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AGENDA REPORT

TO: Sabrina B. Landreth
City Administrator

FROM: Christine Daniel
Assistant City Administrator

SUBJECT: Report on Serving the Unsheltered
Residents of Oakland

DATE: September 8, 2017

City Administrator Approval

Date:

9/14/17

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report Regarding Pilot Programs To Temporarily House The Unsheltered On Identified City Owned Or Controlled Properties That Includes A Cost Analysis And Discussion Of Alternatives That Include Enlisting The Help Of Organizations Such As Feed The People And The Village.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The unsheltered population in Oakland has increased by 30 percent since 2015 and the City Council identified and provided funding for multiple strategies in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 budget to address this crisis. One of those strategies is the creation of a Safe Haven. This report provides an update on staff efforts at launching a Safe Haven including potential locations and the anticipated structure of services provided at the site. Additionally, this report explores the alternative concept of a sanctioned encampment model with services provided by a community group as presented in July at the Life Enrichment Committee by advocates from Feed the People/The Village.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) received a report in April, 2017 with funding recommendations to reduce homelessness in Oakland that included several strategies, including the concept of a pilot Safe Haven. The Council subsequently provided funding for operation of one site in the adopted 2017-19 budget. Staff has been developing this model based on the experience of the Compassionate Communities pilot and is currently seeking an appropriate location for the Center.

On July 11, 2017, the LEC also received a presentation from Feed the People/The Village organizers on an encampment model that would allow for publicly controlled land to be used by this group of people to manage an encampment with little to no City involvement to immediately reduce the number of encamped individuals on sidewalks and in the public right-of-way.

Item: _____
Life Enrichment Committee
September 26, 2017

The Committee asked staff to return with a list of identified City owned properties and a cost analysis to explore pilot programs to temporarily house the unsheltered with the help of organizers such as Feed the People and the Village. This report includes an update on the development of the Safe Haven, parcels the City has identified, and an analysis of the alternative proposed by The Village/Feed the People.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Staff experience indicates that it is essential to provide dedicated and consistent support and services to the unsheltered population in Oakland to be successful at moving them off the streets and into permanent housing. Models of wrap around services such as those provided at the Henry Robinson Multi Services Center have proven to be very effective. However, they are not currently at the scale needed to address the recent increase in the unsheltered population. Providing a structured level of support at an outdoor site allows for provision of intensified services and support to stabilize campers, connect them to mainstream resources, connect them to the new Coordinated Entry System to access housing resources, assist them to become "document ready" for housing (e.g., identification, proof of income, paperwork completion, etc.) and assist them to move to permanent housing or appropriate transitional housing as it is available.

Safe Haven Structure:

The Safe Haven will be similar to the initial Compassionate Communities Pilot, but will incorporate our learning from that pilot including the need for 24-hour site management (services staff during the day and security staff on evenings and weekends) and controlled access to the site. Dedicated and consistent support and intervention services are essential to this approach and involve an ongoing City cost. Staff anticipates that this site will serve 40 people at a time for stays of up to 6 months. Access to housing resources will be allocated through the coordinated entry/prioritization process, meaning that some residents will receive homeless specific housing assistance and others will be assisted to increase income, access mainstream housing, and/or reunify with friends and family. Not all people will end their homelessness through this strategy.

Similar to the Compassionate Communities pilot, the site will have portable toilets, wash stations, and regular garbage pickup. The ideal size for a Safe Haven is 12-14,000 square feet. Since the need for site control was a major lesson learned in the Compassionate Communities pilot, staff is recommending the City contract with a nonprofit agency to provide site management activities (coordination with other service providers, weekly community meetings, managing site cleanliness) and to provide security staff during times when other staff are not present, thus ensuring that only program participants are accessing the Safe Haven site. The City will also contract with a nonprofit agency to provide intensive street based housing navigation services to occupants of the site. The City is already in conversation with current service providers who worked on the Compassionate Communities pilot and they have indicated an interest in managing the site and providing appropriate services. Once the site is selected and prepared, staff would return to Council for a contract modification with those providers.

Rather than tents, if funding allows, the Safe Haven will use more substantial modular units (such as "Tuff Sheds") that have doors and windows and can accommodate two people. These units have the advantage of being more durable and offering more weather protection and security. Staff recommends using modular units due to their weather protection, durability, stability, and capacity to create an organized arrangement.

Safe Haven Locations: The City has been evaluating locations to situate a Safe Haven, seeking one where the impact to the surrounding community can be managed and a cleaner and safer environment for housed and unhoused residents can be maintained. Below is a summary of the status of four sites:

34th and Mandela: This location is an unused Caltrans parcel that is paved, fenced and approximately 46,000 square feet. Although larger than what would be needed for a Safe Haven, the site would require very little preparation to begin the Safe Haven and is in an area close to two large encampments. Staff believe that efforts to encourage people from those encampments to move to this location would be successful due to the services available at the site. Staff had positive initial discussions with Caltrans, including negotiating a draft lease. *However, this location is no longer available due to an upcoming potential construction project at the MacArthur Maze; Caltrans has removed this location from the rental and sales market.*

3831 Martin Luther King Jr. Way: This City owned lot is slated for future development of affordable housing units and is approximately 10,000 square feet. It is slightly smaller than the ideal and would require some paving and the removal of vehicles that are owned by tenants of an adjacent apartment building who park there illegally. It is across from an auto repair shop and to the south is a vacant, privately owned parcel with boarded up units. This site has access to utilities and could be used almost immediately.

East 12th Street and 23rd Avenue: This site is a City-owned remainder parcel that is approximately 64,000 square feet and already has a homeless encampment located on it. The City is adding sanitation services for the encamped at this site. The site is flat and open and the closest neighbor is an auto repair business; there are no residential uses nearby. The site is unpaved which could be problematic during the rainy season therefore some paving and other site prep would be required. Access to utilities must also be confirmed.

6th Street from Castro to Brush: This is an approximately 54,000-square foot parcel that is zoned for residential use and was recently sold by Caltrans to a private party. It is bordered by and adjacent to one of the largest homeless encampments in the City and the closest neighbor is the Kinetic Arts Institute at 7th and Brush. Staff met with the new owner of the parcel and he indicated interest in leasing all or a portion of the lot to the City until his development project is ready to build, which likely would be at least 18-24 months from now. However, staff has learned that the owner just entered into a lease with PG&E for the lot. Staff has contacted PG&E to assess opportunities for sharing the site and are waiting for a response. Preparation of the lot would require vegetation removal, paving and temporary utility installation.

Annual Costs:

Staffing: includes site management staff, security, a housing specialist, housing navigators, and a part time program coordinator for a total annual cost of \$354,462.

Operations: includes portable toilets, garbage service, laundry, supplies, and miscellaneous client services for a total annual cost of \$118,216.

One-time costs: includes fencing, office space, furniture, and storage facilities for a total cost of \$9,132.

One-time costs for "Tuff Sheds": including cots, sheets and blankets is \$69,520.

Total: the combined one-time and annual cost is \$551,330. See **Attachment A** for a more detailed budget.

Alternative Model:

The Village/Feed the People presentation to LEC in July offered up an alternative model in which the City allows for an organization to create a sanctioned encampment on City owned or controlled land. This model relies heavily on volunteer efforts at encampment management, the provision of sanitary facilities, food distribution, and security. Organizers reference the creation of the Village Encampment in Grove Shafter Park in January. A key component of this approach is that it is initially less costly than the Safe Haven model because it does not include the services described above. It would be a community operated model that could quickly move people off streets and sidewalks, but without the wrap around services to enable people to access transitional or permanent supportive housing through the County and City providers. There are real costs associated with such a model including the portable toilets, garbage service, security, and supplies as noted above in the costs analysis for the Safe Haven.

Using the Shelter Crisis Ordinance, to be considered by the City Council on September 19th, this model could be allowed on public land or publicly controlled land, regardless of the zoning, due to the suspension of zoning laws allowed under the ordinance. However, the City would require the entity operating the site to execute an agreement regarding the size and duration of the site, the security and the sanitation management plan.

Similar to the provider selected to operate the Safe Haven, the operator of a sanctioned community-operated site would be required to indemnify the City with a general commercial liability policy with appropriate limits. Also, a clear set of rules including a prohibition on violations of the law, would be required to be posted and enforced by the provider at the site. The provider would be required to allow access by City officials such as fire or building inspectors to ensure the site is being operated in compliance with those established rules and if violations went uncorrected, the City would reserve the right to close the site.

Again, staff experience indicates that it is essential to provide dedicated and consistent support and intervention services to the unsheltered population in Oakland to be successful at moving them off the streets and into permanent housing. The community operated model may be more affordable but it does not replace the service levels and expertise generally recognized as

needed to move highly vulnerable people out of homelessness permanently, particularly those with multiple disabilities. With that in mind, the duration of a community operated model is also a significant concern for staff because of the potential problems associated with a long term sanctioned encampment becoming entrenched at a city site without a clear path to resolution and housing for its participants. These current proposals for Safe Havens and other such sites are emergency measures and should not be viewed as a permanent "housing" strategy or solution.

Additional Location Considerations:

Advocates have raised the idea of allowing encampments in the City's Parks and on other city owned parcels. In the City's General Plan, the Open Space Conservation and Recreation Element (OSCAR) contains principles regarding the preservation and use of parks. Among those principles are the following:

"Oakland's existing parks should be regarded as a limited and precious resource. They should be carefully managed and conserved in the future. Zoning and Master Planning should be used to protect and manage park resources."

"Oakland's parks should support a wide range of passive and active recreational activities."

"A priority must be placed on making the parks safe. While a range of physical and law enforcement solutions can be explored, the single most effective solution to crime in parks is to increase legitimate use of the parks."

Parks where homeless encampments have developed recently have created a variety of access problems to park waterways, usage of children's play structures, and dog parks. Additionally, damage caused by encampments has increased costs and safety concerns for staff responsible for maintaining park and recreation facilities.

If the Council wishes to pursue the use of City parks as Safe Haven locations, staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission be engaged in reviewing that option. This Commission is responsible for advising the Mayor, Council, City Administrator, and the Oakland Parks and Recreation Department on all matters relating to the general policy and operation of the parks and recreation system.

A list of all City owned property was included in the April 2017 staff report to the LEC. Staff has examined that list and assessed locations based on: proximity to existing encampments, services, and transit and adjacency to sensitive uses to determine the likelihood that these locations would be suitable for an encampment. The list of viable locations is fairly limited but staff will continue to review these locations and to take into consideration any locations recommended by the community.

FISCAL IMPACT

This is an informational report and therefore has no fiscal impact. The City's adopted FY2017-19 budget appropriated \$450,000 per year for two years for a Safe Haven. The costs associated with a community operated model are variable depending on the ability of a non-profit entity to meet the basic requirements of the site including sanitation, security, and insurance costs.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

In early February, City staff began meeting with advocates who had been involved with the Village/Feed the People Project and as the group evolved has been named the Homeless Advocacy Working Group. This group includes many Oakland residents who have a strong interest in serving the unsheltered population. They provide input on a regular basis both in meetings and on-site at encampment cleaning operations to provide a stronger voice for the unsheltered community. Their support and advocacy has broadened the City's perspective on the best methods to serve this population.

COORDINATION

Several City Departments are involved with the recently created Encampment Management Team including the Human Services Department, the Public Works Department, the Fire Department, the Police Department, the City Administrator's Office and the Mayor's Office. Also, the Human Services Department holds extensive collaborative and funding relationships with County agencies and the non-profit service providers who serve the unsheltered population in Oakland.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Providing housing and services to the homeless to eliminate and prevent homelessness is an investment that has an immeasurable return when the impact it has on the lives of those individuals and the community at large is taken into consideration.

Environmental: The provision of housing for at-risk and homeless persons is intended to address the environmental degradation caused by homeless families and individuals precariously housed or living on the streets.

Social Equity: The expenditure of these funds is targeted to the most vulnerable and at-risk populations in this City and is providing essential and basic human services, housing and support.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

For questions regarding this report, please contact Joe DeVries, Assistant to the City Administrator, at 238-3803.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Daniel
Assistant City Administrator

Prepared by:
Joe DeVries, Assistant to the City Administrator
Lara Tannenbaum, Community Housing
Services, Acting Manager, Human Services
Department

Attachments:
Detailed Budget

SAFE HAVEN PILOT PROGRAM; 40 INDIVIDUALS @ ONE TIME

** Items that are straight purchases, rather than funded services, would move forward more quickly and in some cases more affordably if funded by an outside entity.

Total cost for these purchased items = approximately	\$279,164			
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STAFFING	DESCRIPTION	COST	SALARY	ANNUAL COST	Notes
Site Management 9am-5pm	Provide general oversight of the space; engaging individuals on site, regularly informing them of upcoming providers, programs, and/or other community services available to them, and addressing any issues as they arise including facilities issues, conflict resolution, or reaching out to providers that the clients are seeking.	\$25 per hour with fringed already folded into hourly rate; 40 hours per week.	\$1000 per week	\$52,000	
Site Monitors /Security (5pm-9am) - 1 person per shift	Provide general safety and oversight of the space; sign clients in and out, provide basic information and referrals as needed between the hours of 5pm and 9am	\$27.00 per hour with fringed already folded into hourly rate; 128 hours per week.	\$3,456.00	\$179,712 **	
Housing Navigators (Case Managers) 1.25 FTE	Build relationships with clients; link clients to benefits and resources as needed; assist with obtaining documents needed for housing; manage RRH subsidy process; 1:30 ratio	\$30 per hour with fringed already folded into hourly rate; 40 hours per week.	\$1,500 per week	\$78,000	
Site & Program Coordinator .25 FTE	Hire, train, supervise staff, ensure adequate staffing, attend planning/implementation meetings, etc.		\$360 per week	\$18,750	
Housing Specialists; .5 FTE	Cultivate landlord relationships; identify safe, decent, and affordable housing; provide tenant/landlord mediation post housing; 1:30 ratio	\$25 per hour with fringed already folded into hourly rate; 20 hours per week.	500	\$26,000	
Janitorial Staff	Activity completed by residents organized by the site coordinators as a weekly activity no need to hire for this task.			\$0	
Total Staffing				\$354,462	
ONE-TIME EXPENDITURES	DESCRIPTION	COST		ANNUAL COST	
Storage Sheds for clients' belongings	4 units; 10 x12; 10 clients share one unit of storage; (two storage bins per client); \$510 each with tax & delivery (may be able to ask businesses or Faith based organizations to "adopt" a shed and pay for the cost; can pick up ourselves to save on cost)	\$2,040 one-time cost		\$2,040 **	
Storage Boxes for clients	80 total; 2 per client to place in sheds (there would be schedule to access belongings daily); 18 gallon tub with lid; \$7 per bin	\$560 one-time cost		\$560 **	
Office Space for the Housing Navigators/Site Management	1 unit; 12 x 12 x 8'6"; can hold up to two staff @ one time; \$3,300 (may be able to ask businesses or Faith based organizations to "adopt" a shed and pay for the cost)	\$3,300 one-time cost		\$3,300 **	
Office Start-up	1 laptop/table, printer, phone, wifi capability.	\$1,000		\$1,032 **	
Desks/Chairs	Human Services Department in kind			\$0	
Fencing	8 foot high to cover approx 12,00 square feet; gate	approx \$5.00 per foot x 440 feet of fence		\$2,200 **	
Total one time expenditures				\$9,132	
OPERATIONS	DESCRIPTION	COST		ANNUAL COST	
Portable Toilets	2 units (1 ADA); 1 sink, cleaning three times per week, soap/paper supplies	\$891.50 per 28 day billing cycle; Citywide contract rate		\$11,616	
Food	Light morning and evening snack; (ask businesses or Faith based organizations to contribute/donate towards cost or provide meals?)	\$5 x person x per day	\$1400 per week	\$72,800	

Garbage Pick Up	Provided in-kind by Public Works/Illegal Dumping/Waste Management			\$0	
Supplies	Office and Site; wifi & cellular accounts, printer paper & ink, garbage bags, cleaning supplies, etc.		\$100 per week	\$5,200	
Client Services	Housing documents, pet food, transportation assistance.		\$150 total per week	\$7,800	
Laundry Services	To encourage health and hygiene - laundry cards given weekly	\$10/person per week	\$400 per week	\$20,800	**
Total Operations				\$118,216	
TOTAL ANNUAL COST INCLUDING ONE TIME EXPENSE				\$481,810	

TUFF SHED/HARD SIDED STRUCTURES ONE TIME COSTS; 40 INDIVIDUALS @ ONE TIME					
ONE-TIME EXPENDITURES	DESCRIPTION	COST		ANNUAL COST	
Tuff Sheds for client shelter	20 units; 10 x 12 x 8'6; occupancy 2 per tuff shed; \$3,300 each (ask businesses or Faith based organizations to "adopt" a shed and pay for the cost)	\$66,000 one-time cost		\$66,000.00	**
Cots	60 total; 1 per client; 20 extra for wear and tear/replacement; \$40 per unit including shipping	\$2,400 one-time cost		\$2,400.00	**
Blankets	120 total; 2 per client; 40 extra for wear and tear/washing/replacement; \$7 per unit including shipping	\$840 one-time cost		\$840.00	**
Sheets	80 total; 1 per client; 40 extra for wear and tear/washing/replacement; \$3.50 per unit including shipping	\$280 one-time cost		\$280.00	**
Total one time expenditures				\$69,520	

updated 7/20/17