

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: DAVID E. GOUIN, DIRECTOR
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL HOMELESS
EMERGENCY AND HOMELESS POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE
REPORT: COMPREHENSIVE HOMELESS SERVICES
STRATEGY, EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS WORK PLAN, AND
REQUESTED COST ESTIMATES

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Housing and Community Services Department that the Council, 1) by resolution, approve an extension of Resolution No. 28839 which formally proclaimed a local homeless emergency within Santa Rosa and 2) by motion, accept the Comprehensive Homeless Services Strategy and Emergency Declarations Work Plan; and 3) provide direction regarding the requested cost estimates.

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. On August 30, 2016, September 27, and again on October 25, Council, by Resolution Nos. 28851, 28863, and 28876 approved an extension of the declaration of local homeless emergency. 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. Staff is also asking Council to accept the Comprehensive Homeless Services Strategy and Emergency Declarations Work Plan and provide direction regarding the requested cost estimates.

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 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. On August 30, 2016, September 27, and again on October 25, Council, by Resolution Nos. 28851, 28863, and 28876, approved an extension of the declaration of local homeless emergency. Also on October 25, Council directed the Mayor to submit letters to our congressional representatives seeking support to change the Continuum of Care Funding Formula.
4. On October 11, 2016, pursuant to the City's authority under the declaration of local homeless emergency, the Council approved an interim Community Homeless Assistance Program (CHAP), establishing guidelines for use of private property for safe parking, safe camping, placement and maintenance of portable toilets and access to existing bathroom facilities, provision of temporary overnight shelter, and storage for personal belongings.
5. The City Council Homeless Policy Subcommittee, with the assistance of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), prepared recommendations in two additional areas – a Comprehensive Homeless Services Strategy and an Emergency Declarations Work Plan. Staff presented the recommendations to the Subcommittee during its regularly scheduled meetings on September 19 and October 17. The Subcommittee directed staff to bring forward the strategy and work plan with requested cost estimates for consideration by the full Council.
6. 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. Staff is also asking Council to accept the Comprehensive Homeless Services Strategy and Emergency Declarations Work Plan, and provide direction regarding the requested cost estimates.

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 a gubernatorial state of emergency proclamation.

On August 30, 2016, September 27, and again on October 25, Council, by Resolution Nos. 28851, 28863, and 28876, approved an extension of the declaration of local homeless emergency.

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, 1906 (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.
 3. The Comprehensive Homeless Services Strategy supports an evidence-based “Housing First” model and aligns with the following three program areas: street outreach and engagement, coordinated entry, and housing and supportive services. The Homeless Emergency Declarations Work Plan, drafted in conjunction with the strategy, outlines existing and new initiatives which the Council may consider implementing to further address homelessness in our community. The work plan also includes cost estimates requested by the Subcommittee.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this item 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 declaration of an emergency. The Emergency Declarations Work Plan does identify cost estimates for the potential implementation of new initiatives subject to the Council’s discretion.

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

- Attachment 1 – Comprehensive Homeless Services Strategy and Emergency Declarations Work Plan

CONTACT

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