



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0009, **Version:** 1

TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH:

Bruce Moe, City Manager

FROM:

George Gabriel, Senior Management Analyst

SUBJECT:

Report on the City's Homelessness Efforts and Initiatives (City Manager Moe).

RECEIVE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive an update on the City's homelessness and initiatives.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

BACKGROUND:

On March 7, 2017, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors obtained voter approval for Measure H, a 10-year, ¼ cent sales tax increase to help fund housing and support services for the homeless population throughout the County. Since the passage of Measure H, various cities have taken an active role in addressing homelessness. In October 2017, 47 cities were awarded homelessness planning grants. Manhattan Beach was one of the cities to apply for, receive this funding, and subsequently develop a homelessness plan.

On August 21, 2018, the City Council adopted the City's "Five-Year Plan to Address Homelessness in Our Community." The plan contains seven goals aligned with Manhattan Beach's and Los Angeles County's objectives to address homelessness. Each of the seven goals contains supplemental information and includes the following elements: 1) Supported actions to achieve each goal; 2) Associated policy changes and requirements to move forward; 3) How progress will be measured; 4) Who is responsible for each goal and its progress; 5) What City resources will be leveraged; and 6) Timeline to complete each goal.

While the cities of Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, and Redondo Beach (collectively the South Bay Beach Cities) each developed its own independent Homelessness Plan, all three cities explored joint efforts to address homelessness. There were common elements including creation of detailed internal city protocols in response to homelessness, creation of consistent system-level response, training for first responders and city staff who have frequent contact with the homeless, strengthening ties with available resources and educating the general public.

Pursuant to City Council authorization in November 2018, and at the recommendation of the homelessness task force, the City submitted a multi-jurisdictional proposal Homelessness Plan Implementation Grant with the cities of Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach.

In April 2019, the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative announced the award of Measure H grant funding to the South Bay Beach Cities totaling \$330,666 towards homeless coordination, training and housing navigation services.

At the September 4, 2019, City Council meeting, the City Council approved a City Homelessness Plan Implementation Grant contract with the County of Los Angeles.

Thereafter, the South Bay Beach Cities developed specifications in order to obtain proposals from qualified service providers to assist in moving people off the streets into interim and permanent housing. These specifications and tasks included but were not limited to:

- Providing a full-time Homeless Coordinator/City Liaison to leverage the cities' fiscal and administrative resources to systematize, coordinate and help oversee multi-sectoral homeless efforts to enhance and expand regional access to services.
- Developing and implementing internal city-level homelessness response protocols and beach city regional response;
- Tailoring training material and lead training sessions with staff;
- Planning and holding an annual homelessness stakeholder roundtable/community meeting;
- Providing two full-time Homeless Case Managers to assist homeless individuals and families by completing Coordinated Entry System (CES) Assessments, maintaining case notes in Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); and
- Getting participants "document ready;" and make successful referrals to interim housing, treatment centers, and permanent housing.

At the October 15, 2019, meeting, City Council awarded a subcontract to a qualified homeless services firm, Harbor Interfaith Services (HIS), to provide the services described above.

At the August 4, 2020, meeting, City Council adopted Resolution No. 20-0031 approving a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Manhattan Beach, the City of Redondo Beach and the City of Hermosa Beach regarding the implementation of the South Bay Beach Cities Homelessness Project for homeless coordination, housing navigation and training services. This agreement is now fully executed by each party to the agreement.

DISCUSSION:

The City of Manhattan Beach has taken an active and multi-pronged approach to address homelessness. Staff has summarized a variety of updates related to homelessness initiatives for the community's reference.

Update on HIS Contract and Metrics

Following the City Council award of a subcontract to HIS at the October 15, 2019, City Council meeting, HIS hired full-time staff to satisfy the requirements set forth in the contract. Beginning in January 2020, HIS was fully-staffed and began to complete various objectives.

Metrics

Consistent with the contract, staff tasked HIS with a variety of metrics to ensure goals are met and monitored on a monthly basis. These metrics are included in the agenda packet for your reference as an attachment. It is important to note that during the Coronavirus pandemic, normal homeless services that focus around outreach and housing placement was substantially interrupted. Due to State and County government office closures (i.e. DMV), HIS could not process the paperwork necessary to facilitate continuous housing placement. Therefore, the metrics below represent data from November - June (HIS was fully staffed beginning in January 2020) with significantly interrupted services in the months of March - June and November - December due to Coronavirus impacts.

The South Bay Beach Cities Homelessness Project report (Attachment #1) summarizes progress made with data metrics.

Staff across all cities continue to meet with HIS monthly to monitor metrics and ensure adequate service delivery for our respective homeless populations.

Future of Los Angeles County Grant

Due to the impacts of the Coronavirus, the County of Los Angeles recently notified cities that a “no-cost extension” of Measure H grant funds can be extended from June 2021 to December 2021 to allow for cities to accomplish their homeless service goals (Attachment #2). Staff expects to process this extension consistent with County requirements. Given this, the City Manager will extend the subcontract with Harbor Interfaith Services, from February 28, 2021, to December 31, 2021 to align with County grant funding.

It is important to note that the extension does not provide additional grant funds. Fortunately, staff has achieved contract savings and will utilize those savings toward providing continued services. Staff has informed the County of Los Angeles that existing grant funds are projected to last until October 2021. Staff is engaging with the County of Los Angeles to fill the funding gap (November - December 2021) until a new round of grant funds will be provided.

Roundtable Discussion

On December 10, 2020, the cities of Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, and Redondo Beach held a virtual community meeting to learn about the local response and partnerships forming to support people experiencing homelessness. The panel of agency representatives discussed the regional partnership within the Beach Cities including law enforcement officers, city officials, and homeless service providers. The panel shared their experiences and answered how we can all work together, as neighbors, to strengthen our community and address homelessness. Staff estimates approximately 75 individuals watched the event. Additionally, staff has placed a recording of the event on the City's YouTube page, where 59 views have accumulated.

Homelessness Count

In response to Coronavirus impacts, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved a waiver request to exempt the Los Angeles Continuum of Care and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) from conducting a 2021 unsheltered point-in-time (PIT) count. LAHSA determined that there is no safe way to gather the 8,000 total volunteers (including 40 from Manhattan Beach) necessary to conduct the 2021 PIT count and collect data as accurately as it has done in previous years. Therefore, the City will not have data on the City's homelessness count for the year of 2021.

Redondo Beach Actions to Address Homelessness

In addition to the City's partnership on the South Bay Beach Cities Homelessness Project, the City of Redondo Beach has taken additional actions to address homelessness that may be of interest to the City Council. Some notable actions taken by the City of Redondo Beach recently are summarized below.

Pallet Shelter

In December,, the City of Redondo Beach constructed a temporary pallet shelter to house 15 homeless individuals for at least six months, at 1521 Kingsdale Avenue in Redondo Beach. The pallet shelter began being utilized in December 2020 and is currently fully occupied. This measure was taken by the City of Redondo Beach as an emergency measure to address concerns related to the ending of the Project Room Key program. In December 2020, Redondo Beach city staff projected operational costs for the shelter to be \$437,384 or approximately \$72,897 per month. The City of Redondo Beach is utilizing County grant funds as well as CARES Act funding provided by the federal government.

Homeless Court

In 2019, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors provided funding to the South Bay Cities Council of Governments to administer "Innovation Funds" for homeless services in the South Bay. The City of Redondo Beach is the only jurisdiction that was awarded an innovation grant to provide a Homeless Court as a pilot program titled, "Enhanced Homelessness Response Pilot Program." The Homeless Court Program offers an informal diversion program and services such as mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment and housing placement. This effort is coordinated in cooperation with the Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Sheriff's Department, Community Partners, City of Redondo Beach, South West District Administrator, Torrance Criminal Operations Manager, and Judge Gilbertson. Currently, Homeless Court is being hosted in the City of Redondo Beach at an open-air location, and eliminates the need to transport homeless defendants to and from court and service providers which reduces the risk of Coronavirus transmission. As mentioned earlier, the Homeless Court is funded by the County of Los Angeles via the South Bay Cities Council of Governments and costs about \$245,000 to fund the pilot program.

Homeless Count

On January 12, 2021, the City of Redondo Beach City Council approved an agreement with a homeless services provider, City Net, to provide a more accurate count of the homeless population (in Redondo Beach) given LAHSA's 2021 homeless count cancellation. The City of Redondo Beach indicated that the City of Bellflower has approved a similar agreement and indicated in their staff report that, "an accurate census would assist the City of Redondo Beach in efforts to combat homelessness." The City of Redondo Beach is utilizing the "Innovation Grant" funds provided by the South Bay Cities Council of Governments as part of the Enhanced Response to Homelessness Pilot Program mentioned earlier in the report. The contract with City Net is estimated to cost \$28,321.

Lease Agreement for Homeless Individuals

On December 15, 2020, the City of Redondo Beach City Council approved a lease agreement for five apartment units at 126 West "D" Street in the City of Wilmington, owned by Swami International (Owner). The City of Redondo Beach's staff report indicated the rooms "would

make excellent temporary, emergency bridge housing for Redondo residents experiencing homelessness.” The total cost for six months was estimated to total \$29,250 utilized Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive the update on the City’s homelessness and initiatives, and provide any additional direction to staff.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed this report and determined that no additional legal analysis is necessary.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Homeless Services Metrics Report from Harbor Interfaith Services
2. County Report Extending Grant Term for County Homeless Service Funds