



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: Sara Bedford
Director, Human Services

SUBJECT: Informational Report – Progress
Identifying Sites For Homeless
Interventions

DATE: April 22, 2021

City Administrator Approval 

Date: Apr 22, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report From The Human Services Department On Progress Towards Identifying Sites In Each Council District For Homeless Interventions Including Specific Types Of Structures And Models For Services, As Requested At The March 22, 2021 Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) Meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information requested at the March 22, 2021 Life Enrichment Committee (LEC) meeting to return to the City Council with an update on identifying land in each Council District for a homeless intervention.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

On March 22, 2021, the LEC received a [Homeless Services Report](#) from the Human Services Department which identified potential uses for public lands to address homelessness and outlined a variety of service models. The report included a list of all City-owned vacant sites of significant size, sorted by Council District, excluding parks and open spaces. It also included a list of non-City owned sites. Staff sought direction from City Council on which City-owned or privately owned sites to prioritize for interventions in each Council District. The report also identifies unexpended funds totally about \$3.9 million that could be used for implementation of such sites.

Staff was also requested to return to the City Council meeting on May 4, 2021 with enabling legislation identifying costs, providers and sites to implement such interventions. While every Council District is actively exploring their options, no single District is yet ready for defined implementing legislation and will require staff to return as specifics are defined in each District.

City Council
May 4, 2021

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Discussions with Councilmembers are ongoing to identify available land in their Districts. Initial results are as follows:

District 1: Councilmember Kalb has identified three potential properties in District 1, both City-owned and belonging to other jurisdictions. All three properties require additional exploration with other City departments or with other jurisdictions, and this work has begun. The Councilmember has expressed an interest in both quick interim interventions and permanent, deeply affordable development. This District is home to the recently acquired Clifton Hall, supporting family shelter and 42 permanent housing units for homeless seniors.

District 2: Councilmember Bas has identified several possible sites in her district and would like to create a co-governed site. She and her staff have identified the population of focus, a possible service provider and a possible vendor for the living accommodations. Work has begun to draw plans and estimate costs of site infrastructure. The preferred site has some time constraints that require more time. District 2 was the home to the recently closed Lake Merritt community cabin site.

District 3: Councilmember Fife provided staff with a list of sites in her district which the Real Estate Division of the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWD) has reviewed and provided detailed feedback on each site. Initial efforts are focused on standing-up interventions on the leased Wood Street site. District 3 is home to the Mandela Cabin site and RV parking, the Northgate Cabin Site, St. Vincent de Paul shelter, and the new Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) project, Lake Merritt Lodge. In addition, the Holland/Henry transitional housing projects are located in this District.

District 4: Councilmember Thao has limited public land in her District that is not already in use and that is near services and public transit. She is looking at privately owned sites and is interested in exploring some of the hotels on the MacArthur corridor in her district as possible temporary or permanent housing sites. The EWD Real Estate Division will be able to provide analysis of hotel options. The Councilmember is committed to identifying a site despite specific parcel limitations.

District 5: Councilmember Gallo would like to have a new intervention in his District that is managed by a nonprofit agency. He is working with staff to identify the best location, program model, and, ideally, to identify a District 5 provider to manage the site. A tour of locations is planned for the week of April 26th, 2021 and conversations with providers are being initiated. District 5 is home to the Miller Cabins, and High Street RV parking.

District 6: Councilmember Taylor has identified a possible site for a Safe RV parking intervention. District 6 is home to the Matilda Cleveland transitional housing program for families and borders the 71st Ave RV Safe parking site which is in District 7.

District 7: Councilmember Reid is interested in possibly using a City surplus property site to develop with modular permanent housing for families. District 7 has the Homebase site with three homeless interventions (YSA Tiny Homes, HomeBase trailers, Covenant House shelter),

the Crossroads Shelter, the 71st Ave Safe RV Parking site, and is home to the County's COVID Roomkey hotels, at least one of which will be converted to a Permanent Supportive Housing site.

Staff will return with implementing legislation as specific sites and providers are identified by each District.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is for informational purposes only and does not have a direct fiscal impact or cost. It should be noted that staff identified \$3.9 million available in unexpended funds (closed or delayed projects in fiscal year 2020-21) that are available for these projects. However, additional funds will likely be needed to reach the goal of a new project in every Council District. All funding is one-time and so important decisions regarding funding will need to be made regarding all emergency interventions in the next 12-18 months.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed policy action beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures.

COORDINATION

Coordination has occurred between the Human Services Department (HSD), City Administrator's Homelessness Administrator, Economic and Workforce Development Department, Housing, and Community Development Department, City Attorney's Office, and City Council offices.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Items discussed in this report are for the purpose of providing housing and services to prevent, address and end homelessness.

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

Race & Equity: In Oakland, the drivers of homelessness fall most squarely on the backs of the African American community who, due to long standing structurally racist practices such as red lining and employment discrimination, are most vulnerable to losing their homes. According to the 2019 Point In Time count for Oakland, 70 percent of the population experiencing homelessness in Oakland identifies as Black or African American; however this demographic is

only 24 percent of the general population. Ending homelessness in Oakland must be defined by what works for African Americans first and foremost in order to reduce the racial disparities.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Lara Tannenbaum, Manager, Community Housing Services Division, at 510-238-6187.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sara Bedford". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

SARA BEDFORD

Director, Human Services Department

Prepared by: Lara Tannenbaum, Manager
Community Homelessness Services