



Administrative Report

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Meeting Date: 4/13/2021

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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PROSECUTOR

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PROGRESS AND POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS OF THE ENHANCED RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS PILOT PROGRAM AND PALLET SHELTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Enhanced Response to Homelessness Pilot Program was initiated by the City Attorney's Office and Police Department in June, 2019 at the direction of the Mayor and City Council. The Pilot Program was initially approved as part of the FY 2019-20 Budget and was limited to one fiscal year due to budgetary concerns. The Mayor and City Council extended the Pilot Program another year upon receipt of the Innovation Grant from the South Bay Cities Council of Government and made the operational changes in the Police Department permanent at the same time. As part of the Pilot Program, the Mayor and Council authorized to host the Homeless Court outdoors in the parking area outside the Detective Bureau at 200 North Pacific Coast Highway on August 4, 2020. On November 10, 2020, on recommendation of the City Attorney the Mayor and City Council approved the construction of Pallet Shelters and chose to build the Pallet Shelter at 1521 Kingsdale for no more than six months. On January 12, 2021, the Mayor and City Council also approved an agreement with City Net to conduct a Census Count of People Experiencing Homelessness. The results of that Census are attached to this staff report. We now seek direction as to whether the Mayor and City Council wish the City Attorney's office to continue the Enhanced Response to Homelessness Pilot Program on a permanent basis and whether to continue the Pallet Shelter component beyond June 30th. If so, our Office will investigate additional funding for the Program, and return with suggested next steps to make the program even more effective, and possible locations for the Pallet Shelter.

BACKGROUND

The Enhanced Response to Homelessness Pilot Program was initiated by the City in June 2019 as an enhanced response to the impact of homelessness not only on individuals experiencing homelessness but also on residents and our local community. The City sought a variety of creative and novel efforts ranging from innovative policing, amending the municipal code, and utilizing the criminal justice system as tools to minimize impacts on the community while striving towards the goal of housing homeless defendants. Some of those efforts include a more precise census of the

homeless population, Homeless Court, and the Pallet Shelter.

Progress

Census. Due to COVID-19, the point in time count of people experiencing homelessness was cancelled this year. The Mayor and City Council approved a census to be conducted by City Net to get a more accurate count of the homeless population, similar to what City Net provided to the City of Bellflower. On January 26, 2021 at 6:00 a.m. and February 2 at 5:00 p.m., City Net conducted a census count of people experiencing homelessness in Redondo Beach. The Census shows a total of 92 individuals surveyed. While this a remarkable **decrease of 47.7%** in the one year from when the 2020 point in time count was conducted, the actual decrease may be even larger. The City Net Census is more comprehensive than the point in time count because the Census includes people that visit the City during the day; whereas, the point in time count is always conducted at night. Of the people who agree to participate in the City Net survey, only 61.5% said they usually sleep in Redondo Beach at night. In addition, 40 people refused the survey while 52 people agreed to participate in the survey. Due to the refusals, it is possible that the total of 92 is further inflated because there is no way to confirm whether a person that refused was already contacted and previously refused (although as much as possible, City Net removed known duplicates of people that refused).

Homeless Court. Harbor Interfaith, PATH and City Net are the homeless service providers that attend Homeless Court. Every participant of Homeless Court is connected with a housing navigator of their choice. The housing navigators give the attorneys recommendations and updates on each participant, and the attorneys will ask the judge to make the appropriate orders to get the participants to work towards becoming housing ready. Judge Rene Gilbertson is the presiding judge of Homeless Court, who compassionately encourages the participants while at the same time is firm when the participants are not following her orders. Homeless Court continues to grow into a one-stop shop with multiple agencies offering services. The Public Defender Expungement Van attends every month to assist defendants in clearing their criminal records to help pass background checks for housing. Clear Recovery Center donates substance abuse counseling and mental health therapy. The Department of Mental Health is able to conduct evaluations and refer people to treatment and services. In addition, these services are not only available to the participants of Homeless Court, but also to any interested person experiencing homelessness in Redondo Beach. If the Enhanced Response to Homelessness Program is approved to continue, the City Attorney's Office hopes to add additional mental health services and treatment as well as agencies that can assist with obtaining employment.

Pallet Shelter. The Pallet Shelter opened on December 28, 2020. In the slightly more than 3 months that it has been open, 25 people have been able to transition from living on the streets of Redondo Beach into the Pallet Shelters. Out of the original 15 people that initially moved in, 60% have been permanently housed as of March 31, 2021, approximately one person every week and a half. This is much more quickly than we ever could have even imagined. Harbor Interfaith maintains a waitlist, and immediately moves a new person in when someone is permanently housed. Four participants are currently employed and the rest work with their case managers to seek employment.

There has been an outpouring of support from the community and the Pallet Shelter receives numerous donations. The Green Room Barber Studio donates haircuts every month; the Women's

Club of Redondo Beach donated a refrigerator and microwave; the Redondo Beach Moose Lodge donates meals every Monday and also donated hygiene items and clothing; the Canterbury Retirement Home donates daily meals; Saint James Church donated sweats; Saint Andrews Church donated sweats and hygiene kits; Saint James School donated welcome mats; Councilmember Emdee donated various clothing and cleaning supplies; the Redondo Beach Salvation Army donated clothing vouchers, snacks, drinks and hygiene kits; the YMCA donated snacks and fruits; and the Laptop Elf Project donated refurbished computers for tenants to use in their job searches. In addition, various residents donated cleaning supplies, towels, bibles, reading glasses, toiletries, vocational training, quilts for their beds, jackets, snacks, welcome plants, life coaching, interview skills, counseling, and computer skills. Deputy Public Works Director Mike Klein has gone above and beyond his ordinary duties, providing extraordinary services. Easter baskets were also delivered to the residents of the Pallet Shelter the week before Easter. Moreover, Alcoholics Anonymous is conducted every Thursday at 5:00 p.m. and the Department of Mental Health arrives on site every Wednesday.

Many participants of the Pallet Shelter are also participants in Homeless Court. The structure of Homeless Court and stability the Pallet Shelter offers work together to permanently house the participants. Data is currently being gathered on the efficacy of these programs, but the preliminary data shows reduction in recidivism and successful diversion from criminal charges. Not only do these programs continue to grow, but other cities throughout Los Angeles County also have toured both Homeless Court and the Pallet Shelter with the intent to replicate a similar model in their respective cities.

Direction for Enhanced Response to Homelessness Pilot Program

Staff seeks direction as to whether the Mayor and City Council want the City Attorney's Office to continue overseeing the Enhanced Response to Homelessness Pilot Program on a permanent basis. The Mayor and City Council can decide to continue the Pilot Program under a different department, such as the Community Services Department or under the City Manager. Alternatively, the Mayor and City Council can take no action and let the Pilot Program come to an end, as it is set to terminate at the end of this fiscal year in June.

Direction for the Pallet Shelter

The Pallet Shelter was approved for six months with the option to terminate earlier with thirty days' notice. Staff also seeks direction as to whether the Mayor and City Council want to continue the program and direct the City Attorney's Office to investigate alternative sites and additional funding to continue the Pallet Shelter.

COORDINATION

The City Attorney's Office coordinated with the Police Department and the City Manager's Office in connection with the preparation of this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Fiscal Impact of each of these items will be finalized at the time they are each brought back for final City Council approval as part of the FY 2021-22 Budget.

ATTACHMENTS

Census Report by City Net