



CITY OF OAKLAND

# AGENDA REPORT


**TO:** Jestin D. Johnson  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Martina Bouey  
Acting Director, Human  
Services

**SUBJECT:** **Supplemental** - Report On City  
Managed Homeless Interventions

**DATE:** June 28, 2024

City Administrator Approval

  
Jestin Johnson (Jul 11, 2024 20:16 PDT)

Date: Jul 11, 2024

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report From The City Administrator On All City Managed Homeless Interventions, Including (1) A List Of All Interventions And Which District Each Intervention Is Located In, (2) The Service Provider And Specific Amenities And Services Provided At Each Location; (3) The Managing City Staff For Each Intervention; And (4) If And How The City Ensures All Of The Necessary Facilities And Services For Residents Are In Place And Fully Functional**

## **REASON FOR SUPPLEMENTAL**

The following supplemental report responds to questions requested at the April 23, 2024, Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) Meeting.

### **Background**

A request to receive information on City Managed Homeless Interventions originated from Council Member Fife's office. The original request included the following inquiries:

1. A List of All Interventions and Which District Each Intervention is Located in
2. The Service Providers and Specific Amenities and Services Provided at Each Location
3. The Managing City Staff for Each Intervention
4. If and How the City Ensures All of the Necessary Facilities and Services for Residents are in Place and Fully Functional

These questions were responded to in an informational report presented at LEC on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and can be reviewed in that report. It was noted a response to inquiry number three was unclear. Team members within the Community Homelessness Services Division are assigned to work with and oversee specific projects. Staff in the classification Administrative Analyst I are typically assigned to provide administrative support to various projects including processing extensive invoice packets, auditing allowable expenses by funding source, and ensuring timely payments to grantees and contractors. Program Management of projects is split across the team of Program

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Analyst II and Administrative Analyst II team members. Nonprofit program level staff that work within the homeless interventions are assigned a City of Oakland Program Manager they work with directly. The Program Analyst staff typically are supervised by Program Planners who provide initial support to troubleshoot programmatic challenges and concerns prior to raising concerns to division and department management for resolution. These two positions are currently vacant. The Community Homelessness Services Division (CHS) Manager is currently filling that void and is the main contact for inquiries and discussions for all city managed homeless interventions. The CHS Manager works directly with Executive Directors and other program leadership for all grantees and contractors.

### **Supplemental Information**

Members of the Life Enrichment Committee had several additional questions regarding homeless services and homeless funding. The community at large raised similar questions. Much of the information requested from the LEC will be provided in a thorough annual report later this calendar year. Further information pertaining to the above referenced questions is available to review in the narrative below.

- How do cabins accommodate residents with disabilities? What is the process to request a reasonable accommodation for a disability? If a participant of a community cabin program has a grievance against a staff member to file (either with the respective nonprofit or city), what is the process to do so?

As new programs are set-up, they are assessed for ADA access. Identifying programmatic sites with adequate ADA access has proven to be a challenge. One benefit of cabin sites is that the City works with a contractor to develop the site from inception. Cabin sites include ADA cabin units. These units typically come with a ramp outside of the door for wheelchair access. ADA restroom access is also provided by way of shower trailers, including an ADA restroom stall and ramp or an on-site ADA porta potty for sites not yet equipped with plumbed restrooms. If a participant has an ADA need or request, they should inform the onsite program manager of the need. The manager will work within their nonprofit to accommodate the need. Should the nonprofit need additional support, they will work with CHS staff to address the client's needs. Should a client or program participant feel their rights have been violated and/or were treated unfairly, they should follow the grievance process to have their concerns resolved. Participants are provided with the grievance policy during their initial program overview meeting with the nonprofit staff. Participants who would like to file a grievance should first follow the nonprofit's process of submitting a grievance to the onsite staff. If the grievance cannot be resolved through the nonprofit, whether with on-site staff or nonprofit leadership, the participant can raise their grievance to City staff. The grievance will be received by the program's assigned City of Oakland Program Manager, who will discuss it with their direct supervisor. If the grievance continues to stay unresolved it will be raised to CHS management with the expectation of a resolution. The Department Head, City Attorneys, and City Administrator's Office leadership will be included as needed. A final decision may be rendered directly by the CHS Manager, Department Director, or City Administrator designee.

- What are the maintenance efforts being taken at community cabins with known/reported hygiene and health issues? Is there a timeline for all cabins to get heating and/or electricity? Why does the availability of restroom facilities vary by site? What upgrades are planned for the cabin sites, as mentioned in the report?

Outdoor emergency shelter interventions were originally set-up in 2020. These facilities were thought of as interventions that could be set-up quickly at a more affordable cost than other intervention types. They were developed to quickly provide shelter and support to the unsheltered homeless population. Original cabin programs were set-up with tough sheds that included two military style cots for an emergency congregate shelter including two individuals assigned to one cabin. The sites also included porta potty and handwashing stations for restroom facilities. Services were typically limited, including one to two staff members on site at a time and overnight security. City staff were very involved in program operations to ensure optimal services were provided despite the limited budgets. These program sites were set-up to support individuals up to six months. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the six month requirement was temporarily lifted. A review of sites coupled with lessons learned have led to a better understanding of the overall need of programmatic enhancements. Despite this understanding, due to fiscal constraints, program budgets have minimally increased, leaving nonprofits to operate within skeleton budgets. As new cabin sites continued to be opened, each iteration attempted to enhance the living conditions and services provided within the minimal budget allocations. The latest program set up on Wood Street includes insulated and electrified cabins with heat, a foldable cot with a metal frame and twin mattress, desk space, and an in-cabin refrigerator. The program site also includes a functional kitchen with a sink and stove, microwaves, and meals. Due to the nature of the set-up of these programs, outdoor interventions enclosed by a fence, and the locations of certain program sites, maintaining security has been a challenge for providers. A unique component of these programs is the need for extensive security support. This need impacts the budget and the ability to increase on-site support while maintaining existing programs.

CHS has committed to enhancing all city-funded cabin and RV programs. Enhancements include ensuring all cabins have insulation and heat, more dignified beds, plumbed restrooms with showers and staffing to support both safety and housing transition and resource services. A priority of CHS, including Human Services and Housing and Community Development, is to ensure the programs we are currently funding are operating in a safe, dignified, and effective manner to support each individual utilizing the services. As of the conclusion of FY 23, the Northgate program has enhanced all of the cabins on site, the Miller site has begun upgrades to their cabins, and prior to notifying the closure of Oak Street, plans were set-up to enhance the site and new beds were secured to begin the process. In FY 24, upgrades to the cabins at Mandela will begin. The resolution for HHAP funded programs includes funds to add plumbing to the Mandela programs which is two of the last three ongoing sites operating with solely porta potties and hand washing stations as restroom facilities. Any additional cost savings from cabin budgets will be used to finalize additional upgrades. City staff continue to work closely with program staff to ensure housing and resource services are provided.

It is important to remember that most cabin participants are not expected to move directly from a cabin to permanent housing within a few months. The goal is to provide a short term stay for unsheltered individuals to connect to services, assess their personal needs, and connect them to their best suited and self-selected next step. This may be a transition to permanent housing and may include a longer stay if needed. It may also include transitioning to another program intended to be longer term with more intensive built-in services.

As facility concerns arise at program sites, nonprofits are expected to utilize the maintenance or other relevant line item in their budget to make repairs. In the case that repairs are extensive and necessary and exceed the available budget or responsibility of the nonprofit, the City will work

with the nonprofit to assess the concern and make a decision about repairs and how to fund the repairs. Participants who have facility concerns should work with the on-site staff to address the concerns. If they feel the concerns are not properly addressed, they should follow the grievance procedure as stated above.

Currently, there is no plan to open new cabins or RV program sites. The city is working with the Interfaith Council of Alameda County (ICAC) on overnight safe parking programs. The newest location, 66<sup>th</sup> Avenue RV Safe Parking, is currently at capacity. The remaining two sites must complete redesigns prior to accepting additional participants. The 71<sup>st</sup> Avenue RV Safe Parking program has nearly completed their redesign and is expected to resume taking new intakes in July. The Wood Street RV Safe Parking site will begin the first steps of the redesign in mid-July.

- How many contracts does the City have with EOCP? How many additional beds will be added to the Homebase sites in FY 24/25? Is the YSA site at full capacity? Is demographic information available for all of the sites mentioned in the report?

CHS works with each agency contracted to run a City of Oakland funded homeless intervention to ensure they are enrolled in the Homeless Management Information System. This is the data system the federal government mandates all jurisdictions to enter homeless data. This system provides several data points, including demographic breakdowns of participants in specific programs. The annual overview will go into greater detail regarding the demographics in specific programs and demographics according to intervention type. As a result of the City Council approving the donation of trailers from San Francisco, Homebase has received 15 additional trailers, increasing the bed count by up to 30 additional spaces. It will also allow the replacement of five unrepairable trailers at that site. In addition to this site, ICAC has accepted 25 trailers for multipurpose use, including services and shelter. Youth Spirit Artworks' Tiny Home Village serving transitional age youth is on the same property as Homebase. The latest report shows the site at capacity. East Oakland Community Project (EOCP) provides shelter services mainly in East Oakland to transitional age youth, families, and single adults. The City of Oakland currently has five contracts with EOCP to support these populations.

CHS staff work closely with providers contracted to operate homeless interventions. We aim to be partners in this work to achieve shared goals. CHS maintains the understanding of the funder to the grantee. A regular review and assessment of the contract compliance is completed. Should this assessment reveal deficiencies, CHS will work with the provider to address the concerns. If deemed necessary, the contract will be terminated.

### **Future Address**

The following questions require more time and assessment and/or are not in the scope of this report and will be addressed in a future report, namely the Annual Report, as accurate information is available.

- Average vacancy rates in each of the shelter interventions for a 30-day period preceding when the report is written.
- Details about county collaboration and what programs at the County are difficult to access.
- How long do participants, on average, stay at each level of intervention – emergency shelter, community cabins, and transitional housing?

- How many shelter beds are funded by the county? Does the county manage or co-manage any sites in Oakland? What county-funded homeless interventions are offered by the City of Oakland?
- What is the rate of turnover at each of the sites?
- What percentage of participants exit into permanent housing or back into homelessness?
- What is the average length of stay at each of the sites?
- How many OHA vouchers does the city have for participants?
- What is the total amount spent annually on the City's homeless interventions?
- What percentage transition into either jobs or SSI/SSDI type benefits?
- How many unhoused seniors reside in Oakland?
- What County measures provide funding to the City for homeless interventions?
- What is the pathway of participants in these programs? What percentage of participants in community cabins and emergency shelters successfully transition into transitional or permanent housing?

### **ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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For questions regarding this report, please contact C'Mone Falls, Community Homelessness Services Manager, at 238-6186.

Respectfully submitted,

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