

City of Culver City, California
City Council Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: 12/12/05		Item Number: <u>A-2</u>	
AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution in Support of Homeless Housing Services at the VA; Authorization for Staff to Prepare a Similar Letter as that of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation Regarding the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Business Plan Studies for the West Los Angeles VA; and Co-Sign a Similar Letter with the Westside Council of Government Cities.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Shelly W. Chagnon		Phone Number: (310) 253-6008	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Public Notification: Westside Council of Governments Councilmembers and Staff for the Cities of Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and West Hollywood, LA County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, and Master Notification List (12/7/05).			
Department Approval: Martin Cole 12/5/05		CAO Approval: Martin Cole for Jerry Fulwood 12/5/05	
City Controller Approval: N/A			

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a Resolution in support of homeless housing services at the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration campus (VA), draft a similar letter as that of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation regarding the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Business Plan Studies for the VA, and co-sign a similar letter with the Westside Council of Government (COG) Cities.

BACKGROUND:

Over the past several months, the COG and Westside Cities Homeless Issues Subcommittee have met to develop regional homeless strategies. Councilmember Gross serves as the Co-Chair of this subcommittee, which is also represented by PRCS Director Bill LaPointe. Of the several areas being addressed, the committee has discussed efforts to continue advocacy for therapeutic supportive housing for homeless veterans at the VA and the CARES process as it relates to the VA.

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority estimates, based upon a count conducted in late January 2005, that there are approximately 91,000 homeless people in the county, and 35,000 of them have been homeless for more than a year (also known as "chronically homeless"). Statistics from the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

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estimate that homeless Veterans make up one-third to one-half of the homeless population in Los Angeles.

Over the past several months, homeless agencies currently providing services at the West Los Angeles VA and the Westside Council of Governments (COG) cities have been working together to develop concepts for housing homeless Veterans on the campus of the VA. These concepts include long-term therapeutic supportive housing for chronically homeless Veterans and homeless Veterans with special needs. The COG Homeless Issues subcommittee believes that the VA property offers a unique opportunity given its several empty buildings, extensive open space, proximity to an array of complementary services, and adjacency to the VA Hospital. On September 19, 2005, the City of West Hollywood adopted a Resolution supporting the designation of property at the VA campus for housing for chronically homeless Veterans.

The US Department of Veterans Affairs is the lead agency for the CARES process, which is designed to establish broad land use priorities for the VA Campus. On September 22, 2005, the West Los Angeles CARES Local Advisory Panel heard public testimony regarding land use proposals for the West Los Angeles VA campus. The land use proposals that have been presented to the Department of Veterans Affairs include selling the VA property to develop into commercial and residential uses. Members of the coalition and representatives from the Westside cities participated in this hearing to express support to maintain the VA site for services provided to Veterans. The results of this hearing were transmitted in the October 7, 2005 Congressional Delegation letter addressed to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and signed by Senators Boxer and Feinstein and several members of Congress (Attachment 1). This letter presents six guiding principles that were adopted by the Local Advisory Panel. The guiding principles include honoring federal legislation prohibiting the sale or enhanced use leases on the VA campus; honoring the original deed of the property granting its use as an Old Soldiers Home; and precluding commercial use on the property as stated in 2002 correspondence from the Office of Veterans Affairs to Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky.

DISCUSSION:

At its November 19, 2005 meeting, Westside COG discussed the CARES Business Plan Studies for the VA and recommended taking a position of support in a letter to be signed by the Mayors of the COG member cities. This letter would be essentially the same as the one in Attachment 1.

Additionally, in a conversation with Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's office, it was suggested that individual cities take a position similar to

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that of the Democratic Congressional Delegation letter to strengthen the message in addition to the letter authored by the COG. Staff requests that the City Council consider submitting a similar letter to the Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of the City. Staff also requests the City Council consider adopting a Resolution in support of the designation of a property at the VA for housing chronically homeless veterans (Attachment 2).

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

There is no fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter to the Honorable R. James Nicholson, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (October 7, 2005).
2. Resolution No. 05-_____ - A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Culver City in Support of the Designation of Property at the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration Campus for Housing for Chronically Homeless Veterans.

MOTION:

That the City Council:

1. Adopt Resolution 05-_____ A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Culver City in Support of the Designation of Property at the West Los Angeles Veterans Administration Campus for Housing for Chronically Homeless Veterans; and
2. Authorize staff to prepare a similar letter as that of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation regarding the CARES Business Plan Studies for the West Los Angeles VA for the Mayor's signature; and
3. Authorize the Mayor's co-signature on a similar letter as that of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation regarding the CARES Business Plan Studies for the West Los Angeles VA as drafted by the COG; and
4. Direct staff to send copies of the signed Resolution to Senator Barbara Boxer, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Congressman Waxman, Congresswoman Watson,

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Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, and the Department of Veterans Affairs Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Committee.