

Agenda Item 3.E

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council receive an informational report regarding the City of Tracy's homelessness initiatives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the City's efforts to address the impacts of homelessness and quality of life issues in the community, including an update on the City's emergency interim shelter activities.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Recognizing the importance of responding to quality-of-life issues including the human services needs of the City's unsheltered population, the City has devoted significant resources toward addressing the impacts of homelessness within the community. Staff continues to coordinate efforts between various departments to conduct bi-weekly clean-ups of public spaces, foster partnerships with non-profit organizations to share information on services and programs with the unsheltered, secure grants to support homeless services, and developing and commencing construction of a temporary emergency housing shelter facility. City staff has worked vigorously to balance the circumstances of the unsheltered as well as the needs of the community.

Since the last update in May 2022, several key events have taken place:

1. Onboarding of new Homelessness Services Manager;
2. Reaffirmed shelter crisis and authorized City Manager to initiate emergency interim solutions;
3. Rejection of Bids for Phase 2 construction of the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility (TEHF);
4. Service Provider Request for Qualifications;
5. Site and services work;
6. Selection and initiation of security services at El Pescadero Park;
7. Funding status/Grants update;
8. Recruitment and selection of "Familiar Faces" personnel;
9. Tracy Homeless Advisory Committee meeting –
 - Arbor Avenue site prep for interim solution;
 - Placement of interim modulars housing units on Arbor Avenue;
 - Identification of secondary interim overflow site.
10. Phasing relocation and Transition Plan.

ANALYSIS AND POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES

Pursuant to Council's reaffirmation of the emergency shelter crisis, the City Manager authorized staff to move forward on interim emergency shelter solutions, contracts for services, and selection of providers to run the interim sites. Staff is in the process of hiring two Police Homeless Outreach Coordinator positions with a tentative start date in mid-October 2022. Two of five modular buildings were placed at the Arbor Avenue interim site, with expected occupancy the week of October 24th.

Updates

1. *Onboarding of new Homeless Services Manager*

The City's Homeless Services Manager onboarded in early June to oversee the City's homelessness initiatives and begin developing the City's Homeless Services Division. Since then, the City also onboarded an Administrative Technician who joined the division in late August. The team has been tasked with managing the implementation of the two interim shelter sites, coordination of selected operators and service providers at the two sites, outreach and transition efforts within the City, and navigating gaps within these systems to provide solutions to the City's shelter crisis.

2. *Reaffirm Shelter Crisis/Authorized City Manager to Initiate Emergency Interim Solutions*

August 16, 2022, the Council reaffirmed an emergency shelter crisis as the City of Tracy experiences an increasing number of unsheltered or homeless individuals over the past several years with the largest encampment located at El Pescadero Park.

3. *Rejection of Bids for Phase 2 Construction of TEHF*

The City's efforts to construct its first emergency housing facility was delayed when, on July 20th, 2022, no successful bids were submitted for the above ground construction (Phase 2 Construction) of the Arbor Road construction site. Consequently, the bid documents were reevaluated, modified and put back out to bid on September 12, 2022. The bid will close on October 19, 2022 with above ground construction anticipated to begin before the end of the calendar year with a completion date of Summer 2023. The most recent update on the switchgear part, critical for providing electricity to the site, is that it is anticipated for delivery around the end of February 2023.

4. *Statement of Qualifications Released to Solicit Service Providers*

A Statement of Qualifications was posted to the public on September 1, 2022, for selection of service provider(s) to operate the facility and provide case management to connect clients experiencing homelessness with health, employment and housing resources. This solicitation closed on September 14, 2022. As of the writing of this staff report, staff is working to secure service contracts with those who submitted.

5. *Site and Services Work*

Arbor Road Emergency Housing Facility - Phase 1 – sitework, demo and underground utilities work was completed in August 2022.

6. *Private Security Services at El Pescadero Park*

A private security company began patrolling El Pescadero Park on September 14, 2022. The security will consist of two security officers patrolling the park 24 hours per day, seven days per week. On Wednesday, September 14th, 24-hour security services began at El Pescadero Park. Trine Security provides a daily activity report to Tracy Police Department (PD) Command staff detailing their interactions and the assistance

they provide to the people at the park. Their daily activity reports provide strong intelligence regarding the activities occurring and surrounding the park. They have frequently deterred and deescalated incidents and have called Tracy PD as needed. They are also equipped with body cameras and have shared images of suspicious activity to Tracy PD.

7. Funding Status/Grants Update

City is currently working with the County on resubmitting for additional ARPA funding proposals to help support the costs associated with the interim shelter solutions.

8. Familiar Faces Personnel (Police Homeless Outreach Coordinator Positions)

Two conditional job offers have been made. Both candidates are completing the background process.

9. Tracy Homeless Advisory Committee Meeting

A Town Hall-style meeting was scheduled on August 22, 2022 to coincide with the Tracy Homelessness Advisory Committee meeting. The Tracy Homelessness Advisory Committee met on August 22, 2022, for their quarterly meeting to receive an update on the shelter transition plan in conjunction with the Familiar Faces Program and to conduct a town hall style discussion to elicit resources for potential interim shelter solutions. The goal was to illicit shelter-related resources from the community and connect with the community organizations and providers to assist in determining the scope of services available and needs within the City and surrounding areas. Staff shared designated site progress reports and timeline phase plans to the advisory committee members. During the town-hall exercise, staff reached out to the community with an invitation to identify site operational resources and services available.

As an outcome of the unsuccessful Phase 2 construction bid process, the Tracy Advisory Committee directed the City Manager to consider co-locating an interim (emergency) site at the existing Arbor Avenue project site. The emergency carve-out at the Arbor Avenue site is planned to provide emergency housing for approximately 40 people while the Phase 2 construction of the permanent structure continues through a rebidding process and construction. The Phase 2 above ground construction went back out for bid on September 12, 2022 and will close October 19, 2022.

10. Phasing Relocation and Transition Plan

Staff is working alongside law enforcement and service providers to develop a phasing relocation plan. As encampments have grown over the last few years, it is estimated that it will take some time and planning to transition individuals from their camps into a more dignified housing situation. As of today, the interim Arbor Avenue site project is underway with the first modulars facilities placed on site on September 26, 2022. This project is expected to provide five above-ground modulars, one of which will be allotted for an administrative building to house operations and support services as well as the additional ancillary structures which may include showers, bathrooms and storage containers. This site is able to house between 32-48 individuals, based on final layout. Based on the San Joaquin County Continuum of Care's 2022 Point in

Time Count, there were 118 unsheltered homeless individuals residing in Tracy. Given that the emergency/interim solution at the Arbor Avenue site will be limited in capacity, staff has also identified a second site to serve as an overflow site. More details will be provided as they are available.

PARTNERS & COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Collaborative efforts, agencies, and partners: Operation Helping Hands and City staff conduct outreach weekly in some capacity with local providers. Working closely with county partners like Community Medical Centers and Whole Person Care who will be coming alongside the City of Tracy in our efforts once we have a shelter site up and running.

Coordination with SJC CoC: Working with county housing providers to look at potential sites to bring permanent supportive housing solutions to the City for a project Home key application.

FISCAL IMPACT

This discussion has no impact to the City's General Fund.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

A Town Hall style activity was conducted at the Homeless Advisory Committee meeting on August 22, 2022. At this meeting the community gave feedback and support for solutions to our shelter crisis.

COORDINATION

Coordinated efforts between City departments continue, including the Public Works Department, South County Fire Authority, Tracy Police Department and the Code Enforcement team to proactively address issues related to homelessness and providing bi-weekly park clean-ups. These clean-ups also serve as an opportunity to educate the homeless population on available resources in the community and the upcoming transition plan once the shelter sites are onboard.

The continued bi-weekly deployment of "Operation Helping Hands" (OHH): This team includes the Homeless Services Division, Tracy Police Neighborhood Resource Officers, San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Department, Care-Link, Whole Person Care, Community Medical Centers, The Salvation Army and local non-profits.

CEQA DETERMINATION

Any required action related to the California Environmental Quality Act will be taken at the time of project(s) approval(s).

STRATEGIC PLAN

This agenda item supports the Public Safety Strategic Priority, Implement the adopted Homelessness Strategic Plan.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff recommends Council receive this informational report regarding the City of Tracy's homelessness initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Carney
Homeless Services Manager