

Project Charter

Transitional Encampments

Project	<i>Transitional Encampments for People Experiencing Homelessness</i>		
Created By	<i>Lee Butler</i>	Date	<i>February 21, 2019</i>
Project Sponsors	<i>Lee Butler, Susie O'Hara, Tony Elliot, Bonnie Lipscomb</i>	Project Manager	<i>To be determined</i>
Project Team Members	<i>Lee Butler, Tony Elliot, Bonnie Lipscomb, Sarah Fleming, Maya Crelan Ray, Mark Dettle, Susie O'Hara, David McCormic, Andy Mills, Tony Condotti, Patty Haymond</i>		

Mission "Practical Problem to Solve and/or Opportunity to Gain"	<i>Identify initial list of vetted locations on public property, location characteristics for additional sites not under City control, operating criteria to ensure quality of life for all stakeholders, and permitting process(es) for public and private property to facilitate the establishment of transitional encampments for people experiencing homelessness.</i>
Executive Summary	<i>The City of Santa Cruz wishes to assist those experiencing homelessness by facilitating the establishment of transitional encampments that serve as a safe place for people to temporarily live while they find/are assisted in finding permanent, stable housing options. Working with key stakeholders, such as housed and unhoused community members, various City departments, and potential non-profit operators, the City will vet an initial set of locations on public properties, locational characteristics for additional sites on private properties, and standards by which transitional encampments can operate in a manner that is safe and dignified for camp residents, while assisting them to move on to improved housing arrangements and while being minimally impactful to nearby residents, businesses, and the environment.</i>
Business Case	<i>It is estimated that 1,204 people are experiencing homelessness in the City of Santa Cruz, with approximately 934 (78%) of those individuals being unsheltered. Per capita, homeless individuals make up 1.9% of the City's population, one of the highest unhoused-to-housed ratios in the state. The existing number of shelter beds has not been adequate to serve the homeless population. The facilitation of transitional encampments operated by non-profit partners can serve as a cost-effective way for the City to assist homeless individuals through an increase in the number of locations where they can temporarily reside and connect with services that assist them with moving from the encampments to improved living situations. Having legal, transitional campgrounds could reduce victimization among the homeless, police calls for service related to homeless camping in other areas of the City, and fire calls for service related to medical emergencies.</i>
Objectives	<i>The objectives of this project are to partner with the community to develop a process by which non-profit organizations apply for and receive authorization to operate transitional encampments, consistent with newly established location and operational criteria. The encampments will provide opportunities for people experiencing homelessness to have a</i>

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	<p><i>safe, stable, dignified, temporary living environment while connecting residents to resources and encouraging residents to find improved living situations.</i></p>
<p>Process Scope</p>	<p><i>Consistent with the Council-adopted Community Outreach Policy, the draft process scope will involve:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Researching similar models, locational criteria, operational criteria/performance standards, and best practices in other communities.</i> <i>2. Ongoing communications with affected stakeholders, including community meetings at various stages of the policy development.</i> <i>3. Examining all City-owned properties in the County to determine basic criteria including but not limited to parcel size, relevant zoning, access to electricity, potable water and accessibility and initial vetting of potential locations for transitional encampments on publicly-owned land.</i> <i>4. Evaluating and establishing criteria for the location of transitional encampments on private properties.</i> <i>5. Evaluating and establishing operational criteria for transitional encampments.</i> <i>6. Evaluating, in coordination with the County and various non-profit organizations, how encampment operations can connect residents with services, such as mental health or substance abuse treatment, either on-site or elsewhere.</i> <i>7. Reviewing applicable indemnification and insurance requirements for non-profit operators, given the parameters of the program.</i> <i>8. Developing a draft process by which non-profit organizations are encouraged to apply for and receive authorization to operate a transitional encampment, consistent with established location and operational criteria.</i> <i>9. Coordinating with the County and other cities to determine feasibility of similar programs in those jurisdictions.</i>
<p>Deliverables</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Initial siting list of vetted public properties meeting criteria where transitional encampments may be located.</i> <i>2. Proposed siting criteria for locations of transitional encampments on public and private property.</i> <i>3. Proposed performance standards or operational criteria for transitional encampments.</i> <i>4. Proposed conditions of approval and insurance, liability, and indemnification requirements for operators/property owners.</i> <i>5. Proposed outreach campaign to encourage non-profits to establish transitional encampments.</i>
<p>Stakeholders</p>	<p><i>Potential non-profit operators of transitional encampments, community members (both housed and unhoused), potentially affected businesses, homeless service providers (County, non-profits, etc.), City staff providing services to the encampments (police, fire, water, garbage/recycling pick-up, etc.), homeless advocates, environmental advocates, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission.</i></p>

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Team Members with Roles and Responsibilities	<p><i>Key team members are identified above, though participants, roles, and responsibilities may shift depending on workloads and priorities. Generally, the following departments/divisions will lead the various topic areas noted below, with assistance from other team members, all of which will be informed by community outreach:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Research, proposal development, outreach and community process:: Advance Planning, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, City Attorney's Office</i> - <i>Identification of potential public properties: Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, City Manager's Office</i> - <i>Operating criteria: City Manager's Office, Police, Parks and Recreation, Advance & Current Planning with review by City Attorney's Office</i> - <i>Indemnification/liability/insurance conditions: Finance (Risk Management) with review by City Attorney's Office</i> - <i>Coordination with County and other jurisdictions – connecting campers to services and encouraging similar models elsewhere: City Manager's Office, Advance Planning</i>
Resources	<p><i>The project team will capitalize on stakeholder knowledge and on other cities'/counties' experiences to develop program parameters, and the City will capitalize on non-profit resources to establish and manage the transitional encampments. County and non-profit services will serve as resources for assisting campers in improving their living conditions. Significant staff time will be required, and timelines for other projects will be delayed.</i></p>
Assumptions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Potential encampment locations will be identified in multiple locations throughout the City. The project team will work with the community to identify potential locations based on basic criteria for transitional encampments on City-owned land and will develop criteria for the creation of additional transitional encampments on private properties. The location of the former, City-run camp at 1220 River Street will be evaluated as one of the preferred locations for a transitional encampment, as will City parks meeting basic criteria.</i> 2. <i>Temporary, short-term, City-run encampments that have the potential to address the immediate demand from the closing of the Gateway Plaza camp at Highways 1 and 9 (e.g., 1220 River Street) may be considered outside of this non-profit-run transitional encampment process.</i> 3. <i>Transitional encampments on private property and long-term encampments on public property will be operated by non-profit organizations.</i> 4. <i>The City's January 23, 2018 declaration of a homeless shelter crisis can provide some flexibility in requiring strict compliance with State building codes while still ensuring basic life safety needs are met, and staff may seek Council approval of modified standards to facilitate this project.</i>
Risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Non-profits may not come forward to operate the encampments.</i> 2. <i>Community members may seek to avoid locating transitional encampments in proximity to their homes or businesses.</i> 3. <i>Encampment residents or operations could create negative social or environmental impacts to nearby areas.</i> 4. <i>Encampments could result in unanticipated costs to the City.</i>

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Boundaries	<i>Will need to engage the community and gather public input on ideas and potential recommendations.</i>
Communications and Change Management	<i>Stakeholder discussions will be arranged before and during development of recommendations.</i>
Decision Making Process	<i>Following community outreach, recommendations of the City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission (assuming parklands are under consideration as potential locations), and the Planning Commission (required if changes to the Zoning Ordinance are proposed) will be sent to the City Council for their review and approval.</i>
Schedule (High Level)	<p>Initial research, analysis, and outreach: March – April</p> <p>Draft policy recommendations vetted with stakeholders: April – June</p> <p>Ordinance/policy language refined: May – June</p> <p>Committee/Commission Recommendations: June – July</p> <p>Council consideration of policy/ordinance and private/public site preferences: August 2019</p>