



City of Pittsburg

65 Civic Avenue • Pittsburg, California 94565

September 1, 2017

Jim Mellander, Foreperson
Contra Costa County Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553

Re: Report 1707 Homelessness in the Cities

This is in response to your letter dated June 9, 2017 regarding the Grand Jury Report No. 1707 "Homelessness in the Cities" by the 2016-2017 Contra Costa Grand Jury.

As required, we are reporting the actions in respect to each finding and recommendation:

FINDINGS:

F1. CORE teams are most likely to be the first point of entry for the homeless into the County's Coordinated Entry System.

Answer – AGREE.

F2. CORE teams can successfully identify a homeless individual in need of physical or mental health services.

Answer - PARTIALLY AGREE.

CORE may have a better idea of identifying a homeless person in need of mental health services. However, a CORE member would need to engage in order to make that determination. A non-CORE member may reach the same conclusion if given the opportunity to engage. For example, a Pittsburg Police Officer that has been assigned to the Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET) may reach the same conclusion. MHET East is comprised of one Pittsburg Police Officer paired with a clinician from Contra Costa County Behavioral Health, to conduct follow-up to persons who have recently had a mental health crisis in Eastern Contra Costa County (Pittsburg, Antioch, Oakley and Brentwood.) MHET links these people with mental health services to diminish the likelihood of another crisis.

F3. CORE teams have the resources to identify if there are vacant shelter beds available in the County.

Answer – Agree.

F4. CORE teams are equipped and have the authorization to transport homeless individuals to a medical facility or to a homeless shelter.

Answer – Agree.

F5. CORE teams build trust between the homeless and police departments.

Answer - Partially Agree.

CORE teams make an effort to build trust between itself and the homeless. Pittsburg Police Department also make an effort to build trust between itself and the homeless. We understand that it is CORE's goal to build trust with both homeless and Police Departments as they are equal partners in moving people off the streets.

F9. The cities of Antioch, Concord, Pittsburg, and Walnut Creek, which are the CDBG Entitlement Cities, are the only cities in Contra Costa County that have an approved written homeless plan to end or reduce homelessness in their respective jurisdictions.

Answer - Partially Agree.

The CDBG Entitlement Cities understand that homelessness is a regional issue and alongside the County Homeless Program, tackle it together through the Continuum of Care written plan which all CDBG Entitlement Cities adopted as part of its five-year CDBG consolidation plan. It is restated in each cities Annual Action Plan.

F10. The City appears to be in compliance with the California Housing Accountability Act.

Answer – Agree.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1. The City should consider establishing CORE teams either by partnering with one or more cities in the region or by funding its own team.

Answer - This has been implemented.

The City currently funds CORE. Successor Agency (SA) funds in the amount of \$10,000 were allocated for fiscal year 2016-2017. CDBG funds in the amount of \$12,000 were awarded to CORE for fiscal year 2017-2018.

R2. The City should consider providing incentives for developers to construct housing for the extremely low income, very low income, and homeless populations.

Answer - This has been implemented.

The City and SA through the Pittsburg Housing Authority is providing up to \$947,000 in assistance for a veterans housing project. In addition, the City is providing up

to \$114,000 in development related credits. To preserve owner occupied affordable housing, the City provides payment deferred housing rehabilitation loans.

R3. The City should consider using Successor Agency funds, CDBG and other federal housing funds, impact fees, and city general funds to assist in funding housing for extremely low income, very low income and homeless populations.

Answer - This is implemented.

The City, SA, and CDBG funds were allocated towards a veterans housing project. CDBG funds are allocated to the housing rehabilitation program to assist with preservation of affordable housing. CalHome and Housing Successor Agency loan repayments and interest earned are funding the First Time Homebuyer program (FTHB) in fiscal year 2017-2018. The FTHB program provides home ownership opportunities to those who may not have been able to purchase a home because of income limitations. These programs will strengthen the community by providing residents a long-term stake in their neighborhoods.

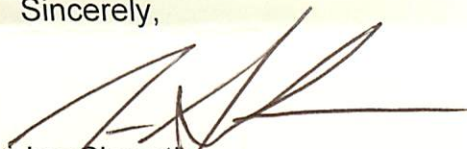
R4. The City should consider adopting a five-year comprehensive homeless plan, as soon as possible with a target date of January 1, 2019, to reduce the homeless population in the City.

Answer – The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable. Homelessness is a regional issue that cannot be addressed independently.

The CDBG Entitlement Cities collectively agreed that each city should not create its own plan as that would lead to incongruences in ideas, priorities, activities, and desired outcomes. Furthermore, individual plans would divide the resources and make each city ineffective. Sharing pooled resources provides a more effective method of addressing a regional issue.

If you have further questions about this matter, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Joe Sbranti
City Manager