



# Memorandum

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Mayor Sam Liccardo  
Councilmember Chappie Jones  
Councilmember Dev Davis

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** November 21, 2018

Approved

*San Luis* *AI* *Dev Davis* *SD* *DM*

Date

11/21/18

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL HOMELESS REPORT AND HOMELESS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Accept staff's recommended Homeless Emergency Assistance Program (HEAP) expenditure plan, with one modification: Direct the City Manager – as a component of the Crisis Response approach – to develop a plan to establish a Humane Public Toilet Program as part of the Crisis Response approach, located initially near river or creek-side homeless encampments, that would:
  - a. Add additional hours, including in the evening, to current City bathrooms - such as at frequently-used community centers or parks;
  - b. Add portable toilet banks, with trash bins, at such encampment hotspots, on a pilot basis;
  - c. Explore innovative toilet technology - such as self-cleaning and/or compost toilets;
  - d. Add job opportunities to the City's new Transitional Jobs Program that would allow people experiencing homelessness to be paid to restock, clean, and tend open bathrooms;
  - e. Be funded with \$200,000 of HEAP funding, to be reallocated from the motel voucher expenditure plan. The City Manager should reach out to the Santa Clara Valley Water District to propose cost-sharing for the project, and should consider other potential sources for more permanent funding, such as storm sewer fees.
2. Return to NSE twice a year with reports on progress on the HEAP expenditure plan.
3. Future Annual Homeless Reports and HEAP reports should provide apples-to-apples metrics that enable the Council to better understand where best to invest each marginal dollar to maximize benefit to recipients and minimize hardship, e.g., dollars-expended-per-individual-moving-to-permanent-housing.
  - a. The comparisons should include some historic perspective to help us better understand how we've been spending money in the past, and to see how variations and tweaks in programs may help us see dollars used more effectively to help more people.

- b. Metrics may differ based on the general category of strategy (e.g., “housing-based solutions,” “interim housing,” etc.), but should enable Council and public to understand if we’re maximizing our scarce dollars within that broad strategy. Where metrics cannot adequately capture progress, or where too speculative, (e.g., “lives saved due to safety to exposure to winter elements”), simply designate that there is no suitable metric.

## **BACKGROUND**

We would like to thank City staff, our legislative delegation, and Governor Brown for bringing forward this much needed funding to address homelessness. As part of our 2018 legislative priorities, Mayor Liccardo worked with staff and the “Big 11,” a group of bi-partisan mayors from California’s largest 11 cities, and Assemblymember Phil Ting to secure \$500 million in one-time grant funding for the state through the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP).

It’s clear from the audit and community feedback that we have much work to do to improve our encampment abatement strategy while finding ways to build permanent housing for our large houseless population. In addition to emergency interim housing that our HEAP funding outlines, we need to address our homeless hygiene needs, in addition to protecting our environment, particularly in our waterways. The directives of California State environmental agencies are largely driving our encampment abatement strategy in our creek areas, where 80 percent of the encampment sweeps take place, and addressing some of the more serious pollutants could go a long way to providing some regulatory relief from the State.

Providing bathrooms can amount to a disaster if not properly managed. With the recent launch of our Transitional Jobs program, we can offer our homeless residents another opportunity to help their neighbors by stocking and staffing public restrooms while finding a path to self-sufficiency.

As the expenditure plan is approved, it is critical that we prioritize measurable outcomes that address the homelessness crisis and that we show leadership on charting outcomes. As California projects the largest surplus in state history in 2019 – \$14 billion – we have an opportunity to take another “bite at the apple” where we can show that this funding has moved the needle in reducing human misery and housing our homeless.