



Agenda Report

Fullerton City Council

MEETING DATE: JANUARY 17, 2023

TO: CITY COUNCIL / SUCCESSOR AGENCY

SUBMITTED BY: ROBERT DUNN, CHIEF OF POLICE

PREPARED BY: ROBERT DUNN, CHIEF OF POLICE

SUBJECT: PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COUNTY OF ORANGE TO
ESTABLISH A TEMPORARY COLD WEATHER SHELTER
AT INDEPENDENCE PARK GYMNASIUM

SUMMARY

The County of Orange Executive Office seeks a partnership City of Fullerton to establish a temporary cold weather homeless shelter at the Independence Park gymnasium building. The County and the City of Fullerton had previously partnered on a similar temporary shelter at this location during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize City Manager, or designee, to negotiate with the County of Orange to establish a temporary homeless shelter at the Independence Park gymnasium building and execute and administer agreements and related documents, in a form approved by the City Attorney.

CITY MANAGER REMARKS

The City Manager recommends approval of working with the County of Orange to establish a temporary homeless shelter. Based on discussions with the County of Orange the shelter will primarily be for individuals in the City of Fullerton as well as individuals experiencing homelessness in our immediate North Orange County region.

The County of Orange will additionally provide security and repair any damages that occur.

PRIORITY POLICY STATEMENT

This item matches the following Priority Policy Statements:

- Public Safety
- Infrastructure and City Assets

FISCAL IMPACT

This item generates no anticipated fiscal impacts to the City. The City would lease the facility to the County of Orange with the County responsible for overall operation of the temporary homeless shelter, in cooperation with a contracted service provider. Lease terms and rental costs are currently in negotiations.

The City Manager anticipates the County would pay the full burden of costs for operations and that the City may receive two to three months of rent (approximately \$7,500 per month).

DISCUSSION

The City of Fullerton declared a State of Emergency in March 2020 in response to the emerging COVID-19 Pandemic. The local emergency declaration augmented similar declarations at the state and federal levels. Part of the pandemic response included activating the California Army National Guard which made the Fullerton Armory (400 South Brookhurst Street), a long-time cold weather homeless shelter, no longer available for shelter use.

The County of Orange and the City of Fullerton collaborated at that time to find an alternative location and identified the gymnasium building at Independence Park as a suitable location. The City leased the gymnasium building and some associated park space to the County to establish the temporary cold weather shelter. The shelter stayed open for an extended period of time to slow the spread of COVID-19 among our homeless neighbors.

In the past, the Fullerton Armory temporary cold weather shelter generally operated from October through the end of March. The County released a request for proposals in the summer of 2022 seeking a qualified service provider to manage a temporary cold weather homeless shelter. The County received no proposals. The County repeated the process a few times and still received no proposals.

Recent increased precipitation and extreme cold brought renewed calls for a temporary homeless shelter solution. The City of Fullerton and the County of Orange have historically cooperated in this way and this well-established partnership provided for a framework to quickly establish this shelter to serve the unhoused.

The County and the City intend to open the temporary cold weather shelter at Independence Park on February 1, 2023, and the shelter will close between the end of March and the end of April, depending on need. The Orange County Board of Supervisors will consider funding allocations, including contracts with a homeless services provider, a dedicated security company and transportation services.