



Housing Authority Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND HOUSING AUTHORITY MEMBERS **DATE:** NOVEMBER 19, 2019

FROM: OFFICE OF HOMELESS SOLUTIONS **WARD:** 1

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY MOTEL VOUCHERS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$94,284.99 FOR THE TEMPORARY RELOCATION OF THE JURUPA ROYALE RESIDENTS LOCATED AT 4747 JURUPA AVENUE IN RESPONSE TO A NOTICE OF DANGEROUS BUILDING, ORDER TO VACATE, AND ORDER TO ABATE DANGEROUS BUILDING NOTICE ISSUED DUE TO THE GAS BEING TURNED OFF FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME

ISSUE:

Approve the emergency motel vouchers expenditure in the amount of \$94,284.99 for the temporary relocation of the Jurupa Royale residents located at 4747 Jurupa Avenue in response to a Notice of Dangerous Building, Order to Vacate, and Order to Abate Dangerous Building Notice that was issued by the Building Official in response to the gas being turned off for an extended period of time.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Housing Authority:

1. Approve the emergency motel vouchers expenditure in the amount of \$94,284.99 for the temporarily relocation of the Jurupa Royale residents located at 4747 Jurupa Avenue in response to a Notice of Dangerous Building, Order to Vacate, and Order to Abate Dangerous Building Notice that was issued by the Building Official in response to the gas being shut off for an extended period of time; and
2. Direct the Finance Department to invoice the property owner, Subsidiaria De San Timoteo LLC, in the amount of \$94,284.99 for the motel vouchers expense and staff costs for relocating the residents to motels.

DISCUSSION:

Under the California Civil Code 1941.1, landlords of a property must ensure that certain conditions are met which make the living space habitable and safe for potential lessees. These conditions include ensuring proper electric, gas, and plumbing utilities.

On September 11, 2019, the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County (Fair Housing) notified the City of Riverside that they were contacted by the residents of Jurupa Royale Apartments due to

their gas being shut off since Sunday, September 8, 2019. This issue was impacting approximately 110 residents. The Fair Housing Council reached out to the property manager about residents being without gas and was informed that there was a gas leak detected after some parking lot improvement work was being conducted. The gas was shut off and a plumbing contractor was being procured to make the necessary repairs.

Since the tenants were without gas for three days and the property manager was unsure of when the gas would be restored, Fair Housing asked the property manager when they were going to relocate the tenants to motels. The property manager was waiting for a response from the property owner and their attorney regarding this request.

In response to the concerns of Fair Housing and the property residents, Code Enforcement went to the property and issued a Notice and Order of Substandard Housing due to violation of 16.09.02 Substandard Housing/Uniform Housing Code of inadequate sanitation due to the gas being shut off. The property owner was also informed that the vehicle/emergency access gates shall be maintained in operable working condition at all times and the vehicle access gates shall be locked in the open position until all repairs have been made and the gate is tested.

On September 13, 2019, Fair Housing reached out to the City again for assistance as the property owner was only willing to offer tenants \$6 per day to relocate, which does not cover the cost of a motel room.

To get a status update on the gas situation, Code Enforcement went out to the property along with Fire Prevention and a representative from the Southern California Gas Company. During this meeting, City staff was informed that the repairs were made to the gas line where the original gas leak was found. However, during the testing of the gas line, Southern California Gas Company found additional leaks. As a result, the property owner now had to replace 1,000 feet of a private gas line. City staff was informed by the onsite contractor that the gas line replacement would be completed by Monday, September 16, 2019.

On September 13, 2019, Fair Housing and the City's Housing Authority Manager reached out again to the property manager to find out the status of temporarily relocating the residents to motels. The City's Housing Authority Manager was informed by the onsite property manager that she was still awaiting a response from the property owner and their attorney. The Housing Authority Manager required a status update by 2 p.m. When no response was provided at 2 p.m., City staff tried contacting the onsite property manager who had closed their onsite office early. A note was left on the door with an emergency contact number. When staff tried calling the emergency number it went to a voicemail box that was full. The City reached out to Wonderdog, the property manager's corporate office, and was not able to get a hold of a live person and leave a message in a voicemail box. The City then tried to reach out to property owner's attorney and was not able to speak to her as she was unavailable. A message was left with the attorney requesting an update.

Since the provisions of the conditions listed in California Civil Code 1941.1 were still not being met by the property owner, and to ensure the safety of the residents as the property had open trenches throughout the property due to the gas line needed to be replaced, the Building Official issued a Notice of Dangerous Building, Order to Vacate, and Order to Abate Dangerous Building Notice.

The City's Housing Authority Manager reached out to the City Manager's Office about providing emergency motel vouchers to ensure the residents had a safe place to relocate to while the gas

line was being replaced. The City Manager's Office provided approval under the City Manager's \$50,000 spending authority.

Housing Authority staff and Fair Housing went to the property to get an idea of which residents had family members they could stay with and how many residents needed motel vouchers. Once this information was obtained, staff called motels to book rooms until Monday and provide transportation to residents without vehicles.

On Monday, September 16th, Housing Authority staff went to the property and met with the onsite contractor to get an update on the gas line replacement. The contractor informed staff that the work would be completed by Friday, September 20th. The Housing Authority Manager reached out to the property owner's attorney about covering the motel vouchers for the extended period. The City received no response. As a result, the Housing Authority Manager met with the City Manager's Office to get approval to extend motel vouchers until Friday, September 20th, which was granted.

On Friday, September 20th, the gas line was repaired and staff from the Housing Authority staff, Building and Safety, and Southern California Gas Company met onsite to test the gas line. Southern California Gas Company tested the line and it passed inspection. The Housing Authority Manager was asked by the Building Official and property owner's attorney to extend the motel vouchers until Monday, September 23rd when all the gas line trenches could be filled in. The Housing Authority met with the City Manager's Office to obtain authorization to extend motel vouchers, which authorization was granted.

On Monday, September 23rd, the residents were able to move back into their apartment units. Housing Authority staff provided residents without vehicles with transportation back to the property.

Staff will work with the Building and Safety Division and the City Attorney's Office to draft a local ordinance that will spell out the responsibilities of property owners if any of the conditions under California Civil Code 1941.1 are not being met or when tenants are being displaced as a result of an order to vacate by a local enforcement agency if the immediate health and safety of the residents is endangered.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of the emergency hotel vouchers is \$94,284.99. Sufficient funding is available in the Housing Authority Account No. 9859000-440446 to cover the motel vouchers expense.

The Finance Department will issue an invoice to the property owner in the amount of \$94,284.99 to cover all expenses associated with the emergency hotel vouchers.

Prepared by: Michelle Davis, Housing Authority Manager
Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by: Moises Lopez, Deputy City Manager
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney