



CITY OF ORANGE

OFFICE OF MAYOR

PHONE: (714) 744-2200

FAX: (714) 744-5523

www.cityoforange.org

August 27, 2018

The Honorable Charles Margines
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: City of Orange Response to Grand Jury Report: "Where There's Will, There's a Way: Housing Orange County's Chronically Homeless."

Dear Judge Margines:

The following is the City of Orange's response to the findings and recommendations contained in the Grand Jury's Report, "Where There's Will, There's a Way: Housing Orange County's Chronically Homeless." The City of Orange was asked to respond to Findings F.1, F.2, F.4 and F.6 through F.10 and Recommendations R.1, R.2, R.4 and R.6 through R.9.

Finding

F.1: Homelessness in Orange County is a regional problem requiring regional approaches and solutions.

Response

The City of Orange agrees with this finding.

Finding

F.2: The lack of a regional plan designating specific development goals for Permanent Supportive Housing contributes to an insufficient number of available units to house the chronically homeless.

Response

The City of Orange agrees with this finding.

Finding

F.4: Cities' reluctance to provide sites for Permanent Supportive Housing development has contributed to overcrowded emergency shelters and an increased unsheltered homeless population.

Response

The City of Orange disagrees in part with this finding. The City of Orange has worked with the private sector in locating sites for Permanent Supportive Housing within our borders. We believe the City of Orange has been welcoming and supportive of Permanent Supportive Housing development. We could do more with additional funding from the County and/or State to assist the private sector development.

Finding

F.6: Service Planning Area meetings have successfully brought together city, county and non-profit entities to share information on homeless issues, but have not fostered decision-making or action.

Response

The City of Orange disagrees with this finding as it relates to the City of Orange. The City of Orange and the 12 other cities in the North Service Planning Area are working collaboratively to create housing for homeless people in North Orange County.

Finding

F.7: NIMBYism has impeded the creation of housing for the homeless, including Permanent Supportive Housing, in the County of Orange.

Response

The City of Orange agrees in part with this finding but believes there are many factors effecting the development of Permanent Supportive Housing and NIMBYism is only one of those factors.

Finding

F.8: Orange County cities and the County have engaged in blaming and finger-pointing, hampering the collaborative efforts needed to site, finance, and maintain Permanent Supportive Housing.

Response

The City of Orange disagrees with this finding for the most part. Although some Orange County cities and the County may have had some disagreements regarding siting and funding, there has also been a great deal of cooperation. We believe this is especially true with the City and County of Orange.

Finding

F.9: Cities have taken a silo approach to developing Permanent Supportive Housing, resulting in inefficient leveraging and pooling of funds across municipal borders.

Response

The City of Orange disagrees with this finding as it relates to the City of Orange. The City of Orange and the 12 other cities in the North Service Planning Area are working collaboratively to create housing for homeless people in North Orange County.

Finding

F.10: There is no established, independent leadership body in the County empowered to address regional homeless issues in an effective manner.

Response

The City of Orange agrees with this finding.

Recommendations:

R.1: Orange County cities and the County should develop a Permanent Supportive Housing development plan, and should consider a plan structure similar to the proposal put forth by Association of California Cities – Orange County, that proportionally allocates sites among the cities. (F1, F2, F4, F7, F8)

Response

This recommendation requires further analysis and coordination with other entities to implement. The City of Orange supports the efforts of the Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACCOC) in its countywide effort to implement a housing plan.

Recommendation

R.2: Each Service Planning Area should identify sites for Permanent Supportive Housing proportional to the allocation suggested in the Association of California Cities – Orange County proposal. (F1, F4)

Response

This recommendation requires further analysis and coordination with other entities to implement. The City of Orange is working closely with the other 12 North Service Planning Area cities to address housing issues for homeless people.

Recommendation

R.4: Cities should ensure decision-makers fully participate in their region’s Service Planning Area meeting. (F1, F6, F8, F9)

Response

The recommendation has been implemented. The City of Orange’s City Manager is spokesperson for the City Managers of the North Service Planning Area. The City’s Mayor, Teresa “Tita” Smith had been a long time member of the Orange County Commission to End Homelessness. The Mayor has also been present and involved in the ongoing litigation.

Recommendation

R.6: Cities should collaborate with, and leverage the work done by, United Way on their “United to End Homelessness” public awareness campaign. (F7)

Response

The recommendation has been implemented. The City of Orange has been supportive and involved with United Way, ACCOC and other stakeholders, in its campaign to end homelessness.

Recommendation

R.7: To streamline shelter and Permanent Supportive Housing development, the County and its cities should establish a decision-making body, such as Joint Powers Authority, that is empowered to identify and allocate sites and pool funding associated with housing and supportive services for the homeless. (F1, F3, F4, F7, F8, F9, F10)

Response

This recommendation requires further analysis and coordination with other entities to implement. The City of Orange is working closely with the other 12 North Service Planning Area cities to address housing issues for homeless people. In addition, AB 448, if approved, will establish a trust and decision making body to allocate resources for housing and supportive services for people who are unsheltered.

Recommendation

R.8: Such a decision-making body should develop a comprehensive, regional housing business plan that identifies both the number of Permanent Supportive Housing units needed as well as the associated costs of renovating existing units or building new ones. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F8, F9, F10)

Response

This recommendation requires further analysis and coordination with other entities to implement. The City of Orange is working closely with the other 12 North Service Planning Area cities to address housing issues for homeless people. In addition, AB 448, if approved, will establish a trust and decision making body to allocate resources for housing and supportive services for people who are unsheltered.

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Recommendation

R.9: Such a decision-making body should propose a plan for securing local, supplemental sources of funding for both Permanent Supportive Housing development and associated support services. (F1, F3, F8, F9, F10)

Response

This recommendation requires further analysis and coordination with other entities to implement. The City of Orange is working closely with the other 12 North Service Planning Area cities to address housing issues for homeless people. In addition, AB 448, if approved, will establish a trust and decision making body to allocate resources for housing and supportive services for people who are unsheltered.

Thank you for your service and efforts on behalf of the City of Orange. We hope this response will be helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa E. Smith, MSW, LCSW". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Teresa E. Smith, MSW, LCSW
Mayor of Orange

cc: The Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701