

2009 DEC 29 PM 12:45
Agenda Item No. 4
January 6, 2010 Meeting

DATE: December 21, 2009

TO: Children and Families Commission of Orange County

FROM: Michael M. Ruane, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Progress Report - HomeAid Orange County Partnership and Services to Homeless Families

SUMMARY

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County has a partnership with HomeAid Orange County for comprehensive homeless prevention programs. This item includes an update on HomeAid projects that are in the beginning stages of development. The item also includes an update on the Cold Weather Armories that opened in December, an update on the families assisted through the Armory Redirection Program, and the final planning process for the Countywide 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. A renewal of our sponsorship of HomeAid's annual "Essentials for Young Lives" campaign is also recommended.

HomeAid Orange County Partnership Update

The Commission supports a comprehensive homeless prevention program that includes five shelter expansion projects completed in partnership with HomeAid Orange County. HomeAid and the Commission currently support homeless prevention agencies that provide services to assist homeless families with young children as they move toward self-sufficiency. Services include education, job skills training, physical, and emotional support. Existing transitional shelter partnerships include Casa Teresa, Precious Life Shelter, Fullerton Interfaith Emergency Services, Orange County Rescue Mission at Village of Hope, and Orange County Rescue Mission at Buena Park Hope Family Housing. In 2010, HomeAid will continue housing development projects that are at various stages of planning and construction to add new beds to the county's current inventory. The following is an update of HomeAid's current developments.

Mercy House Santa Ana

HomeAid Orange County is in the predevelopment stage of a new housing project for Mercy House in Santa Ana at Santa Ana Boulevard and Garfield. When complete, the two-story building will include up to 12 one, two and three-bedroom units to provide permanent affordable housing with supportive services for families and individuals. The city of Santa Ana has donated the land for this development and HomeAid is contributing in-kind donations of labor and materials. The facility will include a community room with office space for individual and group meetings, a center courtyard with recreational space and children's play area, and a laundry facility. The target population is graduates of Mercy House transitional programs and emergency program clients including single women with children, single men including veterans, and families from the Armories with at least one child age five or younger.

Fullerton Interfaith Emergency Services

Fullerton Interfaith Emergency Services has closed escrow on a property adjacent to their existing facility, and has begun a capital campaign to raise funds for the new facility for long-term transitional housing.

Laura's House San Clemente

Laura's House operates a small emergency shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence. Their Step Ahead program provides transitional housing and continued assistance to families who have graduated from the emergency shelter. The program includes 60-90 day short-term transitional housing including counseling, case management, and life skills training to support women and their children become self sufficient. Construction plans are being developed to double the current capacity of the two facilities for the Step Ahead program.

Orange County Rescue Mission

The successful development of the Orange County Rescue Mission Hope Family Housing facility in Buena Park was the catalyst for the city of Buena Park to purchase a two-acre property on La Palma Avenue for a second partnership with the Orange County Rescue Mission, HomeAid, and the city of Buena Park. The facility may provide up to 60 units for permanent supportive housing for homeless families, many of whom transition from low-income motels in the surrounding area. The facility will include a play area and a multi-purpose community room that will provide space for recreation, education, and resident programs including job training, counseling, and life skills training.

HomeAid is also in discussion with the following homeless service providers for future housing developments: American Family Housing for transitional housing; Anaheim Interfaith for transitional housing; H.I.S. House for transitional/permanent supportive housing; Illumination Foundation for transitional/permanent supportive housing; and Women's Transitional Living Center serving victims of domestic violence.

Cold Weather Armory Update

As of December 13, 2009 Mercy House has served 35 families through the Commission's Armory Redirection Program, and no eligible family has spent the night at the Armories. Mercy House recently received \$50,000 from the United Way to supplement the Armory Redirection Program ensuring that all families, regardless of their children's ages, will be entered into the Family Redirection Program. This program began on December 14, 2009 and will support approximately 25 families who only have children over six years of age. One family was served on the first night of operation.

10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

The Countywide 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness is being finalized with a tentative schedule to present to the Board of Supervisors on January 12, 2010. The planning effort is strongly encouraged by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and will be required for future federal homeless prevention funding allocations. The proposed Orange County plan has 10 strategies that include creating a year-round emergency shelter system, increasing prevention services, encouraging homeless service providers to employ a rapid re-housing program (rather than a time specific transitional housing program), improving data collection and management,

and reporting and increasing the stock of workforce housing. A full report on the plan will be presented to the Commission following approval by the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

HomeAid's Essentials for Young Lives Campaign

The Commission sponsored HomeAid Orange County's *Essentials for Young Lives* campaign last year. Over 145,000 items were collected and over 70 businesses supported the campaign either by providing a collection site or with volunteers and in-kind services. The Campaign raises public awareness on the issues of homeless families with young children through a collection drive for consumable baby products such as baby food, diapers, clothes, and wipes. These items are critically needed by the network of transitional shelters that provide services to families with very young children.

This year, the Commission and HomeAid Orange County are partnering with HomeAid Sacramento to expand the campaign to the State Capitol. Legislators are being requested to participate by collecting items at their state offices, and including information about the campaign in their constituent newsletters. Commission sponsorship of HomeAid Orange County's annual *Essentials for Young Lives* campaign at \$50,000 is recommended. This is the same funding level as last year. The Commission would serve as the named sponsor for the campaign and work with our existing corporate sponsors and grantees to expand the collection sites and donations.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY

The proposed projects have been specifically reviewed in relation to the Strategic Plan, and are designed to further the Strong Families/Homeless Prevention goal. Funding for this item is included in the FY 2009/10 Budget within the Strong Families Homeless Prevention budget category.

PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:

- September 2009: Homeless Prevention Services Update
- November 2008: Sponsorship for 2009 *Essentials for Young Lives* campaign with HomeAid

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. Receive presentation.
2. Direct staff to return with a report and recommendations on potential new shelter development projects in partnership with HomeAid Orange County.
3. Authorize \$50,000 sponsorship of the 2010 *Essentials for Young Lives* campaign with HomeAid Orange County and authorize Executive Director to execute any required documents for the sponsorship and funding contribution.

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