

Date: February 4, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



Subject: **Homeless-Related Encampment Cleanups in Long Beach**

Addressing matters related to homelessness continues to be a high priority for the Mayor, City Council, the City Manager, and the community at large. During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) emergency response efforts, interim guidance on how to address sheltered and unsheltered homelessness and COVID-19 was released by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The City is absolutely committed to reducing homelessness and working across departments to do so in a coordinated manner. However, staff have had to adjust cleanup and outreach efforts to follow the CDC recommendations, which has impacted encampment cleanups over this period. This memorandum is to inform you of staff's plan to dedicate additional resources towards cleanup efforts.

Sheltering Opportunities during the COVID-19 Emergency

During the COVID-19 crisis response activation, the City has made great efforts to ensure there are shelter options for those who are experiencing homelessness. It is important to note the congregate shelters supported by the State of California (State), such as Project Room Key and Project Home Key (listed below), provide non-congregate shelter options for the people who have the highest risk-factors such as being over the age of 65, living with chronic health conditions or have respiratory issues. The following shelters were made available to support those who are open to shelter options:

Shelter	Type	Beds or Rooms	Dates
Silverado Park (pop up)	Congregate	55 beds	March 2020- June 2020
Martin Luther King Jr. Park (pop up)	Congregate	75 beds	April 2020- June 2020
Winter Shelter extension (L.A. County Program)	Congregate	70 beds	March 2020- Present
Project Room Key	Non-Congregate	132 rooms	April 2020- September 2020
Project Room Key	Non-Congregate	42 rooms	September 2020- Present
Isolation and Quarantine	Non-Congregate	14 rooms	May 2020- December 2020
Isolation and Quarantine	Non-Congregate	32 rooms	January 2021- February 2021
Atlantic Farms Bridge Housing Community	Congregate	125 beds/70 beds during COVID-19 response	October 2020- Present
Project Home key	Non-Congregate	102 rooms	February/March 2021

Considerations for Encampments from the Center for Disease Control

The Long Beach Outreach efforts, led by the Homeless Services Division of the Health and Human Services Department, are comprised of an Interdepartmental Team, including Police Department Quality of Life Officers, Fire Department Homeless Education and Response Team (HEART) units, and staff from the Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Marine, Library Services, and City Attorney Departments, as well as Emergency Response personnel. The Interdepartmental Team continues to coordinate efforts to address homelessness on a large scale throughout Long Beach. Since the pandemic outbreak, multiple encounters with people who are experiencing homelessness have been with people who are resistant to move into a congregate shelter setting given the easy spread of the disease.

The interim guidance released by the CDC is intended to support response to COVID-19 by local and state health departments, homelessness service systems, housing authorities, emergency planners, healthcare facilities, and homeless outreach services. *CDC Guidelines can be found here: [People Experiencing Homelessness | COVID-19 | CDC](#)*. Though linking people to permanent housing options is the first and foremost priority for the City Outreach Network and Interdepartmental Team, it is evident that the risk of spread of COVID-19 is decreased when sleeping outside versus a congregate setting, where individuals are closer in proximity. However, this does not mitigate the risk of other environmental factors that exist from living outside in unsanitary conditions for those experiencing homelessness and the surrounding communities.

Interdepartmental Team Cleanup Action Plan

The Interdepartmental Team recognizes the urgency to continue to connect people to permanent housing solutions, while simultaneously addressing cleanliness issues across the city. A plan has been developed to address the specific needs and areas of concern. The plan encompasses multiple actions for short-term and long-term success, and includes the following areas of focus:

- Resuming neighborhood cleanups with safety protocols in place
- Updating the GoLongBeach app to support appropriate reporting and coding of requests
- Interjurisdictional coordination including CalTrans, the County, and other agency jurisdictions that cross Long Beach
- Increasing Outreach staffing support
- Continuing weekend outreach efforts, which were scheduled to end
- Continuing Tidelands outreach efforts, which were scheduled to end
- Increasing Refuse staffing support
- Increasing Clean Team cleanup support
- Community engagement and education campaign
- Increasing communications

Homeless-Related Encampment Cleanups in Long Beach

February 4, 2021

Page 3

The following chart outlines the necessary resources to appropriately address the outreach and cleanup requests needed across the City organization.

Department	Staffing Model	Duration	Cost Needed in FY 20 & 21
Health and Human Services	1 Supervisor 2 Outreach Workers	1 Day per weekend (Overtime)	\$58,875
Fire	1 HEART Unit and/or Marine Safety for Tidelands area outreach = 2 members	Sat. & Sun., 6am-2pm (Overtime)	\$144,000
Police	1 Quality of Life Team = 2 members	1 Day per weekend (Overtime) The second day is covered by Tidelands at this time	\$81,611
Public Works	2 Refuse Operator I 2 Refuse Operator II 1 Maintenance Assistant I Miscellaneous Costs Equipment (\$4,000) Disposal (\$3,000) Ocean Blue (\$45,000)	32 Hours per week 32 Hours per week 24 Hours per week	\$400,000
Parks, Recreation and Marine	1 Gardener II 1 Park Maintenance 1 Supervisor Contractor	Four days per week (2 days for posting/2 days for cleaning)	\$100,000
Total			\$784,486

In addition to this update, the Department of Public Works staff is preparing a memorandum related to citywide refuse collection and supporting cleanup efforts. The memorandum will outline the Department's challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and address such issues as: safety protocols, rising costs, staffing, and the overall increase in workload due to the significant surge in residential waste, illegally dumped items, and scheduled special pick-ups. Details will be provided regarding Public Works' ongoing efforts to address these challenges by modifying services, engaging external agencies for support, and coordination with our community partners including Neighborhood and Business Associations.

Fiscal Impact

On August 4, 2020, the City Council authorized the release of \$1 million from the Unfunded Liability Reserve held in the Employee Benefits Fund to transfer to the General Fund Group in the Economic Development Department for the Small Business Restart Grant Program that would provide direct grants to eligible Long Beach small businesses impacted by damages, theft, and/or vandalism related to the events on May 31, 2020. This program has ended and a total of \$213,206 in grants were approved to recipients from the \$1 million, leaving a balance of \$786,794. Using this balance to support outreach and cleanup efforts through FY 21 would enhance the ability for the City team to increase cleanup capacity, as necessary. This unspent allocation will be reserved as part of FY 20 year-end close and City Council will be requested to re-appropriate this amount in the FY 21 Citywide Budget Adjustment letter in the relevant departments as noted in the table above.

Next Steps

The Interdepartmental Team will continue to work together to identify outreach and cleanup locations, as needed, while following all protocols in accordance with local, regional, state, and federal policy as appropriate. We are proud of the Long Beach system of care that works in a collaborative effort to address homelessness from a holistic place while also addressing the needs of the community at large. Addressing homelessness falls on all of us collectively and we are committed to continuing quality care along the journey.

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

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
REBECCA G. GARNER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK
DEPARTMENT HEADS