

Date: February 21, 2024

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



From: Teresa Chandler, Deputy City Manager



For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Office of Homeless Strategy and Partnerships**

The City of Long Beach's (City) emergency proclamation to address homelessness has been in effect since January 10, 2023, and will officially come to an end on February 28, 2024. Though the proclamation is coming to an end, City leadership, Council, and the Mayor will continue to uplift this humanitarian crisis as one of the City's top priorities. The Emergency Proclamation opened opportunities for increased funding and resources to implement new programs, sped up internal processes to increase overall response, and allowed the team to create longer-term goals and organizational structures to sustain the work going forward. The next phase of addressing this crisis will include updating the Homelessness Strategic Plan, building a new governance structure (not to replace the Homeless Services Bureau, but to compliment the work), and continued coordination across City departments, external agencies, and community stakeholders. Most immediately, the City Manager's Office will be creating a new Office of Homeless Strategy and Partnerships to spearhead these efforts.

Providing Context: City Prioritization of Homelessness

The City Manager's Office established a focus on homelessness in 2019 to prioritize citywide coordination for homelessness response, and at that time, a Deputy City Manager (DCM) was assigned to oversee this scope of work. This DCM position was intended to centralize and elevate citywide coordination of homelessness response. No additional staff specializing in housing, homelessness, prevention, or administrative support were assigned or created. The DCM largely worked directly with City departments to streamline homelessness response. Considering lessons learned from homelessness emergency operations and increasing coordination needs, the new Office of Homeless Strategy and Partnerships will provide additional capacity, modeled after other successful City Manager offices.

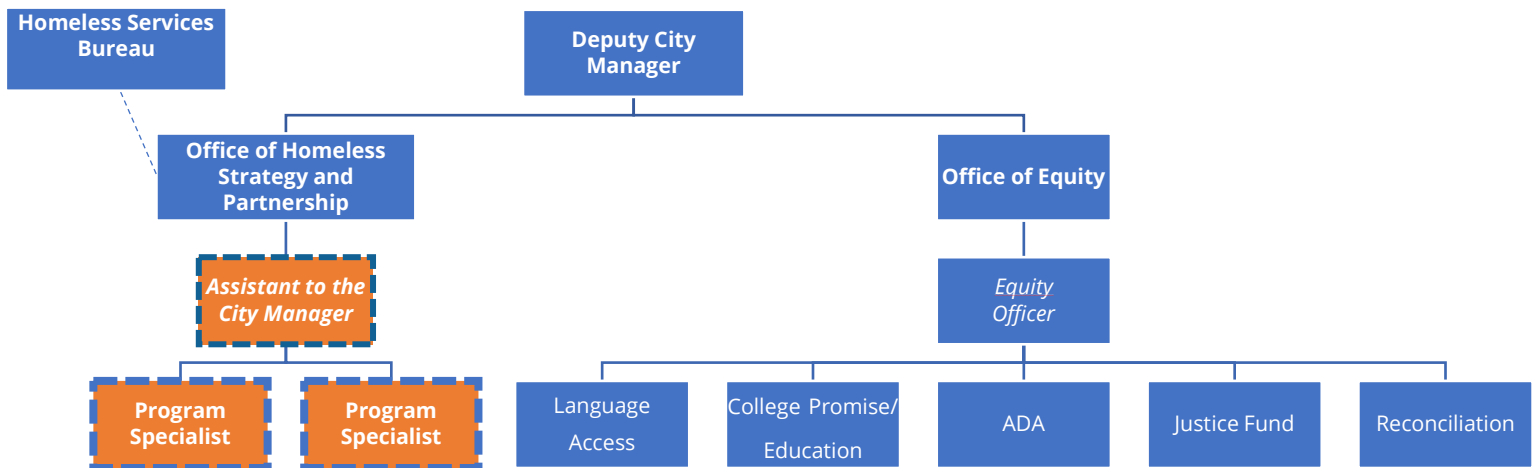
Over the past few years, other City Manager offices have been structured to provide staff support, including program managers, program specialists, analysts, and administrative support. In 2020, shortly after the initial creation of this DCM position, the Office of Equity was shifted from the Health Department to the City Manager's Office, with the DCM also overseeing this new team. Since that time, additional funding and staff were identified to allow the Office of Equity to address several high priority Council initiatives. The Long Beach Recovery Act (LBRA) Office was also created to coordinate and administer Recovery Act funding, allowing the City to efficiently mobilize tailored programs across numerous City departments.

Shifting programs and responsibilities to the City Manager's office has been done before to ensure adequate management across the Departments. This newly established team will provide centralized coordination with a collective impact focus, a dedicated team focused on

strategic planning and implementation, and building partnerships with external agencies, service providers, and community stakeholders. It will take leadership roles in workgroup efforts like the Affordable Housing and the Interdepartmental Workgroups, as well as future bodies.

Organizational Structure

The DCM will oversee two offices: the Office of Homeless Strategy and Partnership and the Office of Equity. Similar to the Office of Equity, the newly formed Office of Homeless Strategy and Partnership (Office) will have one dedicated manager position who will oversee two to three Program Specialists. This team will partner closely with the Homeless Services Bureau in the Department of Health and Human Services as subject matter experts and frontline staff most directly impacting homelessness response. The Office will also partner with the multiple City departments who are involved in addressing homelessness at multiple levels. The organizational structure under this DCM is reflected in the chart below:



Responsibilities of the Office

To be accountable to the citywide prioritization and coordination to address homelessness, the current duties of the DCM include oversight of funding and coordination across departments, liaison to the interdepartmental and interjurisdictional teams, citywide strategic planning, liaison between departments and City partners, public safety liaison across the public safety spectrum, cleanliness coordination, liaison to City Council offices on housing and homeless issues, developing strategic partnerships across jurisdictions, and state and federal representation in homelessness best practices.

The Assistant to the City Manager position will report to the DCM and will provide day-to-day implementation of priority programs identified in the citywide Homelessness Strategic Plan update. This will include liaising and coordinating with the Homeless Services Bureau and all City departments connected to addressing homelessness. They will supervise the two to three Program Specialists and will support the Continuum of Care (COC) and Homeless Services Bureau governance. They will also support multiple relevant interdepartmental workgroups and will convene and coordinate liaisons focused on homelessness and housing affordability within

relevant departments. The Assistant to the City Manager will also take an active role in working directly with community champions and partners in multiple capacities and as requested.

The Program Specialists will provide project management and administrative support for the team, with internal and external responsibilities. The internally-focused Program Specialist will support the implementation of the updated Homelessness Strategic Plan, interdepartmental policy advocacy in collaboration with the Intergovernmental team, prevention policy recommendations, convening and facilitation of interdepartmental working groups, trauma-informed staff training and support, property acquisition and capital projects, and long-term agreements as needed. The externally-focused Program Specialist will support equitable community engagement efforts, building community partnerships, liaising with established governance and community groups, interdepartmental and cross-jurisdictional storytelling, collaborating with the City communications team to help tell the story externally, and representation of the City at external meetings.

Funding for the Office of Homeless Strategy and Partnership

The positions under the Office will be funded by the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding. HHAP is a block grant program issued by the California Interagency Council on Homelessness that is designed to provide jurisdictions with grant funds to support regional coordination and expansion or development of the local capacity to address immediate challenges related to homelessness. Within the City’s structure, this funding will be shifted from the Homeless Services Bureau in the Department of Health and Human Services to support the administrative functions of this new Office. No new positions are being created, as these positions will be shifted from the Homeless Services Bureau into the City Manager’s office to maximize and prioritize the work of each role.

For the City of Long Beach, HHAP funding has been renewed annually over the last few years and is expected to continue. However, staff are reviewing a variety of resources to help sustain this Office over time. For example, the County of Los Angeles Measure H funding now allows the City to expense administrative needs to support a staffing structure similar to this.

Position Title	Classification	Position Type	Funding*
Program Manager	Assistant to the City Manager	Transition from Homeless Services Bureau	HHAP
Program Specialist	Program Specialist	Transition from Homeless Services Bureau	HHAP
Program Specialist	Program Specialist	Transition from Homeless Services Bureau	HHAP

** Three to four total positions are possible depending on grant funding; some funding may also be covered through Measure H administrative dollars.*

Next Steps

As the City prepares to sunset the proclamation to address homelessness at the end of February, the City Council and the Mayor continue to place the homelessness and housing crisis as one of its top priorities. The City Manager’s office intends to formalize and staff the new office of Homeless Strategy and Partnership by late spring or early summer 2024. In January 2024, the City Manager’s office began securing approvals to proceed with establishing this new Office. In February and March, job descriptions will be written and posted for recruitment; through April

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and May, the City Manager's team will work on identifying the new members of the team, establishing office space and other resources. By early summer, the new team will work on establishing the guidelines, protocols, and culture of the new Office, along with working with the consultants on the update of the homeless strategic plan.

For more information, please contact Teresa Chandler, Deputy City Manager, at Teresa.chandler@longbeach.gov at (562) 570-5116.

CC: DAWN MCINTOSH, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
APRIL WALKER, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
MEREDITH REYNOLDS, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
GRACE YOON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
TYLER BONANNO-CURLEY, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
KEVIN LEE, CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK
DEPARTMENT HEADS