

NOVEMBER 15, 2023 HOMELESS TASK FORCE SYNOPSIS

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Attached is an overview of my experience with the Homeless Shelter Task Force (Clean Slate Strategy). Let me give you an explanation of my experience. It continues to be an honor to serve you and the other community councils of our area. I continue to do so with any and all upcoming meetings, like the one that occurred on 11/2/23, 11/8/2023, and 11/15/2023

11/2/23 Meeting

1. It was reported that 2500 beds are needed to supply for the homeless for a period of 2 years
 - It was asked if the 2500 represented a duplication of count, which it was answered that there is a small duplication but not disclosed to what percent
 - There was a methodology change as to the count to capture the homeless, but the methodology was not disclosed
2. A GAP Analysis was presented which represents:
 - Single Adults
 - Youth
 - Veterans (Double calculation with single adults)
3. Shelter for 150 people and whether congregate or non-congregate
 - One location facility or multiple locations
 - Felix Rivera emphasized his desire for multiple locations
4. What is the Return to Homelessness Analysis?
 - The question is now being explored
5. DATA Analysis
 - There was discussion of data collection to comply with HUD requirements only.
 - Ken McCarty asked questions of why can't we include data analysis which pertains to Alaska, such as:
 - How many are coming from villages who wish to return?
 - How many are banned from their village?
 - What is the average cost of housing which is impacting homelessness?
6. Intentional qualification for housing when individual already have their own residence.
 - It was shared that some people are in a self paid hotel room, which they are trying to get evicted so they qualify for homelessness funding to pay for their room (e.g. \$800 a month).

7. 5 Keys to Effective Homelessness
 - Housing First Approach
 - Safety: Appropriate Diversion
 - Welcoming Environment
 - Focus on Rapid Exit (get people permanent housing)
 - Data Collection

11/8/23 Meeting

There was a small attendance potentially due to the expected storm warning.

The Topic was on LOCATION PROCESS

Criteria Regarding Collection toward Location

- 1) Must have Criteria
 - a. Zoning – which can be altered to qualify if able
 - b. Health Certification
- 2) Good to have Criteria
 - a. Public transportation that is ¼ mile from location
 - b. 500 feet from school, day care
 - c. 50 sq foot area per participant

Selection Process Steps

- 1) RFI (Request for Information) of potential locations to be submitted
 - Only 19 days until all potential locations must be submitted
 - Felix Rivera will be the point person to receive the RFI until the administrative office is ready to receive them
- 2) Complete Analysis on GIF map and old location list
 - a. Remove locations that don't meet criteria
 - b. Visibility buffers for potential locations
 - c. Property is unoccupied and available for sale or lease
- 3) Three (3) Individuals to do a more intensive research and verification of locations to recommend at next meeting (11/27/23).
- 4) Rank Options (11/27/23)
 - Reduce location options to 10
- 5) Feedback from Community
- 6) Jan 3, 2024 Recommendation
 - Alternative recommendations can be submitted
- 7) Jan 3, 2024 – Final vote for location (s)

Questions Asked

- 1) Are existing Muni buildings under consideration? - Wardo
- 2) Is there a budget? - Wardo
 - - Unknown budget, but maybe it can be placed as a bond or some other funding source – Felix Rivera
- 3) SWS will allow their building to be used for a shelter for 2 additional years, what about longer if needed?
- 4) Love Canal at 3rd and Ingra resulted in damages by the homeless. Is the Muni going to reimburse business owners for damages?- Avila

- 5) 77% of businesses are effected by the homeless will the Muni reduce or eliminate property tax penalties on businesses who are directly effected?
- Avila
- 6) My daughter just reported from Singapore how clean the city is and that she could not see any homeless. What has been done in getting data collection of cities internationally? - Ken McCarty
- 7) Since the RFI has a short window to get submitted potential locations, what is the plan to get the request out to the public and realitors? - Wardo
- 8) What is the status of the Northway Mall? - Ken McCarty
 - o The building has many repairable needs and the expected cost to fix the building is too great - Felix Rivera

11/15/23 Meeting

The meeting was an assembly homeless committee meeting. I attended in the audience.

Report on Emergency Homeless Shelter

The SWS location for the EHS was at 150 and has been upgraded to hold 200. There are about 25 beds remaining to be filled.

1. How many times is the EHS not filled with people?
 - o The facility management is not keeping count of empty beds; however, it was reported that a couple days ago there were 15 beds not filled (10%).
 - o It was suggested that the curfew to fill beds be at 9:00 rather than 10:00 so an analysis can be assessed to allow for others to fill the unfilled beds
2. Does the EHS foresee expanding in size?
 - o The facility was planned for 150 beds but increased to 200. There is discussion of increasing to 250 if allowed.

Homeless Deny Services

There are homeless individual who refuse shelter facilities due to them not accepting the shelter norms or them demanding certain shelter arrangements (e.g. their own room).

Abatement

APD has been diligently involved in the abatement of the Williwaw area. Some individual are refusing to leave. Home owners are complaining of the homeless intrusion and criminal behavior.

- o Assembly members shared concern that APD is too aggressive to abate the homeless and disregard of the interest of the homeless
- o EHS shelter opportunities are given to the homeless in the process of abatement

Warming Area

A representative from the mayor's office stated that a warming area is being put together in the Fairview area and will be fully operational by next week.

- o Assembly members shared concern that the mayor's office is not responding fast enough, as there is predicted negative temperature in a few days

- Felix Rivera expressed a desire to have multiple warming areas throughout Anchorage

Budget for Homless

1. 6.2 million for the Alex and Aviator hotels
2. Increased need to other recognized areas is on a formula

DATA Matrix and Outcomes

1. Outcomes
 - SWS Emergency Homeless Shelter is operational
 - Navigational center is partially operational with housing focus
 - Specific navigational needs for online medication is coming soon
 - Vouchers available (14)
2. Matrix
 - I was not able to stay to hear of new matrix items as I had another meeting to attend regarding state resource development, which included job opportunities.

SYNOPSIS

The process until now has been slow and delayed. Now the expectation is to create an RFI, which has not been created, and disseminate it to the community with feedback for a sub-group of 3 to review and get a refined answer within 19 days, which Thanksgiving week is part of the 19 days.

Felix Rivera stated that he would like to see multiple shelters created rather than one shelter.

Research has verified that limited shelters are better than multiple shelters as there is not redundancy of operational necessities. The slow process of the task for a shelter at this point may find it more appropriate to get one center going first then consider duplicating efficacious effects. The emphasis of this Task Force is to not duplicate failures of previous attempts for the homeless, which is why it is called the CLEAN SLATE PROGRAM.

I keep reminding the Task Force that the homeless are best served in Anchorage where services are available. I have talked with several APD officers in Eagle River and Chugiak who do not report homeless problems that they know about. Please let me know what you know or hear in our area.

If you have any ideas or suggests please give me a call.

Ken McCarty