

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: KELLI KUYKENDALL, ACTING HOMELESS SERVICES
MANAGER
SUBJECT: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
EXTENSION OF PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL HOMELESS
EMERGENCY
AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Housing and Community Services Department that the Council, by resolution, approve an extension of Resolution No. 28839 which formally proclaimed a local homeless emergency within Santa Rosa.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On August 9, 2016, pursuant to the authority set forth in California Government Code Sections 8630 thru 8634, Council, by Resolution No. 28839, formally proclaimed a local homeless emergency within Santa Rosa. Section 8630 requires that the Council review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such local emergency is terminated. Council has approved an extension of the proclamation of local homeless emergency on a monthly basis since the original proclamation in August. In light of the continuing conditions of homelessness within the city, staff is recommending that the Council maintain the proclamation in full force and effect at this time. If approved, this will be the thirteenth extension.

This item relates to Council Goal 6: Committed to making Santa Rosa a community where people feel safe to live, work, and play.

BACKGROUND

1. On August 9, 2016, the Council formally recognized a homelessness emergency within Santa Rosa through the following 1) adopted Resolution No. 28838 declaring a homeless shelter crisis; 2) adopted Resolution No. 28839 proclaiming a local homeless emergency; and 3) by motion, directed the Mayor to submit a letter requesting for a gubernatorial state of emergency proclamation.
2. Government Code Section 8630 requires that the Council review the need for continuing the local homeless emergency (Item No.2), at least every 30 days until such local emergency is terminated.

3. Council has approved an extension of the proclamation of local homeless emergency on a monthly basis since the original proclamation in August:

Council Meeting	Resolution No.
August 30, 2016	28851
September 27, 2016	28863
October 25, 2016	28876
November 15, 2016	28884
December 13, 2016	28894
January 10, 2017	RES-2017-002
February 7, 2017	RES-2017-018
March 7, 2017	RES-2017-032
April 4, 2017	RES-2017-052
May 2, 2017	RES-2017-062
May 23, 2017	RES-2017-075
June 20, 2017	RES-2017-117

4. As part of the extension on October 25, 2016, Council directed the Mayor to submit letters to our congressional representatives seeking support to change the Continuum of Care Funding Formula; and on November 15, 2016, Council directed the City Manager to make available up to \$20,000 for the Community Homeless Assistance Program (CHAP).
5. To strengthen the City's existing policies and programs regarding homelessness in Santa Rosa, on October 11, 2016, Council adopted an interim CHAP, and on January 10, 2017, approved a Housing First Strategy and Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Work Plan.
6. During the January 10 meeting, Council also directed staff 1) to amend the CHAP guidelines allowing uses on commercial property and clarifying process and noticing, including staff involvement with education and outreach for CHAP sites; and 2) to further evaluate the expanded winter shelter options presented to Council, which included providing additional rapid re-housing resources and increasing shelter capacity at the Samuel L. Jones Hall Homeless Shelter, National Guard Armory, Veterans Memorial Building, and Former Fire Station 5.
7. On February 7, 2017, in connection with the continued extension of the proclamation of local homeless emergency, staff provided Council with an update on a number of work efforts currently underway, including bringing forward an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST) Agreement with Catholic Charities to provide additional rapid re-housing resources in the amount of \$125,000. Council approved the amendment on February 14, 2017.

8. On April 4, 2017, staff presented three items to Council: a study session on Housing First with national and local experts, Erin Wixsten from OrgCode and Elaine de Coligny from Everyone Home, and two report items, including a discussion on the homeless emergency declaration, strategy challenges, and Homeless Policy Subcommittee, and extension of the homeless emergency. Council made a motion to 1) continue the homeless emergency; 2) consider the work of the Subcommittee completed; 3) convene a series of special Council meetings to give direction to staff in the development of a comprehensive homeless strategy and the feasibility of partnering in a countywide strategic plan.
9. On May 24, 2017, Council held the first special meeting which included presentations by City and County staff.
10. As part of the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 budget, Council approved \$250,000 re-appropriated from the \$3 million Housing Action Plan NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability from Fiscal Year 2016/2017) plus \$350,000 from unassigned General Fund Balance (Fiscal Year 2017/2018), for a total of \$600,000, to expand homeless services.
11. In light of the continuing conditions of homelessness within the city, staff is recommending that the Council maintain the proclamation in full force and effect at this time. If approved, this will be the thirteenth extension.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On July 19, 2016, staff presented to Council three options for emergency declarations concerning homelessness, including declaration of shelter crisis, declaration of local emergency, and request for a gubernatorial state of emergency proclamation, and sought direction regarding Council's interest in pursuing these options. Council directed that staff return with documentation for all three options.

On August 9, 2016, the Council formally recognized a homelessness emergency within Santa Rosa through the following 1) adopted Resolution No. 28838 declaring a homeless shelter crisis; 2) adopted Resolution No. 28839 proclaiming a local homeless emergency; and 3) by motion, directed the Mayor to submit a letter requesting for a gubernatorial state of emergency proclamation.

Council has approved an extension of the proclamation of local homeless emergency on a monthly basis since the original proclamation in August.

ANALYSIS

1. A local homeless emergency continues to exist in Santa Rosa as described in Resolution No. 28839, adopted by Council on August 9, 2016, including as follows:

- a. Sonoma County's 2016 point-in-time count identified 2,906 homeless persons on a given night, 1,906 (66%) of whom were unsheltered; and
 - b. The point-in-time count identified 1,877 homeless persons in central Santa Rosa which represents 65% of the total County-wide count, 1,216 (65%) of whom were unsheltered; and
 - c. The community's homeless population includes veterans, women, children, persons with disabilities, seniors and other vulnerable populations; and
 - d. There is a shortage of available and affordable housing units in Santa Rosa due to the very low rental vacancy rate (approximately 1 percent); and
 - e. Although current programs offered by the City and local non-profit service providers are providing assistance to many persons living without permanent housing, a significant number of persons within the city still remain without the ability to obtain shelter; and
 - f. Many of those unable to obtain shelter continue to reside on the streets, along creeks and pathways, in alleys and doorways, and in unauthorized encampments throughout the city; and
 - g. Persons without shelter are also often without adequate cooking or sanitary facilities, are at risk from theft, crime and extreme weather conditions, and are without security; and
 - h. Such conditions result in a critical threat to the physical and mental health and safety of those experiencing homelessness; and
 - i. Such conditions also result in a threat to the natural environment and the public health and well-being of the surrounding community; and
 - j. To address these conditions, significant additional public and private resources must be brought to bear, with efforts focused on both short-term immediate health and safety measures and long-term solutions to homelessness; and
 - k. The scope of the local homeless crisis is beyond the resources of the City standing alone and will require the combined forces of adjacent jurisdictions and state agencies; and
 - l. The causes and effects of homelessness are complex and can be addressed only with dedication, coordination and flexibility.
2. These conditions continue to pose extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of the city, thus necessitating the continuation of the proclamation of local homeless emergency at this time.

FISCAL IMPACT

Extending the proclamation of local homeless emergency does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund, however, staff does not know for certain at this time the potential impacts of continuing the proclamation.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution – Extending a Proclamation of Local Homeless Emergency

CONTACT

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