meals a day, transportation services, laundry service, individualized case management with a housing plan, linkages to supportive services, and connections to permanent housing. All participants will be assessed and referred through the Long Beach Multi-Service Center as part of the Coordinated Entry System.

Ongoing Commitments

In proposing this project site, City Staff sought to honor previous commitments about the approach to the Homelessness Emergency.

- Staff have conducted general community information and engagement sessions during the site survey and will continue focused and general community engagement during program and site design.

- The proposed location is vacant and under-utilized, and has been an undeveloped site for at least two decades. Thus it does not remove any community programming or services.
- The proposed project would include site improvements such as a parking lot, landscaping, and office space, which will be incorporated into future park space once the proposed tiny home shelter project is removed.
- The proposed location is in an area with no current homeless services facilities, increasing geographic equity and continuing the City Team's commitment to developing services across the City.

Next Steps

City staff will continue to work with the California Department of Housing and Community Development to submit necessary documentation and information on the new proposed location. City Staff will assess and move forward with necessary re-design, permit submittals, and contracting to implement the site improvements and installation of the modulars, as well as identify any additional funding sources needed to complete the project at the new site. Staff will also be pursuing additional strategies and seek financial support to invest in the adjacent Willow Springs Park, as there is a strong community desire to continue the park development of that site. Staff will continue engagement with impacted stakeholders to raise awareness and solicit input, including focus group conversations and a general public meeting. If approved by the State for funding, City Staff estimate that the project will be completed in early 2025.

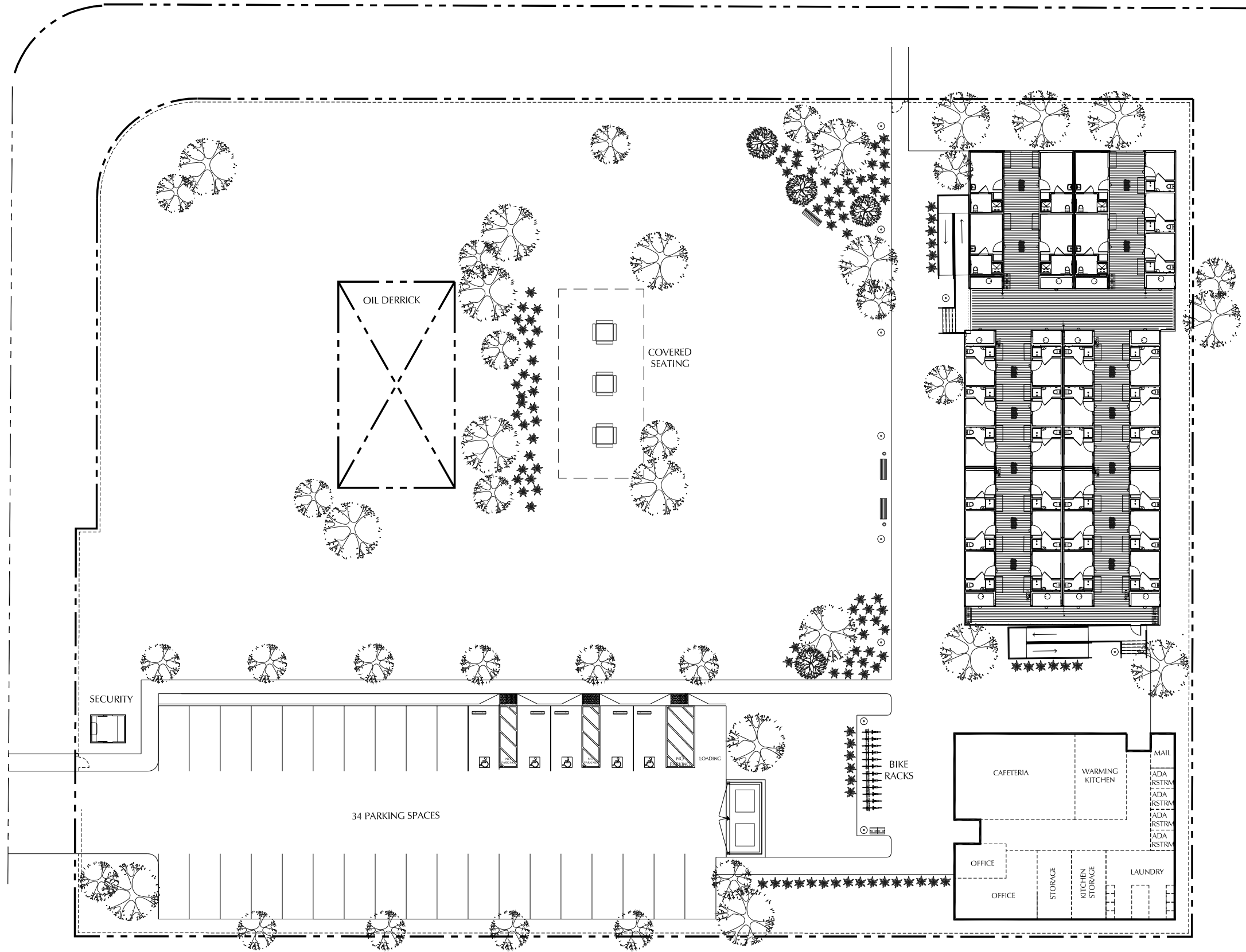
If you have any questions, please contact Teresa Chandler, Deputy City Manager, at (562) 570-5116 or Teresa.Chandler@longbeach.gov.

Attachment

CC: DAWN MCINTOSH, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
MEREDITH REYNOLDS, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
APRIL WALKER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY TO THE CITY MANAGER
TYLER CURLEY, ACTING DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
KEVIN LEE, CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK
DEPARTMENT HEADS

SPRING STREET

CALIFORNIA STREET



SITE PLAN (NTS)