

DATE ISSUED: October 16, 2002

REPORT NO. 02-237

ATTENTION: Land Use and Housing Committee  
Agenda of October 23, 2002

SUBJECT: 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program

SUMMARY

Issues -

1. Should a winter shelter emergency be declared?
2. Should the 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program contained in this report be approved and implemented as proposed?
3. Should the City Council authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute agreements associated with implementing the 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program?
4. Should the City Council authorize the City Manager to separate the Homeless Family Program funds (\$316,913) from the overall program funds (\$853,913)?
5. Should the City Council authorize the City Auditor and Comptroller to accept and disburse funds associated with the approved 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program and additional contributions made by City Council?

Manager's Recommendations -

1. Declare a winter shelter emergency.
2. Approve the 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program and implement as proposed.
3. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute agreements associated with implementing the 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program.

4. Authorize the City Manager to separate the Homeless Family Program funds (\$316,913) from the overall program funds (\$853,913).
5. Authorize the City Auditor and Comptroller to accept and disburse funds associated with the approved 2002/2003 Winter Shelter and additional contributions made by City Council.

Other Recommendations - None.

Fiscal Impact - A total of \$853,913 has been allocated for this year's Homeless Services shelter programs from the following sources: General Fund \$9,280, Community Development Block Grant \$18,473, Emergency Shelter Grant \$251,160, Housing Commission \$445,000. To fill the gap created by our loss of State grant funds, the Mayor and several members of the Council pledged an additional \$130,000 to the program. The total operating budget for the 2002/2003 Winter Shelter Program is \$537,000. The remaining \$316,913 is designated for operating the year-round Homeless Family Program.

## BACKGROUND

City Council Policy 000-51, Comprehensive Homeless Policy, adopted June 12, 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 fifteen 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 last season. The program operated a 250-bed shelter for single adults and a 150-bed shelter for male veterans from December 14, 2001 through March 14, 2002. The City also continues to participate in the County of San Diego Hotel/Motel Voucher Program, which is designed to shelter and case manage homeless families, the disabled and seniors.

## DISCUSSION

In a cooperative arrangement, the City, the County and the United Way of San Diego created the 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 the 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, 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 effect 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:

- \$ A dispersed seasonal shelter program to serve approximately 450 persons per day. The program will operate from December 15, 2002 to March 15, 2003.
- \$ 200 shelter beds to be housed in a sprung structure serving homeless single men and women.
- \$ 150 shelter beds to be housed in a sprung structure serving homeless veterans.
- \$ 100 overflow shelter beds housed at an existing homeless facility serving up to 100 family members per night.
- \$ Final siting of the shelters will be dependent on availability. However, we anticipate both shelters being located at the same sites they were last season.
- \$ To minimize the impact on the neighborhoods, a gradual step down closure process will be employed as recommended by the provider selection panel.
- \$ Shelter participants staying at both the single adult and veteran sites would be allowed to stay on site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The family overflow shelter would operate as an overnight shelter only.
- \$ The City will contract with Alpha Project for the Homeless and Vietnam Veterans of San Diego to operate the shelters. The City will contract with the San Diego Rescue Mission to operate the overflow component.
- \$ The County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency will assist in coordination and the provision of services to participants. Further, numerous non-profit agencies participate in the sheltering effort by providing services at no cost.
- \$ The Homeless Outreach (HOT) Team will continue to support the Winter Shelter Program. Teams consist of two Police Officers, a County Social Worker, a Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) clinician and a Project Manager. A mutually agreed upon number of shelter beds will be designated for HOT Team referrals.
- \$ A computerized coordination dispersed site intake system will be used to track participants as they progress through the Regional Continuum of Care System.
- \$ Implementation of an incentive program to encourage participants to move from the temporary shelters into established shelter programs as a means of breaking the cycle of

homelessness.

\$ A Regional Hotel/Motel Voucher Program to be administered by the County of San Diego. The program, entering its fifth year of operation, is designed to assist families, the disabled, seniors and others as needed. The Hotel/Motel Voucher Program is scheduled to begin November 15, 2002. The City will contribute \$70,000 to support regional programs as it compliments the overall effort to provide emergency shelter.

Funding:

A summary of this year's program funding has been included as Exhibit A of this report. Exhibit B provides a summary of all of our current programs, funding sources, shortfalls and current/proposed activities to address the shortfalls. This document will serve as a status report and will be monitored and updated regularly.

The City's Winter Shelter Program continues to be a model program developed through time and experience. The Continuum of Care model utilized provides flexibility and the potential for long-term solutions for homeless individuals. A report prepared by the Homeless Task Force, who met several times over the summer, is being finalized and will be brought forward later this year. It will include things the City is doing well and recommended program improvements. The Winter Shelter Program has been identified as a program the City is doing well.

ALTERNATIVES:

None recommended.

Respectfully submitted,

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Hank Cunningham  
Director  
Community & Economic Development

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Approve: Bruce Herring  
Deputy City Manager

Note: The attachments are not available in electronic format. A copy is available for review in the Office of the City Clerk.

Attachments: Exhibit A - Winter Shelter Program Budget Summary  
Exhibit B - All Homeless Services Programs Budget Summary