

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 7/26/04		Item Number: 1-4
AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of Short- Term and Long-Term Options to Address Homelessness in Culver City.		
Contact Person/Dept.: Don Rogers / Tevis Barnes / Simone Slifman		Phone Number: (310) 253-6682 / (310) 253-5782; (310) 253-6015
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☒ No ☐
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒
Public Notification: Citywide postcard mailing (7/19/04); Hand distribution of 250 flyers in the neighborhood surrounding the Armory (7/16/04); Via Email (7/16/04): Clare Foundation/Culver Vista Family Center, Culver City Chamber of Commerce, Culver City Downtown Business Association, Culver City Homeowners' Association, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, New Directions, Inc., People Assisting the Homeless, City of Santa Monica - Human Services Division, Ronald A. Stewart, Ph.D., OPCC, St. Joseph Center, Venice Community Housing Corporation, West Los Angeles Medical Center - Department of Veteran's Affairs, Westside Shelter and Hunger Coalition. Via Email (7/21/04): Master Notification List. Via Fax (7/16/04): A Community of Friends, Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Clinic, Salvation Army-Samoshel.		
Department Approval: Don Rogers 7/19/04		CAO Approval: Jerry Fulwood 7/22/04
City Controller Approval: Marlee Chang for Eric Shapiro 7/21/04		

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council consider short and long-term options to address homelessness and the impacts on Culver City and provide further direction to staff.

BACKGROUND:

Homelessness is an issue that confronts many Southern California cities. It is estimated that between 84,000 to 300,000 men, women and children in Los Angeles County do not have a fixed nighttime residence and live in places not meant for human habitation (i.e., cars, freeway underpasses, parks, streets, etc.). Many of these individuals may be victims of domestic violence or emancipated foster youth, and many more suffer from mental illness and/or substance abuse.

The exact size, characteristic or location of Culver City's homeless population is unknown. Estimates place this number anywhere between five (5) and forty (40) persons who lack a fixed nighttime residence and utilize cars, parks, streets, etc., as their domicile. The Culver City Police Department has interfaced with the City's homeless population on a multitude of occasions and believes that the majority of the homeless individuals they have interacted with have mental and/or substance abuse

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problems. It is believed that the majority of the City's homeless population primarily exists within Veteran's Memorial Park, where a small number of individuals have made their home within the picnic pavilion area. There has been growing interference with park maintenance staff, which has been attributed to the presence of homeless individuals residing in the Park. This interference includes continual destruction of park sprinkler heads, dumping of trash cans, vandalism of City vehicles, and destruction of items necessary for the protection of park infrastructure. Members of the public have spoken at City Council meetings to express their concerns about homeless individuals in the park, who through their behavior, often intimidate park users, including children attempting to use the playground.

The estimated number of homeless individuals increases significantly during the winter months. During these months, Culver City's National Guard Armory, near Veteran's Memorial Park, is used as a cold weather shelter for the homeless, pursuant to California Government Code Section 15301-15301.6, which mandates that the City utilize the Armory in this manner. The Armory has been used as a shelter for at least the past fifteen (15) years and has a capacity of 150 beds, which can be increased up to 165. The cold weather shelter is required to run continuously from October 15th through April 15th, although this year it was open from November until March. The operation of the shelter is contracted out through the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). The subcontractor, chosen in consultation with LAHSA, provides staffing as well as dinner, a sack lunch for the following day, and information on services available through various agencies. Homeless persons are picked up at various points through the Westside and transported to the Armory. From there, they are supposed to be transported back to the pick-up points the following morning.

On most nights, the Armory shelter is at or near full capacity. Since the shelter is first-come, first-serve, many people stay near the park to give themselves a better chance of getting a bed the following evening. Additionally, transportation back to pick-up points often occurs by van without enough seating to transport large groups, and, as a result, many homeless individuals linger in Veteran's Park long after the shelter has closed for the day. This has aroused concerns by park users, local residents and businesses about the safety of the park and surrounding areas. In addition, the Culver City Police and Fire Departments have responded to numerous radio calls regarding the homeless. Some of these calls have resulted in arrests and time-consuming medical checks.

In October 2002, the City Council created a Homeless Subcommittee, consisting of Councilmembers Gross and Silbiger, to address these concerns. In addition, a Homeless Task Force consisting of staff members from Police, Fire, Housing, Public Works, City Attorney, Administration, and Parks, Recreation and Community Services has been formed. Both the Homeless Subcommittee and Homeless Task Force have held various meetings to analyze homelessness in Culver City and identify possible

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solutions to assist the homeless, reduce the impact on the community, and reduce costs to the City. The Homeless Task Force also met with LAHSA on May 7, 2004 to get input on how to address homeless-related issues as well as to express growing concerns with the operation of the cold weather shelter at the Armory.

As a result of these various strategic and informational meetings, staff has collected a number of possible short and long-term actions to effectively deal with homelessness in Culver City.

DISCUSSION:

Homelessness is a long-term issue that cannot be resolved with one particular solution. Every homeless individual has a unique set of circumstances that have led them to become homeless. Some have fallen on extreme personal or financial hardships, while others struggle with substance abuse and/or mental illness.

Many local service providers who have met with the Homeless Task Force throughout the past year have echoed a similar opinion; that, in order to be truly successful, an individualized and long-term approach must often be employed when dealing with the homeless. The providers advise that this is a time-consuming, and often, resource-intensive process. The short and long-term approaches to addressing homelessness will not solve the situation overnight, but are effective in helping the homeless move to self sufficiency and rebuild their lives. This is an ongoing problem without a surefire solution.

Current Activities

On May 7, 2004, a meeting was held between the Homeless Subcommittee and LAHSA to discuss the operation of the cold weather shelter at the Armory. This meeting outlined costs incurred due to nuisance activity and citizens' concerns. Also, during this meeting the future of operating the cold weather shelter at the Armory was a topic of discussion, including how the shelter could be managed more effectively.

Meetings with local and regional homeless service providers were held on August 14, 2003 and June 24, 2004. These meetings were attended by more than 20 homeless service providers, ranging from outreach and mental health services to permanent supportive housing providers. A wealth of information was collected by staff at these meetings as the various consultants and service providers offered advice on different strategies that Culver City could employ as well as which service providers are best equipped to provide aid for a particular function.

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Signage has been placed in Veteran's Park to advise the public that property left in the park overnight would be disposed of by City staff. The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department began disposing of this property on July 7, 2004.

In addition, the CAO has designated Don Rogers, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services, as the Task Force Head. Tevis Barnes, the City's Housing Administrator and Simone Slifman, Management Analyst, are providing hands on support for Mr. Rogers. The Task Force itself consists of Jerry Fulwood, Carol Schwab, Heather Iker, Roland Miranda, Susan Evans, Jeff Eastman and Hank Davies.

Short-Term Actions

Short-term actions that may be employed to address this issue include:

- **Join the Westside Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness.** This coalition is comprised of homeless service providers and staff from various cities on the Westside. As a member of this coalition, Culver City could garner valuable information, support and consultation from other cities on ways to address our local issues. Coalition meetings are held bi-monthly. **Fiscal Impact:** \$250 annual membership, plus staff time to participate in meetings and workshops.
- **Conduct a study of Culver City's homeless population.** A comprehensive study would detail the number of homeless people that reside in Culver City as well as their needs, such as whether these individuals are dealing with substance abuse, mental health issues, or both. This study would be key in the formulation of an appropriate strategy to address the appropriate problems. **Fiscal Impact:** A study of this type could be conducted by a consultant at a cost of approximately \$30,000-\$40,000.
- **Develop a homeless resource card.** Working with local service providers, the City could develop a homeless resource card that contains contact information on various support services available to assist the homeless. These cards could be distributed to emergency service providers, City staff and other members of the community so that information would be available at all times when encountering a homeless individual in need of assistance. **Fiscal Impact:** Approximately \$1,000 for the initial printing of 500 cards.
- **Install high incandescent lighting in the pavilions at Veterans Memorial Park.** Two bright lights would be installed in the pavilion area at Veterans Memorial Park and would stay on all night. The purpose of installing such lighting would be to discourage anyone, including the homeless, from setting up camp in the park, increase park safety and make it possible for park patrol and law enforcement to see the pavilions from a distance after dark. **Fiscal Impact:**

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\$2300 for materials, which includes \$1500 for the lighting system and an additional \$395 per light for anti-vandalism shields. Other expenses include added electrical cost to keep the lights on all night and ongoing maintenance, such as bulb replacement or repair of broken or vandalized units.

- **Install low light video surveillance cameras in Veterans Memorial Park.** The installation of one, 4-camera, split-screen system will record occurrences of vandalism around the Recreation Hut and would aid the Police Department and the City Attorney's Office in identifying and prosecuting vandals in the park. **Fiscal Impact:** One set would be required to record a 45 foot area surrounding the Recreation Hut. Purchase and installation of one set of four cameras with 72-hour recording capability requires \$8,800 for installation and material costs. Additional costs include use of increased electricity and ongoing maintenance.
- **Alter trash pick-up cycle in the park.** Picking up park trash at the end of the day will decrease the amount of refuse in the park at night and deter vandalism of trash receptacles. **Fiscal Impact:** Minimal, if anything, as this would require only an alteration of staff scheduling but no additional materials.
- **Hold regular meetings with the Armory service provider to develop a "Good Neighbor Policy."** Holding regular meetings between the Homeless Subcommittee and shelter operations management before, during and after the winter months that it is activated (October through April) would allow the City to better understand how the shelter is managed and provide feedback to shelter management as to how the cold weather shelter affects our community. This group would work together to develop a "Good Neighbor Policy" for our community. **Fiscal Impact:** Minimal, requiring staff time to organize meetings and communicate with participants.
- **Conduct a forum on homelessness.** This forum would serve as an educational vehicle, community sounding board, and would seek input from the community and service providers on the creation of a long-term strategy to address homelessness in Culver City. **Fiscal Impact:** Minimal, requiring primarily staff time to organize and conduct the forum.
- **Provide staff training to increase effectiveness in dealing with the homeless.** Staff wishes to utilize the expertise of LAHSA and the City of Santa Monica to develop workshops for those City staff members who are likely to encounter homeless individuals in the community. These workshops will increase staff knowledge and awareness of how to conduct outreach and provide assistance to the homeless. **Fiscal Impact:** Minimal. Staff intends to approach LAHSA and the City of Santa Monica with a request for in-kind assistance with this program.

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- **Revisit existing ordinances.** The examination of existing City ordinances, such as the "Camp Out" ordinance, could result in modifications that strengthen such ordinances to address nuisance activity and better secure the parks, parking garages, and other areas. **Fiscal Impact:** It is possible that this action may require extensive staff time to evaluate and rewrite existing ordinances, if necessary.
- **Enhance existing park patrol program.** Currently, there are a total of two Park Patrol Officers on staff. The officers patrol all City parks on a daily basis from 12:30 pm to 10:00 pm Monday through Thursday, from 1:30 pm to 10:00 pm Friday, and from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm Saturday and Sunday. One option would be to implement a 90-120 day pilot program to increase patrol by 2 hours per day, which would be less costly than hiring additional patrol staff. If the program is successful, we may consider bringing the program back to the City Council to increase the number of officers. **Fiscal Impact:** Approximately \$5,100 for an additional 2 hours per day (14 hours per week) for a 90-day period.

Long-Term Actions

Depending on the outcome of the study, it may be recommended that we implement some of the following actions. We would need to explore funding sources in order to do so. A long term goal of a comprehensive strategy to move homeless off of the streets and into stable housing could include:

- **Retain an Outreach Worker/Service Coordinator.** This individual would act as a single point of contact for our homeless community as well as to the community-at-large on this issue. They would also act as a point of contact for service providers working with our City's homeless population. The Outreach Worker/Service Coordinator would be responsible for keeping the business community and residents informed on what the City is doing to make contact with the homeless population. The City could either hire an entry level City staff member, hire a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) to conduct mental health assessments and treatment plans or contract with another agency that specializes in this type of service. **Fiscal Impact:** The cost of an entry level City staff member for this position could cost approximately \$22,000-\$25,000. An LCSW could cost approximately \$30,000-\$40,000. Alternatively, the City could contract with another agency, such as People Assisting the Homeless (P.A.T.H.), which provides outreach services. The estimated cost for such a contract is \$32,000-\$36,000 annually.
- **The development of a City-owned and operated homeless facility.** Currently, there is no local facility to which homeless individuals can be transported for

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shelter and services. Additionally, many of the homeless facilities in neighboring communities are often filled to capacity. The development of a local homeless facility may help address this issue. This facility would be small in size, no more than 8 to 10 beds in a group home setting or an actual complex of 10 or 15 single-room occupancy (SRO) units, and would be service enriched with professional management staff to prevent any negative activity. Residents of the facility would be required to develop and follow a case management plan which would outline goals to help them achieve self-sufficiency. All residents would also be required to be sober and/or under a treatment program if they are dealing with substance abuse and/or mental illness. The location of the facility would be in an area of minimal neighborhood impact, such as a semi-industrial area. The proposed development of a homeless facility would be a transitional housing model where residents stay for up to twenty-four (24) months and then move to independent or supportive, service-enriched, permanent housing. **Fiscal Impact:** Further study is needed to determine the fiscal impacts. However, it is anticipated that the development of such a facility would require approximately \$300,000 - \$500,000 to rehabilitate an existing site, and that annual operational costs would be approximately \$200,000.

Funding Resources

At least three funding sources may be considered to assist with the financing of the supportive services tier of addressing homelessness. These sources include: Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), the Continuum of Care for Homeless Services and Housing Set Aside Funds.

- **Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)** - These federal funds are made available annually through a competitive process. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) is the local entity which administers these funds and awards them through a competitive process. ESG funds are designed to help improve the quality of existing emergency shelters for the homeless, to make available additional shelters, to meet the cost of operating shelters, provide essential social services to homeless individuals, and to help prevent homelessness. We have been advised that the next application period for ESG funding will be October 2004, which means that preparation of an ESG grant application will need to begin soon in order to ensure all deadlines are met.
- **The Continuum of Care for Homeless Services**- the Continuum of Care funds are federal funds created by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. They are designed to address the critical problem of homelessness through a coordinated community-based process of identifying needs and building a system to address them. The Continuum of Care system seeks to move homeless individuals to self sufficiency through outreach and assessment

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to emergency shelter to transitional housing to independent or service-enriched permanent housing. LAHSA is the local entity charged with administering these funds through a competitive process. Funds may be used for outreach, services linked to housing, transitional housing, case management services, and permanent supportive housing. The next round for this funding is anticipated in Spring 2005.

- **Housing Set Aside Funds-** These funds are local funds provided through the Redevelopment Agency. The primary function of the Housing Set Aside Funds is to increase, improve and preserve a community's supply of affordable housing. These funds focus on creating permanent housing. Set Aside Funds may be utilized to assist with the development of a homeless facility or housing assistance for the homeless in Culver City. Such funds could not be used to print resource cards or to fund additional personnel.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

The following is a summary of anticipated fiscal impacts of the short and long-term actions identified within this report, along with a description of legal funding sources for each purpose. For the sake of brevity, any references to the General Fund in the following tables refer specifically to the Appropriated Reserve and/or the City Council Discretionary Fund.

Short-Term Actions	Fiscal Impact	Possible Funding Resources
Join the Westside Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness	\$250 to join; \$250 membership fee annually.	General Fund
Conduct a study of Culver City's homeless population	\$30,000-\$40,000 (one-time cost)	General Fund Grants Housing Set-Aside
Develop a homeless resource card	\$1,000 for initial printing of 500 cards; approximately \$300 for each additional run of 500 thereafter.	General Fund Grants
Install low light video surveillance cameras in Veteran's Park	\$8,800 for installation and materials.	General Fund

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Short-Term Actions	Fiscal Impact	Possible Funding Resources
Install two high incandescent lights in the pavilion at Veteran's Memorial Park	One-time cost of \$1,500 in materials and \$395 per light (total of \$790) for anti-vandalism shields. Increased electrical and ongoing maintenance.	General Fund
Alter trash pick-up cycle in the park	Minimal. Would require only alteration of staff scheduling.	N/A
Hold regular meetings with the Armory service provider to develop a "Good Neighbor Policy"	Minimal. Requires staff time to organize and communicate with participants.	General Fund
Conduct a forum on homelessness	Minimal. Requires staff time to organize and conduct the forum.	General Fund
Provide staff training to increase effectiveness in dealing with the homeless	Minimal. Staff intends to approach service providers for their assistance in providing training.	N/A
Revisit existing ordinances	Potential for extensive staff time to evaluate and rewrite existing ordinances if necessary.	General Fund
Enhance existing park patrol program	Approximately \$5,100 for 90 day pilot program to increase park patrol by 2 hours per day.	General Fund

Approximate Initial Short-Term Costs: \$57, 440

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Long-Term Actions	Fiscal Impact	Legal Funding Sources
Retain an outreach worker/service coordinator	Varies, depending on qualifications and experience. In-house staff could cost \$22,000-\$40,000, while contracting with a service provider could require \$32,000-\$36,000 annually.	General Fund Housing Set-Aside Grants
Development of a City-owned and operated homeless facility	Initial estimate of \$300,000-\$500,000 to rehabilitate an existing site and annual operational costs of at least \$200,000.	General Fund Housing Set-Aside Grants

Approximate Initial Long-Term Costs: \$736,000

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Staff report of April 7, 2004 regarding issues and concerns related to homelessness in Culver City.

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Approve implementation of all short-term options as listed; OR
2. Approve implementation of short-term options as modified by the City Council; OR
3. Approve implementation of a study of Culver City's homeless population and direct staff to bring recommendations back to City Council, based on the results of the study; OR
4. Do not implement any short-term options; AND/OR

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5. Direct staff to review grant options and bring back recommendations with fiscal impacts of said grants; AND/OR
6. Direct staff to use City Council's and Administration's budget contingency to fund short-range plans that cannot be funded with Housing Set-Aside grant funds.



City of Culver City

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Staff Report

File #: 16-417, Version: 1

CC - Adoption of a Resolution to Partner with Los Angeles County to Combat Homelessness

Meeting Date: November 28, 2016

Contact Person/Dept: Tevis Barnes/CDD-Housing
Phone Number: (310) 253-57-82

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☐ Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒

Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☐ Date:

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (11/22/2016); Committee on Homelessness - 11/14/2016

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (11/17/16)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution to partner with Los Angeles County to combat homelessness through the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative.

BACKGROUND:

On August 17, 2015, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors launched the Homeless Initiative to combat the homeless crisis that pervades Los Angeles County communities region-wide. To develop these strategies, the Homeless Initiative conducted 18 policy summits on nine topics from October 1 to December 3, 2015 which brought together 25 Los Angeles County Departments, 30 cities and other public agencies, and over 100 community partners and stakeholders.

These summits resulted in 47 strategies divided in six areas. These areas included:

- Prevent Homelessness
- Subsidize Housing
- Increase Income
- Provide Case Management and Services

- Create a Coordinated System
- Increase Affordable/Homeless Housing

On February 9, 2016, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a comprehensive plan to combat homelessness which included the 47 strategies.

DISCUSSION:

By vote of 59-11 on Jun 30, 2016, the State Assembly overwhelming passed House Resolution 56 (HR 56) urging the Governor Brown to declare a state of emergency on homelessness in California.

The homeless crisis in Los Angeles County has been increasing and demands an urgent, coordinated response from the County, cities and community partners throughout the region. According to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the total point-in-time homeless population in Los Angeles County was 39,461 in 2013 and 44,359 in 2015, which equals a 12.4 percent increase. Focusing locally, in Culver City, based on the point-in-time Homeless Count, in 2013 the individual homeless population was 22 persons, in 2015 the individual homeless census was 33 persons and in 2016 the individual homeless count was 26 persons.

At its regular meeting on Monday, November 14, 2016, at the request of the Committee on Homelessness, the City Council through consensus directed staff to place an item on a future agenda to approve a resolution to partner with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to combat homelessness based on the 47 strategies defined by the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative.

By adopting the proposed Resolution, the City would partner with the County of Los Angeles in identifying homelessness as a priority issue for the region. The proposed Resolution affirms that all members of the Culver City community should have their basic human needs met with services provided in a manner that maintains human dignity and respect. Through the adoption of the proposed Resolution to combat homelessness, the Council will explore:

- Contributing funding toward the cost of rapid re-housing for homeless Culver City residents;
- Dedicating federal housing subsidies to permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals;
- Ensuring that law enforcement and other first responders effectively engage homeless families and individuals; and
- Using land use policies to maximize the availability of homeless and affordable housing.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

Adoption of the proposed Resolution does not create a fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative Summary
3. 2013, 2015 and 2016 Homeless Count Census

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Adopt a resolution to partner with Los Angeles County to combat homelessness.