



CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

October 15, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Linda Lowry, City Manager

Submitted By: Benita DeFrank, Neighborhood Services Director

Subject: **Adopt a Resolution Affirming the Guiding Principles of the "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision" as Adopted by the Governing Board of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments.**

OVERVIEW

Recommendation – That the City Council adopt a resolution affirming the guiding principles of the "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision" as adopted by the Governing Board of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG).

Fiscal Impact – There is no fiscal impact with the adoption of this resolution.

Previous Related Actions – On January 7, 2017 the City Council adopted "A Way Home: Community Solutions for Pomona's Homeless". On December 17, 2017, the City Council accepted \$70,000 of Measure H City Planning Grant Funds to assist the City in developing components of the Measure H City Plan. On July 2, 2018, City Council adopted a resolution authorizing the submission of the "City of Pomona Enhanced Strategic Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness" to Los Angeles County outlining enhancements to the City of Pomona's "A Way Home" Strategic Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Pomona is a leader within the San Gabriel Valley region in addressing homelessness. However, community concerns lie in the perception that Pomona is the only city in the region that is actively engaged in solving homelessness. These concerns are addressed in the City's Homeless Strategic Plan in Strategy B5 "Advocate for Fair-Share Participation with Neighboring Cities". Pomona, along with many other cities in the region, has been actively engaged with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) to develop guiding principles of a regional approach to address homelessness. These principles are outlined in the "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision" which staff is asking the Council to adopt by resolution (Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND

Whether the unsheltered population within a city is large, small or nonexistent, all cities are impacted by homelessness in Los Angeles County. The San Gabriel Valley, the eastern region of Los Angeles County, which has the greatest number of unsheltered people in the nation, is no exception. The cities in the San Gabriel Valley share major transportation corridors, riverbeds, hiking and bike trails. People, including those without housing, use these common transit-ways to traverse the region. Residents move between cities to conduct business, shop and worship. Wages for a large segment of society have remained flat, housing stock has not kept pace with the need, and the cost of housing has skyrocketed, creating a homelessness crisis.

Cities play a vital role in addressing homelessness as they control local zoning and land use ordinances. Local first responders are often the first point of contact for those who are unhoused. Residents turn first to city leadership to address the ancillary challenges that accompany an increase in homelessness in the community.

To address this challenge, Los Angeles County adopted the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative Strategies to Combat Homelessness. Recognizing the role of cities in addressing homelessness, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors allocated funding for individual cities to develop homelessness plans. During the Spring of 2018, an unprecedented 19 cities out of 31 cities in the San Gabriel Valley created homeless plans. These plans include efforts in outreach, diversion, prevention; building crisis, bridge, and affordable housing; and, providing opportunities for supportive and rapid-rehousing. Each city's plan supported the efforts of the County's adopted Homeless Initiative and agreed to work within the framework of the Coordinated Entry System. An overview of these plans can be found in Attachment 2 and the actual plans can be reviewed at http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1043966_AllCitiesHomelessPlans_8.31.18--pdf.pdf

DISCUSSION

With cities all moving in the same direction, addressing homelessness at the same time, a unique opportunity was presented to address the questions of how cities can collaborate and partner to address a challenge that is too complex for any one city to manage independently. This opportunity was embraced by the SGVCOG to address homelessness from a regional approach.

To do this, eight key cities that have been proactive and provide leadership in the homeless services and housing arena, engaged in conversations addressing the challenges and opportunities of providing homeless services were approached to discuss homelessness. These discussions resulted in the policies outlined in the "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision" (Exhibit A). The cities participating in working group informing the document were Pasadena, El Monte, Pomona, Industry, South El Monte, Claremont, Baldwin Park and Temple City.

Fourteen city staff members participated in five meetings over five months to develop this document. The final draft was reviewed by the working group participants and final feedback provided prior to SGVCOG internal review. The Homelessness Committee and Executive Steer Committee of the SGVCOG provided revisions and approved the proffered document.

The SGVCOG's "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision" outlines guiding principles for cities within the region to collaborate and partner effectively to address homelessness.

There are four key concepts or overarching categories in the document that the participating cities agreed to support. These include:

- Commitment to Help Solve the Crisis of Homelessness
- Local Preference
- Reciprocal Agreements and Cooperation in Providing Shelter, Services and Housing
- Expectations in Collaborating with the County

Each category highlights various principles for cities to follow in order to collaborate and partner to effectively to address homelessness.

Pomona's Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness

The majority of these concepts and guiding principles support the City of Pomona's strategic plan, "A Way Home". In particular they support Strategy B5 – "Advocate for Fair-Share Participation with Neighboring Cities". Within this strategy it was determined that "each city must commit to providing needed housing and services to their fair share of their unsheltered community members, within their city limits." It was also determined that, "it should no longer be acceptable that any city ignore those living on their streets or address their homeless population by simply referring them to other cities for housing and services." The "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision" clearly supports this strategy and with it, the SGVCOG leadership clearly supports Pomona's belief that homelessness is a regional issue that demands a regional solution.

Attachment 1 – Resolution

Exhibit A – The SGVCOG "San Gabriel Valley Positions on Homeless Housing, Shelter and Services Provision"

Attachment 2 – Overview of Regional City Plans