



City of Anaheim
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

August 28, 2018

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

Subject: 2017-2018 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "Where There's Will,
There's A Way; Housing Orange County's Chronically Homeless"

Honorable Judge Margines:

As the City Manager of the City of Anaheim (City), I am pleased to respond on behalf of the City to the 2017-2018 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "Where There's Will, There's A Way; Housing Orange County's Chronically Homeless." The responses contained in this letter have been approved by the Anaheim City Council. The City's responses address the Orange County Grand Jury Report's findings and recommendations relevant to our City in accordance with the California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05.

Findings

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

Response 1: The City agrees with this 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 2: The City agrees with this 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 4: The City disagrees wholly or partially with this finding. Overcrowding of emergency shelters and increased unsheltered population is the direct result of insufficient emergency shelters throughout the County of Orange. The City is host to the first Orange County Emergency Shelter, holding 200 beds and is in current discussions to add additional emergency shelter sites to its inventory. Further, the City of Anaheim has demonstrated its willingness, not reluctance, to partner with the County and developers to provide Permanent Supportive Housing (“PSH”) on several projects such as Diamond Apartments (2008; 100% PSH) and Rockwood Apartments (2016), as highlighted in the Grand Jury Report. In addition to full PSH units, Anaheim continues to provide shelter at varying levels to homeless individuals, commits financial resources to the homeless population, and is currently in several stages to add additional PSH units to the City’s inventory.

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 6: The City agrees with this finding, partially. Service Planning Areas (SPA) brought cities together and may not have resulted in decision-making and/or action within each SPA. However, immediately after the County separated cities into three SPAs, the North Service Planning Area immediately scheduled meetings and has been meeting regularly to discuss regional solutions and as a direct result, recently submitted a confidential letter to the United States District Court, Central District, in the matter of Orange County Catholic Workers, et al. v. County of Orange, et al., outlining the regional collaborative approaches, including funding, the identification of emergency bed shelter sites, and transitional and permanent supportive housing units. Moreover, the North SPA was the first to receive funding from the State to conduct the first North Orange County Homeless Census to provide specific data on the region’s homeless population, to better match resources and housing to homeless located in the North SPA. Additional collaborative decisions and action include, but is not limited to, compiling a general inventory of emergency shelter beds, availability of vacant beds, and opportunities to expand. Transitional housing and PSH was also a point of discussion resulting in a regional map identifying all SB2 zones in North SPA eligible for emergency and transitional housing.

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

Response 7: The City agrees with this finding, partially. NIMBYism is a true hurdle, however Anaheim continues to address issues and conduct necessary outreach to minimize NIMBYism. The Bridges at Kraemer Emergency Shelter, various PSH units currently online and others in the pipeline, as well as ongoing discussions to host a(n) emergency shelter(s) in the City of Anaheim demonstrates Anaheim’s continual efforts to identify and address housing needs for Anaheim’s homeless. Nonetheless, community opposition exists, which requires significant staff time, financial resources and extended timelines on projects in order to achieve appropriate community engagement.

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 8: The City disagrees with this finding wholly or partially. The uncertainty of responsibility and funding for homelessness is challenging. However, the City of Anaheim has completed several projects through collaboration and in partnership with the County of Orange including sites for various homeless uses, development of PSH units, such as Rockwood Apartments, Diamond Apartments, motel conversions and future units for Veterans and Seniors. The City recognizes that there is always room for improvement and will continue to work towards greater collaboration; the City values the current partnership and line of communication with the County, which has contributed to many significant projects as previously highlighted.

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 9: The City disagrees with this finding wholly or partially. Decisions on the type of development that is needed to address critical housing needs is always based on regional data, in addition to city data. The City has a long standing record of working with the County to produce Permanent Supportive Housing as evidenced by the development of Tyrol Plaza in 2005, a 60 unit senior housing project that included 12 units set-aside for homeless seniors (services are funded by the County), Diamond Apartments which opened in 2009 (24 PSH units supported with County funds) and Rockwood Apartments, a unique 70 unit project that contains 48 units set-aside for homeless families as well as 15 County funded MHSA units for chronically homeless individuals. All of these developments have required communication and collaboration between the City and County in order to bring together the multiple funding sources needed to produce long term permanent housing.

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

Response 10: This finding is generally directed to the County of Orange, however the City disagrees with this finding wholly or partially. The City of Anaheim has a voting seat on the County of Orange Continuum of Care (CoC) Executive Committee designed to address homelessness and funding (State and Federal) at a regional level. Further, there is a subcommittee of the newly formed CoC Executive Committee, which deals with development of PSH units to which we also have an Anaheim representative participate on this committee.

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 the Association of California Cities – Orange County, that proportionally allocates sites among the cities.

Response 1: The City agrees with this recommendation. Anaheim supports regional efforts to address the need for proportionate Permanent Supportive Housing.

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.

Response 2: The City agrees with this recommendation. The City of Anaheim, together with the North SPA has been proactive in not only identifying sites for emergency shelters and transitional housing, but also Permanent Supportive Housing.

R.4. Cities should ensure decision-makers fully participate in their region’s Service Planning Area meetings.

Response 4: The City agrees with this recommendation. This recommendation is already implemented.

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

Response 6: The City agrees with this recommendation. This recommendation has been implemented. The City has met with United Way and continues to explore opportunities to collaborate. Further, the City has an Anaheim representative on the leadership advisory board of the United Way Campaign to End Homelessness.

R.7. 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.

Response 7: The City agrees with this recommendation, partially. The City of Anaheim supports streamlining efforts, however the recommendation needs further analysis to determine the most beneficial regional approach to maximize funding and projects for our homeless.

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.

Response 8: The recommendation needs further analysis and the City is willing to partner and participate in developing a plan and identifying units needed along with costs associated with new and/or renovating existing units as we have experience in many projects completed in Anaheim.

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.

Response 9: The recommendation needs further analysis and the City is willing to assist with proposing a plan, identifying resources and funding for Permanent Supportive Housing developments and support services to those housing units.

The City of Anaheim would like to express its appreciation for the efforts of the Orange County Grand Jury. The City of Anaheim is committed to addressing homelessness within its jurisdiction and regionally with the County of Orange. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Sandra Sagert, Community Preservation & Licensing Manager and City's Homeless Liaison, at (714) 765-4413 or ssagert@anaheim.net.

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Zapata
City Manager

cc: Orange County Grand Jury
City Clerk, City of Anaheim