

Commission Meeting of
August 26, 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL #1

Honorable Members of the Social Services Commission
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Commission:

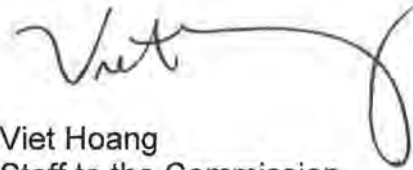
**SUBJECT: Supplemental #1 – Accept and File Report from Staff on the City's
progress in addressing Homelessness in Torrance**

At the August 24, 2021 City Council meeting, Staff presented City Council a monthly update report on the City's Progress in Addressing Homelessness in Torrance.

Respectfully submitted,



Zulma Gent
Staff to the Commission



Viet Hoang
Staff to the Commission

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: City Manager – Accept and File Update Report on the City’s Progress in Addressing Homelessness in Torrance.

Expenditure: None.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council accept and file an update Report on the City’s Progress in Addressing Homelessness in Torrance.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

At the City Council meeting of July 13, 2021, Councilman Mattucci requested and received concurrence directing staff to provide a monthly update on the City’s progress in addressing homelessness, including an update on alternate site locations for temporary housing.

Site Selection

As directed by City Council at their June 22 meeting, while staff moves forward with activating the Civic Center grounds as the site for the temporary housing units, staff continues to explore potential alternate sites. The Community Development Department is using meetings with prospective industrial developments as an opportunity to raise Council’s request. Additionally, staff continues to reach out to large industrial landholders in the City to gauge interest in partnering with the City for an alternate site location.

While the City has not found a viable alternate industrial site as of the date of this memo, in reaching out to landholders in the City, one large industrial landholder offered to support the City in its efforts to address homelessness with financial support. Staff will work with this landholder and will officially announce their generosity at a future City Council meeting.

Finally, the City has heard numerous requests from the community to explore the Regional Transit Center as a possible location for temporary housing. Staff will continue to assess this site as a possibility, particularly as the City secures lease agreements and understands the available space at the Regional Transit Center (RTC). Staff is researching process and costs associated with exploring the removal of existing deed restrictions prohibiting overnight occupancies on RTC parcels.

City staff will continue to explore alternate sites. If viable options become available, staff will return to City Council for further direction. In the meantime, staff will continue with the activation of the Civic Center grounds for temporary housing.

Budget and Funding for Temporary Housing Program

Staff has developed the following 18-month budget related to site preparation, capital expenses, and operating expenses. An 18-month budget was created so that staff could submit a proposal for the South Bay Cities Council of Government (SBCCOG) call-for-projects, which is addressed below. As approved by City Council, the temporary housing program will be evaluated for program effectiveness during its first twelve months. The 18-month budget was developed so that City staff could submit a proposal based on the SBCCOG's 18-month project window.

Site Preparation, Capital and One-Time Expenses	Est. Cost	Proposed Source of Funding
Architectural Design Services for Site	\$10,000	SBCCOG Innovation Grant 20/21 ⁽¹⁾
Southern California Edison Planning & Design Fees	\$10,000	SBCCOG Innovation Grant 20/21 ⁽¹⁾
Site Preparation: Trenching, Electrical Connection	\$80,000	SBCCOG Innovation Grant 20/21 ⁽¹⁾
Site Preparation: Sewer Connection	\$20,000	In-Kind: LA County Public Works
Site Preparation: Water Connection	\$20,000	In-Kind: LA County Public Works
40 8x8 All Access Units, AC, Heating, Light, Smoke Detectors, Mattresses, Delivery of Units, Assembly of Units	\$372,000	LA County ARP Act Funds – Tranche One ⁽²⁾
Interior Fencing and Access Gates	\$30,000	SBCCOG Call for Projects for LA County Homeless Initiative 22/23 ⁽³⁾
Block Wall Extension along the Eastern Property Line (as requested by Council to explore)	\$70,000	SBCCOG Call for Projects for LA County Homeless Initiative 22/23 ⁽³⁾
Start Up Costs: Cleaning Supplies, Technology, Personal Supplies for Residents	\$20,000	SBCCOG Call for Projects for LA County Homeless Initiative 22/23 ⁽³⁾
Total Site Preparation, Capital and One-Time Expenses	\$632,000	

Operating Expenses for 18 Months	Est. Cost	Proposed Source of Funding
Two Outreach and Housing Navigator Staff for 18 months	\$250,000	SBCCOG Call for Projects for LA County Homeless Initiative 22/23 ⁽³⁾
18 Months Operating Expense (Estimate provided by LA County Housing for Health)	\$2,550,000	Torrance ARP HOME Funds ⁽⁴⁾ , LA County ARP Act Funds – Tranche One ⁽²⁾
Total Operating Expenses for 18 Months	\$2,800,000	

Total Site Preparation, Capital and One-Time Costs, and 18-months Operating Expenses	\$3,432,000
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Status of Funding Sources

- SBCCOG Innovation Grant 20/21:** Staff has submitted the proposal and scope of work for \$100,000. SBCCOG staff is drafting the MOU between the City and the SBCCOG. These funds were previously allocated by the SBCCOG to another city in our region; however, because the city will not be able to expend the funds before the end of 2021, SBCCOG has requested that the County redistribute these funds to Torrance.
- LA County ARP Act Funds – Tranche One:** This is the most significant change since the June 22 City Council meeting. LA County staff originally proposed that temporary housing units and operating expenses be funded through LA County's Emergency Services Grant and the Fourth District

Supervisor's Discretionary Funds. In the City's most recent meeting with LA County staff, the City was notified that funding for temporary housing units and operating expenses will be funded through the County's allocation of ARP Act Funds, Tranche One. Although prospective finding levels remain the same, the reclassification to federal monies imposes additional regulatory elements that may impact procuring the temporary housing units.

3. **South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) Measure H Call for Projects 22/23:** LA County allocated funds from Measure H to COGs based on the 2020 homeless count. In turn, COGs will allocate funds to their member cities. SBCCOG's allocation is \$1.9 million, and through a competitive call for projects, will distribute these funds to cities in the SBCCOG region. City Staff submitted three proposals to the SBCCOG's call for projects, which were due on August 10, 2021. One of the proposals submitted was to seek funds to support capital, one-time and operating expenses associated with a temporary housing program.
4. **Torrance ARP Home Funds:** The City received an allocation of \$1.7 million from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for ARP HOME Funds. One eligible use of these funds is to develop non-congregate shelter, which the temporary housing units qualify. HUD has announced that guidelines for using these funds will be released this fall. These funds will be used for operating the temporary housing program for one year.

Implementation Timeline

The City continues to work with LA County staff in developing an agreement that delineates funding expectations. A challenge staff has encountered is LA County's change in funding sources from the Emergency Services Grant and the Supervisor's Discretionary Funds (both funding sources that the County has control over), to the County's ARP Act Fund – Tranche One. Because the County is now utilizing Federal funds, the County is required to comply with Federal guidelines, including issuing RFPs to secure vendors. LA County anticipates that this will extend implementation by at least two months, likely to December 2021.

The Board of Supervisors approved allocation recommendations of the County's ARP Act Funds – Tranche 1 at their meeting on July 27, 2021. City staff will continue to work with LA County staff to develop an agreement now that funding allocations have been approved.

Program Development

During the June 22 meeting, City Council expressed concern about residents of the temporary shelter having constructive activities to do during day time hours. Staff recently met with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB). SBWIB staff proposed a number of programs to offer at the temporary housing site, in conjunction with the operator's case managers, who work to assist the residents in attaining permanent housing.

1. **Blueprint:** SBWIB staff can provide life skills training to residents of temporary housing, including interpersonal relationships.
2. **Pre-Employment Services and Training:** SBWIB staff can provide resume writing, job matching, and interview preparation skills.
3. **Transitional Subsidized Employment:** SBWIB can fully subsidize paid work experience for employers/organizations who are willing to hire individuals who are experiencing homelessness. SBWIB works directly with employers to set up Transitional Subsidized Employment. Assignments are generally under six months and seek to provide the participant with income and work experience. While the employer does provide supervision, SBWIB provides the administrative oversight, including payroll administration and insurance.
4. **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** For residents of temporary housing who may have less barriers to employment, on-the-job training can be coordinated between SBWIB and a participating employer. Employers who participate in OJTs hire employees who may not be fully ready to assume the responsibilities of the position. During the first six to twelve months of employment, SBWIB subsidizes the employee's pay, while the employer trains the employee for the necessary skills to succeed on the

job. The difference between OJTs and Transitional Subsidized Employment is that OJTs provide long term employment opportunities.

The City continues to explore other temporary housing models to identify opportunities to engage residents while they work with case managers to attain permanent housing.

Website Update

CitiCABLE is constantly updating information related to homelessness on the City's webpage. The Homeless Services page (TorranceCA.Gov/Homeless) has been updated to include the homeless plan and the latest news updates. Under news updates, staff included the latest information regarding Council's approval of the proposed temporary homeless program and Council's adoption of the homelessness plan.

In the coming weeks, the page will be updated to include progress towards the homeless plan, as well as outcomes achieved by the Outreach Worker. Additionally, as City staff provide City Council with monthly updates during City Council meetings, the information will be posted on this webpage for the public's awareness.

Outreach Worker Outcomes

At the March 16, 2021 City Council meeting, staff provided key metrics and an update on the City's Outreach Program efforts. The key metrics were established by the City to measure the effectiveness of the Outreach Program (Attachment A). Highlights to note about the metrics is the differentiation between priority clients and light outreach interactions.

Priority clients refer to those individuals who have been jointly identified by the City and Harbor Interfaith Services as having the greatest urgency to receive services. These individuals are likely to require multiple contacts by the outreach worker to build trust and to take steps to accepting services centered around a housing plan.

Light touch outreach interactions occur with individuals when Outreach Worker is in the field and provides referrals to programs that will benefit the individual. These individuals are not likely to be part of the Outreach Worker's ongoing client priority list; however, may benefit from a referral to a specific program or service. In addition to the established metrics, Valerie manages a caseload of 30 to 40 cases.

During the staff presentation on this report, staff will further elaborate on the Outreach Worker outcomes.

Success Story #1

The City's Outreach Worker, Valerie, received a referral from Harbor Interfaith which indicated that there were two individuals experiencing homelessness: a mother and daughter in the City of Torrance. These clients were living in an apartment with their grandfather. Unfortunately, the grandfather passed away due to Covid-19 and they ended up becoming homeless after his passing. The daughter was only receiving Social Security benefits and the mother was not working at the time because she was taking care of the grandfather.

Both clients ended up depleting their savings, staying in a motel in Torrance. Ultimately, they were referred to Valerie in March of 2021. Valerie enrolled the clients into her case load, with a focus to achieve permanent housing. Valerie referred them to the Rapid Rehousing Program, which helps individuals get into permanent housing. The Rapid Rehousing Program includes house navigation, and provides financial support for security deposit, first months' rent, furniture and ongoing case management to maintain housing. The program offers ongoing rental assistance for up to six months.

Once enrolled into the Rapid Rehousing Program, Valerie provided support to the mother to seek employment for stable income. The mother worked hard, applying at many agencies. Ultimately, she landed a job as a Certified Nursing Assistant. With steady employment and verifiable income, Valerie shifted her efforts to support the clients on a permanent housing solution.

Valerie used a database, linked with program, LeaseUp. LeaseUp is a program that helps clients locate a unit by working with the property managers that will accept the program for rental assistance.

With much persistence, the clients were able to obtain a permanent housing solution as of May. The clients were connected to a one bedroom apartment, and were super thankful that they had finally had a place they could call home. These two clients continue to work with a case worker to ensure they receive the necessary support to maintain employment and housing. To date, their progress is outstanding, with the mother maintaining employment and her daughter a recent graduate from a community college.

Success Story #2

In another successful outcome, Valerie was connected with a client in May who was laid off from his full-time job of 15 years due to the pandemic. When Valerie met the client, he was residing in a short-term rental, and had only one day left in the unit. Valerie conducted his intake over the phone and enrolled him into her program.

Valerie recognized that the client's unemployment was a temporary situation, as his union indicated work opportunities would likely increase in the coming weeks. Valerie connected the client with a short term, temporary housing solution, while she worked with the client to achieve permanent housing. During this time, Valerie supported the client to attain the necessary documents for him to achieve permanent housing.

Ultimately, through Valerie connecting the client with two different short-term, emergency solutions, the client was able to achieve permanent housing and enroll the client in case management to maintain the permanent housing. Additionally, the client has achieved another work opportunity through his union.

This success story is about prevention of homelessness, which could have easily happened had Valerie not connected the client with short-term, emergency solutions.

Update on City Collaboration

In addition, the City continues to meet with the following teams to address solutions to homelessness.

- **Torrance Police Department Community Lead Officer and Harbor Interfaith Services Outreach Team (Monthly):** These meetings are to prioritize individuals who need the greatest level of engagement with the Outreach Worker. These meetings also serve as an opportunity to identify areas with encampments. Following the monthly meeting, the Outreach Worker provides staff with updates on her progress with engaging the priority clients.
- **Homelessness Response Team (Monthly):** This multi-disciplinary team is comprised of internal City Departments, and continues to meet monthly to focuses on solutions for encampments. Since the inception of the Homeless Response Team, it has been able to address areas of concerns that affect the quality of life in the City of Torrance.

There has been a total of six areas of concern that have been addressed by clean ups and or securing the area in coordination with Valerie, Torrance Police Department CLO's the City's Public Works Team and Caltrans.

Three vacant buildings and associated parcels have been secured in partnership with the Community Development Team and the owners of those parcels.

Community Engagement - How the Community Can Help?

As a friendly reminder to the Community, staff encourages those wishing to assist people experiencing homelessness to use the LA-HOP portal. LA-HOP is the County's online resource that allows the community to make an outreach request, when they see an individual needing assistance related to homelessness. The LA-HOP Portal can be accessed at www.LA-HOP.org. Information from the request is used to dispatch a homeless services outreach team to the area.

The Community may also continue to contact the City Manager's Office at (310) 618-5880 during regular business hours with questions related to how they can best help those experiencing homelessness.

Respectfully submitted,
ARAM CHAPARYAN
CITY MANAGER

By _____
Danny Santana
Assistant City Manager

By _____
Viet Hoang
Deputy City Manager

By _____
Zulma Gent
Management Associate

CONCUR:

Aram Chaparyan
City Manager

Attachment: Outreach Program Outcomes

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Respectfully submitted,
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CITY MANAGER

By _____
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Attachment: Outreach Program Outcomes