



Agenda Report

File #: 20-0301

**AGENDA REPORT
REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

DATE: 04/15/2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Management Services Department

SUBJECT:

City Council consideration of Resolution No. 2020-018, declaring a shelter crisis in the City of Corona pursuant to Government Code Section 8698.2 (a)(1)

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2020-018 declaring a shelter crisis in the City of Corona pursuant to Government Code Chapter 7.8 (Section 8698.2 et. Seq.) and direct the City Manager to include policy options, including shelter crisis and emergency housing policy options, in staff's upcoming presentation of the draft Homeless Strategic Plan.

ANALYSIS:

Homelessness is currently one of the most urgent and significant issues impacting national, state, and local government. The following data highlights this crisis:

National/State Data:

Each year, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development submits a national homeless assessment report to Congress. According to the 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), there are 151,278 homeless individuals in the State of California. California currently has the highest percentage of homeless in the nation as the 151,278 equates to approximately 27% of the total 567,715 homeless individuals in the U.S.

Riverside County:

The January 2019 Homeless Point in Time Count and Survey Report identified 2,811 homeless individuals in Riverside County.

City of Corona:

The January 2019 Homeless Point in Time Count and Survey Report identified 164 homeless individuals in the City of Corona; however, a more comprehensive homeless census conducted by City Net in March of 2019 identified 209 unsheltered homeless in the City of Corona.

Homelessness Resources Committee:

On January 23, 2019, City Council established the Homelessness Resources Committee to work with public and private stakeholders to evaluate the homeless issue in Corona. Through community engagement and evaluation of homeless response efforts in other regions, in November of 2019, the Committee concluded that a coordinated, systems approach was needed to effectively address homelessness in Corona.

Homeless Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee:

On November 21, 2019, the City hired a Homeless Solutions Coordinator to focus on homeless issues and to develop a Homeless Strategic Plan. On December 18, 2019, City Council established the Homeless Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee to support the strategic plan development process.

To date, a considerable amount of work has been accomplished in support of the homeless strategic plan including a comprehensive community meeting and survey engagement process, needs assessment data collection, development of relationships with multiple County Agencies and other community stakeholders, City participation in regional Continuum of Care Strategic Planning efforts, and collaboration with County Supervisor Karen Spiegel to organize and convene sub-regional meetings with the neighboring cities of Eastvale, Jurupa Valley, Norco, and Riverside.

While development of the City's Homeless Strategic Plan is an ongoing top priority, it is critical to ensure that direct service and shelter efforts are in place to address the homeless crisis facing the City of Corona. The January 2020 launch of the Motel Voucher Emergency Shelter Program is a good example of the City's effort to quickly expand services and shelter to Corona's homeless residents.

Shelter Crisis Declaration Benefits:

Due to the fact that Corona had a motel shelter service delivery system in place, the City was recently successful in securing its first ever Continuum of Care (CoC) grant of \$65,000 to extend the motel program during COVID-19. The City's CoC grant is part of a larger COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness grant from the State to address the national crisis associated with the pandemic.

Other State Programs have required local government agencies to declare a shelter crisis to qualify for homeless grants (e.g., the State Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). In FY 2018/19, the City of Lake Elsinore adopted a shelter crisis declaration and was subsequently awarded a \$1.5 million HEAP grant to develop a multi-faceted program that includes emergency motel shelter, crisis stabilization bridge housing and permanent housing components.

The City of Riverside not only adopted an Emergency Shelter Crisis declaration to qualify for State HEAP funding but also subsequently adopted a December 2019 resolution declaring the

establishment of emergency housing at designated public facilities to be of urgent necessity for the preservation of life and health. The emergency housing resolution included provisions to streamline procurement requirements and relax building code requirements. As a result, in less than three months, the City of Riverside developed and began operation of the Tiny Houses project.

Adoption of a Corona shelter crisis declaration: 1) affirms the City's commitment to address the homeless issue on a priority basis, 2) positions the City for potential funding if Federal, State or local government agencies require a shelter crisis declaration, and 3) sets the stage for Council consideration of policy options for timely development of shelter and housing interventions that will be outlined in the Homeless Strategic Plan.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

On April 11, 2020, the Homeless Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee concurred with staff recommendation.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The item supports the City's Strategic Plan Goal 1: Promote Public Safety: Protect Our Residents and Businesses.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact other than staff time associated with this agenda item.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

No environmental review is required because the proposed action is not a project governed by the California Environmental Quality Act.

PREPARED BY: KAREN ROPER, HOMELESS SOLUTIONS COORDINATOR

REVIEWED BY: DEAN DERLETH, CITY ATTORNEY

SUBMITTED BY: JACOB ELLIS, CITY MANAGER

Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 2020-018: Shelter Crisis Declaration