

July 2022

SACRAMENTO AREA

HOMELESSNESS PROGRESS REPORT

City Council approves operating full-time 'Outreach and Engagement Center' serving unsheltered residents

By Gregg Fishman

The Sacramento City Council in late July voted unanimously to operate the former Powerhouse Science Center and Museum on Auburn Boulevard as a full-time "Outreach and Engagement Center" for people experiencing homelessness.

The center already is staffed under a \$3.3-million contract with [Hope Cooperative](#) approved by the Council in January, but its operation has been subject to [certain weather thresholds](#), including days when the [National Weather Service](#) issues a heat advisory.

Mayor Darrell Steinberg [asked the Council](#) to consider expanding the use of this facility.

"We have a city-owned piece of property and a building that is being underused at the same time that we have more than 9,000 people living unsheltered in Sacramento," Steinberg said. "I cannot just let this resource lay fallow when so many people need help."

With the approval, the Outreach and Engagement Center soon will be open daily as a place where up to 50 people can come inside regardless of the weather and receive help from social workers, clinicians and housing coordinators.

It will take a few weeks before the center is fully staffed, officials said. Guests will be admitted by referral only. There will not be walk-up admissions except during extreme weather events.

"The guests will all be referred in by the [Department of Community Response](#)," said Bridgette Dean, the department's director. "They will be pre-screened and obviously, they will have to agree to abide by the rules. We see this as an opportunity to bring people in off the street while we determine what their needs are and how we can meet those needs. This center offers hope for those experiencing homelessness, and for the community."

First priority will go to people experiencing homelessness in the immediate vicinity of the center. Department of Community Response staff said they expect City Council District 2 and the nearby unincorporated area around the center to get substantial relief as more people are brought indoors and connected with services such as housing assistance and help to obtain health care through Cal-AIM.

The decision to expand the use of the Auburn Boulevard Outreach and Engagement Center was not without concerns from the community. A group of nearby residents led a protest claiming that the facility would endanger residents of the [Children's Receiving Home nearby](#).



Steinberg and staff members from DCR have worked extensively over the past month with representatives of the receiving home. The recent Council action also included a good neighbor policy that features such items as round-the-clock security, monitoring of crime data, a no-camping zone around the center and the exclusion of registered sex offenders.

In a statement, the Children's Receiving Home said it is "neutral" on the expanded operation of the center.

"We're going to be good neighbors," Dean said, "to the Children's Receiving Home and to the rest of the community."

About this Report

The City of Sacramento, Sacramento Housing and Development Agency, Sacramento Steps Forward and the County of Sacramento are publishing this monthly report to keep the community informed about our collaborative work to address homelessness in Sacramento.



Meet Ben Worrall, the new Community Outreach Manager for the Department of Community Response with the City of Sacramento. Ben leads the Neighborhood Resource Coordinators who work with people experiencing homelessness throughout the city. He has extensive experience in conflict management, crisis intervention, trauma informed practice, motivational interviewing, and safety organized practice. He earned a Master of Social Work (MSW) from University of Denver. "I'm very grateful to be in this role where I can use my education and experience to serve my community and help people succeed in life." said Worrall.

Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency

SHRA recently helped celebrate the opening of Lavender Courtyard, Sacramento County's first LGBTQ-friendly senior affordable housing complex during the community's grand welcoming event held July 8. Located downtown at the corner of I 6th and F Streets, the community built by Mutual Housing includes 24 units of permanent supportive housing to serve formerly homeless seniors. SHRA is providing project-based vouchers for the permanent supportive housing units. Lavender Courtyard features 53 residential units, consisting of 48 one-bedroom and four two-bedroom residential units for seniors 62 years old and over. (It also includes a manager's unit.) The first residents have already moved in with more expected in the coming weeks. Individuals interested in becoming Lavender Courtyard residents are encouraged to visit the [Mutual Housing](#) website. Resident social services are provided by Lutheran Social Services of Northern California.



Sacramento Steps Forward

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released in late June a first-of-its-kind package of resources to address unsheltered homelessness and homeless encampments. Through this special Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), HUD will award funding to communities to implement coordinated approaches--grounded in Housing First and public health principles--to reduce the prevalence of unsheltered homelessness and improve services, health outcomes, and housing stability among highly vulnerable unsheltered individuals and families.

The Sacramento CoC is eligible for up to \$10.6 million over three years through this Special NOFO process. The NOFO application is due to HUD on October 20, 2022. More information on the Sacramento CoC's application process and timeline will be provided in the upcoming weeks. For more information [visit this link](#).



**U.S. Department of
Housing and Urban Development**

County of Sacramento

Sleeping cabin construction at Sacramento County's new concept "Safe Stay Community" to shelter persons experiencing homelessness has officially begun. The new project, located at 8144 Florin Road, will have 100 sleeping cabins constructed on the site. Construction of the Pallet cabins is expected to take 10 days.

Once cabin construction is complete, infrastructure work such as running power and sewer lines will take several months to complete. In addition to the cabins, the site will have a sanitation trailer for restrooms and showers, staff quarters for the 24/7 on-site operator, a security booth to manage all persons on-site, a communal eating area, storage units for possessions guests bring that do not fit in their cabin and a pet relief area. [Link to more](#)

