



CITY OF GARDEN GROVE

August 29, 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 Garden Grove 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 Garden Grove 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 Garden Grove agrees with the above finding.

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 Garden Grove agrees with the above finding.

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 Garden Grove agrees with the above finding

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

Response: The City of Garden Grove agrees with the above finding

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 Garden Grove agrees with the above finding

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 Garden Grove only partially agrees 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. Except for Cities like Garden Grove, who have chosen to enact its own Housing Authority and directly manage Federal CDBG and HOME grants as an entitlement city, 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.

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 Garden Grove only partially agrees 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.

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 recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The City of Garden Grove is a member of the Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACCOC) and, as such, is a member of the ACCOC Homelessness Task Force. On May 8, 2018, the Garden Grove City Council adopted Resolution No. 9504-18 (Attachment 1) authorizing City Staff to participate in the ACCOC’s planning efforts regarding County-wide 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 of Garden Grove anticipates (upon City Council approval) pledging its support of the “Affordable Housing Strategic Plan” and working with the County to implement its recommendations.

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 recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The City of Garden Grove is a member of the Association of California Cities – Orange County (ACCOC) and, as such, is a member of the ACCOC Homelessness Task Force. On May 8, 2018, the Garden Grove City Council adopted Resolution No. 9504-18 (Attachment 1) authorizing City Staff to participate in the ACCOC’s planning efforts regarding County-wide permanent supportive housing. The City of Garden Grove is in the process of producing a list of sites for potential 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 Garden Grove is fully committed to participating in the region’s Service Planning Area meetings. Additionally, Garden Grove City Manager, Scott Stiles, is a member of the Orange County City Manager’s Association (OCCMA) who is currently working with U.S. District Court Judge Carter to inventory available housing and supportive services in the Central SPA.

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 of Garden Grove is collaborating with the United Way in their public awareness campaign, “United to End Homelessness”. Additionally, I (Steven R. Jones, Mayor of Garden Grove) am a member of the United Way’s “United to End Homelessness” Leadership Council.

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: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The City of Garden Grove is committed to partnering with the County and its fellow

municipalities in forming a decision-making body to identify and allocate potential Permanent Supportive Housing sites, and to explore funding options associated with housing and supportive services for the homeless. The County of Orange is in the process of forming a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) known as the Orange County Housing Trust (OCHT) that would act as a regional entity to address homelessness and housing issues through the pooling of public and private funding. The City of Garden Grove anticipates (upon City Council approval) participating in 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 recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. 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 of Garden Grove anticipates (upon City Council approval) pledging its support of the "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan" and working with the County to implement its recommendations.

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 recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The County of Orange has published its "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan", which proposes a plan for securing local, supplemental sources of funding for both Permanent Supportive Housing development and associated support services. The City of Garden Grove anticipates (upon City Council approval) pledging its support of the "Affordable Housing Strategic Plan" and working with the County to implement its recommendations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven R. Jones
Mayor of Garden Grove