

DATE ISSUED: November 16, 2000

REPORT NO. 00-240 Revised

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor and City Council
Docket of November 21, 2000 (Revised)

SUBJECT: 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program

SUMMARY

Issues -

1. Should a winter shelter emergency be declared?
2. Should the 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program contained in this report be approved and implemented as proposed?
3. Should the City Manager be directed to negotiate and execute agreements and leases associated with implementing the 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program?
4. Should the City Auditor and Comptroller be authorized to accept and disperse funds associated with the approved 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program?

Manager's Recommendations -

1. Declare a winter shelter emergency.
2. Approve the Winter Shelter Program contained in this report and implement as proposed.
3. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute agreements and leases associated with implementing the 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program.
4. Authorize the City Auditor and Comptroller to accept and disperse funds associated with the approved 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program.

Other Recommendations - None

Fiscal Impact - A total of \$778,913 has been allocated to the Homeless Services Program for operation of the 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program. The sources of these funds are as follows: General Fund \$10,076, Community Block Grant Program \$37,277, Emergency Shelter Grant \$231,560, Centre City Development Corporation \$25,000 and the Housing Commission \$445,000. In addition, the County has approved a \$30,000 cash contribution to the 2000-2001 Winter Shelter Program.

BACKGROUND

City Council Policy 000-51, Comprehensive Homeless Policy, adopted July 1995, serves as the current source document in addressing homelessness issues. Said policy supports the development of an emergency shelter and recommends the "Continuum of Care" approach whereby "the City, in coordination with businesses, social service agencies, community groups, and other jurisdictions, assess needs and promote programs which restore people who are homeless to their optimum participation in the community." The policy further requires the City Manager to provide annual recommendations for the operation of a dispersed site, flexible homeless shelter program.

For the past thirteen years, the City has managed a temperature/weather driven shelter program and/or seasonal shelter program. In time, and with experience, the program evolved into the successful model utilized in the 1999-2000 season. The program operated from December 15, 1999 to April 15, 2000 for single adults and Veterans, and from December 15, 2000 to May 15, 2000 for families. During this period, services were provided to 4,630 unduplicated homeless persons which included 579 children. The average length of stay varied for each shelter (i.e., 41 days at the family shelter, 28 days at the veterans' shelter and 10 days at the single adult shelter). Unlike previous years when the shelters operated for only 90 days (December 15 - March 15), for FY 2000 the shelters were extended for an additional 30 days to facilitate Census Bureau enumeration. In addition, the family shelter was expanded and extended for 60 days due to increased demand for services.

DISCUSSION

In a cooperative arrangement, the City, the County of San Diego and the United Way of San Diego created a Regional Task Force on the Homeless in March 1985. In August 1999, the Task Force issued a County-wide update on the current state of homelessness. As outlined in that report, there is an estimated homeless population of 15,000 within the region, of which 6,500 are located in the City of San Diego. The Task Force further reports that, within the City of San Diego, there are currently 2,331 shelter beds available, leaving an unmet need of 4,169 beds or 64%.

The inclement weather conditions associated with the winter season has the potential to affect the health and safety of individuals subjected to long-term or constant exposure. Given the existing shortage of available beds, it is recommended that a winter shelter emergency be declared and a winter shelter program be adopted to address the needs of the homeless.

The specific components of the shelter program have been developed based on past successes and include:

The Winter Shelter Program will operate at four locations from December 15, 2000 to March 15, 2001 (90 days).

Dispersed seasonal shelter program to serve approximately 550 persons.

250 shelter beds to be housed in a sprung structure serving single men and women.

150 shelter beds to be housed in a sprung structure serving veterans.

150 shelter beds serving families (beginning March 16, 2001 the family shelter component will begin operating as a year-round short-term transitional family shelter).

An alarming increase in the number of homeless seniors has necessitated adding 100 beds to the Winter Shelter Program to serve this population. In collaboration with the County of San Diego and Senior Community Centers of San Diego, a site for a 100-bed facility will be located and funds identified to pay for the services required by the addition of these new beds.

Site placement of the shelters will be dependent upon availability.

Existing shelter providers would be compensated for expanding their shelter capacity to accommodate up to 100 persons on a nightly basis. This component is contingent on the availability of funding.

The Regional Hotel/Motel Voucher Program to be administered by the County of San Diego. The program, entering its fourth year of operation, is designed to assist families, the disabled, seniors and others as needed. Access to the program would occur for individuals not able to gain entry into a shelter. The Hotel/Motel Voucher Program will begin November 1, 2000 and end on April 30, 2001.

The City's sponsored shelters operate 24 hours a day. Shelter participants staying at any of the four shelters will be allowed to stay on site 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The City will contract with Saint Vincent de Paul and the Solutions Consortium for seasonal and expanded capacity services at a rate of \$8.00 per day per person served. Partnership with other governmental agencies. The City will have as funding partners the County of San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission, and the Centre City Development Corporation. The Port District will continue to assist with the transportation and storage of the sprung structures. The County's Department of Health and Human Services will assist in coordination and provide services to participants as necessary. The County also has committed to contracting with a non-profit social services agency to provide two case managers to the family shelter program for FY 2000-2001 and FY 2001-2002 at an annual cost of \$100,000 per year. Further, numerous non-profit agencies participate in the Winter Shelter Program, and provide services at no cost to the program

Continued support from and partnership with the Homeless Outreach (HOT) Teams consisting of two Police Officers, a County Social Worker, a psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) clinician and a Project Manager.

A computerized intake system will be used to track participants as they progress through

the Regional Continuum of Care System.

In conclusion, it is recommended that the City Council continue implementing the Winter Shelter Program as outlined above.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not provide a Winter Shelter Program (this is not recommended as there is a clearly identified need and the proposed program conforms to the guidelines contained in Council Policy 00051).
2. Provide for a longer or shorter Winter Shelter Program (fiscal impacts will vary accordingly).

Respectfully submitted,

Hank Cunningham
Director
Economic Development & Community Services

Approved: George I. Loveland
Assistant City Manager

CUNNINGHAM/DFP