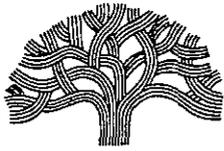


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OAKLAND

2013 OCT 31 PM 3:47



CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO: DEANNA J. SANTANA
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: Sara Bedford

SUBJECT: Supplemental Informational Tracking Report DATE: October 25, 2013
On Winter Shelter Facility Usage & Strategies
For Walk-in Clients

City Administrator

Date

Approval

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sara Bedford', written over a horizontal line.

10/30/13

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council accept from the Department of Human Services, Community Housing Services a supplemental informational tracking report on winter shelter facility usage and strategies for walk-in clients.

REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

Staff provided a report and resolution on the winter shelter to the Life Enrichment Committee on October 22, 2013. At that time the Committee had several questions, including strategies for accommodating walk-in clients and provision for overflow beds, and also for the integration of the shelter population into the downtown business environment so as to mitigate the impacts of homeless clients during hours when the shelter is not in operation.

ANALYSIS

The Winter Shelter at the Henry Robinson Multi Service Center (HRMSC), 559 16th Street, is scheduled to open for the season on November 15, 2013. In years past, the winter shelter was located at the Oakland Army Base and the remote location and sparse business density minimized the impacts on the surrounding working environment. However, since the Henry Robinson Center is located in the heart of downtown, in the midst of the high density and heavily trafficked urban core, care must be taken to mitigate the impacts of homeless populations on the surrounding business and professional environment. Towards this end, staff has taken a number of steps to address those issues.

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Referral Agencies

Rather than operate the shelter on a daily "walk-in" basis, in which clients line up for shelter beds on a nightly basis, clients will access the shelter through participating service provider referral agencies. The referral agencies ordinarily refer clients who are actively participating in services at their agencies. Clients are screened for eligibility, including determination of homelessness, lack of severe illness or debilitating disability, and other criteria. After being screened for eligibility, clients are issued vouchers for up to 28 days. The vouchers are renewable for clients who are actively engaged in case management, housing and/or employment activities. The referral agencies provide case management services and other assistance to winter shelter clients during the daytime hours, as well as administering and issuing the shelter vouchers and tracking client outcomes. The referral agencies insure that winter shelter clients have a productive destination when leaving the shelter site in the morning, and insure that clients have access to the services and resources they need during daytime hours.

Client shelter access: Clients wishing to access the Winter Shelter will gain access through one of the following referring agencies:

- St. Vincent de Paul
2272 San Pablo Avenue. Oakland
- Henry Robinson Multi Service Center (HRMSC)
559 16th Street. Oakland
- Operation Dignity
1504 Franklin Street. Oakland
- Health Care for the Homeless (HCH)/Alameda County Public Health
1900 Fruitvale Avenue. Oakland

Capacity and Bed Allocations

The voucher system has proven to be an effective way to manage shelter resources and minimize the impacts of client queues on crowded downtown streets. When reporting to the shelter in the evening, clients with vouchers will present themselves for admission within a 15 minute window; from 5:45 pm until 6 pm. Bed allocations by agency are as follows:

Agency	Total Beds
1. St. Vincent de Paul	15
2. HRMSC	14
4. Operation Dignity	15
5. Healthcare for the Homeless/AC Public Health	6
Totals for Oakland Agencies	50

Certain steps have been taken to provide for crowd and queue control. As noted, the voucher system eliminates the need for walk up queues. The shelter opens in the evening at 5:45 pm, after the evening rush hour. The Henry Robinson Center itself administers 14 beds, some of which may be reserved for walk ups. A few additional beds are usually available due to no shows and unutilized vouchers. Ordinarily walk-in clients are advised to check for availability of these walk-in beds at 6 pm. Clients may be referred to other shelter resources or vouchered into other shelter sites such as CityTeam Ministries if funding and overflow capacity are available. Staff will carefully monitor the number of clients turned away due to lack of bed capacity and will return to this committee with an evaluation of this and other factors after the shelter is open and operating for at least 30 days.

In the mornings, shelter clients will exit the program at 7 am, which is earlier than morning rush hour, and is intended to minimize the impact on the morning commute. Every effort will be made to ensure that shelter clients are engaged in daytime services and have a productive destination to go to during daytime hours. Note that the practice of dropping clients off in the downtown area in the mornings and having them gather downtown in the evenings is a continuation of longstanding practice for winter shelter. When accessing the army base shelter, clients were picked up and dropped off in the downtown area by shuttle bus without significant impact to the community. It is anticipated that the same very moderate impacts will result from downtown shelter operations at the Henry Robinson Center.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

This item did not require any additional public outreach other than the required posting on the City's website.

COORDINATION

This item required coordination with the City of Oakland Housing and Community Development Department, Planning and Zoning, and the Public Works Agency; also with Alameda County Social Services Agency, Housing and Community Development Agency, Behavioral Health Care Services Agency, and the Probation Department; the report and resolution have been approved by the Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Office.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Integration of homeless and formerly incarcerated clients into the economic mainstream reduces recidivism and crime and provides economic stability for clients, their families, and the community.

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~~Life Enrichment Committee~~

~~November 12, 2013~~

Environmental: Integration of homeless and formerly incarcerated clients into familiar Oakland neighborhoods in supervised settings will provide for community stability and productive environments. Cleanup of homeless encampments mitigates environmental degradation caused by these sites.

Social Equity: Through the provision of housing and wrap around services to homeless and re-entry populations, these clients will begin to achieve stability and prosperity and contribute positively to the community.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Susan Shelton, Community Housing Services Manager, 510-238-6186.

Respectfully submitted,



Sara Bedford, Director
Department of Human Services

Community Housing Services Division

Reviewed by: Susan R. Shelton, Manager

Prepared by: Mike Church, Program Analyst II

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