

Date: August 12, 2024

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



From: Teresa Chandler, Deputy City Manager



For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **City Response to *Grants Pass v. Johnson* Decision**

On June 28, 2024, the Supreme Court reversed the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision in the case of *Johnson v. Grants Pass* (9th Cir. 2022) 50 F.4th 787, setting precedent that public agencies may now enforce local laws restricting sleeping and/or camping in public space, regardless of the availability of shelter options. This memo provides a summary of this ruling, how this additional enforcement capacity will be implemented, and how it will be incorporated into the City of Long Beach's current homelessness response.

Overview

This decision overturns the previous legal precedent set by the 9th Circuit in *Martin v. Boise* (9th Cir. 2019) 920 F.3d 584, which ruled that enforcement of ordinances restricting camping or sleeping in public spaces without first offering adequate, available shelter options constituted a violation of the U.S. Constitution's Eighth Amendment cruel and unusual punishment clause. While this ruling does not mandate any action by local jurisdictions nor provide additional resources or funding towards homelessness response, it does enable cities and other public agencies to exert full discretion on enforcement of anti-camping ordinances. In Long Beach, this enforcement mechanism will be used as an additional tool when appropriate, while continuing to apply a human-centered approach to addressing homelessness.

A human-centered approach is leading with outreach and offering services while working to ensure experiences of homelessness in Long Beach are rare and brief if they do occur. The City has been, and will continue to invest in proven long-term solutions, including meeting basic needs, providing supportive services, and providing immediate access to temporary and permanent housing. Though widespread issuance of citations or arrests solely for violations of the City's anti-camping ordinance will do little to reduce overall rates of homelessness, and could create additional barriers for people to access housing and services, they also can be used as a tool to address locations where there is a threat to public health or safety and when other solutions are not working.

The City also remains committed to ensuring all residents of Long Beach have access to and use of crucial public resources. The additional enforcement mechanism will be incorporated into the City's interdepartmental approach to resolving encampments that pose significant and persistent obstruction to use of public resources like parks, libraries, and beaches. Once identified, these Priority Focus Areas will be subject to an intensive interdepartmental engagement effort, including multiple days of outreach, credible offers of supportive services and shelter, clean-up protocols, and notification that the area needs to be vacated. Enforcement may be used as a means of dispersing encampments in priority focus areas if other outreach and service provision measures prove ineffective.

Based on the recent Supreme Court ruling, police officers responding to calls for service will now have the discretion to enforce ordinances restricting camping or sleeping in public places. The Police Department considers a variety of factors when taking discretionary enforcement for misdemeanor crimes, including but not limited to, associated criminal conduct, ongoing and chronic complaints. If additional crimes are discovered during police responses to violations of the City's camping ordinance, this will be addressed through arrests or citations in accordance with local, state, and federal law.

The recent ruling provides an additional avenue for the Police Department to focus on criminal conduct associated with encampments or to address individuals who are in violation of this ordinance and have exhibited criminal behavior or pose a threat to public health and safety. However, citations or arrests solely for violations of the City's camping ordinance will likely result in coordination with additional City departments including Health and Human Services, Public Works, Parks Recreation and Marine, and the City Prosecutor's Office.

The primary mission of the Long Beach Police Department is to reduce crime and enhance safety in the City. The recent ruling will not impact the mission of the Police Department. While violations of the anti-camping ordinance may lead to enforcement action, the Police Department remains committed to supporting solutions that address public safety and support the ongoing efforts to help individuals experiencing homelessness.

Legal Summary of the *Grants Pass v. Johnson* Ruling

Legal Landscape

On June 28, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision in the case of *Johnson v. Grants Pass* (9th Cir. 2022) 50 F.4th 787. The Supreme Court held that enforcement of generally applicable laws regulating camping on public property does not constitute "cruel and unusual punishment" prohibited by the United States Constitution's Eighth Amendment. The Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states: "Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted."

In the City of Long Beach, there are generally applicable laws regulating camping on public property, such as Long Beach Municipal Code Section 16.16.010(E) and Section 9.42.110. These have been outlined in a [memorandum](#) dated April 23, 2024.

Procedural History

In *Martin v. Boise* (9th Cir. 2019) 920 F.3d 584, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals held that municipalities may not impose criminal sanctions against people experiencing homelessness for camping on public property without offering adequate, alternative and available shelter. Essentially, the ruling of the court was that municipalities could not enforce ordinances that criminalized sleeping in public unless the municipalities had adequate, alternative and available shelter space and an individual refused to take such shelter.

A few years later, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals heard the case *Johnson v. Grants Pass* (9th Cir. 2022) 50 F.4th 787. This court, citing *Martin v. Boise*, ruled that issuing civil infractions

for violation of an ordinance precluding the use of bedding supplies, such as a blanket, pillow or sleeping bag, when sleeping in public violated the Eighth Amendment. The court found that fining someone for civil infractions for engaging in the unavoidable, biological, life-sustaining acts of sleeping and resting while also trying to stay warm and dry, who very likely does not have enough money to obtain shelter, is excessive punishment.

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals provides appellate review of cases tried in the United States District Courts within the geographic area of its jurisdiction, which includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The decisions in the cases of *Grants Pass* and *Martin* applied only to the jurisdictions listed here.

Supreme Court Ruling

The Supreme Court's holding now nullifies *Martin v. Boise*, and the ruling in *Grants Pass* is now reversed. The Supreme Court opined that the 9th Circuit's intervention in *Martin v. Boise* was well-intended. Nonetheless, the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution is directed at the method or the kind of punishment, not whether the government can criminalize particular behavior, or how the government can secure a conviction for that offense. The Court reasoned that the 9th Circuit court ruling in *Martin v. Boise* reached beyond the power of the judiciary, and that the decision shall be left to the policymakers.

The Supreme Court decision provides municipalities the option to enforce generally applicable laws regulating camping on public property, without first being legally required to offer adequate shelter space within its jurisdiction. However, both the majority opinion and the dissent noted that this limited holding did not mean that all anti-camping ordinances pass Constitutional muster. For example, both noted a potential that such ordinances may violate the due process of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. (*City of Grants Pass, Oregon v. Johnson* (2024) 144 S.Ct. 2202, 2221 (majority) and 2242 (dissent).)

Considerations

This is a narrow decision related to the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. As a result, enforcement will include the issuance of citations with the offer of services and shelter. Staff are still required to follow case law related to unlawful searches and seizures under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In relation to homelessness, Fourth Amendment case law governs due-process requirements for people's personal property in public spaces, where the City is required to provide due process notices before people's private property are searched or seized. For example, the City of Long Beach cannot immediately seize and destroy property unless it has been abandoned, is an immediate threat to health and safety, or if there is evidence of a crime or contraband, pursuant to the case of *Lavan v. City of Los Angeles* 797 F. Supp. 2d 1005 (C.D. Cal. 2011). The City's protocol is to store personal property for 90 (ninety) days. Further, the City of Long Beach provides a 48-hour notice by posting the public area to be cleaned pursuant to the case of *Allen v. City of Pomona* No. 16-cv-1859 (C.D. Cal. filed Mar. 18, 2016). Furthermore, anti-camping ordinances may still be vulnerable to due process challenges, especially if the only enforcement mechanism is the issuance of criminal sanctions.

Possible Drawbacks of Over-Reliance on Criminal Enforcement in Homelessness Response

While cities are now able to pursue enforcement of anti-camping ordinances regardless of shelter availability, research, best practices, and input of people with lived experience and City staff all highlight the limitations of a homeless response that overly relies on criminal enforcement as a primary solution. A growing body of research, including the [Long Beach Point-in-Time Count](#), confirms that the underlying cause of our national and regional homelessness crisis is the lack of affordable and available housing. These economic barriers to accessing housing are often compounded by additional challenges, including mental illness, substance use disorders, disabilities and trauma, which are exacerbated the longer a person is experiencing unsheltered homelessness. As a result, persistent criminalization of low-level offenses like sleeping in public spaces does not address the root causes of homelessness, only causing temporary or short-term relocation of individuals or encampments.

In Long Beach, enforcement of a violation of the City's anti-camping ordinance(s) may result in a misdemeanor conviction or infraction pursuant to LBMC Section 1.32.010 and 9.42.110(D). In most cases, this would simply result in a fine on the individual and a financial and administrative burden that could further inhibit their ability to stabilize their life and access housing. Repeated citations may create additional difficulty and barriers to access employment and services that could help an individual exit homelessness. If enforcement rises to the level of a warrant and arrest, it is highly unlikely that misdemeanor citations would result in any significant jail time. Regardless, jail is not housing, and increased incarceration of individuals experiencing homelessness will only exacerbate the homelessness crisis in Long Beach. As a result, widespread issuing of misdemeanor citations would only serve to move individuals around, put additional strain on police and City resources, and ultimately do little to reduce homelessness.

In the wake of the Supreme Court ruling, many local government officials have opined that enforcement of anti-camping ordinances will be used to compel individuals to access services and shelter. Long Beach Homeless Services staff report that there is almost always greater interest in shelter than available shelter capacity on any given evening. In Long Beach's case, further motivation through enforcement will be ineffective without rapid expansion of available shelter and permanent housing capacity.

Recognizing the limitations of an approach that prioritizes enforcement, City staff intend to utilize enforcement of anti-camping ordinances in coordination with a service-based approach and as an additional tool to address difficult spots, focusing first on areas where public use of public space is denied by encampment activity.

The City Approach

Priority Focus Areas

While officers retain individual discretion to address issues during the normal course of their work, the priority areas requiring an interdepartmental approach will be handled by through a coordinated approach.

On an as-needed basis and as resources allow, the City's Public Spaces Workgroup will identify Priority Focus Areas in which to apply an encampment resolution model. In order to resolve encampment activities as quickly as possible, the City's Interdepartmental Homelessness Team will focus intensified outreach, trust-building and offers of shelter and resources for those within the encampment. Enforcement of the City's anti-camping Ordinance through issuing of a misdemeanor citation will generally be utilized after multiple attempts of outreach and at the team's discretion, as appropriate.

These Priority Focus Areas will be identified and prioritized by the City's Interdepartmental Team and Public Spaces Workgroup, involving appropriate staff from the Health Department (Homeless Services Bureau), Police Department, Parks Recreation and Marine Department, Public Works Department (Clean Team), Fire Department, Library Services and other relevant City staff depending on the location. Identification of these sites will be based on encampments that meet the following criteria:

- Encampment(s) that have previously received repeated outreach and offers of services and shelter.
- Encampment(s) causing significant and persistent obstruction of access or use of crucial, highly used public resources and space, such as parks, libraries and beach areas. Significant obstruction would result in the inability of the public to use a space or resource as intended.
- Encampment(s) taking up a significant amount of space relative to the overall space available.
- Priority problematic areas as identified by consistent community and Council Office input where other methods of outreach and services have not been effective.
- Activities or characteristics representing significant public health or safety concerns, including observed behaviors.
- Quantitative data, such as homeless services outreach and engagement data and other frontline service data.

Once identified, the City's Public Spaces Workgroup will design and implement an encampment resolution strategy for the specific location or situation. This approach will include intensive outreach, including engagement by Homeless Services and relevant front-line departmental staff (e.g. Police, Fire, Parks Recreation and Marine, Library, etc.). This outreach will include building trust and rapport, assessment and meeting of basic needs (food, water, and immediate medical care), offering emergency shelter and connection to case management for permanent housing solutions, and notification that the area needs to be vacated. The Team will assess if cleanups of the location(s) are required and follow all necessary protocols including posting procedures. The Public Spaces Workgroup will also convene weekly case conferencing, in which individual needs and barriers to service are discussed and resolved, and interdepartmental coordination will happen daily. As needed, the team may allocate additional resources, including additional staff, after-hour visits by staff, and prioritization of residents of encampments for non-congregate shelter options.

Enforcement of the City's anti-camping ordinance through misdemeanor citations may be used as a means of dispersing encampments in priority focus areas if other outreach and service provision measures prove ineffective. Due to the significant impact on staff, service resources, and funding needed for this approach, prioritization will need to occur, with the team focusing on the most problematic locations, prioritizing those where other solutions are not possible and have a high impact on either public resources or access to public space. If every location is a priority, no area is a priority, and the team will be ineffectual in its response.

General Homelessness Response

When responding to other requests related to residents experiencing homelessness, the City remains committed to leading with compassion and empathy and focusing on services that can resolve homelessness. Homeless Services staff will continue proactive outreach and relationship-building to move people into shelter and housing as quickly as possible.

When responding to community requests, the City's Interdepartmental Team will generally start with outreach and engagement, building trust with Outreach Workers to successfully connect the person(s) to supportive services. This will include an assessment of basic needs (food, water, and immediate medical care), an offer of emergency shelter as available, and an offer of case management services to work towards available permanent housing resources. Misdemeanor citations for violations of the City's anti-camping ordinance may be issued after multiple attempts of outreach and engagement.

Encampments and individuals in situations of high danger to physical safety, such as unsafe vacant structures or in areas vulnerable to storm events, may be subject to citation. The Long Beach Fire Department, in partnership with the Long Beach Police Department, may utilize citations to further compel encampments to relocate to safer areas. The City's Interdepartmental Team will continue implementing the homelessness response laid out in [the Homeless Encampment and Public Spaces Cleanup Protocol](#) memo, transmitted on April 23, 2024.

Examples of Potential Enforcement Scenarios

To help underscore the resources available and the potential process used to address problematic locations, here are three examples of potential resolution to encampments where enforcement has been requested. Please note that the hypothetical scenarios below are solely meant for illustrative purposes, as City responses to real-life situations are nuanced and based on individual circumstances.

Example 1: A resident reports a single tent on a public right of way near a flood control channel. It is a small encampment, but residents are requesting it to be dispersed and call the Emergency Communications Center (Dispatch). The call is triaged by the dispatcher to determine which City department is best equipped to respond to the call for service. If the circumstances provided by the caller warrant direction to the Multi-Service center, the call would be forwarded to the MSC line at (562) 570-4MSC. In this case, the call is directed to the Homeless Services Bureau, who sends an outreach team to make contact, build rapport, and offer services and shelter. They follow up with additional visits, but services are consistently declined. After coordinating, the

Interdepartmental Team coordinates another visit to inform the individuals of the City's Municipal Code regarding overnight camping and advises the individuals they are subject to citation upon response by the Police Department. The Interdepartmental Team follows up at the location to find the encampment has been abandoned, and the Clean Team removes any remaining debris.

Example 2: A large encampment of five tents has been erected outside of a public library. The tents are growing and structures are being added. The Public Spaces Working Group receive input from the community, patrons, the Councilmember's office and other stakeholders that the encampment is affecting service at the library. The Public Spaces Working Group determines it is a priority and develops an encampment resolution strategy. The Interdepartmental Team, including Homeless Services Outreach and Police staff, make visits to the individuals to assess basic needs and offer services. The Mobile Access Center deploys to offer specialized services like mental health counseling, access to State and County benefits and information on available case management services. Two individuals accept services and shelter, but others refuse and continue to occupy the space. After assessment, the area is posted for cleanup, with a 48-72 hour notice posted. During the cleanup, two more individuals decide to leave and take their belongings. One other puts their encampment right back. Quality of Life officers visit the site and informs the individual that enforcement action will be taken. The individual again refuses to leave and a citation is issued. Follow-up is conducted until the site is again free of encampments. Any personal belongings that are left behind are stored at the City's Public Works storage locker.

Example 3: An encampment of two individuals is reported in a City park. They are alone, but their encampment is quite large. City outreach staff visit the location and determine that the couple is very interested in housing and are enrolled in case management services. The team follows up and determines they are in line to receive a shelter bed, but the space will not open for about three days. The team continues to engage through case management, and check on the status of housing, but citations are not issued to facilitate their entrance into housing. On day four, the shelter becomes available and the individuals move to that location. The site is cleaned by Parks, Recreation and Marine.

These are just potential examples of situations the City may encounter. Each situation is unique and may result in different tools and strategies being implemented.

Challenges and Unintended Consequences

In line with the City's Equity Toolkit, it is important to acknowledge and consider potential challenges and unintended consequences that may result from the implementation of this approach. While enforcement of anti-camping ordinance through misdemeanor citations may temporarily disperse an encampment, it also disrupts the lives of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, who often already represent the most vulnerable and system-impacted residents in Long Beach. Fines associated with citations can have destabilizing effects on people who are already extremely low income. The experience of receiving fines and forced movement may result in material and psychological harm, lost belongings such as

documentation, exacerbated mental and physical health complications and other trauma.

Another potential unintended consequence of utilizing the priority focus area approach to disperse an encampment is the displacement of those residents into other areas of the City. Citations or threat of citations may compel an individual to move, but it does not cause them to disappear or connect them to housing. Unless enough shelter is available for every person in an encampment, people experiencing homelessness may be forced to relocate to other areas, including neighborhoods, commercial corridors, alleys, vacant buildings, right of way of other agencies such as Los Angeles County or Caltrans or other public spaces, creating new impacts or challenges. This increased movement around the City also creates further challenges for a service system that often relies on repeated connections and regular communication between staff and people experiencing homelessness to successfully connect a person with shelter and housing.

Increased activities on priority focus areas may also impact availability of resources and staff within involved departments (Homeless Services, Police Department, Parks, Public Works, Library) to support other proactive outreach and services associated with homelessness throughout the City, unless additional resources are identified.

Independent of the City of Long Beach's response, the actions of many cities in response to the Supreme Court decision are unknown and could prove challenging. However, recent County guidance was released and found to be similar in most areas. Most surrounding cities have not announced definitive positions or changes to policies or protocols, though local government officials have weighed in. Some have expressed their commitment to offering services or resources first before enforcement. Some have expressed an intent not to use any enforcement tools. However, many of those same cities have enacted local ordinances banning encampments in certain proximity to what they deem as sensitive areas in the name of public health and safety. Others have also vocalized their strong support of the ruling, indicating that they will likely leverage enforcement as part of their strategy to address encampments in problem areas. This mismatch in approach at a regional level could lead to people being pushed out of areas that prioritize enforcement and into areas that emphasize services. City leadership intends to advocate with surrounding cities, as well as regional and state governing bodies to ensure there is not a "race to the bottom" and that all municipalities remain committed to solutions over criminalization.

Recent Actions by Governor's Office and LA County

On July 25, 2024, the Governor's Office issued an Executive Order N-1-24 directing state agencies to address homeless encampments on state property with a similar approach of services. The order calls for a process that is similar to how Long Beach and CalTrans work currently to address encampments, through an innovative partnership where Long Beach provides outreach and clean up services defined through an MOU on areas where the City can access without CalTrans support. CalTrans remains responsible for certain areas that require their support to close freeways in order to access safely. This partnership over the past two years has proven very effective, with encampments noticeably decreasing on major CalTrans on and off ramps in Long Beach. The order appears to require state agencies to utilize this approach statewide and encourages cities to do the same.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recently held a public discussion on Tuesday, July 30, 2024. The County approach will be similar, prioritizing a human-centered approach and providing \$120 million in additional funding for the Pathway Home program to provide additional dedicated shelter space. In that discussion, the LA County Sheriff noted that County jails would not be accepting arrests in the County jail solely for anti-camping violations but would continue to address specific crimes that occur that threaten public safety.

Additional Necessary Resources

To appropriately and effectively implement this effort, City staff will work to identify additional resources to supplement the encampment resolution model in priority focus areas. This includes:

- Additional funding for motel vouchers and/or shelter capacity to provide credible offers of interim housing to those in priority focus areas.
- Increase partnerships with community and faith-based organizations who may provide additional shelter capacity.
- Expand permanent housing resources in order to increase flow through the shelter system.
- Add additional staffing resources in the Homeless Services Bureau, Public Works (Clean Team), Parks Recreation and Marine and Library Services to ensure after-hours coverage and concentrated outreach and engagement.
- Expansion of field-based services, such as restroom access, garbage collection, and proactive outreach in areas outside of the priority focus areas where people experiencing homelessness may relocate.

The Proposed FY 25 Budget takes initial steps towards additional resources with two additional Maintenance Assistant positions funded by Tidelands to provide additional cleanup services in Tidelands areas, which will allow our other teams to dedicate more time in non-Tidelands areas. Staff are reviewing additional contract support that can assist through groups that regularly work with homeless populations in Long Beach.

Other Efforts to Mitigate Impacts of Increased Enforcement

City staff are currently monitoring the stance of surrounding cities and advocating with those cities to maintain a service-based approach to the regional homelessness crisis. This could include collaborating on regional shelter facilities and/or programs, as well as advocacy with County, State, and Federal funders to build in requirements incentivizing cities to avoid enforcement designed to criminalize and push out their residents experiencing homelessness and thus just pushing the problem to other locations without offering housing or services.

In June, in preparation for the Supreme Court ruling, the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (COG) began discussion and drafting of a “Good Neighbor Pledge,” an opportunity for cities to sign a commitment to prioritize care coordination, services and shelter, and long-term solutions like affordable housing. Though not legally binding, this pledge represents a mutual commitment to a regional approach to address homelessness, rather than

shifting the issue from city to city. The City will pursue the adoption of a similar pledge to be disseminated among the Gateway Cities COG. The LA County Board of Supervisors has also called for a pledge among cities to coordinate a response countywide.

The Long Beach Police Department and the Department of Health and Human Services are currently in the process of reinstating the Clinician-in-Jail program, which will provide a dedicated mental health clinician working to build rapport, conduct assessments, and coordinate referrals to services and housing for individuals exiting the Long Beach jail.

The City Prosecutor's Office works closely with law enforcement agencies, service providers and the Health Department to offer diversion on low-level, nonviolent misdemeanors with a focus on quality-of-life related offenses. For example, pre-arrest diversion is offered through the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program connecting persons experiencing homelessness to housing, substance use treatment, and mental health services. The Priority Access Diversion (PAD) program and the Rapid Diversion Program (RDP) were created to divert PEH in court into services. The 3P Neighborhood Prosecutor includes prosecutor resources to assist with problem areas within each Patrol Division, including encampments and areas with a concentration of PEH. In 2023, the City Prosecutor's Office developed the GUIDES App to assist LBPD Officers to access services and make referrals in the field, followed up by social workers. Finally, people can also be connected to housing and substance use and mental health services in the courthouse or at the Multi-Service Center through the Homeless Court program. This coordination can be helpful for those who otherwise would not accept services and use pre-trial and pre-booking diversion as an added incentive to get connected with treatment and services.

City staff will continue to identify additional resources, such as Proposition 1 funding and CARE Court, that may provide additional interim and permanent housing resources to expand capacity in the system. City staff will also continue advocacy at the County, State, and Federal level for additional resources, including additional rounds of Encampment Resolution Funding.

Building on Current Operations

It is important to remember that this approach builds upon a strong foundation of existing work, and that the City's capacity to address homelessness has grown dramatically over the past few years. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no City-operated shelter in Long Beach. Since 2021, the City identified partnerships and funding to open the City's first year-round shelter at Atlantic Bridge Community, acquired the former Best Western hotel (1725 Long Beach Blvd) to convert to interim housing, acquired and opened a second year-round shelter at the former Rescue Mission building (702 W Anaheim), master leased motels through Encampment Resolution Funding, partnered with LA County to convert two other motels into permanent supportive housing, and has both the Youth Navigation Center and the Luxury Inn under construction. In the past four years, 457 new emergency shelter or interim housing beds have either been completed or are under construction just by the City alone, not to mention partnerships with the County and non-profits. All told, Long Beach has over 1,200 shelter beds in our system through our Continuum of Care partnerships.

The City has dozens of outreach workers, case managers, nurses, mental health clinicians, and specially trained Police officers who work with our homeless population every day. Public Works teams addressed 3,200 encampments in the last year. Last year, the City launched two

Mobile Access Center teams to bring services directly to people experiencing homelessness across the City and a new unarmed Community Crisis Response Team to dispatch to calls for service that do not require a police response, adding additional capacity to deescalate situations and create solutions. Long Beach is fortunate to have such a coordinated system and will continue that work in addition to the additional enforcement tools mentioned above.

Next Steps

Staff believe the approach identified above is in alignment with the law, and in alignment with best practices that resolve homelessness as opposed to merely addressing symptoms of homelessness yet will provide additional tools to address some very difficult situations and encampments the City is facing. City staff will start on this approach in August 2024 unless additional policy direction is provided by the Mayor and City Council in an agenda meeting. Staff will also provide a six-month update presentation to the Mayor and City Council, reviewing the impact of the City's approach through qualitative and quantitative data and adjusting as needed, and engage our relative commissions such as the Long Beach Continuum of Care Board and the Homeless Services Advisory Commission (HSAC) as we review the effectiveness and impacts of these changes over the next six months.

Staff are happy to answer questions, take input on both the approach and priority areas from Councilmembers, our community, commissions, non-profit partners, residents and businesses as we work to implement this new approach while balancing the workload of the City's interdepartmental team, the housing and service capacity in Long Beach and the region, and the large demand from both the City's population of unhoused residents and our community who call with concerns. We are asking for everyone's understanding of the complexity of this most difficult of societal issues and hope this new approach will allow for a balanced yet effective response to the City's most pressing and difficult challenge.

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