



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0081, **Version:** 1

TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:

Bruce Moe, City Manager

FROM:

George Gabriel, Senior Management Analyst

SUBJECT:

Update on the City's Homelessness Initiatives and Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness in Our Community (City Manager Moe).

a) RECEIVE AND FILE

b) APPROVE

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file the report on the City's homelessness initiatives and approve updates to the City's Homelessness Plan.

BACKGROUND:

On March 7, 2017, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors obtained voter approval for a 10-year, ¼ cent sales tax increase to help fund housing and support services for the homeless population throughout the County. Since the passage of Measure H, various cities have taken an active role in addressing homelessness. In October 2017, 47 cities were awarded homelessness planning grants. Manhattan Beach was one of the cities to apply for, receive this funding, and subsequently develop a homelessness plan.

On August 21, 2018, the City Council adopted the City's "Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness in Our Community." The plan contains seven goals aligned with Manhattan Beach's and Los Angeles County's objectives to address homelessness. Each goal contains supplemental information and includes: 1) Supported actions to achieve those goals; 2) Associated policy changes and requirements to move forward; 3) How progress will be measured; 4) Who is responsible for each goal and its progress; 5) What City resources will be leveraged; and 6) Timeline to complete each goal.

Following approval of the plan, at the September 4, 2018, meeting, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 18-0020 prohibiting the camping and storage of personal property in public areas and private property. Additionally, the City Council appointed a Homelessness Task Force to assist with recommended uses of County homelessness funds, community outreach and education, and the future development of grant proposals.

On October 16, 2018, staff provided an update on the City's Homelessness Plan. Going forward, staff

will provide quarterly updates on progress associated with the City's Homelessness Plan as well as any initiatives addressing homelessness.

DISCUSSION:

While concerns have been raised within the community regarding an increased presence of homeless individuals, the City has taken a strategic and regional approach to address homelessness. Below are a variety of updates on homelessness efforts being made with various stakeholders addressing homelessness in Manhattan Beach.

Homelessness Plan

When the Homelessness Plan was adopted by the City Council, it sought to create an initial strategic approach to homelessness. Staff indicated the plan can be updated and subject to revision by the City Council. Therefore, staff has attached a red-lined version of the plan indicating the proposed revisions. The revisions properly adjust the timeline of completion associated with goals in the homelessness plan and mark the completion of other goals. Due to so much effort being placed in obtaining funding from Measure H (completed goal), some other goals slated for completion in April/May needed to be revised to a later date in the calendar year.

Police Department Interactions

As mentioned in Goal #6 of the Homelessness Plan, the City has begun to track various resources dedicated to responding or addressing homelessness. Most, if not all, resources and responses have been conducted by the Manhattan Beach Police Department. Beginning in August, the Police Department began tracking total number of homeless encounters, response types (patrol initiative vs. calls for service), services offered, and mental health oriented encounters.

From August 2018 - February 2019, the Police Department has recorded 351 instances where police officers have contacted a homeless individual. Of those, 276 were initiated by officers on duty and 75 instances were responses to calls for service from the public. Additionally, 51 of these interactions were mental health oriented. It is important to note that contacts with homeless individuals do not represent a different individual with each contact. Homeless individuals are often contacted multiple times with repeated efforts to provide services.

As mentioned in page five of the homelessness plan, the Manhattan Beach Police Department has several officers who have special training and are primarily assigned to respond to incidents involving people who are homeless. The Police Department now has 13 police officers with advanced training to respond to incidents with homeless individuals.

Signage

Signage at the Civic Center and Metlox regarding the prohibition on camping and storage of personal items is in process. Staff expects the signs to be in place in the next six weeks.

Measure H Funding

With the approval of the City Council, and at the recommendation of the homelessness task force, the City submitted a multi-jurisdictional proposal with the cities of Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach (Beach Cities), to the County for outreach and education, coordination of regional efforts to address homelessness and housing navigation services. On January 24, 2019, the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative announced the award of Measure H grant funding to the Beach Cities for \$150,000.

The Homeless Initiative indicated the funding is specifically awarded for homeless coordination and housing navigation services. While training was requested in the grant proposal, the Homeless Initiative stated that training will be provided centrally and will leverage existing training resources. However, staff is exploring repurposing the \$60,000 requested for training in order to increase the grant award up to the \$210,000. The Homeless Initiative has indicated that cities may resubmit the grant for consideration in obtaining those additional funds.

City staff looks forward to working collaboratively with the Homelessness Task Force and our fellow beach cities to utilize these funds and address homelessness regionally. Going forward, staff and the Homelessness Initiative will prepare a formal contract with a service provider to conduct homeless coordination and housing navigation services. Thereafter, the implementation of these funds will be further with all stakeholders.

Mental Health Clinician

The City of Manhattan Beach, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and the cities of Redondo and Hermosa Beach, provides mental evaluation services through compassionate field intervention. In 2017, these four agencies launched the Beach Cities Mental Evaluation Team (MET). MET is a co-response model to respond to 911 calls or requests from field patrol officers to assist with calls for service regarding mentally-ill persons. Each team consists of one officer and one mental health clinician. Currently, the clinician serves two days a week in the Redondo Beach, and one day a week in Hermosa Beach and Manhattan Beach.

The Police Department has indicated the clinician provides a great value and their need specifically with homeless individuals. Consistent with Goal #1 of the Homelessness Plan, staff met with Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn's Office to discuss how the County can better assist the City with homelessness services. In our discussion, the City requested an increase in the availability of the County's Mental Health Clinician hours. The Supervisor's staff agreed with the need, requested by several cities and indicated that they would work with the LACDMH and the cities to ensure the needs are met. Staff is continuing to work with the Supervisor's office on this request.

Service Providers

As part of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) contract with People Assisting the Homeless (PATH), Manhattan Beach is able to obtain response and "street outreach." In order to build the relationship with the Manhattan Beach Police Department, PATH services workers currently ride along with MBPD officers every other Monday to offer outreach with homeless individuals in Manhattan Beach.

Homelessness Fairs

From time to time, organizations in the South Bay conduct a Housing and Health Services Fair that aims to offer homeless with resources related to housing, medical services, resources for veterans, and hygiene services. Two fairs have been held in the last three months and on those days, Manhattan Beach police officers offer transportation to homeless individuals interested in obtaining services.

Homelessness Task Force

Consistent with City Council direction at the August 21, 2018, meeting, City Council appointed five members to the task force on October 16, 2018, and later appointed six additional task force

members on February 5, 2019.

In total, the homelessness task force has met five times and discussed the City's multi-jurisdictional proposal for Measure H funding, homelessness count, Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) funding, outreach and engagement ideas, and feedback from updates provided to the Task Force by the Police Department.

HEAP Funding

Last year, the State of California approved \$500 million in one-time funding to address homelessness through the new Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). The purpose of the HEAP is to provide service providers with one-time flexible block grant funds to address immediate homelessness challenges. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) was the administrative agency for HEAP and required that cities adopt a resolution declaring a shelter crisis if a city wanted to be eligible for HEAP funding. Therefore, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 18-0149 declaring a shelter crisis pursuant to Senate Bill 850.

In December, LAHSA released the Request for Proposals to apply for HEAP funding. Following staff and Homelessness Task Force review, the proposal requirements were found to be unfit for the community's needs. While cities were allowed to apply for funding, the proposals requirements were catered to service providers and focused on providing services and housing for homeless within city limits.

Homelessness Count

On Wednesday, January 23, 2018, the City hosted a deployment site for the 2019 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count at the Joslyn Community Center. This annual count allows stakeholders to receive official statistics on homelessness at a point in time in our community.

The public was encouraged to sign up and 40 volunteers came to conduct the count in Manhattan Beach and El Segundo. Following the count, LAHSA takes the initial data the volunteers observed and analyzes it. Due to the large amount of data (80+ cities), it takes time to comb through the data and dissect that information to determine demographic changes in homelessness. LAHSA has a very thorough review and quality assurance process to ensure the data is accurate. Additionally, the count is subject to a conversion factor that requires a statistical analysis which factors how many people may reside in vans, SUV's, tents, and makeshift shelters. Upon official release, the data is analyzed and explained for public consumption as well. Staff expects the official numbers to be released by June 2019.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file the report on the City's homelessness initiatives and approve updates to the City's Homelessness Plan.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed this report and determined that no additional legal analysis is necessary.

Attachment:

1. Updated Five Year Plan