

# **Encampments of Persons Experiencing Homelessness in Isla Vista and Temporary Emergency Sheltering Option for COVID-19 Response**

Board of Supervisors Hearing

November 10, 2020



# Recommended Actions

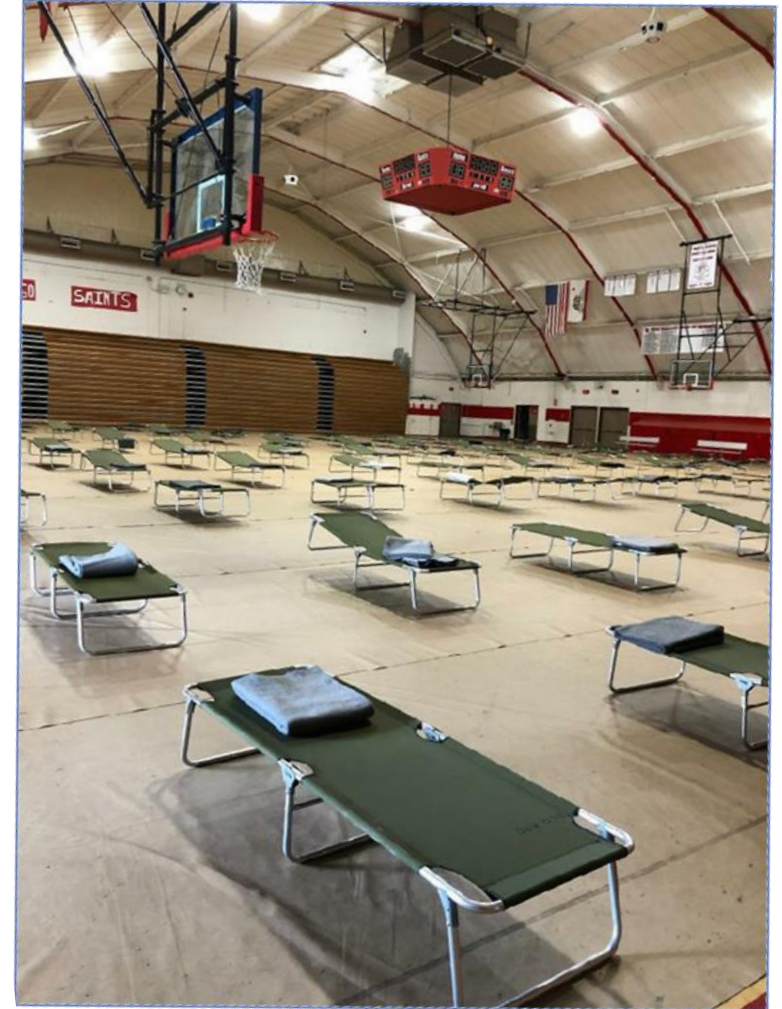
That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file a presentation regarding homeless encampments in Isla Vista and potential option for temporary emergency sheltering as a response to COVID-19;
- b) Provide conceptual approval of the option outlined in this report regarding temporary emergency shelter and navigation support services;
- c) Direct staff to return with an agreement or agreements to facilitate the establishment and operation of a temporary emergency shelter in Isla Vista;
- d) Provide other direction, as appropriate; and,
- e) Determine that the recommended actions is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4) and (5) as the action consists of organizational, administrative or fiscal activities of government that do not involve any commitment to any specific project and that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

# COVID-19 Homelessness Response

## Summary of Four Key Objectives

1. Prevent and mitigate COVID-19 impacts for persons who remain unsheltered.
2. Increase homelessness prevention and housing activities.
3. Sustain existing shelter capacity.
4. Establish non-congregate shelter.



# COVID-19 Objective: Non-Congregate Shelter

- Non-Congregate Shelter provided to over **400** persons:
  - Qualifying Veterans
  - COVID +
  - High Risk of Complications from COVID-19
- Roomkey South Services:
  - Shelter, Meals, Transportation
  - Security
  - Behavioral Health Services
  - Public Health Nurse
  - Case Management
  - Housing Navigation

**50%** of guests exiting Roomkey South have transitioned to permanent housing

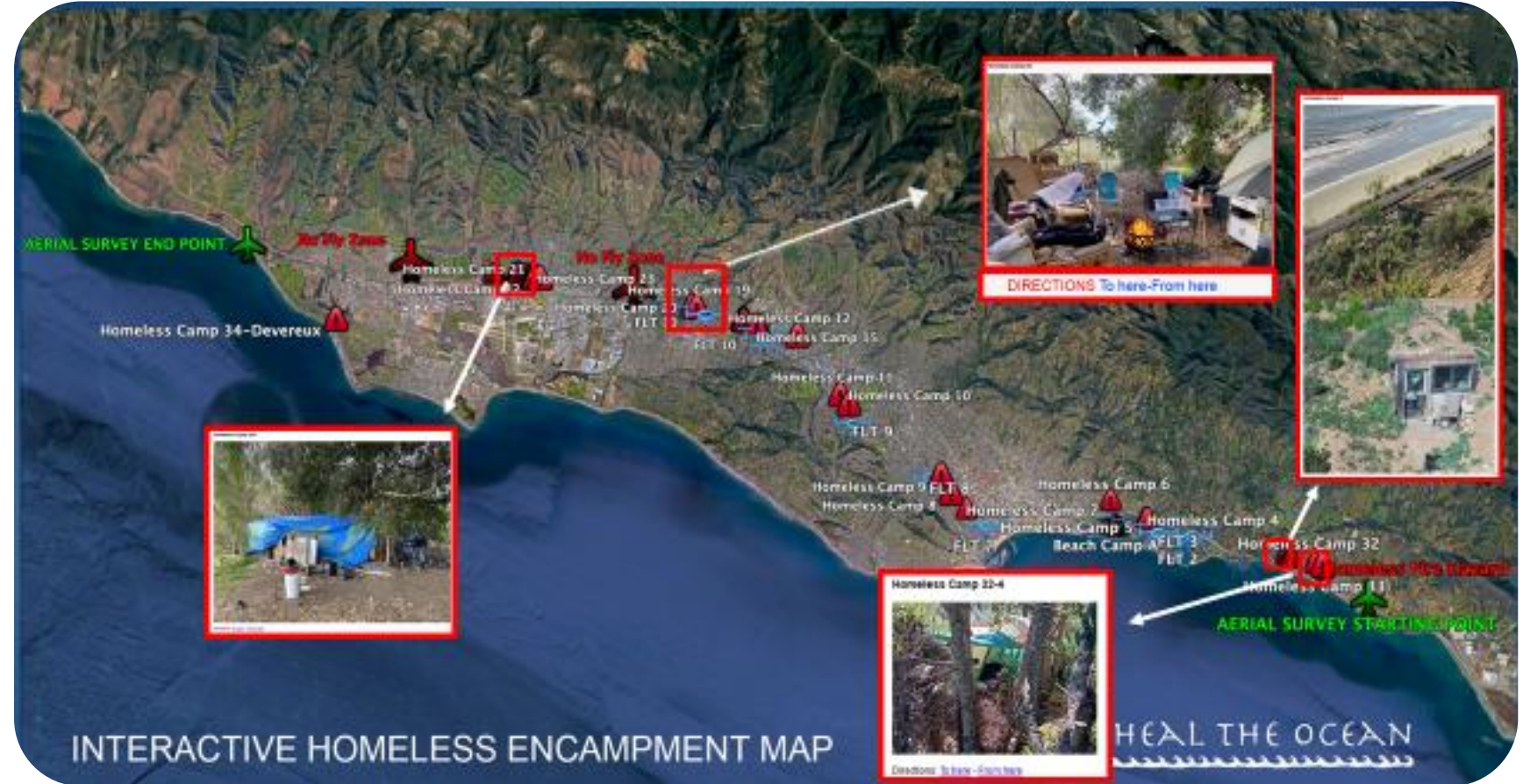


# **Encampment Response**

*Summary of Areas of Concern and Need*

# COVID-19 Update: Increase in Encampments

- More camps and persons in camps
- Expanded footprint with additional belongings/debris
- 37 Fires (2020)
- Damage to parks and open spaces
- Water quality



# Considerations for Addressing Encampments

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Recent legal decisions
- County Public Health, Fire, Sheriff insights
- Impacts on the community
- Best practices and guidance from other communities and experts in the field

# ***Summary of CDC Considerations for Encampments:***

- The balance of risks should be considered for each individual.
- If housing is not available, allow persons unsheltered or in encampments to remain where they are.
- Encourage at least 12 feet x 12 feet of space per individual.
- Work together with community coalition members to improve sanitation in encampments.
- Ensure nearby restroom facilities have functional water taps, hand hygiene materials (soap, drying materials) and bath tissue, 24 hours per day.



# Encampment Impacts in Isla Vista

- risk of fire (“significant potential for the fire and life hazard conditions associated with the inspected homeless encampments to adversely impact life, property, and the environment”)
- concern for the environment and safety of the greater Isla Vista community and visitors
- concern for the health and safety of those experiencing homelessness
- increase in calls for law enforcement service
- need for sanitation services and removal of biohazard
- deterioration of parks due to work delays or cancellations caused by encampment activity



# **Actions taken to address needs and prevent spread of COVID-19 in Isla Vista**

- Installation of hygiene equipment (restrooms, hand washing stations)
- Distribution of hygiene items (masks, hand sanitizer, sanitation kits, water)
- Outreach teams address immediate health concerns, environmental safety, as well as general education about COVID-19
- Improve shower access, address food insecurity, connection to service providers and support network through solar chargers
- Sanitation services of existing encampments including removal of excess belongings, waste and biohazard removal
- Placed storage bins to mitigate expanding footprint of camps
- Engagement in services and navigation to shelter and housing resources

# Temporary Emergency Shelter

US Department of Housing and Urban Development issued guidelines shown for the use of a temporary emergency shelter

| Defining Temporary Emergency Shelter |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  | Used for response to a natural disaster or public health emergency   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  | Local public health official determined that temporary emergency shelter is necessary for community's coronavirus response           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  | In use only for the period of time needed for coronavirus response. Time limited to January 31, 2022 unless HUD grants an exception. |



## Isla Vista Temporary Emergency Shelter Rendering

Isla Vista Community Center and Adjacent Parking Lot

- Install privacy fence, bathrooms, showers and handwashing trailers.
- Use the Community Center for navigation of services, staff work areas, staging, supplies.



## Panelized

Shelters can be individually stacked for low-cost warehousing or shipping. Each panel is light enough to be carried by hand.



Reusable Pallet Shelters  
Riverside, Redondo Beach, Solano County

# Temporary Emergency Shelter Concept

## Operator and Service Provider

- County issued Request for LOI/SOQ and will return to BOS to award Contract.
- Good Samaritan Shelter Proposed Operator
- Services focus on case management, safe shelter and housing, substance abuse intervention opportunities, relocation and reunification, vital documents, health care, benefits acquisition
- Housing navigation to meet individual needs using County departments and non-profit providers
- 24 hour security and staffing
- Intensive service connections similar to Lompoc riverbed model

# County Departmental Support

- **Public Health:** support and guidance from Environmental Health Services, designated Public Health Nurse, Hazardous Materials/Sharps Containers, Personal Protective Equipment, and; Animal Services division
- **Behavioral Wellness:** designated Mental Health Clinician to assist with outreach assessment during regularly scheduled hours
- **Public Defender:** staff advocates to support client legal needs and relevant service linkages
- **Probation:** staff to navigate probation violations and assist with supportive housing and AB109 referrals
- **Sheriff:** law enforcement support in a collaborative effort to maintain safety at site in parks
- **Building and Safety:** advise on code compliance
- **Department of Social Services:** staff to provide outreach and linkages for those who qualify for benefits
- **Planning and Development:** issue of emergency permit by Director and other permitting processes.
- **General Services:** use of property documents and assistance through set-up logistics (ex: utilities) and insurance requirements
- **Fire:** staff to provide guidance and support through logistics and for disaster planning/ prevention and general safety
- **Community Services:** funding support and resources/linkages to coordinate with service providers

# Temporary Emergency Shelter Concept

## Program Timeframe, Conclusion, and Ramp-down

- Time Limited (projected December 2020 - June 2021)
- Shelter limited to persons already in Isla Vista encampments
- Continuous transitions to other available shelter and housing opportunities with case management focused on removing barriers to a safe exit
- Isla Vista Recreations and Parks District to prevent re-habitation of parks as areas are restored
- Offering shelter and housing opportunities at time of shelter closing



# **Temporary Emergency Shelter Concept**

## **Funding**

- Estimated Cost of \$900,000
- Source is Emergency Solutions Grant CARES and CARES funding dedicated to vulnerable populations

## **Outcomes**

- 50 guests served
- 4,000 bed nights of shelter provided
- 15% of persons achieve a safe longer term housing placement
- All shelter guests will be linked to vital services

# Temporary Emergency Shelter Concept

Address COVID -19 impacts on the Isla Vista community including on persons experiencing homelessness by creating a safe temporary emergency shelter for encampment dwellers to be linked to housing and other critical services

- Good Samaritan Shelter, Operator
- Isla Vista Community Center with 20 Re-usable Pallet Houses and Support Trailers (up to 40 beds)
- Six month operation period (Dec 2020- June 2021)
- Extensive County Departmental Support
- Approximately \$900,000 Cost
- Intensive case management and housing navigation services
- All 50 guests linked to services
- Isla Vista Community support



# Recommended Actions

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