

Homeless Discussion, Aug. 7, 2015  
Supervisors' Chambers, 70 W Hedding

informal notes by L. Ames

presentation packet: [>link<](#)

### **Public Comment**

- Being constantly moved is hard and stressful
- Tent camping at County parks is good -- legal, cost effective, environmentally sensitive: toilet & shower facilities, trash pickup, but 14-day limit is hard -- need more time for stability.
- Program in Gilroy that houses homeless at County Parks.
- County's Park Charter Fund specifies that it is "for Public Use"
- Buy 10 A of land next to park for homeless?

### **Presentation**

- Vets: FCH -- First Community Housing.
- Discussion of how many units at various sites coming on-line in near future: 5 here this fall, a dozen there next year, ....
- Listing of various measures (e.g., rent motel for temporary housing), costs, number served

Q by Chavez re permanent housing:

- types of services for vulnerable
- cost? A: \$10k/unit/year
- compare cost of Case Management vs Supportive Services

Chavez notes that homeless have bad credit. Giving Housing Vouchers sometimes doesn't help since homeless can't rent w/ bad credit. Q: could County "vouch" for homeless, guarantee the security deposit and 3-month's rent?

Microhouse On Wheels ("MOWs") -- Micro-housing, mobile homes.

- small trailers. Only needs to meet DMV code, rather than more costly building codes.
- park in groups to make "villages". Park on County Park land.
- inexpensive (~\$7k - \$8k in material, plus labor -- hire the homeless to build?)
- want to be like a village, w/ on-site supervision: police and services

Q: permanent or temporary? Aren't there always homeless?

A: no: weren't homeless in US in 1950s - '80s. Can remove trailers once homeless is dealt with.

There's a bus configured to provide showers for homeless: could service the villages.

Comment by Jim Beall: task force should do a tour of possible facilities before making recommendations.

Q: does Homeless Task Force have to wait for conclusion of study before reporting out, or can it give comment mid-way? A: can give mid-term report.

Want to address immediate concerns now, deal w/ long-term issues later.

Task force discusses on what to focus on first:

- "Housing First"
- Permanent Campgrounds

- Rapid Response Program -- RRP, but needs to lead to permanent solutions
- "Safe Parking" -- but there were no responses to recent RFP...

### **More Public Comment**

Many speakers: each given 1 minute.

I spoke. My comments:

- I'm intrigued by MOWs. Coyote/Bear Co. Park has some flatland.
- Concerned by tent-camping proposal:
  - Co. Parks have few campsites, often booked in advance;
  - Remote: no public transportation, no service, limited infrastructure (porta-potties);
  - Not viable year-round: cold and rainy at Mt. Madona
- Glad a variety of solutions are being suggested, but tent-camping at Co. Parks doesn't have capacity to be a significant part of solution.

[Concern (no time to express): if campsites used by homeless, they won't be available for public to use during summer & holidays. Might affect the public's willingness to vote for future Park Charter Fund; could endanger Co. Park program.]

[Afterwards, some audience-members gave me grief for being heartless -- they're already sleeping outdoors, want a safe place to be; I countered that they're not on top of cold & windy mountain.]

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This session was half of a two-parter:

Task force will meet again in one week

Aug. 14, 9 AM, Co. Board of Supervisors Chamber, 70 W. Hedding.

~Larry Ames, 8/8/15