



SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Department: City Manager

**Prepared by: Andrew Hening,
Director of Homeless Planning and Outreach**

City Manager Approval: _____

TOPIC: HOMELESSNESS CASE MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION OF THE SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF MARIN TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR HOUSING FIRST CASE MANAGEMENT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$260,000

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a resolution of the San Rafael City Council Authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement with the County of Marin to provide funding for Housing First Case Management in an amount not to exceed \$260,000.

BACKGROUND:

In January 2017, according to a [report](#) from the Bay Area Economic Institute and McKinsey Consulting, Marin County had the seventh highest per capita rate of homelessness in the entire country. By January 2019, however, overall homelessness in Marin had fallen by 7%, long-term chronic homelessness had declined by 28%, and unsheltered homelessness in San Rafael had dropped by 30%. Over this same two-year period, approximately 80% of California counties saw [increases](#) in homelessness, including a 20% increase in San Mateo County, a 31% increase in Santa Clara County, and a 43% increase in both Alameda County and Contra Costa County.

These results were not an accident. Over the last five years the City of San Rafael has been partnering closely with the County of Marin and local nonprofit partners to implement services and housing for people experiencing homelessness.

In 2016, the City and its partners launched the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), which from March of 2016 through September of 2017, housed 23 of the most visible and vulnerable people experiencing chronic homelessness in Downtown San Rafael. HOT has subsequently been named a statewide best practice by the League of California Cities.

This success helped inform the launch of Coordinated Entry (CE), which officially kicked off on October 1, 2017. Since the implementation of CE, countywide over 330 of the most vulnerable people experiencing chronic homelessness have been housed (and over 90% remain housed). Today, our data suggests there are less than 400 people still experiencing chronic homelessness in Marin County.

FOR CITY CLERK ONLY

File No.: _____

Council Meeting: _____

Disposition: _____

These housing placements have been the result of strategically pairing local housing subsidies (e.g. Section 8 housing vouchers) with intensive “Housing First” case management. [Housing First](#) is an evidence-based best practice for housing people experiencing chronic homelessness that prioritizes getting back inside and then working on the underlying issues that might have caused a person’s homelessness.

ANALYSIS:

Despite this impact, the last year has raised many new challenges and concerns in our community about homelessness, and it is yet again requiring a fresh look at the way the City and its partners address this complex issue. While objectively there has been tremendous success over the last five years, subjectively, over the last year in particular, the rise of large homeless encampments (e.g. Lee Gerner Park in Novato, the Central San Rafael viaduct and Boyd Park in San Rafael, Dunphy Park in Sausalito) has suggested just the opposite.

What’s important to remember is that despite their outsized visibility and impacts, encampments remain relatively rare overall. Based on the best data we have (the 2019 Homeless Point-in-Time Count), just 15% of people experiencing homelessness in Marin County reside in tent encampments. Moreover, at least in San Rafael, upwards of 90% of people residing in encampments are in fact chronically homeless. Thus, continued progress around our core housing first strategy for people experiencing chronic homelessness will ultimately also result in a reduction in encampments.

Due to the fallout of COVID-19, the federal government is making even more resources available for people experiencing homelessness. For example, the Biden Administration recently announced the rollout of 70,000 new housing vouchers for people experiencing homelessness, over 100 of which will come to Marin. However, as we have learned over the last few years, people only have success with housing if they also have wraparound support services. Fortunately, thanks to federal stimulus funding coming to local communities, there are now resources that have never existed before.

To that end, staff is recommending that the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the County of Marin, in a form to be approved by the City Attorney, agreeing to provide up to \$260,000 for the hiring of additional housing first case managers.

The goal is ultimately for cities and towns in Marin to contribute to this effort, which will help dramatically expand local service capacity. Through regional meetings, there has been discussion of setting aside approximately \$2 million countywide towards additional case management tied to the new emergency housing vouchers. Using a population-based formula, San Rafael’s share is approximately \$260,000.

This program is scalable because it is employing case managers to work with people experiencing homelessness and matched up with a housing voucher. For example, the Marin Housing Authority has said they will make approximately half of the new vouchers available in July, so this program would be able to get up and running fairly quickly. Each voucher will need to be matched with a willing landlord. Additional funding, such as through the State budget or additional federal funds, would allow expanding the program to have a larger reach and assist more people. Staff is working on an initial program that manages the funding sources to flex up case management services for a period of 3-5 years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff is recommending that the City set aside up to \$260,000 for this program. This amount would be made possible through San Rafael’s allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. While the guidance for those funds is not yet finalized, there are sufficient funds available using either ARPA

funds or the funds that are released due to ARPA covering reimbursable expenses. It's important to remember that this funding will be highly leveraged by allowing our community to utilize more Section 8 housing vouchers.

OPTIONS:

The City Council has the following options to consider on this matter:

1. Adopt the resolution as proposed by staff.
2. Adopt the resolution with modifications.
3. Direct staff to return with more information.
4. Take no action.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Enter Into an Agreement with the County of Marin to Provide Funding for Housing First Case Management in an Amount Not to Exceed \$260,000

RESOLUTION NO.

**RESOLUTION OF THE SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT
WITH THE COUNTY OF MARIN TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR HOUSING FIRST
CASE MANAGEMENT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$260,000**

WHEREAS, on October 1, 2017, the County of Marin and local homeless service providers launched a “Coordinated Entry System” for providing people experiencing homelessness with housing and services; and

WHEREAS, since the launch of the Coordinated Entry System, approximately 330 people who had been experiencing chronic homelessness have been housed; and

WHEREAS, over 90% of the chronically homeless persons housed through Coordinated Entry have remained housed; and

WHEREAS, there are still people experiencing chronic homelessness in San Rafael and the rest of Marin County who would greatly benefit from supportive housing and services; and

WHEREAS, with new economic resources becoming available for services to assist people experiencing homelessness, the County of Marin and local cities and towns have been discussing the possibility of pooling local city and town resources to create a new “city-funded case management” option, that would provide additional case management support for people experiencing chronic homelessness and would allow our community to prioritize more of the most high-needs people for permanent supportive housing;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of San Rafael hereby approves and authorizes the City Manager to negotiate and enter into an

Agreement with the County of Marin and/or with other local jurisdictions, in a form to be approved by the City Attorney, to contribute funding for a Housing First case management program, in an amount not to exceed \$260,000.

I, **LINDSAY LARA**, Clerk of the City of San Rafael, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly and regularly introduced and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of said City held on Monday the 7th day of June 2021, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS:

NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS:

ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS:

LINDSAY LARA, City Clerk