

DATE: JULY 25, 2005
TO: PASADENA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF TEN-YEAR STRATEGY TO END HOMELESSNESS

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Pasadena Community Development Commission ("Commission") approve the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness.

ADVISORY BODIES

On June 9, 2005, the Community Development Committee recommended the 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness for City Council approval.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness (Strategy) was developed by staff in conjunction with the Housing & Homeless Network (Network) following fourteen months of meetings by a community-based Working Group. The recommendations contained in the Strategy will help to end homelessness in Pasadena by 1) expanding homeless prevention efforts that limit the number of households becoming homeless, and 2) supporting/expanding existing case management based homeless services that assist homeless persons to secure housing. Special focus is given in the Strategy to chronically homeless individuals, as defined later in the report, who are often the most visible and difficult to assist homeless population.

BACKGROUND

In October 2004, the Pasadena Community Development Commission approved the planning and preparation of a 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness, and delegated the responsibility to the Housing and Homeless Network. The Network convened a community-based Working Group of Network members augmented by stakeholders from throughout the community. Over 150 different community members attended at least one of the Working Group meetings, including representatives from neighborhood associations, business associations, community service organizations, faith-based organizations, government agencies, non-profit agencies, public and private institutions of care, private foundations, affordable housing developers/sponsors, educational institutions and homeless and formerly homeless persons.

07/25/2005
Item No. 8.A. (CDC)

The Working Group met monthly for fourteen months to develop a Strategy based on the federally approved concept to end homelessness. This concept focuses on homeless prevention services and activities that limit the number of households who become homeless, and on re-housing those who do become homeless as quickly as possible.

To develop a Strategy based on this concept, the working group focused on four primary goals:

1. Ending Chronic Homelessness;
2. Supporting Existing Homeless Services;
3. Expanding Existing Homeless Services; and
4. Strengthening Homeless Prevention Efforts.

The completed Strategy delineates methods for accomplishing these goals. The key recommendations in the Strategy are outlined below.

Ending Chronic Homelessness

The chronically homeless are defined as individuals who have been homeless for more than one year, or four or more times in three years, and have a disability. On any given night, of the 1,217 homeless persons on the streets of Pasadena, nearly half of them, or 540, meet this definition. Many of them are severely mentally ill or substance abusers. Due to the nature of their disabilities, they are often service-resistant. To effectively move this population from homelessness, three key recommendations are made in the Strategy:

- addition of a new street outreach team to complement the existing street outreach team and provide mental health and case management services;
- establishment of a First Step Recovery Program, which stabilizes homeless individuals who are under the influence of drugs and alcohol so that they can access other case management services and begin to exit their lives on the streets; and
- development of a Safe Haven, which provides high-tolerance permanent supportive housing with intensive case management to individuals with special needs.

Supporting/Expanding Existing Homeless Services

On a daily basis, existing homeless service providers throughout the City help homeless individuals and families escape from homelessness. The Strategy recommends support or expansion of the services provided to address the growing need, including:

- continued federal and state grants for those service providers and services that perform satisfactorily based on monitoring by the City;

- expand the Bad Weather Shelter to 60 continuous, non weather-activated nights of operation and earlier hours to allow the provision of increased case management.
- increase transitional housing for families from the current 32 beds to 48 beds.

Strengthening Homeless Prevention Efforts

Strengthening homeless prevention efforts is also crucial to ending homelessness. The Strategy makes two recommendations:

- implement the Good Neighbor program, a public/private partnership that will increase the number of community groups and resources available to prevent households from becoming homeless.
- employ a full-time Homeless Services Coordinator to manage the Good Neighbor Program as well as the other activities recommended in the Strategy. The Network recommends that the Homeless Coordinator be a city employee, as is the case in the other continua of care systems, located within the Housing & Community Development Division. This objective can be achieved by assigning the Homeless Coordinator's responsibilities along with other related duties to an existing vacant Housing Assistant II position within the Housing & Community Development Division, Supportive Housing Section.

Other Recommendations

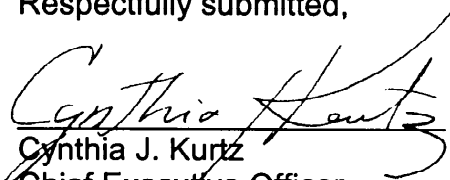
The Network also made several recommendations concerning other homelessness-related issues that impact the community. Key recommendations were:

- continued enforcement of existing rules and regulations regarding aggressive panhandling, urination and defecation in public, storing property in public areas, alcohol and drug use, and washing clothes in public restrooms; and
- limiting community groups from distributing food in parks through strengthened enforcement of the applicable existing rules and regulations regarding the use of public facilities and encouraging these groups to redirect their efforts through participation in the Good Neighbor program.


FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of the recommendations in the Strategy (excluding the cost of the Homeless Coordinator) will require an estimated \$11.0 million dollars. The recommendations may be funded through grants, private donations, and existing allocated resources. Adoption of this plan is the first step in seeking funding from government sources.

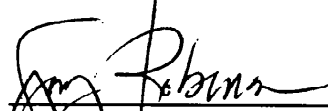
Respectfully submitted,


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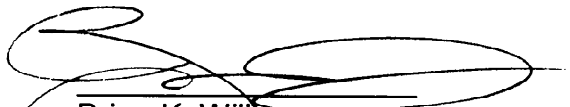
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Attachment 1 - 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness