



Housing and Homelessness Committee Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS **DATE: NOVEMBER 28, 2022**

FROM: OFFICE OF HOMELESS SOLUTIONS **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION FROM PATH OF LIFE MINISTRIES ON THE EMERGENCY COLD WEATHER SHELTER PROGRAM

ISSUE:

Receive a presentation from Path of Life Ministries on the Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Program and the duration of operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Housing and Homelessness Committee receive a presentation from Path of Life Ministries on the Emergency Cold Weather Shelter Program.

BACKGROUND:

Path of Life Ministries (POLM) has operated an Emergency Cold Weather Shelter (ECWS) Program in the City of Riverside (City) since 2005. Since that time, thousands of individuals have been provided a safe, hygienic, and healthy alternative to sleeping on the streets and other places not meant for human habitation during the cold weather season.

From 2005 until 2019, the ECWS Program provided up to 72 additional beds at the POLM Community Shelter located at 2840 Hulen Place to serve individuals needing shelter during the coldest months (December - March). The ECWS program offered guests meals (sack lunches were provided by the Salvation Army), supportive services, showers, and fresh linens.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ECWS Program and forced POLM to seek an alternative site to continue providing this vital service in the City. After a lengthy and thorough search of available facilities, POLM was able to partner with the Salvation Army to host the ECWS Program at its campus located at 3695 1st Street. Due to City code requirements, the capacity of the ECWS Program was reduced to 40 beds. In addition, the Salvation Army utilizes their facility for its primary fundraiser during the entire month of December. This impacts the start date of the ECWS Program until after January 1 each year. Additionally, the facility is used for a large Easter program which prevents POLM access to the facility after the first week in April.

Since 2020, POLM has operated a 40-bed (24 men, 16 women) ECWS Program at the Salvation Army campus from January 1 - March 31 with no negative impact on the surrounding area. POLM was able to secure additional funding from Riverside County to launch 24-hour operations for

ECWS Program, thus eliminating a daily exodus of guests back into the community. Intakes are conducted seven days per week utilizing appointments made on the ECWS hotline. There are no lines that form outside and walk-ups are discouraged. Referrals from the City, County of Riverside, and other partner agencies are encouraged to utilize the ECWS hotline to verify bed availability prior to sending individuals to the site. Twenty-four-hour security is provided by POLM and the Salvation Army. POLM provides a secure storage unit on the campus for ECWS guests to temporarily store excessive property while they are enrolled in the ECWS Program. The ECWS is a low barrier shelter and serves as an access point to vital services for many previously shelter resistant chronically homeless individuals.

The ECWS Program is funded through the County of Riverside and supplemented by private funds.

DISCUSSION:

POLM will provide the Housing & Homelessness Committee with an overview of the ECWS Program that will operate from January 2, 2023, to March 31, 2023, and discuss cold weather shelter needs.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to **Strategic Priority 2 – Community Well-Being** and **Goal 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 ECWS Program operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during January 1 – March 31, without requirements of leaving during business hours back into the community.
2. **Equity** – Riverside residents will have equal access to the program.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – POLM leverages funding through the County of Riverside as well as private donations to provide this service for our target population.
4. **Innovation** – The City supports POLM in service delivery and operations of the ECWS which adds an additional 40 shelter beds during the winter months.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – This emergency shelter will allow people to have a safe, warm space to stay through the end of March.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this staff report.

Prepared by: Lorissa Villarreal, Officer of Homeless Solutions

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

Attachment: Presentation