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CLERK OF THE BOARD  
ORANGE COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

## MEMORANDUM

To: Robin Stieler, Clerk of the Board

From: Supervisor Andrew Do, Vice Chair

Subject: County's Efforts to Address Homeless

S38E

Please add a supplemental item of business to the October 17, 2017 Board Agenda. The title of the supplemental item should read:

**County's Efforts to Address Homeless**




## SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA ITEM AGENDA STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** 10/17/17

**LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION:** Board of Supervisors

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT(S):** All Districts

**SUBMITTING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** Supervisor Andrew Do – 1<sup>st</sup> District

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REVIEW:**   
Department Head Signature

**DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S):** Chris Wangsaporn (714) 834-3110  
Veronica Carpenter (714) 834-3110

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**SUBJECT: County's Efforts to Address Homeless**

CEO CONCUR	COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	CLERK OF THE BOARD
	Action	Discussion
		3 Votes Board Majority
_____ CEO Signature	_____ County Counsel Signature	

**Budgeted:** N/A      **Current Year Cost:** N/A      **Annual Cost:** N/A

**Staffing Impact:** N/A      **# of Positions:** N/A      **Sole Source:** N/A

**Current Fiscal Year Revenue:** N/A

**Funding Source:** N/A      **County Audit in last 3 years** N/A

**Prior Board Action:** N/A

### RECOMMENDED ACTION(S)

Receive and file update on the County's efforts to address homelessness, and provide direction to staff, as appropriate.

### SUMMARY:

Receiving and filing this update on County's efforts to address homelessness will provide a public record of the County's available resources, investments, and successes to date in building a System of Care that offers a comprehensive response to homelessness.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The County of Orange continues to increase its efforts to mitigate homelessness and provide services and shelter to those experiencing homelessness while also prioritizing the public safety and quality of life impacts for all Orange County residents.

Individuals experiencing homelessness grew approximately 20% in Southern California between 2015 and 2017. Orange County, specifically, also experienced an increase of 7.6% based on a recent Point-in-Time Count conducted in January 2017 identified 4,792 individuals, 2,208 sheltered and 2,584 unsheltered, in Orange County who were experiencing homelessness.

Over the last several years the County has allocated significant resources towards combating homelessness across service departments. The Health Care Agency (HCA), the Orange County Community Resources (OCCR) department, and the Social Service Agency (SSA) have provided behavioral and public health services, housing assistance, veteran services, and deployed the Mobile Response Vehicle in the Civic Center to provide eligibility assistance and general relief benefits.

Despite the County's efforts to assist those experiencing homelessness, challenging impacts have been identified in all 34 Orange County cities and unincorporated areas. County staff believe that there is an increasing need to coordinate and integrate the County's efforts with a regional approach to addressing homelessness. Recognizing this need, the Board of Supervisors (Board) has:

- Appointed the Director of Care Coordination in May 2016;
- Pursued a rapid crisis response in opening the Courtyard in October of 2016;
- Implemented Phase 1 of the County's first year-around shelter and multi-services center, the Bridges at Kraemer Place, which opened in May 2017; and
- Launched the Flood Control Channel Engagement which includes intensive case management and links to wraparound services.

Following the release of the October 2016 report, "An Assessment of Homeless Services in Orange County," the County has been building upon existing efforts to develop a coordinated and regional "System of Care" that addresses all facets of homelessness including enhancing the homeless services delivery system, improving regional coordination and investment, integrating system navigation through regional asset linkages and increasing availability of emergency, bridge and permanent housing options. Developing this System of Care requires that the foundational systems such as Physical Health, Behavioral Health, Re-Entry/Criminal Justice, and Economic tributaries to homelessness are strengthened. The County has concentrated its approach on the following five areas:

- (1) Stabilizing Housing
- (2) Offering Needed Services
- (3) Ensuring Law Enforcement and Public Safety
- (4) Land Use Development and Management
- (5) Developing a Regional Approach with All Stakeholders

Since implementing this strategy, the County has accomplished the following under these five areas:

Stabilizing Housing: Despite differing approaches on how to address homelessness, there is one agreed upon strategy – access to available, affordable and permanent supportive housing. The State of California acknowledges this issue as a statewide crisis. This is a priority area therefore, the County has focused on accomplishing the following in this area:

- (1) **Moving forward major affordable housing projects** such as:
  - a. Potter's Lane- Midway City
  - b. Rockwood Apartments – Anaheim
  - c. The Orchard, formerly Guest House – Santa Ana
  - d. Oakcrest Heights – Yorba Linda

- e. Placentia Veteran's Village -- Placentia
- (2) **Acting as the Lead Agency for the Continuum of Care Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Grant:** Leading the collaborative effort with 14 nonprofit agencies to submit the annual competitive application to HUD of approximately \$22 million, to provide Coordinated Entry System, Homeless Management Information System, Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing resources Countywide.
  - (3) **Opening The Courtyard on October 5, 2016:** Since opening, The Courtyard's Safe Sleep Program has provided overnight beds to a daily average of 356 individuals while hosting 600 to 700 individuals daily for meals, services and a place to access basic services. Designed to be a shelter that provides services and an entry point to permanent supportive housing, 149 individuals have been connected to permanent housing options and since April 2017, 260 have been employed at entry or during their stay.
  - (4) **Expedited development of Bridges at Kraemer Place (Bridges):** On December 13, 2016, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to expedite the development and opening of Phase 1 of the Bridges at Kraemer Place. Just five months later on May 5, 2017, Bridges opened with 100 beds. Since then, 21 individuals have found permanent housing and 20 are employed. The second phase will be completed in spring 2018 bringing an additional 100 beds online.
  - (5) **Funding the seasonal armories, which are open typically from December - April.**
  - (6) **Funding support for the Laguna Beach Canyon shelter, Alternative Sleeping Location (ASL)**

Offering Needed Services: The Director of Care Coordination's first assignment was to complete The County Assessment on Homelessness Report. As a result, major service needs of the county's homelessness population and its demographics were identified. These needs were further bolstered by the Point-In-Time Count and increased outreach to the cities and non-profits for information. The County refers to all of this data when determining how to effectively allocate resources. Accomplishments in this area include:

- (1) **Whole Person Care I and II:** HCA applied for and successfully secured over \$30 million in funding for the Whole Person Care (WPC) program. At full implementation, the program will effectively coordinate physical, behavioral health and social services through a patient-centered approach for Medi-Cal beneficiaries struggling with homelessness.
- (2) **Behavioral Health Response:** HCA's Outreach and Engagement Team (O&E), the County's foremost team in homelessness outreach, has increased from 2015 to 2017. Additionally, HCA's Psychiatric and Emergency Response Team (PERT) and Crisis Assessment Team (CAT) provide countywide response to the homeless population for both mental health and substance abuse treatment systems. These team members are in the field every day providing these services and are working with municipal law enforcement to support clinical treatment responses in local cities.
- (3) **Flood Control Channel Engagement Initiative:** On July 1, 2017, the County contracted with CityNet to provide intensive case management, outreach and help connect those living in the Santa Ana Riverbed to services that could lead to permanent supportive housing. To date, 71 people have exited the encampment.

Law Enforcement and Public Safety: While the County has increased its services and resources for those experiencing homelessness in the county, public safety has become a necessary component of these efforts. Ensuring public safety along the County's recreational trails and providing prompt law enforcement services to residents impacted by criminal activities is one of the County's top priorities.

- (1) **Law Enforcement Services in the Flood Control Channels:** On September 12, 2017, the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution supporting law enforcement services provided by the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSA) in the flood channels. In that same resolution, the Board of

Supervisors approved OCSD leading a public safety forum consisting of local law enforcement agencies to develop a cohesive approach toward public safety in and adjacent to the flood control channels.

- (2) **Collaborative Courts and County Partnerships:** The County continues to provide services to enhance the Collaborative Courts programs with reentry linkages to treatment and supportive services.
- (3) **The Proposition 47 Grant Award:** HCA was awarded a \$6 million grant over 3 years to reduce recidivism by expanding trauma competent jail in-reach, re-entry planning and linkages by expanding access to post-release services for individuals with mental health/substance use disorders with a high risk of recidivism.

Land Use, Development and Management: This is an area where cities play a critical role. The location of services and housing options is critical to creating a successful System of Care across the County. The County, in working with its partners, have gathered and analyzed data to identify areas where the need is the highest. In addition, it identified service gaps and the potential resources that can address those gaps. Below are some of the investments the County has made that will require city support for land use and development:

- (1) **Crisis Stabilization Units (CSUs):** The Board of Supervisors, to date, has approved \$24 million for crisis stabilization units but the inability to site a location with city support has been a barrier to implementation of this community resource.
- (2) **Proposition 47 Community Support and Reentry Center:** HCA just released a Request for Proposal for Community Support and Reentry Center to service the Proposition 47 community; Proactive systemic re-entry planning and linkages will improve stabilization for high risk populations, hence reduce community impacts that currently are require mitigation in local communities.

Regional Approach with All Stakeholders: Throughout 2017, the Director of Care Coordination has worked with many organizations to facilitate regional Service Planning Area (SPA) meetings with city leadership including elected officials, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, community-based-organizations, affordable housing developers and other key stakeholders in North, Central and South County. These meetings have become a forum for dialogue, collaboration, implementation of regional strategies to improve the County wide response to homelessness, leveraging County investments with the local contributions from cities working collectively. There is agreement that cities need to work with neighboring cities and with the County to produce an effective system of care regionally to meet the challenges faced in local communities. Regional Resource Hubs have been identified for each SPA and efforts to integrate and coordinate in these smaller sectors is ongoing. The Director of Care Coordination is providing technical assistance for cities in how to best align with regional efforts. Attendance at these regional meetings has been averaging around 75 – 100 participants with representation from a diverse cross section of stakeholders impacted by homelessness and working together to align efforts.

System of Care: The County of Orange has delivered on several key components for the System of Care in the past year and a half. These accomplishments are often met with criticism, recognizing that the issue of homelessness has become front and center, not just in Orange County, but statewide and nationally. Despite these challenges, the County will remain focused on solutions, and on partnerships, both of which are necessary to achieve the results our communities want. This is an issue that requires contributions/investments from all sectors. The County is spending millions of dollars on this comprehensive response to homelessness, yet must rely on cities, that maintain land use/zoning authority for siting of necessary resources, to provide a completely responsive System of Care for the County.

The County also recognizes the cities' interests and efforts in contributing to this System of Care. SB2 emergency shelters, motel conversions, affordable housing developments supported by MHSA and/or Housing Authority voucher funds have been key resources delivered by cities. Recently, some of the largest Orange County cities have issued declarations of emergencies regarding the homeless issue and some have committed law enforcement, monetary investments and other resources to address homelessness within their cities. Some have initiated homeless task forces, others designated staff at the point of contact for their city, yet these efforts must become integrated and better coordinated, regionally.

As homelessness is a regional issue, moving forward, the County will remain proactive, reaching out to cities and stakeholders to identify service needs and solutions. Additionally, the County will continue to evaluate its resources and allocate them regionally. Finally, the County will continue to lead in these efforts and encourage the dialogue to continue on how to better address homelessness in Orange County.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

N/A

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

N/A

**ATTACHMENT(S):**