

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Mary Gourley](#)  
**Subject:** Questions for Committee on the Unhoused - Public Comment 9/20/22  
**Date:** Monday, September 19, 2022 10:18:41 AM

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Dear Council Members,

On 3/15/22, I asked the Committee for a budget for transient services in Sebastopol. I never received one, despite the fact that there was a "town hall" held. I use quotes around the words town hall as it was not a town hall but a completely controlled and orchestrated piece of propaganda produced to promote the services of the nonprofits who are currently receiving tax money to house and care for transients. It would seem there is a huge conflict of interest in the City advertising for the very people who are receiving tax based funding yet the video still remains up and in circulation.

Thus my questions remain.

### **WHERE IS BUDGET FOR TRANSIENT SERVICES?**

I am asking that the Committee on the Unhoused submit a budget for all the expenses current citizens (7500 people) are paying for a small group of transients (less than 70?) who are in the City of Sebastopol.

This would include police, public works, fire and City administration time, funding for Park Village, funding for the homeless outreach coordinator, port-o-potties, hand washing stations, garbage cans and pickup, and outside attorney time. Over the course of the 5 years in which the illegal RV encampment occupied Morris Street, there were weekly, if not daily, calls to the Police Department. Last fall, there was a cleaning of the Laguna because there had been so many transient fires in the Laguna and transients had set up an illegal kitchen in the Laguna. In addition, there was a fire on Morris Street at the beginning of this year. All these events take up City resources and staff time. What has been the cost? The Committee on the Unhoused should have this data.

As this and the previous report clearly documents, citizens, City Staff and Council have spent an extraordinary amount of time and resources on a very small segment of the population. Although we pay are paying \$72,000 per year for a Homeless Outreach Coordinator, there is no data which says how many transients live in Sebastopol (this might be anticipated as they are transient) but it would be reasonable to put the number at 70 or less which means that the 99.2% of Sebastopol's population is housed. Would it be fair to say that Council, City Staff and Citizens should only be spending .08% of time and resources on transients instead of 25% or 50%?

What percentage of the annual budget of Sebastopol is spent on a micro population of transients who do not pay any property tax but instead live off the services paid for by

property owners? Is Council's spending fair to taxpayers given the fact that the fire and police departments are underfunded, Main Street and Downtown are unkempt, sidewalks are dangerous and roads are the worst in Sonoma County?

### **SEBASTOPOL - HIGHEST PER CAPITA BEDS FOR TRANSIENTS IN SONOMA COUNTY**

As has been previously mentioned, Sebastopol has the highest per capita of transient beds of any city in Sonoma County. The County itself would need 11,000 beds to match Sebastopol's ratio of transient beds.

Sonoma County has many cities that have much bigger budgets and more hotel revenue. Windsor, Healdsburg, Cloverdale, Rohnert Park, Sonoma all have much larger budgets and fewer transient services. It's time for other cities and the County to fulfill their obligations to transients and to let Sebastopol recover from providing an outsized amount of services.

### **Committee on the Unhoused Never Produced Document Outlining All Programs, Funding Sources, Lead Agencies and Services**

I have also asked for a document that lists all the services in Sebastopol - Park Village, Sebastopol Inn, SAVS Parking Lot, The Sebastopol Community Church Safe Park - that lists simple facts such as how many people are served, the mission (ie - permanent supportive housing, safe parking program to help people save for rent), the leading nonprofit with their contact information, budget and funding sources. The Church provides its own funding. The City of Sebastopol contributes some money to Park Village and also gives the land, which otherwise would be a public park, to Park Village for free. Citizens pay for the Sebastopol Inn and Horizons Shine through their state and federal tax dollars.

### **Why is There No Report from Homeless Outreach Coordinator?**

Why is there no detailed report with data from the homeless outreach coordinator? The citizens of Sebastopol are paying over \$70,000 per year (from our stressed and meager budget) to a homeless outreach coordinator. What impact is this position having? Has there been a reduction of homeless people living on our streets? Has she worked with our police department to route people to services? How is this expense justified?

### **What Happened to Safe Parking?**

Previous Committee on the Unhoused included ambitions for more Safe Parking in Sebastopol. Why isn't that mentioned in the September 2022 document? What is the status of this former goal?

### **What is Going On with Horizon's Shine?**

The September 2022 document does not include a relocation plan for Horizon's Shine. Why is that? Can the Committee tell the public what the exit strategy is for Horizon's Shine?

## **Why are We Still In A State of Homeless Emergency?**

If the Committee on the Unhoused has completed their work, why are we still in a state of homeless emergency?

Best,

Kate Haug