



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

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Study Session Summary of March 3, 2015 - Update on Cold Weather Shelter Programs and the Community Plan to End Homelessness, presented by the County Office of Supportive Housing and Destination: Home

Call to Order:

Mayor Griffith called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

City Councilmembers Present:

Mayor Jim Griffith
Vice Mayor Tara Martin-Milius
Councilmember David Whittum
Councilmember Pat Meyering
Councilmember Jim Davis
Councilmember Glenn Hendricks
Councilmember Gustav Larsson

City Councilmembers Absent:

None.

Public Comment:

Several members of the public asked questions and commented:

- Shelter closing triggered an experiment in which 38 people are currently being sheltered in motels.
- With the regional focus on chronic homelessness, the community has lost its focus on homelessness prevention, and more non-chronic households have recently become homeless.
- Rent control should be considered.
- Working in Sunnyvale has been very refreshing compared to working in Palo Alto or San Jose.
- Most people who were camping in Fair Oaks Park have been sheltered through new cold weather shelter programs.
- MidPen will start leasing of the new permanent supportive housing units at the old Armory site in about six months, with occupancy to begin in 2016.
- Housing developers are eager to build, if money is available for dedicated homeless units (permanent supportive housing units). If the money is there, they will build it.

Study Session Summary:

Ky Le presented a brief slide show with information from the 2013 Homeless Census and Survey and on County efforts to address homelessness using five distinct program types: permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, prevention, emergency shelter, and transitional housing. He also provided an overview of the new Inclement Weather Program implemented during the current (FY 14-15) cold weather season, and the new North County Shelter programs developed using \$1 million allocated

by the County in October to address closure of the Sunnyvale emergency shelter site. He indicated that the prior Sunnyvale site had a capacity to provide a maximum of 15,000 person-shelter-days (PSDs), so the new County funding was designed to replace that capacity in various other existing shelter facilities with excess space (unfunded capacity), and through new motel voucher programs.

He also provided data on utilization rates during the first two months of operation of the new North County programs, and on the next steps the County was pursuing to develop programs for the coming year, including establishing warming centers, transitional or emergency housing facilities within each city in the North County area.

Councilmembers asked questions and discussed with County and City staff the following items:

- What happens at the end of the cold weather season?
- Is the County advocating at the federal level for more CDBG or other funding for shelters/homeless programs?
- What conversation does the County want to restart?
- Does the County have a plan for providing 7,600 permanent housing units?
- What does the County have in mind regarding jointly funded programs? Is the County asking the City to provide funding for something specific?
- The County has set a goal of having one or more new shelter facilities in place by December 1, 2015. What are the key milestones required for the County to meet that goal?
- What kind of amenities would a new shelter provide (showers, bathrooms, etc.)?
- The County wanted to transition from shelters to permanent housing, based on a study prepared some years ago, correct?
- What different types of clients were served at the old Armory site, compared to the clients served with the new programs this year (i.e., families vs. individuals, etc.)?
- What types of services were provided at the old Armory site, compared to what services will be provided at the new permanent supportive housing projects being developed now at that site?
- What was the County's total annual cost of operating the old Armory site? How much funding did the City provide for that?
- How much is the City projected to receive in Housing Mitigation fee revenues this year? Can that money be used to fund a shelter?
- Is the Hedding Street Armory in San Jose, near the County offices, still available? Can it be used as an interim shelter?
- Will the new supportive housing units at the Armory site be credited toward the goal of replacing the 125 shelter beds (15,000 PSD's) formerly provided in the shelter?
- Is the homeless population growing or staying the same?
- Are we doing anything like what they are doing in Utah ("housing first" model)?
- When is the next follow-up discussion on this topic scheduled? Should be before December 1.
- What is the most cost-effective use of shelter dollars? Appears to be motel vouchers, due to multiple occupants per room.
- The Council controls local zoning in the City, so if that is a problem with a site that would otherwise be a good opportunity, the County should contact the City to see if it could possibly be addressed.
- What else can the City do to help with solutions?

Amanda Montez of Destination:Home provided a brief slide presentation on the new [Community Plan to End Homelessness](http://destinationhomesc.org/downloads/Community_Plan_to_End_Homelessness_IN_SANTA%20CLAY%20COUNTY%20CA.pdf)
<[http://destinationhomesc.org/downloads/Community_Plan_to_End_Homelessness_IN_SANTA%](http://destinationhomesc.org/downloads/Community_Plan_to_End_Homelessness_IN_SANTA%20CLAY%20COUNTY%20CA.pdf)

[20CLARA%20COUNTY.pdf](#)>. She explained that Destination:Home (D:H) is an organization that developed as a result of the County's Blue Ribbon Commission to End Homelessness, convened in 2005. Its board of directors is unique, with members with diverse perspectives, such as formerly homeless people, venture capital representatives, housing developers, water district officials, and various others. D:H believes that the Housing First model can make the biggest difference in addressing homelessness. There are currently about 2,500 chronically homeless individuals in the county, plus about 3,000 people in families, and 700 veterans. She noted that the agency fell a bit short of meeting the goal of housing one thousand homeless individuals or families last year due to the lack of available affordable housing within the county. The new Community Plan to End Homelessness includes three key strategies, and focuses on the belief that housing is the best medicine for ending homelessness. The plan includes a goal of creating 6,000 new "housing opportunities".

Councilmembers asked questions and commented on the presentation by Ms. Montez:

- How many of the 6,000 units/opportunities will be in Sunnyvale?
- What additional policies could the City adopt to help with these goals?
- Can they share a copy of the plan?
- D:H should provide a broad-based communications/outreach campaign to educate the general public on these issues.

Adjournment:

Mayor Griffith adjourned the meeting at 9:44 p.m.