



Meeting Date: 02/12/2007

ACTION	TYPE OF ITEM
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved Recommendation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Info/Consent
<input type="checkbox"/> Ord. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Res. No(s). _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing (Info/consent)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Prepared By: Will Reed x8044 *WR*

Agenda Item No. **I-3**

Reviewed By: City Manager *MMH* City Attorney *AAK* Finance *SLW* Other (Specify)

**DATE:** January 31, 2008

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Sal Gonzalez, Director *SG*  
Housing Department

**SUBJECT:** 1-Year Action Plan Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION**

That City Council approve the listed five (5) recommendations for the City of Oxnard's Action Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, extracted from the County's recommendation of its 10-Year Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness:

1. Develop a dedicated revenue generating source;
2. Create twenty (20) additional units of transitional housing;
3. Create thirty-five (35) shelter beds;
4. Create and implement an educational campaign;
5. Develop and implement additional prevention programs.

**SUMMARY**

In 2003 the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requested local jurisdictions participating in federally funded homeless programs to develop "local 10-year plans to end chronic homelessness." The two agencies agreed that chronic homelessness is the most visible form of homelessness, consisting most often of unaccompanied individuals who have been homeless for a year or more, or multiple times over several years; disabled by drug addictions, mental illness, chronic physical illness or disability, or developmental disability, with frequent histories of hospitalization, unstable employment, and incarceration. Because the City is a recipient of federally funded homeless program grant funds, namely the Continuum of Care grant, the City must comply with the ICH and HUD.

At the July 12, 2007 meeting, City Council approved the recommendation sent forth by the City's Commission on Homelessness to adopt the County of Ventura's 10-Year Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness.

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## **DISCUSSION**

In December of 2005, City Council adopted a resolution supporting the development of a 10-year plan to end homelessness in Oxnard. At the December 11, 2006 meeting, City Council appointed a 16-member ad-hoc committee named the "Homeless Plan Working Group" to guide the development of the 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness.

However, since that time, County Supervisor Kathy Long has requested that the City adopt the County's 10 Year Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness (Strategy). The County's Strategy was adopted by the County in June 2007 and submitted to the ICH. Throughout the remainder of 2007, all ten (10) municipalities within the County adopted the Strategy.

After this request was made, staff consulted with ICH as to how to respond to Supervisor Long's request. Mr. Cabrera of ICH offered two (2) recommendations:

1. The City develop its own plan with a strategy unique to Oxnard, or
2. The City adopt the County's Strategy but develop its own action items and develop more fully the details and benchmarks for each item.

This response was taken to the City's Commission on Homelessness and the Working Plan Group on July 2, 2007 in a Special Meeting. At the meeting both groups voted unanimously to adopt the County's Strategy with the City identifying its own action items and fully developing the benchmarks for each item. The groups then worked vigorously to select five (5) of the twenty-two (22) recommendations listed in the Strategy, and continued to work to produce and present, in concept, the composition of the five (5) items (see attachment #1).

Upon the approval of these recommendations, staff will continue to work with the Commission on Homelessness, service providers, and other community stakeholders to finalize the concepts, and create implementation timelines and benchmarks for each recommendation. This process will be one that will continue to evolve and renew itself as the City continues its work to end chronic homelessness.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There are no financial impacts for the City in the adoption of these five recommendations. However, as the recommendations are further and fully developed, there may be costs associated with the implementation process.

WR

Attachment #1 – City of Oxnard Action Plan to End Chronic Homelessness

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**CITY OF OXNARD  
ACTION PLAN TO END  
CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS**

In 2003 the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requested local jurisdictions participating in federally funded homeless programs to develop "local 10-year plans to end chronic homelessness." The two agencies agreed that chronic homelessness is the most visible form of homelessness, consisting most often of unaccompanied individuals who have been homeless for a year or more, or multiple times over several years, disabled by drug addictions, mental illness, chronic physical illness or disability, or developmental disability, with frequent histories of hospitalization, unstable employment, and incarceration. Because the City is a recipient of federally funded homeless program grant funds, namely the Continuum of Care grant. The City must comply with this directive.

In December of 2005, City Council adopted a resolution supporting the development of a 10-year plan to end homelessness in Oxnard. On December 11, 2006, City Council appointed a 16-member ad-hoc committee named the "Homeless Plan Working Group" to guide the development of the 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness. However, since that time, County Supervisor Kathy Long has requested that the City adopt the County's 10 Year Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness (Strategy). The County's Strategy was adopted by the County in June of this year and submitted to the ICH.

On September 13, 2007 the Homeless Plan Working Group voted to extract five (5) of the County's recommendations from its 10-Year Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness. The recommendations being submitted are as follows:

1. **Develop a Dedicated Revenue Generating Source** – create a City Housing Trust Fund and develop public and private sources of funding to support the production and preservation of affordable housing and supportive services. There are approximately 400 cities and counties within 40 states across the country including at least six (6) counties within the State of California that have created housing trust funds. Such funds are received through an ongoing dedicated source(s) of public funding to support the production and preservation of affordable housing. The public source of funding is usually committed through legislation or ordinance.

Additionally, the City will look at hosting and/or supporting special fund raising events with local service providers. The City is encouraged to work directly with Service Providers to organize and implement annual event(s) to raise funds to support its homeless prevention programs. The Working Group has concluded that there is a continuous cycle of homelessness each year during which large numbers of persons exit homelessness only to be replaced by a

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large number of other persons who lose their housing and become homeless. Funds would be used to help provide supplemental resources to prevent households at risk of becoming homeless from becoming homeless.

Supplemental resources previously noted include:

- clothing certificates
- food certificates
- health care
- household items certificates
- landlord-tenant mediation
- legal services
- rental assistance
- transportation assistance
- utility assistance

2. **Transitional Housing** – Create 20 additional transitional housing units consisting of 60-80 beds to serve families who are living on the streets and develop a case management plan with a case manager as a condition to admission; Create 15 additional transitional housing “Safe Haven” beds for single individuals with disabilities. The recommendation for 10 additional transitional housing units consisting of 10-40 beds for families and individuals with disabilities (e.g., mental illness and other disabilities) is also based upon the number of persons who are homeless in the city which was documented at 671 persons on the night of the Point-in-Time count in January 2007. As defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), transitional housing should allow residents to stay up to two (2) years and have access to on-site and/or off-site social services such as employment, health care, housing placement, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and veteran services. Their service needs should be coordinated with case manager(s) and among agency providers. In addition, they also need time to establish the resources (e.g., credit history, move-in costs, and employment stability) necessary to obtain and maintain permanent housing.
3. **Shelter Beds** - Create 35 additional shelter beds for individuals living on the streets and develop a case management plan with a case manager as a condition to admission. The recommendation for 35 additional shelter beds is based upon the number of persons who are homeless in the city which was 671 persons on the day of the Point-in-Time count in 2007. Of these persons, 516 or approximately 77% are unsheltered. Of the approximately 671 persons living on the streets on a given day, approximately half (50%) or 335 persons are single individuals who are chronically homeless. The other half (335) of persons living on the streets consists of approximately 160 single individuals who are often in need of shelter in order to obtain permanent affordable housing. These persons have a wide-range of social service needs and a wide range of case management services is needed in order to meet their needs such as domestic violence

recovery, education, employment, health care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and veteran services. They will also need time to establish the resources (e.g., credit history, move-in costs, employment stability) necessary to obtain and maintain permanent housing.

4. **Community Education Campaign** – Implement an education campaign to make the community aware of the findings, guiding principles, goals, and recommendations of this report. It is important that the community know the extent and profile of homelessness within the city. As noted in this report, there are approximately 671 adults and children who are homeless on a given day throughout the city and about 850 persons who experience homelessness annually. The Working Group believes that knowing the extent of the problem will help generate more community support towards solving homelessness. It is also important that the community knows that there is a continuous cycle of homelessness. There are large numbers of persons who exit homelessness each year thanks to the resources and social service efforts of many local organizations and individuals. However, these persons are replaced by a large number of other persons who lose their housing and become homeless. This cycle involves approximately 860 households consisting of about 2,580 adults and children who become homeless annually. The Working Group believes that knowing the extent of the problem will help generate more community support towards solving the problem for those at risk, including local homeless prevention.
  
5. **Prevention Programs** – Implement homeless prevention programs throughout the city that will prevent at least half (50%) or 430 of the 860 households who become homeless each year from becoming homeless. This would include the implementation of a community outreach and education campaign that raises awareness about households at risk and provide information about resources available through homeless prevention programs. The Working Group concluded that there is a continuous cycle of homelessness each year during which large numbers of persons exit homelessness only to be replaced by a large number of other persons who lose their housing and become homeless. This cycle involves approximately 860 households (2,580 residents) who become homeless annually. The Working Group also realizes that helping households maintain their housing is less costly and more effective than helping households obtain housing after they become homeless.

As a result, the Working Group recommends that city-wide homeless prevention programs be implemented. Prior to receiving resources, an intake and assessment should be completed that will verify eligibility and identify the needs and strengths of each household. Recipients should be required to work with a case manager on a long term basis when necessary.

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The Working Group believes that raising awareness of households at risk of becoming homeless will result in households receiving resources prior to becoming homeless and thus increase the odds of maintaining their housing. Raising awareness can be accomplished through several means of communication that provide at risk of becoming homeless households, and those groups and individuals that want to help them, with the necessary information and resources to prevent homelessness. Providing information about resources available through homeless prevention programs is also necessary to ensure that households at risk of becoming homeless receive essential resources and maintain their housing. Thus, the Working Group is recommending that the City encourage faith-based organizations, neighborhood groups, and other neighborhood entities to “adopt a neighborhood.” Adopting a neighborhood would consist of distributing and/or posting homeless prevention program materials at various places.

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