



CITY OF GARDEN GROVE

September 15, 2022

The Honorable Erick L. Larsh
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
County of Orange
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Response to the 2021-22 Orange County Grand Jury Report re How is Orange County Addressing Homelessness?

Dear Judge Larsh,

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 2021-22 Orange County Grand Jury Report entitled, "How is Orange County Addressing Homelessness?".

FINDINGS

F3. The County of Orange and cities within Orange County have been inconsistent in collaboration for support of shelters and services, which has resulted in missed opportunities to end homelessness.

Response: The City of Garden Grove disagrees partially with the above finding. The City of Garden Grove is fully committed to collaborating with the County and its fellow municipalities to support homeless shelters and services. The City works and supports the efforts of the Orange County Commission to End Homelessness and has been a member of the Commission since 2020. The City of Garden Grove is also a member of the Orange County Housing Trust and a member of the ACCOC Homelessness Task Force. Garden Grove Mayor Steve Jones has served on the United Way's "United to End Homelessness" Leadership Council since 2018.

In July 2022, the City executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cities of Fountain Valley and Westminster to develop a navigation center in the Central Service Planning Area, and is currently collaborating with the County on this effort. The City also collaborates regularly with the County regarding homeless services programs, including: participating in the Orange County Emergency Solutions Grant Collaborative; collaboration with the County on the Be-Well OC in Garden Grove Mobile Response Unit; and through administration of the Garden Grove Housing Authority, one of only four in the County, which administers Section 8 housing vouchers, Emergency housing vouchers and Mainstream housing vouchers that provide increased financial stability to homeless individuals and individuals at risk of becoming

homeless. In addition, Garden Grove staff participated in the Orange County Mental Health Crisis Response Continuum Forum hosted at Freedom Hall Mile Square Park in July 2021 and the City's GGPD Special Resources Team regularly collaborates with the County mobile crisis assessment (CAT) team to address homelessness and identify shelter solutions.

F4. There are an insufficient number of rental units available to those exiting Emergency Shelters, resulting in the majority returning to homelessness when leaving the shelters.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

R4. By July 1, 2024, the County of Orange and cities should collaborate to open facilities that can house people with severe and persistent mental illness and addiction issues in a secure setting. (F2)

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. The City is fully committed to collaborating with the County and its fellow municipalities on opportunities to house people with severe and persistent mental illness and substance use issues. The City has executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cities of Fountain Valley and Westminster to develop a "low barrier" navigation center in the Central Service Planning Area, and we are collaborating with the County on this effort. It is anticipated this project will move forward and open by July 1, 2024. The navigation center would provide emergency housing and services to the literally homeless population, including those with severe and persistent mental illness and substance use issues. There is great need for additional funding opportunities to assist jurisdictions develop housing for those experiencing severe or persistent mental illness and substance use issues.

R5. By July 1, 2023, the County of Orange, cities and CoC should collaborate to encourage the development of affordable housing to individuals exiting the emergency shelters in Orange County. (F3, F4, F5)

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City is fully committed to continuing our collaboration with the County and its fellow municipalities to encourage the development of affordable housing for those exiting emergency shelter. The City completed development of an 8-unit permanent supportive housing project at 11742 Stuart Drive in August 2022, which now houses the most vulnerable homeless individuals. Additionally, the City of Garden Grove has approximately 1,700 deed restricted affordable housing units, 2,200 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, 117 Emergency Housing Vouchers, and 75 Mainstream Vouchers. There is great need for additional funding opportunities to assist jurisdictions develop affordable housing.

R6. By December 1, 2022, the County of Orange, cities and CoC should collaborate to increase the number of housing opportunities for Transitional Aged Youth. (F6)

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The City is fully committed to continuing our collaboration with the County and its fellow municipalities to increase the number of housing opportunities for the Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) population. The City currently funds Stand Up for Kids to provide services to the TAY population. Stand Up for Kids provides Street Outreach and Rapid Rehousing services to the homeless TAY population in Garden Grove. In addition, the City is currently in discussions with Thomas House Family

Shelter for a potential acquisition and rehabilitation affordable housing project for the TAY population. These discussions will continue through December 1, 2022. There is great need for additional funding opportunities to assist jurisdictions develop affordable housing.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steven R. Jones
Mayor of Garden Grove