

Kari Svanstrom

From: Kate Haug [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, July 23, 2021 7:15 AM
To: Mary Gourley
Cc: Dante Del Prete; Kari Svanstrom
Subject: PC_Public Comment 7/27/21 RE: Homeless Shelters at 1000 Gravenstein Highway North

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in regards to the temporary use permit application by Sebastopol Community Church located at 1000 Gravenstein Highway North for 2 prefabricated micro-shelters or Conestoga Huts.

I support this project and have the following questions:

1. Will the Church keep data on the project and share it annually with the community and other organizations in terms of how many people are served, their demographic information (including the circumstances which led to homelessness), and outcomes? As the homeless population has increased over the last three years, despite the State's/taxpayer expenditure of \$13 Billion dollars, the model which the Church seems to be proposing (allowing people to stay up to a year in a stable, safe location) seems to be economically efficient and also allows individuals to have stability which could be a tremendous help to finding a pathway to housing stability?
2. Does the Church have the ability to coordinate with other homeless service providers in the area to help provide wraparound services to individuals using their facilities? One key finding in a recent Legislative Analyst Report is that the State has failed to coordinate resources for homeless services which is why, although spending billions of dollars in tax money, the state saw a rise in homelessness.
<https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4152>
3. The Sebastopol Inn, a former tourist hotel, was converted through tax money by the County to 31 rooms of housing for homeless individuals. The cost per room is roughly \$360,000 with \$55,000 per month for security and an additional \$3,000-\$4,000 per month in costs for wraparound social services. There are case managers and security onsite 24/7. Sebastopol also has Park Village, near the Sebastopol Inn, run by West County services and also houses formerly homeless individuals and provides services. In addition, the City is allotting \$72,000 for a homeless outreach coordinator. The state of California is allotting \$12 Billion or \$75,000 per individual this year for homeless services. The County will be generating \$25 million through Measure O for mental services. Is there a way the Church can utilize any of these resources to help the people in their program? At some point, it would be helpful to the general public if all of these entities gave presentations on their costs and also their outcomes as we have several different models at work and it would be educational to see what programs are successful for what demographics.
4. The City of Sebastopol is running a budget deficit, which is expected to increase over the next 5 years. There are many unfunded and underfunded infrastructure projects from road repaving to sidewalk repair to park maintenance to the fire department to city offices. The citizens of Sebastopol permanently lost \$200,000 or more in property tax, sales tax, transient occupancy tax and tourist foot traffic when the County converted the Sebastopol Inn to homeless housing. The City will be paying \$72,000 for a homeless outreach coordinator although there seems to be very little data on the goals of this position and how it reduces impacts of the homeless population on the citizens of Sebastopol. Last year the citizens of Sebastopol funded \$50,000 on handwashing and sanitation facilities for the RV encampment on Morris Street. This year \$11,000 will be spent. The Public Works department spends a significant amount of their time and budget on cleaning and repairing city property impacted by homeless individuals. Is there a way that the Church, given the financial situation of the City, can help mitigate some of the impact of the homeless population on the City and residents of Sebastopol? For instance, where do people go during the day after they leave the site? Is there a way that the Church can work with other Churches that provide free meals, showers and other services to the transient population to

support our Public Works department? Can the Church community work with other service agencies to help get individuals into social and medical services?

5. As the Church has been providing Safe Parking for many years, insurance and/or contracts are in place so that the City would not be held liable if there are any crimes committed by someone using Safe Parking. Are Safe Parking applicants vetted to make sure they are not on the Sexual Offenders List?

The Conestoga Huts in the parking lot are a very interesting idea and if it is successful at transitioning people into jobs, services and more permanent housing, it should be explored further by the County as it is doubtful that there would be enough resources to house the County's 3000 homeless population in individual motel rooms at \$360,000 each. It would take roughly 80 motels with 40 rooms each and cost over \$10 Billion. In addition, cities and the County lose vital revenue and tourist accommodations. When tourist accommodations are lost, it drives up the AirBNB rental market, removing long-term rentals from the market, which contributes to the housing shortage, potentially driving up rents and homelessness.

I hope the Church will keep data and present the costs and results after a year of operation. It might be a model that could be used by government agencies in more permanent locations like County owned property where residents could stay on-site during the day to receive services and medical care.

Best,
Kate Haug
Sebastopol