



CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS

Thursday, February 13, 2020

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Simi Valley Public Library Community Room
2969 Tapo Canyon Road, Simi Valley, CA 93063

*****Special Meeting Location*****

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call
2. Agenda Review
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Public Statements/Comments

This is the time allotted for statements or comments on matters within the subject matter and jurisdiction of the Task Force on Homelessness. Statements and comments are limited to no more than five (5) minutes per speaker.
5. Informational Presentation:
 - a. Overview of City Housing Funds
6. New Business
 - a. Review and Discussion of Zoning and Building Code Requirements related to Tiny Homes and other Alternative Housing Options
7. Task Force Member Comments

This is the time allotted for Task Force member statements or comments on matters within the subject matter and jurisdiction of the Task Force on Homelessness, to request a future agenda item, or to give an Ad Hoc Committee Report. This is also the time to make any announcements related to community events and other items of interest.
8. Task Force on Homelessness Coordinator's Report
9. Adjournment: Thursday, May 14, 2020, 3:30 p.m.

/s/

Mara Malch

Deputy Environmental Services Director

If any interested individual has a disability that may require accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact April Rosser, Management Analyst at (805) 583-6759. Upon advance notification, reasonable arrangements will be made to provide accessibility to the meeting.

TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS MINUTES

1. Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

Council Member Ruth Luevanos called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m. April Rosser noted that a quorum was present. The attendance detail is available on the last page of the minutes.

2. Agenda Review

The agenda was accepted as presented.

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Fred Bauermeister and seconded by Toni Freeland to approve the August 8, 2019 minutes. The motion passed with 10 in favor and Jillian Fleming abstaining.

4. Public Statements/Comments: None

5. Informational Presentations: None

6. New Business

a. Community Panel Discussion on Government Resources Available to Individuals at Risk of and Experiencing Homelessness

Representatives from the County of Ventura's Continuum of Care (CoC), Human Services Agency (HSA) and Health Care Agency (HCA), along with Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura, provided information on services and resources available to those in need of assistance. The CoC is a regional planning body with the goal of ending homelessness by providing countywide support and collaborates with a wide range of partners. The HSA has multiple services to help with employment and financial assistance, homeless and housing assistance programs, protection and help for adults and veterans, and assistance with nutrition and health care. The HCA has ambulatory services, through its Whole Person Care and Health Care for the Homeless One Stop programs, as well as multiple Behavioral Health programs designed to provide wrap around mental health services, including RISE, ASSIST or Alcohol and Drug treatment. Behavioral Health also has a housing section to assist with co-developing and coordinating housing for those with mental illness. The Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura has homeless prevention services through affordable housing programs and acquires and develops affordable housing units.

For more information on each program, please go to www.simivalley.org/homelesssservices and visit the Resources and Referrals webpage.

Questions about the programs presented included: Does Simi Valley have a shelter to send donations to; can there be tiny homes and more accessory dwelling units (ADUs); what is the smallest size of purchasable land and can eminent domain be used to create small unconnected lots on which to put non-traditional housing units; what services are available in schools; where is *No Place Like Home* looking to add housing; why is East County underserved by the County regarding homeless prevention and shelters?

Comments from the panel included the following: Simi Valley does not have a permanent shelter but donations can be sent to the Samaritan Center for its winter warming shelter; information on current and upcoming laws regarding tiny homes, ADUs, and land use as well as encouragement to participate in the upcoming Housing Element update and ongoing development approval process can be made available; *No Place Like Home* funding needs to be applied for by developers and can be developed anywhere within the County; the County Board of Supervisors offered to match funding with local municipalities to fund shelters and there have been other funding sources available through the State for permanent shelters.

Comments from the audience included the following: A representative from Victory Homes stated that it has recovery homes within Simi Valley and are actively working with homeless individuals. Betty Eskey, former Executive Director of The Samaritan Center, announced that a new non-profit, *Everybody Always*, will be opening in 2020, will provide four transitional housing beds for women and will work with The Samaritan Center for case management. She also announced that she would be happy to participate in the 2020 homeless count. A homeless community member advocated for ADUs and tiny homes developments similar to Compassion Village in Sacramento. A written letter was submitted to the Task Force.

It was the consensus of the Task Force on Homelessness to agendize future discussions regarding the City's Housing Element, tiny homes and ADUs as previously identified in the Task Force's work plan.

7. Task Force Member Comments

Simi Valley Board of Education Trustee Bob LaBelle stated that the Simi Valley Unified School District is willing to help support the efforts of the Task Force.

Susan White Wood, Behavioral Health Housing Manager, requested more information on the City's Housing Element update, specifically information on ADUs, for a future agenda item.

Council Member Ruth Luevanos requested a moment of silence for the Saugus High School shooting.

8. Task Force on Homelessness Coordinator's Report

April Rosser announced that the November meeting was the last Task Force on Homelessness meeting for 2019 and to let her know who the 2020 representative will be for their respective organizations. She referenced the memo in the agenda packet which specified the 2020 Task Force on Homelessness meeting dates. She also announced the 2020 Homeless Resource Coordination meeting dates: January 21, 2020; April 21, 2020; July 21, 2020; October 20, 2020 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Simi Valley Public Library Community Room.

9. Adjournment: Thursday, February 13, 2019, 3:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Organization	Representative	Attendance
Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura	Linda Fisher-Helton	P
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce	Nikki Eskey	P
City Council	Council Member Mike Judge	A
City Council	Council Member Ruth Luevanos	P
Ventura County Health Care Agency	Susan White Wood	P
Ventura County Ventura Human Services Agency	Jillian Fleming	P
Ventura County Supervisor Bob Huber Office	Joel Angeles	P
State Senator or Assembly Member	Ryan Valencia	A
Simi Valley Unified School District	Bob LaBelle	P
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District	Theresa Pennington	P
Resource Coordination Representative	Fred Bauermeister The Free Clinic of Simi Valley	P
Resource Coordination Representative	Kelly Behle Simi Valley Public Library	P
Resource Coordination Representative	Toni Freeland The Samaritan Center of Simi Valley	P
Attendance Key: P = Present A = Absent * = Arrived after Approval of the Minutes		

CITY OF SIMI VALLEY • MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 6, 2020

TO: Task Force on Homelessness

FROM: Mara Malch, Deputy Environmental Services Director

SUBJECT: Overview of City Housing Funds

It has been requested for the Task Force to receive information on the availability of funding for the creation of housing. The City's existing funding sources that allow for the creation of housing units are governed by state regulations. Additionally, the City Manager will be presenting options for the use of these funds to the City Council at an upcoming meeting. Below is the current fund balance and description of the funds.

Environmental Services staff will be available to answer questions related to the administration of the funds.

HOUSING SUCCESSOR AGENCY FUND 201 – Fund Balance: \$4,062,500

Effective February 2012, the State of California dissolved all redevelopment agencies throughout the state. The City elected to serve as Housing Successor Agency. The Housing Successor Agency assumes the housing functions of the former CDA Housing Set-Aside Fund and is authorized to exercise housing powers inherent in Redevelopment Law. Therefore, the Housing Successor Agency is obligated to fulfill contractual obligations that existed at the time of dissolution, subject to approval by the Oversight Board and may use program income generated since the dissolution to preserve and promote affordable housing in accordance with Redevelopment Law.

LOCAL HOUSING FUND 202 – Fund Balance: \$3,995,600

The Local Housing Fund was established to assist in the development of affordable housing projects and programs. The Fund's revenues represent payment of affordable housing fees from various agreements, including development agreements. Expenditures from the Fund are for the creation and preservation of affordable housing units.

CITY OF SIMI VALLEY • MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 7, 2020

TO: Task Force on Homelessness

FROM: Stratis Perros, Environmental Services Director

SUBJECT: Review and Discussion of Zoning and Building Code Requirements related to Tiny Homes and other Alternative Housing Options

There have been several requests and/or suggestions from community and Task Force members to discuss tiny homes as a possible solution to bring more affordable housing to the City, especially for those currently experiencing homelessness. The following provides an overview of several alternative housing options that are currently allowed in the City and through recent changes in State law. These housing options include accessory dwelling units, group homes, lodging houses, and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units. Additionally, recommendations could be made to change the General Plan and Development Code to expand housing options within the City. This overview also touches on housing standards that are currently considered acceptable for residents in the community, while recognizing the City's role in balancing land uses among adjacent properties for the value and benefit of all residents and businesses.

Tiny Homes

As seen on television shows or through community presentations, tiny homes have become a popular perceived alternative to providing additional affordable housing. Many tiny homes are built to resemble a small house that is attached to a trailer and can be towed. Normally, tiny homes average between 120 to 300 square feet and include a sleeping area, bathroom, kitchen, and living room. In fact, tiny homes are considered comparable to a recreational vehicle (RV). Other tiny homes are built like a normal home of traditional construction that include a foundation, but on a smaller scale and are usually found in specific developments. Some communities have allowed the placement of tiny homes on single-family lots (Fresno) or on larger properties that provide communal services that can include bathrooms, kitchens, and supportive programs. Some of these communities are located in a RV park setting that can include tiny homes, RVs, trailers, and tents. In some cases, the tiny homes can be connected to preexisting utilities (electricity, water, and sewer). Some communities that are incorporating tiny homes in RV parks include Community First Village in Austin, Texas and Delta Bay in Northern California. The Community First Village in Texas provides a communal style of living for individuals who experienced homelessness and have onsite supportive services to assist residents to stay out of homelessness. The Delta Bay model provides an affordable housing option for residents who want the freedom to live without housing cost struggles.

The cost to build a tiny home on wheels can start around \$30,000 and go up to \$70,000. One of the challenges in many communities, and in Simi Valley, is that these types of homes do not meet the California State Building Code (Title 24 and 25) or Zoning Code

requirements. Since these types of tiny homes are considered a RV, a person cannot currently obtain a zoning clearance or building permit to legally place it in the backyard of a single-family residence in Simi Valley. Tiny homes that have been requested to be utilized on individual properties would be similar to living in a recreational vehicle in the backyard of someone's home. Currently, the community does not support that as a compatible land use based on the community feedback solicited in December 2019 related to onsite parking options for residential properties. However, discussion at these meeting did not involve tiny homes, only recreational vehicles.

As mentioned, the tiny home communities that are beginning to be developed in urban areas, like Texas and Northern California, are located in RV park settings that include utility hook ups. For this to be done within Simi Valley, a developer or property owner would need to properly pave and install the required infrastructure such as drainage, utility, water, and electric hook-ups. The cost of developing a site will vary depending on the different site constraints. Considering the total potential cost, tiny homes may not efficiently house enough people to meet community housing needs. The cost to develop a site for traditional housing, such as apartments, could allow for a larger number of people to be adequately housed at the same location allowing for more efficient building production and cost, especially if a developer or the City would partner with a non-profit developer like Many Mansions, Cabrillo Economic Development, or other non-profit agencies.

However, it should be noted that the Interim City Manager has had discussions with affordable housing partners regarding the development of a tiny home community. This community would include tiny homes of the size noted above that are not on wheels; the units instead are built either slab-on-grade or on a raised foundation and would have permanent utility connections. As contemplated, the tiny homes would be a for-sale product and the community would create CC&Rs and an HOA to maintain the common area property. In discussions with these partners, such a development could take place on as little as an acre of land. The Interim City Manager is continuing to explore this concept for Simi Valley.

Recreational Vehicle (RV) Campgrounds

There are various campgrounds within and around Simi Valley that provide opportunities for visitors to camp. Some campgrounds are equipped with cooking grills, water, and restrooms. Recently, the City Council approved a 15-space recreational vehicle campground on a .85-acre property located on the west side of Kuehner Drive, approximately 250 feet south of Katherine Road. This site was difficult to develop due to flood plain issues and the need to quickly evacuate should flooding occur. The campground includes utility hookups for RVs and trailers; however, due to the flood plain issues the property cannot permissibly be developed for permanent housing. At the end of 2019, there were approximately 70 vacant properties identified throughout the City that vary in size. Most of these properties are privately owned and approximately five properties are owned by the City. Property owners who are interested in pursuing a development that includes a recreational vehicle campground with utility hook-ups could provide additional housing options for people; however, the typical length of stay at a campground is six-months. The use of RV campgrounds do not come without concerns, as it is not a permanent housing option. However, it may be practical for the City to evaluate the vacant parcels throughout the City to determine possible housing options.

Accessory Dwelling Units

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provides a subordinate dwelling unit to a property owner that can be attached or detached and provide an affordable housing option to residents and rental income for property owners. There are approximately 30,000 single-family residences in Simi Valley that provide opportunities for property owners to build ADUs on their property. These types of units provide complete independent living facilities for one or more persons. As of January 2020, the State of California has made a number of changes to regulations surrounding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in order to create additional housing. Currently, two ADUs are allowed on a single-family property, an ADU and a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU). The main difference between an ADU and JADU is that the JADU is smaller than an ADU and is attached to the primary residence. Prior to January 1, 2020 if a property owner built an ADU, either the primary residence or the ADU had to be owner occupied. The new law only requires the property owner to live onsite if a JADU is proposed, and the owner can live in either unit. The new law also allows ADUs within existing multi-family developments that are not used as livable space (storage rooms, passageways, attics, garages, and other non-livable areas).

The State's intent is to increase housing supply to better meet the demand for obtaining affordable housing. ADUs could also result in an overall increased affordability of housing throughout Simi Valley and throughout California. With regard to achieving additional housing units through the development of ADUs, the City's role is to administer land use approvals (zoning clearance and building permits). City staff has already begun assisting various property owners in navigating their options. It should be noted that the development of ADUs will be driven by the desire and financial ability of individual property owners. It should also be noted that there is no affordability requirement for ADUs or JADUs, meaning that there is no limit on the rents to be paid by the tenants.

Group Homes and Lodging Houses

Group homes are federally and/or state licensed facilities that provide care and/or services to specific populations that include children, the elderly, mentally disabled individuals, or adults recovering from or receiving treatment for alcohol or drug addiction. The State allows for group homes to accommodate up to six people in residential zones. For example, an existing single-family residence can be used as a group home. Cities generally have no regulatory control over group homes unless there are public safety or code enforcement issues. However, group homes that have more than six people require a conditional use permit in order to operate.

Lodging houses are considered a residence wherein rooms are rented to three or more individuals under separate oral or written rental agreements or leases; whether or not an owner, agent, or property manager resides onsite. Lodging houses do require a conditional use permit when three or more individuals under separate agreements live onsite. This is required to ensure that the use is compatible with the surrounding uses or if certain conditions need to be put into place to ensure it operates efficiently. Group homes and lodging houses may provide increased housing capacity to individuals who are unable to live independently.

Single Room Occupancy Units

A Single Room Occupancy is a small unit, usually ranging between 200 to 350 square feet that consists of one habitable room (for living, sleeping, cooking, or eating purposes) within a larger building. Depending on the design, some SROs are built for residents to share bathrooms and/or kitchens while others have private kitchens and bathrooms. SROs are allowed with a conditional use permit in a few zoning districts of the City (Mixed-Use and Commercial Planned Development districts) in order to ensure that the use is compatible with the surrounding areas (i.e. parking, security, and management). Currently, regulatory standards, such as parking or special operational requirements, are determined on a case-by-case basis as part of the conditional use permit approval process. Currently, SROs do not require kitchens or kitchenettes; therefore, if a developer were to propose an SRO project without a kitchen, the SRO unit would not be counted towards satisfying the State's requirement to increase affordable housing [Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)].

At the January 13, 2020 City Council meeting, staff presented options to establish development standards for SROs. Some of the standards included unit size, parking, open space, kitchens, and possibly expanding allowable zoning districts. As a result of the meeting, the City Council authorized staff to come up with development standards and/or policies to incorporate into the General Plan and Development Code and then present those recommendations for public outreach and final approval by the City Council.

City staff from Planning and Building and Safety will be available at the Task Force meeting to further discuss the available alternative housing options described above and to facilitate any recommendations to the City Council that may result from the meeting.

Prepared by: Jennifer Santos, Senior Planner