

**MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF FACILITY SERVICES
COUNTY OF PLACER**

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

Date: August 18, 2015

From: Ken Grehm, Facility Services Interim Director

Subject: Temporary Emergency Homeless Shelter – Modification of Site Access Agreement and County Financial Contribution

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Consider Amendment No. 1 to the Site Access Agreement with Right Hand Auburn (RHA) to continue operating a temporary emergency homeless shelter at the Placer County Government Center and authorize the Chair to execute the amendment upon County Counsel review and approval; and
2. Consider one-time contributions of \$150,000 to reimburse RHA for construction costs associated with additional upgrades to the shelter to accommodate additional services, and \$166,250 for operating expenditures until March 31, 2016.

BACKGROUND:

On February 3, 2015, the Board of Supervisors approved a temporary conditional use permit (PLN15-00036) to allow for the establishment of a temporary emergency shelter within an existing structure in the Placer County Government Center (PCGC). On February 24, 2015, your Board authorized a Site Access Agreement with Right Hand Auburn (RHA) to operate a temporary emergency homeless shelter at the Placer County Government Center in accordance with the temporary conditional use permit (TCUP) and the Site Access Agreement. One of the primary provisions of the Site Access Agreement is a 90-day pilot period that can be extended only with the approval of your Board. That 90 day period ends on August 31, 2015.

The County did commission a report on homelessness within the County by Dr. Robert Marbut. Last April, Dr. Marbut presented his recommendations for strengthening our county's homeless continuum of care, which included: 1) the development of a coordinated case management system, 2) implementation of 24/7 homeless shelter and services centers in both Auburn and South County and 3) the creation of permanent housing placements for homeless and formerly homeless individuals and families. The Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras, our region's Continuum of Care governing body with support from the County Health and Human Services staff, is in the process of convening community meetings to review these recommendations and create action plans. RHA's current requests are consistent with Dr. Marbut's recommendation to open an interim Auburn shelter and service center while other options are being researched. Staff anticipates that potential solutions and action plans will require a joint effort by the County, Cities, Business Community and Nonprofits.

Other major conditions of the Site Access Agreement and the TCUP restricted the operation of the shelter, including a maximum occupancy of 49 individuals, a prohibition of medical services, counseling, health care or substance abuse treatment and the restriction of operational hours, which are currently specified in the Site Access Agreement as 5pm to 7am for client use. 3 pm to 8am are the hours provide for set up, operation and clean up. RHA also constructed improvements to the facility to adhere to various Building Codes and to facilitate the operation of the shelter, including fire sprinkler and accessibility improvements.

The temporary emergency shelter opened on June 1, 2015. The first week generated occupancy of 254 individuals. The shelter operates at or near capacity and provides pre-packaged meals, showers and referrals to local social services. The County has hosted a series of five public forums since the opening of the shelter. In addition to support for the shelter, there have been substantial concerns from local neighbors who are concerned with the shelter, camping on the Government Center lawn and a perception of increased crime in the vicinity. Staff believes that the shelter has conformed to the Site Access Agreement and TCUP. The Board, on July 7, 2015, approved an ordinance prohibiting camping and storage of personal items at the Government Center. The ordinance took effect on August 6, 2015. The Sheriff responded to 7 calls at the shelter during June and July.

Right Hand Auburn has requested that, in addition to extending the Site Use Agreement through the term of the TCUP (March 31, 2016), that your Board consider additional modifications to the Site Access Agreement and consistent with the temporary use permit to provide enhanced services to shelter users. These additional requests include the following:

1. **Allow 24 hours/day, 7 days a week operation** – RHA requests that a 24/7 operation will allow better integration with various government services as was recommended by the Marbut Study.
2. **Increase capacity to 75 on an ongoing basis and as much as 100 under emergency situations as determined by the County** – RHA requests that the maximum occupancy be increased since the current shelter is at capacity and winter time needs are expected to be greater. RHA believes that 75 is the maximum occupancy that it can normally accommodate providing a full range of services but that they could provide beds for as many as 100 during inclement weather.
3. **Allow for food storage and cooking at the facility** – RHA requests permission to install commercial grade freezer, sinks and cooking facilities to provide meals more cost-effectively and to not depend on daily volunteer food distributions.
4. **Allow limited supplemental counseling and medical screening and referrals onsite** – RHA wishes to connect shelter users with various support and health services that could be provided by professional volunteers and the County. This request is consistent with the Marbut Study by allowing shelter guests access to services that can help them transition out of homelessness.
5. **Allow for the storage of personal belongings onsite** – RHA believes that storage of personal items on-site will allow more people to participate in shelter activities, particularly in a 24-hour shelter.

RHA's modification request is included as an attachment to the related Community Development Resource Agency item on today's Board agenda. The changes are also reflected in the proposed Site Access Agreement Amendment No. 1 on file with the Clerk of the Board.

The existing budget for current shelter operations is approximately \$33,000 per month. RHA believes that operational costs will increase to approximately \$50,000 per month assuming the shelter is allowed to increase occupancy, expand services and operate 24 hours per day and seven days a week. RHA proposes a cost sharing arrangement by which the County would contribute \$23,750 per month, the City of Auburn would contribute approximately \$4,167 per month and RHA would fundraise for the remainder (approximately \$22,000 per month). Since only 7 months remain in the temporary use permit, the contribution for operational costs requested of the County is \$166,250. In addition, RHA is requesting that the County reimburse costs (maximum \$150,000) associated with construction of improvements required or desired to operate 24/7 and with an increased occupancy.

Staff can support the modifications allowing enhanced services, additional capacity and expanded hours of operations, if all building, health and safety codes are met. Necessary improvements include additional exiting, accessibility improvements and electrical improvements for any food storage or preparation needs. RHA also wishes to provide some additional space for a private interview area. The facility is not proposed to be upgraded as a medical care facility which will limit the services that can be provided.

Depending on Board spending priorities, staff can support a financial contribution since the proposed shelter operations are consistent with the Marbut Study, meet a demonstrated need, are being responsibly managed, and leverage public and private sector resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE:

The modification of the Site Use Agreement is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to provisions of Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines – Existing Facilities and Section 18.36.030 of the Placer County Environmental Review Ordinance (Class 1, Operation, leasing, licensing or alteration of existing public or private facilities). The modified Site Access Agreement would result in operations within existing facilities and be temporary in nature. Your Board's fiscal actions, if any, are exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4) – Fiscal Activities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

RHA is requesting a capital contribution of \$150,000 to reimburse construction costs associated with requested upgrades to the facility. They are also requesting a contribution towards ongoing operation costs of \$166,250 for the remainder of temporary use period (September 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016). Pursuant to your Board's direction, one-time funding for the reimbursed construction costs and ongoing operating costs until March 31, 2016 may be provided by the County's Capital Projects Fund and a one-time cancellation of General Fund reserves, respectively.

Available for review at the Clerk of the Board's Office – Proposed Site Access Agreement Amendment No. 1

