



TERRA LAWSON-REMER

VICE-CHAIR

**SUPERVISOR, THIRD DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: February 6, 2024

13

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

MAKING COUNTY LAND AVAILABLE FOR EMERGENCY HOMELESS SHELTER SOLUTIONS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Under this Board of Supervisors (Board), the County of San Diego (County) has been more active than ever in stepping up its response to homelessness. In the last 3 years, the County has pushed a significant increase in homeless outreach that now reaches all 18 cities and has worked collaboratively with city jurisdictions to stimulate the expansion of approximately 900 new emergency housing options including beds and safe parking spaces, funded 1,655 affordable homes with approximately another 3,180 units on the way, and led a significant increase in behavioral health services to support mental health and addiction treatment.

The County is leveraging all our tools in the fight against homelessness, including making County land available for local cities and community organizations to develop temporary and long-term homeless solutions. The County modeled this approach at the 150-bed Rosecrans Shelter, partnering with the City of San Diego and the Lucky Duck Foundation to launch the emergency shelter in the Midway District. The County contributions included the use of County land, \$1.2 million in capital for site prep costs and providing on-site behavioral health staffing support and access to self-sufficiency programs provided by Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities. Since opening in September 2022, the Rosecrans facility has sheltered 878 individuals with a 95% occupancy rate.

Given the success of this model, the County should analyze additional land assets that may be suitable for similar emergency housing programs alongside local agencies and community partners. The County stands ready and willing to take action as a strong partner. Many of these sites have long-term disposition plans that are in various stages of planning and approval to support affordable housing construction but may have a window of several years that the site could support an interim use. Today's action would not impact the County's long-term affordable housing plans for these sites in any way.

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The sites identified in this Board Letter have utilities located on site, minimizing public costs, and providing a greater return on investment. Further, the County recently launched a program called Building Partnerships that aims to expand local safe sleeping cabin options via innovative partnerships with local private entities to address homelessness. The County established a sleeping cabin vendor contract for partner organizations to purchase cabins directly and to set up for use as emergency shelters through a grant program offered by the Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC). HSEC launched this effort on November 1, 2023, which included the release of the grant opportunity.

Today's action directs staff to conduct a preliminary screening of suitability of County sites for emergency housing options, focusing on sleeping cabin villages, sprung shelters, safe parking, or repurposing existing structures for homeless services. It also authorizes staff to issue a Request for Information (RFI) on the sites that are deemed feasible for one or more of these uses, to identify potential partners interested in bringing homeless services to these sites. Potential partners include service providers, philanthropies, community-based organizations, and local government agencies.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

VICE-CHAIR TERRA LAWSON-REMER

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to conduct a preliminary screening of opportunities to utilize County-owned sites for temporary emergency housing options, including safe sleeping cabin villages, safe parking, sprung shelters, or repurposing existing structures for homeless services. Report back with an analysis within 120 days.
 - a. Sites to be analyzed should include, but not be limited to:
 - i. W. Beech Street/Kettner Avenue, San Diego
 - ii. 620 E. Valley Parkway, Escondido
 - iii. 6255 Mission Gorge Road, San Diego
 - iv. 5001 73rd Street, San Diego
 - v. 5202 University Avenue, San Diego
2. Authorize the Department of Purchasing and Contracting to issue a Request for Information (RFI) to identify potential service providers and local jurisdictions looking to partner to stand up compassionate emergency housing solutions on these sites to be released after the preliminary screening is completed. The RFI would be applicable to the sites that are deemed feasible in the preliminary screening directed in Recommendation 1. For the purposes of the RFI, ensure potential respondents know the County may fund some or all of the site preparation, utility hookups, sleeping cabins, site assembly costs, and other development costs that are needed to create a compassionate emergency housing solution. In return, respondents will be expected to provide the funding for on-going operations. Ensure all temporary compassionate emergency housing solutions do not interfere with the County's long-term commitments and plans for the sites, including development of affordable housing. Provide preferences for responses that offer the

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highest level of service, best serve the unhoused needs of the County, and minimize cost exposure to the County.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The increase in homelessness is an issue of concern to our entire County, even more so in disadvantaged communities. Continuing to explore ways to create equity by decreasing homelessness in individuals and families is a benefit to the entire region.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today’s proposed actions are aligned with Sustainability Goal #2, assisting in providing just and equitable access to housing. These actions will assist persons experiencing homelessness to quickly reconnect to stable homes, reducing the impacts on the justice, education, and public health systems. Addressing and ending the growing crisis of people experiencing homelessness in San Diego would lead to positive social and economic enhancements, contributing to the overall sustainability of the region.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this cost are included in the Fiscal Year 2023-25 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency. Today’s recommendations will result in an initial one-time cost of approximately \$90,000 for the preliminary screenings of the sites listed. There may be fiscal impacts associated with future related actions which would require a return to the Board for consideration and approval. The funding source is American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) amounts under the Homeless Services component of the ARPA Framework. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

The County of San Diego (County) is leveraging all of our tools in the fight against homelessness, including making County land available for local cities and community organizations to develop temporary and long-term homeless solutions. The County modeled this approach at the 150-bed Rosecrans Shelter, partnering with the City of San Diego and the Lucky Duck Foundation to launch the emergency shelter in the Midway District. The County contributions included the use of County land, \$1.2 million in capital funding for site preparation costs and providing on-site behavioral health staffing support. Since opening in September 2022, the Rosecrans facility has sheltered 878 individuals with a 95% occupancy rate.

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sites have long-term disposition plans that are in various stages of planning and approval to support affordable housing construction but may have a window of several years that the site could support an interim use. Today's action would not impact the County's long-term affordable housing plans for these sites in any way.

The sites identified in this Board Letter have utilities located on site, minimizing public costs, and providing a greater return on investment. Further, the County recently launched a program called Building Partnerships that aims to expand local safe sleeping cabin options via innovative partnerships with local private entities to address homelessness. The County established a sleeping cabin vendor contract for partner organizations to purchase cabins directly and to set up for use as emergency shelters through a grant program offered by the Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC). HSEC launched this effort on November 1, 2023, which included the release of the grant opportunity.

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Today's action directs staff to analyze the suitability of these sites for compassionate emergency homeless solutions, focusing on safe sleeping cabin villages, safe parking, and sprung shelters. Today's action also calls for a Request for Information (RFI) on sites that are deemed feasible, to identify potential partners interested in bringing homeless services to these sites, including service providers, philanthropies, community-based organizations, and local government agencies.

The County-owned sites for staff analysis should include, but not be limited to the following:

1. W Beech Street/Kettner Avenue, San Diego

- Approximately 16,000 square foot (SF) site at the corner of W. Beech Street and Kettner Avenue. Located in the Little Italy neighborhood in District 3.
- Site has a long-term disposition agreement for market rate housing and is currently serving as construction staging area for the adjacent Kettner Crossing affordable senior housing development. Once construction is completed in late 2024, the site could be evaluated for a temporary use until the market rate developer breaks ground in approximately late 2025.

2. 620 East Valley Parkway, Escondido

- Located in Escondido in District 5
- The approximate 2-acre site contains the Esperanza Crisis Center that will remain operational, with the remainder of the parcel demolished with a concrete pad.

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- Located on a transit corridor with connections to the Escondido Transit Center on East Valley Parkway.
- County Request for Proposals has been released for potential affordable housing development, with developer selection occurring by early summer and construction commencing as early as 2028.

3. 6255 Mission Gorge Road, San Diego

- Located in the Grantville neighborhood in District 2.
- The property encompasses 0.86 acres along Mission Gorge Road that contained a Health and Human Services Agency building that has since been demolished, as well as a separate 18,731 SF surface parking lot across Glacier Avenue to the northeast.
- The site has been awarded to Wakeland Housing Corporation and will be developed with 334 affordable units for low-income seniors with construction commencing as early as 2026.

4. 5001 73rd Street, San Diego

- 1.26-acre parcel that formerly housed the Northeast Family Resource Center site located in the College East neighborhood in District 4.
- The site is already demolished and contains a peripheral parking lot and fence with a concrete pad.
- The site has been awarded to Eden Housing Corporation and will be developed with 120 affordable units for families with construction commencing as early as 2026.

5. 5202 University Avenue, San Diego

- Located in the Colina Park neighborhood in District 4
- The 0.53-acre site was the former home to the Central Region Public Health Center. The site is currently vacant, and the existing 4,500 SF building and 1,500 SF trailer are slated for demolition in early 2024.
- County has entered into a development partnership with the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) as part of a larger affordable housing project. SDHC is in the process of site design, due diligence and entitlements with construction commencing as early as 2028.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's actions support the County of San Diego's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan initiatives of Sustainability, Equity and Community by ensuring resiliency by adding capacity to respond to immediate needs for individuals and families; creating initiatives that reduce and eliminate poverty by promoting economic opportunity; creating programs that value health and housing; and by improving the quality of life for individuals experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Terra Lawson-Remer', with a stylized, looped flourish extending from the end.

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Supervisor, Third District

ATTACHMENT(S)
N/A