



City of Arts & Innovation

Housing and Homelessness Committee Memorandum

**TO: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2022

FROM: OFFICE OF HOMELESS SOLUTIONS

WARD: ALL

SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN

ISSUE:

Conceptually approve the Homelessness Action Plan for City Council consideration.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Housing and Homelessness Committee conceptually approve the Homelessness Action Plan for City Council's consideration.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE:

On June 8, 2022, the Office of Homeless Solutions presented the draft Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness, HHAP-3, and HOME-ARP to the Housing and Homelessness Committee during a special meeting. Over several months, the OHS engaged experts in the field, community members, and end-users to gather quantitative and qualitative data that informed the OHS of the importance of identifying gaps with a focus on addressing subpopulations. Further, the 2022 Point-in-Time Count data weaved into the information collected from stakeholders supported the creation of new goals the City intends to implement intentionally. Two members of the Housing and Homelessness Committee, Chair Edwards and Committee Member Cervantes, voted to move the Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness, HHAP-3, and HOME-ARP along to the City Council with recommendations of incorporating feedback received and working with Chair Edwards for continued leadership and support during the process.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Riverside's Office of Homeless Solutions in collaboration with the Housing and Homelessness Committee are working toward a Homelessness Action Plan to reduce homelessness in the City. The City is building from the Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan, the Housing & Homelessness Committee's FY 2021/22 goals, and the City's Housing First Policy. The plan will center around goals that work to increase housing production and affordability, prevent homelessness, increase shelter beds and services, expand public awareness about homelessness and housing, and build a regional infrastructure with other jurisdictions and organizations.

In order to ensure the Homelessness Action Plan reflects the needs of Riverside's stakeholders, the City held three hybrid community engagement meetings (simultaneously in-

person and on Zoom) to inform the community, obtain feedback on the proposed goals and the activities within the goals and prioritize activities leveraging HHAP-3, HOME-ARP, Measure Z, and other existing funding streams. These community meetings featured both Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation. The City hosted three Homeless Task Force meetings virtually and one in-person where leaders and front-line staff who work with the homeless population and extremely low- to low-income residents had an opportunity to provide input on how to craft a feasible and useful Homelessness Action Plan. Additionally, our partners were asked to administer an end-user survey to collect valuable feedback from those experiencing homelessness. People experiencing homelessness and those with lived experience were invited to participate in a discussion held in-person to provide their feedback of the Homelessness Action Plan.

The three major themes of these meetings included: (1) the need to prioritize vulnerable groups experiencing homelessness; (2) supporting creative housing with low-barrier shelter options; and (3) getting all hands-on deck to help with the homelessness crisis. The meeting attendees also supported the following six goals to address homelessness:

1. Increase housing production with a focus on affordability;
2. Availability of services, with a focus on physical and mental health and substance use disorder treatment;
3. Prevent homelessness;
4. Increase availability and effectiveness of emergency shelters;
5. Expand public awareness; and
6. Build a coordinated regional infrastructure.

The draft Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness (Attachment 1) includes each goal and the corresponding new program and policy deliverables, partnerships, city department leads, leveraged city resources, timelines, and goal alignments.

To receive the HHAP-3 grant funds, the City had to submit a local homelessness action plan and HHAP-3 application by June 30, 2022. The HHAP-3 application, a component of the Five-Year Plan, required regional collaboration with the County and Continuum of Care (CoC) to complete the eight tables included in the application.

CITY COUNCIL:

On June 28, 2022, the Office of Homeless Solutions presented the draft Five-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness, HHAP-3, and HOME-ARP to City Council. Over several months the OHS engaged experts in the field, community members, and end-users to gather quantitative and qualitative data that informed the OHS of the importance of identifying gaps and the focus on addressing subpopulations. Further, the 2022 Point-in-Time Count data weaved into the information collected from stakeholders supported the creation of new goals the City intends to implement intentionally. Recommendations by

City Council included coordination between the City and County to provide joint efforts to address homelessness across the City, preventing lawlessness and ensuring safety for all, review of the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program, affordable for sale options, and differentiation between CARE Court and HOME Court. Additionally, Councilmember Edwards requested that the OHS meet in person with the

Task Force to receive feedback and to confirm that the plan incorporates the voice of all stakeholders.

DISCUSSION:

Task Force Meeting:

On August 17, 2022, the Office of Homeless Solutions led a meeting with Task Force members to review the draft Homelessness Action Plan Problem Statement, Activities, and Measurements and ensure stakeholders' voices were captured throughout the plan. Feedback from the group includes additional measuring tools to strengthen data collection. We heard that individuals with lived experience are crucial in implementing the Action Plan. Acknowledging that many activities are interwoven, it is essential to identify what action is being taken toward meeting other goals to contribute to success. Additionally, we heard that our plan aligns closely with that of the County, and by highlighting the Office of Homeless Solution's supportive ancillary services, we have an opportunity to share more of the great work already happening.

Lived Experience Meeting:

On September 1, 2022, the Office of Homeless Solutions led a meeting with individuals experiencing homelessness and those with lived experience to discuss the Homelessness Action Plan. Participants shared their struggles with utilizing housing vouchers, the need for compassionate field engagements, clean drinking water, shower utilization, and the importance of frequent safety checks at non-congregate shelters. Those experiencing homelessness and people with lived experience would like to continue meeting with the City throughout the implementation of the Action Plan to share experiences around gaps and success.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

This item contributes to **Strategic Priority 2 – Community Well-Being** and **Goal No. 2.2**, collaborate with partner agencies to improve household resiliency and reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness.

The item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The City conducted community meetings and reestablished the Homeless Task Force to assist with drafting the Homelessness Action Plan.
2. **Equity** – Riverside residents will have equal access to the programs that will be supported through the Homelessness Action Plan.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The City will ensure that the HHAP 3 and HOME-ARP grant funds will be used in accordance with the state and federal program regulations including funding evidence-based programs serving people experiencing homelessness among eligible populations.
4. **Innovation** – The Homelessness Action Plan provides the City with the ability to support innovative programs that address gaps in our homeless system of care.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The HHAP 3 and HOME-ARP grant funds will provide funding to meet the gaps in our homeless system of care and adapt to the needs of our homeless population and service providers.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this staff report.

Prepared by: Lorissa Villarreal, Homeless Solutions Officer
Availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Interim Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by: Edward Enriquez, Interim Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Homelessness Action Plan
2. Presentation