



Staff Reports

File #: 1436-2018, **Version:** 1

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
From: Rick Tooker, Community Development Director
Prepared By: Lark Ferrell, Housing Manager

TITLE:
Homeless System Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Receive report providing an update on the homeless system redesign.

DISCUSSION:
This item provides City Council with an update on the homeless system redesign over the past six months since the last update provided in December 2017.

Background

The City of Napa (the “City”) and the County of Napa (the “County”) have historically partnered with each other to address the needs of homeless individuals and families. The City’s Police Department has taken the lead on homeless outreach and encampment clean-up activities while the County has funded specialty mental health services and drug and alcohol recovery services for vulnerable individuals and families. In recent years, the City and the County have each funded 50% of year-round shelter operating costs and the County has funded 100% of winter shelter operations.

In October 2015, the City and County of Napa (the “County”) began a process of transforming the way systems respond to and address homelessness. The City and the County jointly hired consultants from the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and from the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) to examine and make recommendations for improving the shelter and homeless housing systems.

In March 2016, CSH and NAEH jointly issued a report recommending changes to align Napa’s homeless system with national best practices by redesigning community housing and homeless services systems to more quickly connect the most vulnerable with housing opportunities, align resources to maintain housing stability, and use the shelter system as a tool for quickly moving households out of homelessness. The report provided six overall strategies. These included:

- 1. Breaking Silos & Leveraging Resources:** Integrate siloed community support services and funding and leverage additional resources for affordable housing.

2. **Cutting Costs & Realigning Resources:** Cut unnecessary system costs and adopt a systems approach to better align resources and serve the most vulnerable, high-need individuals.
3. **Prioritizing Housing Resources:** Target housing resources to “right size” interventions based on household need and ensure the most vulnerable households are prioritized.
4. **Building Housing Capacity:** Build a pipeline for housing and serve the right people in the right way.
5. **Using Data:** Centralize the tracking of homeless system outcomes, flow, data quality, inventory and demographics into an easy-to-digest format.
6. **Identifying New Funding Opportunities:** Secure new funding opportunities including Medi-Cal.

Since the report was issued, the City and County made significant progress on implementing many of the recommendations. Accomplishments from March 2016 through December 2017 included:

- The hiring of a Homeless Programs Coordinator jointly fund by the County and the City
- The formation of a Funders Collaborative with the goal of broadening the base of organizations involved in efforts to end homelessness. Members include representatives from the City, County, the Vintners, the Community Foundation, the Gasser Foundation, Partnership Health Plan, Queen of the Valley Community Benefits, law enforcement, etc.
- The issuance of a Request for Proposals resulting in the contracting with Abode Services, a nationally known and respected housing and homeless services provider, to operate the community’s shelter system and homeless housing services.
- The reduction of barriers to shelter entry, so that services at the community’s shelters can be available to those in need.
- The creation of Napa’s Flexible Housing Subsidies Pool. This virtual pool of housing and support funds is key to effectively address the needs of homeless families and individuals.
- Securing additional funding include the Whole Person Care Pilot, an \$11.5 million multi-year grant which targets homeless and at-risk of becoming homeless Medi-Cal beneficiaries. This grant has provided considerable new funding to help expand outreach and case management and supportive services to help homeless clients become, and remain, housed.
- Formalizing the City’s and County’s collaboration on the homeless system by entering into a Cooperative Joint Powers Homeless Services Agreement

Update on Current Activities

During the past year, Abode has been working hard to become fully staffed. Although many of the previous shelter operator's staff were hired by Abode, the expansion of outreach and housing programs, added many new staff positions. As of June, almost, all positions have been filled. With the majority of its outreach workers hired, Abode's outreach team has been able to work collaboratively with the Police Department's outreach team to expand outreach to unsheltered homeless.

During the past year, efforts have been made to expand the permanent supportive housing (PSH) inventory in the community. Valley View Senior Homes in American Canyon is currently under construction and will include 17 units for homeless veterans and three units for homeless persons who are 55 or older. The County has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Pacific West, the developer of Napa Courtyards, a 20-unit affordable housing project currently under construction on Coombsville Road to include two units for homeless households. Additionally, Stoddard West, the 50-unit affordable rental project currently under construction on Soscol Avenue, will include one unit for a homeless household. Burbank and Gasser Foundation also have submitted plans for a 60-unit PSH project on Valle Verde that is currently going through environmental review. Additionally, Abode and the Housing Authority have launched the Section 8 Landlord Mitigation and Incentives Program to help house Section 8 voucher holders who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Abode and the County also have been working to launch a similar landlord incentive program for non-voucher holders and expect this program to be fully launched by summer.

Last fall, after mold was discovered, the families staying at the Samaritan Family Shelter were relocated to a temporary shelter set up at the former County Health and Human Services campus. Since then, all of the families have been housed, and Abode has been exploring family shelter options including scattered sites and working with Catholic Charities to possibly convert a transitional housing site to family shelter.

Additionally, after over 20 years of service to the community's homeless at the Hope Center, day services are being transitioned to South Napa Shelter beginning June 16th. The transition will be fully complete by July 19th. This will allow the Methodist Church to reclaim the space for church functions. This change is consistent with the recommendations for the community's homeless system redesign because the consolidation of day time and overnight services should result in easier access to services for people experiencing homelessness.

Next Steps

The following are some of the next steps over the upcoming fiscal year:

- The City, County, and community partners will continue to focus efforts on expanding the supply of permanent supportive housing. As these projects require significant rental subsidies and supportive services, this will require leveraging resources to maximize the number of available units.
- The City, County, Housing Authority, and other partners will also continue to collaboratively

seek out new funding to bring additional housing resources into the community to help provide housing resources to the homeless residents of the community.

- Abode will formally launch diversion and family reunification programs, so that people with other options do not have to enter the shelter system.
- The City, County, Abode, and other community partners will move forward with solutions to the current lack of family shelter options for families experiencing homelessness.
- Abode staff will transition all day time services to South Napa Shelter over the next month.
- Metrics to measure and evaluate on-going system performance will be developed and the results shared with community stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

This agenda item is informational and does not result in a financial impact without future Council action.

CEQA:

The Community Development Director has determined that the Recommended Action described in this Agenda Report is not subject to CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c).

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

None

NOTIFICATION:

Napa County Department of Health and Human Services, Abode Services, and the Methodist Church were notified of this agenda item.