



Legislation Text

File #: 24-268, **Version:** 1

Motion to Take No Action Regarding Declaring a State of Emergency on Homelessness in San Leandro

COUNCIL PRIORITY

- Housing and Homelessness

SUMMARY AND RECCOMENDATION

On September 19, 2023, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors declared a countywide state of emergency due to homelessness in the East Bay. They tasked the Alameda County Office of Homeless Care and Coordination with developing a response plan. Following this action, at the October 16, 2023 City Council meeting, City Councilmember Aguilar introduced a motion for an urgency referral to bring forward a future action that would declare a local state of emergency in San Leandro due to homelessness. The City Council authorized Councilmember Aguilar's urgency referral by majority vote. At the November 6, 2023 City Council meeting, staff provided a preliminary recommendation against adopting a resolution for a range of reasons, including a lack of guidance from the County of Alameda, unclear benefits, and other factors discussed below. This recommendation was upheld by the City Council Rules Committee on May 22, 2024.

Consistent with the direction provide by the City Council Rules Committee, as well as the analysis provided below, staff recommends the City Council take no action regarding the declaration of a State of Emergency on homelessness in San Leandro at this time.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

As noted above, on September 19, 2023, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors approved a countywide state of emergency related to homelessness in the East Bay. The order directed County staff at the Alameda County Office of Homeless Care and Coordination to develop an emergency response plan to address homelessness in Alameda County. Following a multi-month process, County staff unveiled the response plan, which focuses on efficiency and resource recommendations.

The plan's efficiency recommendations focus on streamlining Alameda County internal operations, including hiring, recruitment, retention, and procurement, as well as collaboration with cities to identify opportunities for shelter and housing development.

The plan's resource recommendations focus on identifying and quantifying the funding deficit that is impeding access to the resource needs identified in the Home Together Plan, as well as the County's emergency unsheltered response, such as the provision of drinking water, hygiene services, and extreme weather response.

Alameda County presented four recommendations for cities to consider in their homelessness response efforts, outlined below. City staff developed responses to each of these recommendations, which were informed by local conditions and input from the City's service providers and submitted the

responses for County consideration. A summary of the County's recommendations and the City's response to each recommendation is provided below:

- 1) Encourage cities and other public entities to join the County of Alameda in establishing a land use working group to evaluate publicly owned properties and properties offered for housing and homeless use. Local government and special districts should attempt to identify properties in their housing site inventory that would be dedicated to homeless use.**

City of San Leandro staff will participate in the land use working group. City staff is currently identifying properties in their housing site inventory that could be dedicated to homeless uses. Additionally, Alameda County should clearly articulate how much land throughout the County is County-owned vs. City-owned vs. other public-entity owned.

- 2) Encourage cities to use lands that cannot be immediately developed for interim or permanent housing as potential safe parking or safe camping sites**

City of San Leandro staff is currently/already evaluating this option.

- 3) Encourage cities to use identified land or vacant properties to convert to new interim or permanent housing**

City of San Leandro staff is currently/already evaluating this option.

- 4) Cities should evaluate programs that operate only during winter for potential expansion to year-round interim housing.**

City of San Leandro staff is currently/already evaluating this option and would need additional funding to support year-round operations.

Staff provided the below additional recommendations for County consideration and integration into the Plan:

- The County should increase the monetary value of the shelter bed night rate to support nonprofit shelter operations.
- The County should increase data transparency to help cities better communicate the need/resources/and length of time to access shelter and housing resources.
- The County should explore County run programs (funded by the County and operated by nonprofits) that are open to individuals County-wide.
- The County should direct City companion declarations.
- The County should provide cities with direction/recommendations to help cities better understand the expected resource contributions to address homelessness.
- The County should explore how they can partner with cities to collectively advocate for increased resource allocation from the State or Federal level.

Based on the current emergency response plan prepared by County staff, there is no explicit direction for cities to declare companion local emergency declarations, nor are there any resource or efficiency benefits for San Leandro to do so. As a result, staff recommends the City Council take no action regarding a declaration of a State of Emergency on homelessness in San Leandro at this time. Should Alameda County provide explicit direction with justification for the City to declare a local State of Emergency on homelessness in the future, City staff will return to Council.

Previous Actions

At the October 16, 2023 regular City Council meeting, Council Member Aguilar made a request, which was affirmed by a majority vote of the City Council, for staff to bring forward as an urgency item a resolution that would also declare a local state of emergency related to homelessness in San Leandro.

On November 6, 2023, staff returned to Council with a draft resolution and recommended the City Council to not adopt the resolution, as there had been no direction given from the County of Alameda and no tangible benefit to declaring a local emergency. This item was continued by consensus.

Committee Review and Actions

On May 22, 2024, staff presented an update on the Alameda County Board of Supervisors Emergency Homelessness declaration to the City Council Rules Committee where the Committee provided approval of Staff's recommendation to not adopt an emergency homelessness declaration at this time.

Financial Impacts

This item has no fiscal impact.

PREPARED BY:

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