



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

DATE ISSUED: June 21, 2013 REPORT NO: 13-053

ATTENTION: Honorable Council President and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT: Declaration of a Homeless Shelter Crisis in the City of San Diego and Designation of Sites for the Continued Operation of Two Emergency Homeless Shelters and Transitional Storage Center for FY 2014

REQUESTED ACTION:

- 1) Find and declare the existence of a homeless shelter crisis in the City of San Diego pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of California Government Code section 8698 et seq. and suspend any and all housing, health and safety codes that interfere with efforts to mitigate the crisis;
- 2) Authorize the City of San Diego to pay up to and including \$1.3 million in general funds, and any other additional amounts hereafter appropriated by the City of San Diego for these purposes, to the San Diego Housing Commission to fund the Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter at the City-owned cul-de-sac at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Newton Avenue for FY 14, upon proper submittal of adequate documentation of expenditures as determined by the City's Economic Development & Program Management staff, contingent upon the Comptroller certifying that funds are available;
- 3) Authorize the City to pay up to and including \$600,000 in general funds, and any other additional amounts hereafter appropriated by the City of San Diego for these purposes, to the San Diego Housing Commission to fund the Veterans' Emergency Homeless Shelter on Navy property at 2801 ½ Sports Arena Boulevard for FY 14, upon proper submittal of adequate documentation of expenditures as determined by the City's Economic Development & Program Management staff, contingent upon the Comptroller certifying that funds are available;
- 4) Authorize the City to pay up to and including \$50,000 in general funds to the San Diego Housing Commission to fund the Transitional Storage Center for FY14, which amount is to be provided to the Housing Commission upon proper submittal of adequate documentation of expenditures as determined by the City's Economic Development & Program Management staff, contingent upon the Comptroller certifying that funds are available; and

- 5) Authorize the Mayor and the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Housing Commission, or designees, to execute such documents and to perform such acts as are necessary and/or appropriate to implement these approvals.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the requested actions

BACKGROUND:

On June 10, 2013, the City Council approved the FY 14 City of San Diego budget which included general fund allocations of \$1.95 million for the continued operation of two emergency homeless shelters and a Transitional Storage Center through FY 2014.

This included an allocation of \$1.3 million for the continued operation of a Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter; an additional \$600,000 for the continued operation of a Veterans' Emergency Homeless Shelter; and \$50,000 for the continued operation of the Transitional Storage Center.

Concurrent with the budget review and approval process, the Mayor convened a working group of multiple City disciplines to consider possible locations for these year-round homeless shelters and to determine the necessary activities to continue operations throughout FY 14.

DISCUSSION:

**Declaration of Emergency**

According to the 2013 Regional Task Force on Homelessness Point-In-Time Count, a total of 5,733 homeless persons were counted within the City of San Diego (City). This accounts for 64.6% of the entire homeless population in the San Diego region. Of those counted, 3,115 homeless persons are living on the street within the City.

Such individuals are at risk of injury and harm due to exposure to the elements and due to other health, safety and welfare-related circumstances and consequences associated with living outside. In addition, the effects and impacts of overnight lodging in City parks and on public sidewalks, parking lots and beaches has an effect on the physical environmental resources and on the use and enjoyment of public spaces for their intended purposes.

In FY 2014, the City will provide funding for a total of 685 homeless shelter beds and/or transitional housing beds from various funding sources (see Table 1 below).

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Table 1: Emergency Shelter Beds / Transitional Housing Funded By the City of San Diego

Name of Housing Program	Number of Beds	FY 2014 Funding*	City Funding Source
Cortez Hill – Family Center (Transitional Housing)	150	205,902	CDBG
		277,346	ESG
PATH / Connections Housing (Emergency / Interim Shelter)	150	276,000	CDBG
		96,338	ESG
Rachel’s Women’s Shelter (Transitional Housing)	35	96,150	CDBG
Total-Without the Emergency Shelters:	335		
Single Adult Emergency Shelter	200	1,300,000	General Fund
Veterans Emergency Shelter	150	235,000	CDBG
		60,669	ESG
		\$600,000	General Fund
Total-Including the Emergency Shelters:	685		

\* For the purposes of this table, only City funding sources are included. Not all of the programs listed above are administered by the San Diego Housing Commission.

Given the large discrepancy between number of shelter beds available and the recent count of homeless persons living on the street, it is clear there is a need for additional emergency shelter beds to accommodate the number of City homeless persons in need of such shelter.

California Government Code section 8698 et seq. provides the ability to declare a state of emergency due to a shelter crisis in the City. A shelter crisis may be proclaimed when a situation exists whereby a significant number of persons are without the ability to obtain shelter, resulting in a threat to their health and safety. In addition, California Government Code section 8698.1 (b) provides for the suspension of any state or local regulatory statute, regulation or ordinance prescribing standards of housing, health or safety to the extent that strict compliance with these standards would prevent, hinder or delay the mitigation of the effects of the shelter crisis.

In place of such standards, the City may enact certain municipal health and safety standards during the housing emergency which ensure basic levels of public health and safety conditions are operative.

**Homeless Working Group**

In May 2013, the Mayor assembled a Homeless Working Group with representatives from various City disciplines to: examine alternative locations for the continued operation of a Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter; consider co-locating the Transitional Storage Center with the Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter; and evaluate permitting/review requirements that may be triggered to host a longer-term facility.

City disciplines represented on the Homeless Working Group included: Development Services, Economic Development, Fire-Rescue, Disability Services, Real Estate Assets, General Services, Streets, and Public Utilities. In addition, representatives from the San Diego Housing Commission and Civic San Diego were consulted and participated in discussions.

Several locations were evaluated for feasibility (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Potential Locations Evaluated / Comments

Locations	Comments/Concerns
16 <sup>th</sup> and Newton	Most feasible; space fits footprint required for the shelter (less a variance for standard set-backs)
20 <sup>th</sup> and B – City Yard	Space near front gate (on 20 <sup>th</sup> Street) is not large enough for the shelter footprint. Other potential space is currently being used for parking of City fleet and employee vehicles and is not accessible to disabled.
Old Central Library – 820 Broadway	Not available until August or September, 2013. Cost prohibitive –restrooms and showers would need to be installed that are accessible to disabled persons
Parking Lot – Old Admin Bldg / Balboa Park	Cost prohibitive – electricity and water utilities would need to be brought down to the location. In addition, residential uses are generally not permitted on dedicated park land
Old Charger Practice Field	Permanent tenants would need to be displaced. Currently used as overflow parking during football season.
Tailgate Park at Petco Park	Exception to the 30-year lease with the Padres would need to be granted by the Padres
Balboa Park Municipal Gym	Residential uses are generally not permitted on dedicated park land.
Golden Hall	Scheduled events would be displaced and associated revenue lost. Lack of accessibility regarding bathrooms and showers.
1508-1544 E Street	Private property

After careful consideration, it was determined that the existing locations for the Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter (cul-de-sac of 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Newton Avenue) and the Veterans' Emergency Homeless Shelter (Sports Arena Boulevard) were the most viable for the continued operation of the two emergency homeless shelters during FY 14.

There may be undetermined costs associated with the continued operation of the two emergency homeless shelters during FY 14 associated with increased utility costs, retrofits to the tents to adapt to warmer temperatures and other unforeseen expenses related to continuing the operation of the shelters beyond the winter months. Funding sources for these improvements and contingencies have not yet been identified and, depending upon the need to use operational funds, the number of months the shelters operate in FY 14 may be reduced *pari passu*.

**Transitional Storage Center**

The Girls Think Tank began operation of the Transitional Storage Center on May 1, 2012. Their temporary facility is located at 1610 Commercial Street, San Diego CA 92113, at the intersection

of 16th and Commercial. The 4,500 square foot property has been donated for this use by Father Joe's Villages. The Transitional Storage Center allows 350 displaced families and individuals to safely store their personal belongings without the risk of being stolen or destroyed. It allows participants to job hunt, work, attend classes, meet with health and service providers, and transition back to housing, while freeing the streets of almost 30,000 pounds of belongings. An estimated 100 people have been able to re-assimilate and get jobs because they were able to check their belongings into the Transitional Storage Center.

The Girls Think Tank is currently looking for a new location with at least 7,500 square feet of available space in order to expand their services. Due to the size of the footprint for the Transitional Storage Center (4,500 – 7,500 square feet), the Homeless Working Group is not recommending co-locating the Transitional Storage Center with the Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter. Economic Development staff will continue to work with the Girls Think Tank and the San Diego Housing Commission to identify a more viable location.

### **Emergency Homeless Shelter Administration**

The San Diego Housing Commission administers the contracts for operation of the City's Homeless Service Programs, including the Emergency Shelters, pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and Housing Commission effective July 1, 2010.

Alpha Project for the Homeless (Alpha Project) is the operator for the Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter and has indicated support for the FY14 operation. The Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter is currently operating under a permit which expires July 7, 2013.

The operator for the Veteran's Emergency Homeless Shelter, Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD), has been consulted and has indicated support for the FY14 operation and Economic Development staff is working with Navy to secure the use of the location at 2801 ½ Sports Arena Boulevard for FY 2014. The program is currently operating under a license with the Navy for a "nonfederal use of real property" which expires July 12, 2013. The Navy is working on an extension of that license for the short-term until they can determine if longer term arrangements are necessary.

### FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The following General Funds have been allocated to homeless service programs in the City of San Diego's FY 14 Budget:

Single Adult Emergency Homeless Shelter:	\$1,300,000
Veterans' Emergency Homeless Shelter:	\$ 600,000
Transitional Storage Center:	\$ 50,000

These figures were based on preliminary budget projections and will be adjusted according to actual costs. If future cost estimates are found to be in excess of budgeted amounts, the length of each program or contract terms may need to be adjusted accordingly.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING INFORMATION: N/A

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

The FY 14 Budget was approved at the June 10, 2013 meeting of the City Council. The FY 13 Emergency Homeless Winter Shelter Program was approved by City Council and Housing Authority on July 23, 2012.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Pursuant to Government Code section 8698.1(b), the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are deemed suspended with respect to the temporary emergency shelter facilities located at 2801 ½ Sports Arena Boulevard and at the cul de sac at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Newton Avenue. Furthermore, the temporary emergency shelter facilities referenced herein nevertheless are exempt from the provisions of CEQA in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15304(e).

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

Members of the public participated in budget discussions.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:

Approving this action will result in 350 beds being provided for homeless individuals for up to 12-months during FY 14. Additionally, this action will provide for the continued operation of the Transitional Storage Center for FY 14.

Respectfully submitted,



Tom Tomlinson  
Interim Director  
Development Services Department