



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: December 10, 2013

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Administration, Housing & Human Services Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Freedom Warming Centers Funding Request

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Consider the request from The Unitarian Society to support the Freedom Warming Centers' pilot emergency overflow site;
- B. If approved, authorize the Assistant City Administrator to execute an agreement with The Unitarian Society for up to \$15,000 for the operation of the pilot emergency overflow site from December 15, 2013, through March 31, 2014, subject to City Attorney approval as to form; and
- C. Appropriate \$15,000 from the Overnight Accommodation reserve funds held within the General Fund.

DISCUSSION:

On November 18, 2013, the City received a \$15,000 funding request from the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, fiscal agent for the Freedom Warming Centers, for the development and operation of an emergency overflow site during their 2013-14 operating period (see Attachment 1).

The purpose of the Warming Centers is to ensure that homeless individuals have emergency temporary shelter in order to avoid hypothermia and death on nights of inclement weather. The program received a City Human Services grant of \$10,000 for Fiscal Year 2014 for this effort. However, it is expected that Casa Esperanza's recent change to a sobriety-based emergency winter shelter will result in an increase in the number of people accessing the Warming Centers this winter. In addition, other homeless shelter providers have reported that they are already at capacity, which may also impact the number of people accessing the Warming Centers.

Due to this anticipated increase, the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H) formed a task force to help develop an emergency response plan for the safe operation of Warming Centers this winter. As a result of these meetings a protocol was developed which includes the addition of an emergency overflow site.

Churches countywide volunteer to host a warming center site. Five churches in the City of Santa Barbara have agreed to participate this winter. Each church is scheduled in weekly blocks from November 15, 2013 through March 31, 2014 and is activated only on nights of inclement weather. The goal is to have one church scheduled each week in each geographic area (Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Goleta/IV, Lompoc and Santa Maria). If Warming Center staff make the determination that a church will reach its capacity (40 – 85 people based on the size of the church), they will initiate the opening of the overflow location and follow their notification procedures (see Attachment 2). There will also be trained volunteers available to contact guests waiting for beds and encourage appropriate guests to transfer to Casa Esperanza's sober Shelter Program.

The pilot overflow site will be located at the Presidio Springs community room, which the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara has agreed to let the Warming Centers use at no charge. The overflow site will require additional funding totaling \$40,861 to staff the site and provide supplies, transportation and insurance. The Unitarian Society is requesting assistance from the City in the amount of \$15,000 to help fund this effort. They will also be asking the County of Santa Barbara and other funding entities for contributions.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

In Fiscal Year 2006, the City received \$1.1 million for an overnight accommodation mitigation fee from an applicant for the issuance of a Coastal Development Permit (the Entrada Project). The City is to use these funds and any interest earned, at its discretion, to mitigate the loss of the low-cost lodging that was provided by the former Californian Hotel. To date, opportunities for new development or rehabilitation of such lodging have not materialized. Since 2009, the City has been using the interest earned on these funds for overnight accommodations such as: hotel vouchers for people on the waiting list for Transition House; start up support for the Warming Centers in 2009; Restorative Policing beds at The Salvation Army; and police referral beds at Casa Esperanza. As of June 30, 2013, the fund has almost \$20,000 of accumulated interest income available, which can be appropriated for this request.

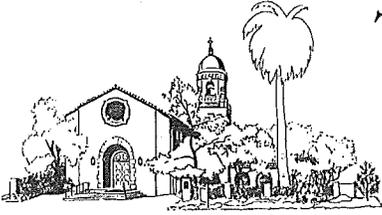
The amount of funding required for the emergency overflow site depends upon the number of days the warming centers are activated and the number of people who access the open site each night; therefore staff recommends that Council approve up to \$15,000 of the interest earned on the overnight accommodation fund to support this effort.

ATTACHMENT(S): 1. Funding Request Letter from the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara
2. Warming Centers Overflow Site Protocol and Communication Plan

PREPARED BY: Sue Gray, Community Development Business Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Casey, Assistant City Administrator

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office



The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara

Rev. Aaron McEmrys, Parish Minister
 Rev. Julia Hamilton, Assistant Minister
 Rev. John Alexie Crane, Minister Emeritus
 Nancy Edmundson, Director of Administration
 LeeAnn Williams, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

November 18, 2013

Sue Gray
 Community Development Business Manager
 City of Santa Barbara
 630 Garden Street
 Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Sue,

As you may know, the Freedom Warming Centers have grown from a small grass roots effort begun in 2009 to an efficient and vital program serving thousands of our neighbors without homes throughout all of Santa Barbara County.

The mission of Freedom Warming Centers is to relieve suffering and save lives for our neighbors without homes by providing shelter on nights of inclement weather conditions.

In May 2013, the *Santa Barbara Homeless Death Review* reported a 25% decrease in homeless deaths. In the *Santa Barbara Independent* (May 9, 2013) Dr. David Lennon reported, "To that end, 190 previously homeless people are now in housing through multi-agency programs focused on the homeless population. Also helping are programs like the homeless warming centers that pop up around the county whenever inclement or cold weather strikes, getting the homeless out of the wet and cold, even if temporarily."

The winter of 2012-2013 the Freedom Warming Centers provided shelter countywide to **4,184** (duplicated and unduplicated clients) including emancipated foster youth, those with mental illness, the physically disabled, those with chronic terminal illness, unemployed, underemployed, safe parking program participants, dual diagnosed and substance abusers, those just released from jail, senior citizens, and veterans for **48** nights. We accepted couples, families and their pets. We saw an overall increase of 32% in the number of individuals served compared to last year; and added 13 additional nights.

This summer and fall conversations between the Freedom Warming Center administration and C3H were held due to concerns related to the change in Casa Esperanza sobriety policy and other service providers who find their shelters already at capacity. These conversations have legitimized a need for an emergency overflow plan to permit Warming Center beds and sites to maintain a safe environment for our guests, staff, volunteers and neighborhoods.

The result of this conversation is that we have secured an emergency overflow site at Presidio Springs through the Santa Barbara Housing Authority.

We are asking that the City of Santa Barbara consider a grant in the amount of \$15,000 for the 2013-2014 winter season to support the costs of an overflow site for when our church sites have reached capacity. Your contribution will be used exclusively for our work in the City of Santa Barbara and assist us with three main objectives:

- Fund the pilot emergency overflow site at Presidio Springs.
- Save the lives and reduce suffering of the unsheltered homeless who find themselves turned away when church sites have reached capacity, and reduce their impact on emergency services and businesses in the downtown corridor.
- Assist us in securing additional funding from the County of Santa Barbara to fund this overflow site

Our estimated budget for the overflow site is:

Overflow Site Budget	
2013-2014 Santa Barbara	
Program Coordination	\$ 3,000
1 Staff Lead 50 nights	\$ 10,200
2 On Call Staff 40 nights	\$ 15,360
Supplies	\$ 2,000
Transportation	\$ 5,600
Insurance & Admin Fee	\$ 4,701
	\$ 40,861

Thank you for your consideration of funding this critical need for our community.

Sincerely,



Nancy Edmundson
Fiscal Agent, Freedom Warming Centers



Maria W. Long
Director Freedom Warming Centers

Warming Center Overflow Site Protocol and Communication Plan

1. On nights where large guest numbers are projected either due to severe weather or prior guest participation, an extra lead staff member will be activated to the primary SB downtown site with anticipation of activation at Presidio Springs (overflow site). Two additional staff will be on call until 10 pm.
2. On any night of activation the Warming Center Director (WCD) will be on site or be in direct communication with the site lead staff at the downtown SB WC location.
3. When WCD determines the SB site is at 90% capacity the overflow site will be activated.
4. At this time a specific notification will be sent to OEM, Cottage Hospital, SB Sheriff, SB City Police to inform them that the overflow site is activated. WC referrals from Cottage Hospital, Sherriff or Police will call the WCD directly to determine appropriate referral which may include:
 - a. Casa Esperanza Medical Bed
 - b. Reserved Vulnerability Bed at first activated site
 - c. Directly to Presidio Springs for overflow bed.
5. When Presidio Spring is activated the extra lead staff member will break away to the overflow site, and Rock Star Cab Company will be called to begin transportation of guests to Presidio Springs; and the two on call staff will report to duty at Presidio Springs.
6. Rock Star Cab will begin pick up from Presidio Springs beginning at 5:30 a.m.

Plan to Refer those Eligible to Casa Esperanza

- WCD is working with C3H and Common Ground Volunteers to pilot a program where highly trained volunteers will access appropriate guests waiting for WC beds between 5 pm and 6:30 pm.
- Volunteers will encourage appropriate guests to transfer to Casa Esperanza Shelter Program. (Please note this pilot program is dependent upon C3H and Common Ground recruiting and scheduling appropriate volunteers.)
- Up until 7 pm Casa Esperanza will accept any referrals of guests deemed appropriate by Common Ground Volunteers.
- WCD will arrange Rock Star Cab Transportation of these individuals to Casa Esperanza.
- After 7 pm Casa Esperanza will accept referrals only through SB Police and Cottage Hospital.
- In addition all 20 on-call Warming Center staff have been trained to access and encourage appropriate referrals to a variety of services.



Freedom Warming Centers

December 10, 2013



Potential Impacts on Warming Centers

- Casa Esperanza Changes
 - Change to a sobriety-based shelter
- Warming Centers
 - Emergency Temporary Shelter
 - Avoid Death on Nights of Inclement Weather
 - Expect Increase of approximately 50 people per night



Response

➤ C3H Task Force

➤ Emergency Response Plan

- Overflow Site activated when at 90% capacity
- Notification regarding appropriate referrals
 - Casa Esperanza Medical Bed
 - Reserved Vulnerability Bed at primary site
 - Overflow site
- Homeless Advocacy Project referrals



Request

- \$15,000 to support Overflow Site
 - Staff
 - Supplies
 - Transportation
 - Insurance



Staff Recommendation

- Appropriate Up to \$15,000
 - Overnight Accommodation Mitigation Interest
 - \$20,000 accumulated interest available



Freedom Warming Centers

➤ Questions?