

# City of Huntington Beach

2000 MAIN STREET

CALIFORNIA 92648

**Mike Posey**  
**Mayor**

September 18, 2018

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

**RE: Response to the 2017-18 Orange County Grand Jury Report re Housing Orange County's Chronically Homeless**

Dear Judge Margines:

In accordance with Penal Code 933.05(a) and (b), the City of Huntington Beach submits the following response to the report, findings, and recommendations of the 2017-18 Orange County Grand Jury report entitled, "Where There's Will, There's A Way: Housing Orange County's Chronically Homeless".

## **FINDINGS**

**F1. Homelessness in Orange County is a regional problem requiring regional approaches and solutions.**

Response: The City of Huntington Beach agrees with the above finding.

**F2. 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 Huntington Beach agrees in part with the above finding. Each City currently has responsibility for creating affordable housing through the State and units created include Permanent Supportive Housing. The City does agree there is a need for additional Permanent Supportive Housing units. However, funding is the issue, not a regional plan. The Orange County Board of Supervisors has published its "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan", which provides 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. On July 16, 2018, the City Council supported ACC-OC's efforts regarding the Countywide Homeless Trust Fund for permanent supportive housing.

**F4. Cities' reluctance to provide sites for Permanent Supportive Housing development has contributed to the overcrowded emergency shelters and an increased unsheltered homeless population.**

Response: The City of Huntington Beach disagrees partially with the above finding. The City of Huntington Beach is fully committed to partnering with the County and its fellow municipalities to produce Permanent Supportive Housing, Bridge and Transitional Housing Units. The City of Huntington Beach is a member of the Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACC-OC) and, as such, is a member of the ACCOC Homelessness Task Force. On July 16, 2018, the City Council supported ACC-OC's efforts regarding the Countywide Homeless Trust Fund for permanent supportive housing. The Orange County Board of Supervisors has published its "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan", which provides 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.

**F6. 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 Huntington Beach strongly disagrees with the above finding. Under the Director of Care Coordination, Susan Price, has done an outstanding job of bringing together the Service Planning Areas to discuss regional opportunities and to share "Best Practices". Due to the high number of attendees, it shows that there was a true need for the meetings. Based upon these regional meeting, the City of Huntington Beach is exploring multiple permanent supportive housing, bridge housing and transitional housing opportunities within the Central Service Planning Area.

**F7. NIMBYism has impeded the creation of housing for the homeless, including Permanent Supportive Housing, in the County of Orange.**

Response: The City of Huntington Beach cannot comment on other cities within the County; however, the City of Huntington Beach disagrees with the above finding. The City of Huntington Beach is exploring multiple permanent supportive housing opportunities. We are actively seeking out potential housing sites with numerous non-profits.

**F8. 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 Huntington Beach disagrees partially with the above finding. The City is fully committed to collaborating with the County and its fellow municipalities to produce Permanent Supportive Housing, Bridge and Transitional units. In addition, the City is currently working to create new Bridge/Traditional units to assist with the flow from Shelter to Permanent Supportive Housing. The City is working with the County, non-profits and the City of Westminster to create, finance and maintain the units. We are hopeful that the new infusion of \$500 million in HEAP funds will help significantly.



**F9. 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 Huntington Beach disagrees with the above finding. Although state law requires Cities to enable the development of shelters and low-income housing by removing local regulatory barriers, the law does not require cities to acquire real property nor fund development of new housing or shelters. Huntington Beach, however, has a Housing Authority and directly manages Federal CDBG and HOME grants as an entitlement city, whereas most other cities in the County must apply to the County for pass-through funding for social and housing programs as subrecipients. Welfare and Institutions Code 17000 makes it a County responsibility to provide public assistance to the indigent, and funding for social and housing programs is almost exclusively directed to the County. Consequently, the lack of funding available directly to cities minimizes their ability to take on a direct role in the development of housing and shelters. As stated above, the City of Huntington Beach is fully committed to collaborating with the County and its fellow municipalities to produce Permanent Supportive Housing units and we are currently exploring multiple opportunities with the County to facilitate new units within the next year.

**F10. There is no established, independent leadership body in the County empowered to address regional homeless issues in an effective manner.**

Response: The City of Huntington Beach strongly disagrees with the above finding. The City recognizes the County's efforts in exploring solutions, including the creation of the Homeless Czar and Service Planning Areas. The City is an active participant in the Central Service Planning Area and is working extensively with the County to identify funding and sites to create additional permanent supportive housing and maintain the resources available through the County's Continuum of Care.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**R1. 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: The City of Huntington Beach is a member of the Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACC-OC) and, as such, is a member of the ACCOC Homelessness Task Force. On July 16, 2018, the City Council supported ACC-OC's efforts regarding the County-wide Homeless Trust Fund for permanent supportive housing. The Orange County Board of Supervisors has published its "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan", which provides 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. The City looks forward to working with the County of Orange and the newly enacted Housing Trust Fund Joint Powers Authority.

**R2. 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: The Central Service Planning Area is looking into sites currently and has presented a report of current Affordable Housing Units and potential future units to the Honorable U.S. District Court Judge Carter. The City of Huntington Beach continues to look for potential sites for Permanent Supportive Housing developments.

**R4. Cities should ensure decision-makers fully participate in their region's Service Planning Area meetings. (F1, F6, F8, F9)**

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City of Huntington Beach is fully committed to participating in the Central Service Planning Area meetings.

**R6. 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 is collaborating with the United Way in their public awareness campaign, "United to End Homelessness". The City will be hosting a community-wide meeting for United Way on September 25, 2018 for our citizens, non-profits and faith based community partners.

**R7. To streamline shelter and Permanent Supportive housing development, the County and its cities should establish a decision-making body, such as a 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: We are pleased to report that AB 448 was approved by the California State Senate on August 6, 2018 and will be voted upon by the State Assembly very soon. The City of Huntington Beach is committed to partnering with the County and its fellow municipalities in forming a decision-making body to identify potential Permanent Supportive Housing sites, and to explore funding options associated with housing and supportive services for the homeless. The Joint Powers Authority (JPA) known as the Orange County Housing Trust (OCHT) will act as a regional entity to address homelessness and housing issues through the pooling of public and private funding. The City of Huntington Beach's City Council supports the OCHT.

**R8. 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)**

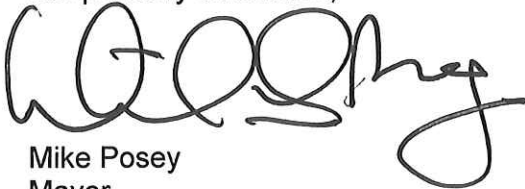
Response: The Orange County Board of Supervisors has published its "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan", which provides a comprehensive, regional housing business plan that identifies both the number of Permanent Supportive Housing units needed as well as the associated costs of renovating existing units or building new ones. The City is in process of formal approval of a Ten-Point Plan to Address Homelessness in the City of Huntington Beach, which includes services and affordable housing.

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**R9. 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: The City of Huntington Beach pledged its support of the "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan" and working with the County to implement its recommendations.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Posey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

Mike Posey  
Mayor  
City of Huntington Beach

xc: City Council  
Fred Wilson, City Manager  
Lori Ann Farrell Harrison, Assistant City Manager  
Michael Gates, City Attorney  
Kellee Fritzal, Deputy Director, Business Development