



REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Grant Yates, City Manager

Prepared by: Nicole Dailey, Assistant to the City Manager

Date: October 23, 2018

Subject: Resolution Declaring a Shelter Crisis

Recommendation

adopt a RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE ELSINORE, CALIFORNIA, DECLARING A SHELTER CRISIS IN THE CITY PURSUANT TO SB 850 (CHAPTER 48, STATUTES OF 2018 AND GOVERNMENT CODE § 8698.2).

Background

Homelessness is currently one of the most urgent and significant issues facing the State of California. According to the Riverside County Point in Time Count, there are 2,316 homeless individuals in the County. Of these, at least 75 are in the City of Lake Elsinore.

In May 2017, the City of Lake Elsinore established a Homeless Task Force to tackle homelessness. The Homeless Task Force is comprised of two council members, staff, and community leaders eager to join the City in its efforts to reduce homelessness. Key objectives have included a formal analysis of the existing resources and needs within the City, developing new programs to help those in need, and identifying long-term solutions such as housing.

Some of the key initiatives and programs implemented by the City to date include:

- Participating in the Regional Homeless Alliance for Southwest Riverside County.
- Hiring a dedicated Community Services Deputy to work with the community and our Problem-Oriented Policing Team to address homelessness and other quality of life issues in the City.
- Establishing a Street Outreach Team that provides more than 40 hours of outreach services per week. Since March, this team has helped 29 individuals off our streets.
- Creating a Homeless Community Outreach Coalition of more than 400 individuals eager to support and assist those experiencing homelessness.
- Hosting numerous community update and educational meetings to inform residents and businesses about the City's efforts, what they can do to help, and encourage responsible compassion, i.e. giving a hand up, rather than a hand out.
- Conducting enforcement sweeps and ongoing encampment clean ups to address nuisances within the City and discourage illegal activities.

Discussion

In June 2018, Governor Brown and the Legislature authorized Senate Bill (SB) 850 to create the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). HEAP is a \$500 million block grant program designed to provide direct assistance to cities and counties to address the homeless crisis throughout California.

The County of Riverside is expected to receive a total allocation of \$9,791,805, based on a formula that takes into consideration the homeless point in time count data collected annually. These funds will be administered by Riverside County's Continuum of Care (CoC).

The County of Riverside Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) is the collaborative lead agency for the CoC and will serve as the designated "Administrative Entity" and eligible applicant for this funding. DPSS is currently preparing an application on behalf of the County's CoC to submit to the state before the end of the calendar year.

Small cities including Lake Elsinore will only be able to apply for and receive HEAP funding through the CoC. To be eligible, SB 850 requires all cities and counties participating to declare a shelter crisis, pursuant to Government Code Section 8698, and demonstrate city-county coordination.

Adoption of this resolution declaring a shelter crisis for those experiencing homelessness in our City will ensure eligibility for related state funding. HEAP funds are intended to support immediate emergency assistance to people experiencing homelessness. Eligible uses include, but are not limited to the following:

- Homeless prevention activities
- Criminal justice diversion program for homeless individuals with mental health needs
- Establishing or expanding services meeting the needs of homeless youth or youth at-risk of homelessness
- Emergency aid

The CoC Board of Governance is establishing its priorities for the use of these funds and will then be issued by DPSS as a Request for Proposals to solicit applications from cities as well as other service providers. Only cities who have passed a resolution declaring a shelter emergency may submit proposals through this process. DPSS is finalizing these priorities now and the Request for Proposals is expected to be issued on November 1. The City will likely apply for funding regionally through the Regional Homeless Alliance as well as independently.

Staff is working with the RHA, Homeless Task Force and Street Outreach Team to determine our proposed programs and funding initiatives for this program.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact other than staff time.

Exhibits

A – Resolution Declaring a Shelter Crisis