

Responses to Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Santa Rosa Declares a Homelessness Emergency

Report Date: June 16, 2017

Response by: Sean McGlynn Title: City Manager

Agency/Department: City of Santa Rosa

FINDINGS:

I (we) agree with the findings numbered: F1, F2, F4,

I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: F3, F5

(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the finding that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations numbered: none

have been implemented.

(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)

Recommendations numbered: R2, R3

have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

(Attach a timeframe for the implementation.)

Recommendations numbered: R1

Require further analysis.

(Attach an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.)

Recommendations numbered: none

Will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

(Attach an explanation.)

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Number of pages attached: 2

City of Santa Rosa's Response to the 2016-2017 Grand Jury Report "Santa Rosa Declares a Homelessness Emergency"

FINDINGS

We agree with findings F1, F2 and F4.

We partially agree with finding F5, with the following clarification:

The First Methodist Church previously discussed with City representatives a proposal to offer up to twenty tent sites on its Church property. The Church has recently indicated that fewer tent sites may be offered. The number of tent sites is within the Church's prerogative.

We disagree with finding F3.

The City's Declaration of Local Homeless Emergency has enabled the adoption and implementation of the Community Homeless Assistance Program (CHAP) and has enabled the opening of additional shelter options within the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. By September 30, 2017, the City of Santa Rosa shall commit to continue to renew the Declaration of Homeless Emergency every 30 days, at least through the Winter of 2017-18.

Response: Pursuant to Government Code section 8630, the City Council must review the need for continuing the declaration of local homeless emergency at least once every 30 days. Section 8630 also requires that the City Council terminate the local emergency "at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant." The City Council therefore cannot, at this time, commit to renewal of the declaration through the winter of 2017-18.

Staff intends, however, to recommend continued monthly renewal of the declaration of local homeless emergency for so long as conditions warrant.

R2. The City of Santa Rosa should formally engage the County to implement the multifaceted Tool Box approach.

Response: Both jurisdictions have adopted the Housing First strategy outlined in the document. In addition, the County has implemented the recommendation that allows the County to invest in affordable housing within Santa Rosa City limits. County and City staff are also working to implement other components of the Tool Box, primarily the facilitation of policy discussions to secure a resource for affordable housing production.

A Joint Meeting of the Board of Supervisors and the City Council is tentatively scheduled for November 7, 2017, to outline the combined and coordinated efforts to address homelessness and affordable housing in the region.

R5. By September 30, 2017, the City of Santa Rosa should develop an action plan to work more preemptively with residents to welcome homeless services.

Response: The joint meeting will inform both the County and City on how both jurisdictions move forward with consistent program oversight, contract scope of services for service providers, measurable outcomes, and housing first approaches linked to affordable housing policy. In the meantime, the City is actively engaged in education and outreach to the community regarding homeless services. The City maintains a webpage dedicated to the City's programs and initiatives to address homelessness and participates in public presentations to inform the community about homeless services. A current example is Santa Rosa's Office of Community Engagement that coordinated outreach to neighborhoods and a community meeting to premier the City's Homeless Encampment Pilot Program. Pending the results of this pilot at the initial location, additional outreach and community meetings will be convened in partnership with the County for other encampment locations. Finally, a joint effort between both jurisdictions is underway to seek proposals for affordable housing at the former Water Agency property on College Avenue.