

PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date:	February 25, 2020	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular
		<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing
Department:	Administration		
Submitted By:	Administration		
Submitted For:	Administration		

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Motion and Title: Staff recommends motion to approve: the Sheltering and Housing Strategy Annex to *Leading the Way Home* – Palm Beach County's Plan to End the Cycle of Homelessness.

Summary: This strategy expands the doorway for services and housing for those living on the streets or in parks, increasing the availability of support services currently being provided at the Senator Philip D. Lewis Center and other locations within the County. Key components of the strategy include shelter, feeding, medical care, counseling, case management, and a pathway to permanent housing. Countywide (AH)

Background and Justification: This strategy is intended to serve as an annex or supplement to *Leading The Way Home* – Palm Beach County's Plan to End the Cycle of Homelessness. This plan replaced The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, a blueprint to end homelessness that was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2008. It will expand shelter and housing opportunities for the homeless in John Prince Park and other locations utilizing a housing focused model similar to that used at the very successful Senator Philip D. Lewis Homeless Resource Center and the future Homeless Resource Center 2 (HRC2) expected to open in Fall 2022.

Attachments:
Sheltering and Housing Strategy Annex

Recommended by:		2-21-2020
	Deputy County Administrator	Date

Approved By:		2/24/2020
	County Administrator	Date

II. FISCAL IMPACT

ANALYSIS A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal

Impact:

Fiscal Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Capital Expenditures	\$892,000				
Operating Costs	\$2,270,692	\$5,449,662			
External Revenues					
Program Income(County)					
In-Kind Match(County					
NET FISCAL IMPACT					
#ADDITIONAL FTE					
POSITIONS (CUMULATIVE					

Is Item Included in Current Budget? Yes No

Does this item include the use of federal funds? Yes No

Budget Account No:

Fund _____ Agency _____ Organization _____ Object

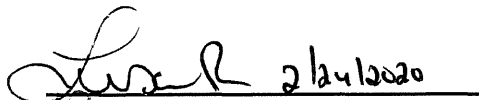
B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:


Ad valorem funding will be budgeted for this strategy, however, grant funding will be pursued to offset some portion of costs. Operating costs for 2020 are based on five months of operations.

C. Departmental Fiscal Review:

III. REVIEW COMMENTS:

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Dev. and Control Comments:


2/24/2020
OFMB 2/24


Contract Dev. & Control
2/24/2020 TD

B. Legal Sufficiency


2-24-2020
Assistant County Attorney

C. Other Department Review

Department Director

SHELTERING AND HOUSING STRATEGY ANNEX
TO LEADING THE WAY HOME – PALM BEACH COUNTY’S PLAN TO END THE CYCLE
OF HOMELESSNESS
February 21, 2020

GOAL: TO EXPAND CURRENT ENGAGEMENT, SHELTERING, CASE MANAGEMENT AND HOUSING PLACEMENT OPERATIONS TO ADDRESS A PROLIFERATION OF UNAUTHORIZED TEMPORARY TENT SHELTERS IN JOHN PRINCE PARK AND A WAITING LIST FOR SERVICES AT THE PHILIP D. LEWIS CENTER.

INTENT AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION: This strategy is intended to serve as an annex or supplement to *Leading The Way Home* – Palm Beach County’s Plan to End the Cycle of Homelessness. This plan replaced The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, a blueprint to end homelessness that was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2008. *Leading the Way Home* summarizes the accomplishments of the past ten years, describing goal by goal what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. It identifies a number of system enhancements that occurred as a result of the plan including:

- Progression from working in silos to collaboratively working as a system;
- Establishment of an enhanced coordinated entry system through the Homeless Resource Center;
- A shift from “first come, first served” to prioritization based on vulnerability;
- Implementation of Housing First and Rapid Re-housing programs;
- Development of a robust Homeless Management Information System (HMIS);
- Implementation of enhanced program standards; and
- Creation of a low-barrier, trauma informed Homeless Resources Center (HRC).

Leading the Way Home serves as a framework for the policies and programs that address homelessness in our community. The strategy described in this Annex should not be viewed as a stand-alone solution to a complex problem challenging cities and communities throughout the country, a problem exacerbated by the increased cost and inadequate supply of affordable housing and the prevalence of mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) issues. Rather, it should be viewed in the broader context of *Leading the Way Home* and the continuum of services provided by the County and community partners. This strategy expands the doorway for services and housing for those living on the streets or in parks, increasing the availability of support services currently being provided at the Senator Philip D. Lewis Center and other locations within the County. Key components of the strategy include shelter, feeding, medical care, counseling, case management, and a pathway to permanent housing. The strategy is intended to be flexible and can be contracted and expanded as needed or directed. The strategy is a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners and is subject to approval

by the Board. Various community partners including Gulfstream Goodwill, The Lord's Place, the Salvation Army, the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, and the Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network, are being consulted and asked to contribute to the development and implementation of this strategy. Additionally, municipalities in Palm Beach County affected by homelessness are encouraged to support this strategy and the broader plan to end the cycle of homelessness.

PROPOSED STRATEGY FRAMEWORK: Creation of a humane and legal alternative sheltering/housing opportunity for individuals that are sleeping or residing in tents or in other structures outside of permitted campgrounds within the park system and those on the Senator Philip D. Lewis Center waiting list. Following creation of the sheltering/housing opportunity, utilize Palm Beach Sheriff's Office deputies and Parks & Recreation personnel to enforce current park ordinance restrictions on camping outside of designated camping areas. Increased law enforcement presence to curb unlawful activities and educate visitors who may unwittingly contribute to inappropriate or unlawful activities, and expanded outreach and engagement by social and caseworkers functioning within the homeless outreach teams (HOT).

BACKGROUND AND POLICY STATEMENT: Palm Beach County has a population of nearly 1.5 million and a homeless emergency shelter system that has the capacity to house 428 persons at any given time. In addition, the community's permanent supportive and rapid rehousing programs provide housing to an additional 1,224 homeless persons. Palm Beach County also utilizes a homeless prevention strategy to keep households from entering the homeless system. Approximately 1,134 households received assistance through this strategy in 2019.

The need for temporary shelter is evident by the number of persons erecting tents in public parks, sleeping on park benches and under pavilions, residing in train stations and living in abandoned buildings in the metropolitan areas of Palm Beach County. Municipalities and county governments struggle with public outcry, increased risk of public health issues, and rising numbers of elderly homeless persons and individuals with mental illness and/or SUD issues.

Strategies employed in different jurisdictions have inappropriately included securing and locking public facilities frequented by the homeless, discontinuation of feeding sites that attract homeless, playing loud music in public places, putting spikes on ledges and installation of bars on bus stop benches. These are not solutions to the problems associated with homelessness and only create hostility and retaliatory behaviors. In addition to not being viable solutions, strategies which result in criminalizing homeless persons for engaging in life-sustaining activities are not legal.

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness and research that has been done in the homeless services arena, the most effective crisis response system should include the following:

- 1) Outreach – Outreach workers are responsible for making contact with the homeless and directing them to emergency shelter, diversion or rapid rehousing. Outreach

includes the use of Peer Specialists, defined as persons with lived experience. Palm Beach County has four outreach teams and has recently added three peer specialists to assist each team. A local non-profit The Lord's Place also provides outreach to West Palm Beach, and Gulfstream Goodwill has joined with the County Homeless Outreach Teams to provide similar activities throughout the county.

- 2) Coordinated Entry – Coordinated Entry is a process used to quickly assess and connect homeless persons with housing and services. Coordinated Entry for homeless and at-risk services is fully functional in our community although due to volume of calls, will need to expand in the near future.
- 3) Diversion and Prevention – Diversion is defined as diverting the homeless from entering the system. This usually includes facilitating a return of the homeless person or family to their home of origin or other family members that agree to house and care for the person or family. Prevention aids households in preserving their current housing situation while connecting them with services. Both strategies assist in the reduction of the size of our homeless population.
- 4) Emergency Shelters and Interim Housing – People experiencing a housing crisis or fleeing an unsafe situation are in need of immediate shelter. Effective shelters should be low barrier and embrace a Housing First approach. Program goals should complement the larger homeless system goals, which in Palm Beach County, is exiting people to permanent housing options as quickly as possible.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (2020) lists the Five Keys to Effective Emergency Shelter and include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1) Housing First Approach | 4) Housing Focused Rapid Exit |
| 2) Safe and Appropriate Diversion | 5) Data to Measure Performance |
| 3) Low Barrier Access | |

Low barrier shelters often provoke misunderstandings and resistance as well as concerns over community safety and health. The key to overcoming these concerns is to ensure that all shelter staff are trained in conflict resolution, de-escalation and trauma informed care. Another technique to overcome the concerns of a low barrier shelter is the sharing of descriptive and informative program and outcome data. The Lewis Center has an average stay of 53 days and houses approximately 400 singles and 248 families consisting of 818 family members annually. 60% of these individuals and families secure adequate permanent housing after their shelter stay.

PROPOSED STRATEGY COMPONENTS:

HOUSING/SHELTER: The solution to homelessness in the parks and public places revolves around the need for safe, affordable and decent housing as well as overnight housing for those that are without shelter. County-owned property at 673 Fairgrounds Road is a 17-acre compound formerly used for a correctional facility. It is currently vacant and being maintained for future use. The recommended strategy includes establishing 100 to 125 beds of emergency

shelter for homeless individuals and couples at this facility¹. The goal of utilizing the Fairgrounds Road facility for emergency shelter is to immediately increase capacity in Palm Beach County in order to make homeless rare, brief and non-reoccurring. The focus would be on securing permanent housing and ending homelessness. The Fairgrounds Road facility is available and adaptable for this purpose and can be prepared rapidly. It has served as a temporary shelter in the past.

The facility would provide space for temporary shelter for the homeless that have been vetted through the coordinated entry process and undergone a level 1 background check and a sexual offender database search. This information will not be used for law enforcement purposes or to create barriers to entry, but will be used for suitable placement purposes only. The facility will mirror the Lewis Center in that assessments, intake, placement, and law enforcement drop-offs will be coordinated in the same efficient and effective manner that currently prevails at the Lewis Center. Persons residing in public places such as parks, office buildings and places not meant for human habitation will be offered services at the facility once assessments are completed. Persons in need of transportation to the facility, will be transported via HOT team transport, designated bus assignments, and/or transportation vouchers. Palm Beach County Sheriff's deputies will also be authorized to provide transport after clearance by shelter management. No other law enforcement drop-offs will be permitted.

The estimated number of emergency shelter beds will be 100-125. Each occupant will have access to a hot meal, showers, restrooms, amenity boxes, lockers and social services that are employment and housing focused.

ENGAGEMENT, COUNSELING AND SOCIAL SERVICES: An integrated resource center will be located at the Fairgrounds Road facility. The center will offer housing focused case management services for the occupants. The tasks for both residents and staff are listed below:

- Occupants can work on housing and associated work during the day, leaving the facility when engaged in housing visits, property owner meetings, employment opportunities or job placement, etc.
- Occupants can maximize the use of computers for housing search.
- Safe document storage for birth certificates, immigration papers, legal, housing-related documents and other important documents will be provided.
- Staff time in the Resource Center is exclusively focused on assisting occupants with housing searches and related activities like securing documentation (that are then stored in the document bank) and employment readiness.
- Partnerships with PBSO, nonprofit agencies, businesses, government entities, municipalities, and Homeless Outreach Teams are essential to the success of the facility.

¹ It is assumed that housing will be accomplished in Buildings R and S, which are set up in 8-16 person sleeping quarters with shared common spaces such as bathrooms, showers, living room/day space, etc. with easy access to adjacent outdoor spaces. An additional building(s) will be available for service delivery. Cost estimates include preparation and use of Buildings R and S and a classroom building, although support services will initially be provided from the former clinic space until the classroom building is available.

MEDICAL CARE: Medical services will be offered to all individuals currently residing in the Park and to prospective residents of the newly established facility. The services will be delivered by the Health Care District of Palm Beach County at existing clinic locations and through the District's mobile health unit.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH: Behavioral health services including substance use disorder treatment will be coordinated by the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, the Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network, and the Human & Veteran's Services Division within the Department of Community Services.

JOB READINESS: Residents of the facility will be encouraged to participate in on-site job readiness classes such as how to dress for an interview, how to create a resume, and how to interview. They will be referred to off-site job location and job training services including those offered by CareerSource Palm Beach County, the Lord's Place, and various educational institutions.

TRANSPORTATION: Transportation from John Prince Park, the Lewis Center and other designated pick up points will be provided by one or more dedicated Palm Tran vans or buses utilizing a flexible or fixed route approach. Additionally, regular Palm Tran fixed route service is available within walking distance of the facility and bus vouchers can be provided to the residents on an as-needed basis. Contract transportation services will also be utilized when deemed necessary by staff.

FOOD SERVICE: Prepared meals will be provided through the contracted food service vendor at the Palm Beach County Sheriff's office and picked up and transported to the Fairgrounds Road facility by the contracted operator. Equipment for limited refrigerator storage and remote reheating of meals will be provided as well as storage for various pantry items that do not require refrigeration or cooking/reheating.

LAUNDRY: Laundry service for bed linens and towels will be provided by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office. Pick up and drop off will be the responsibility of the facility operator. Washing machines and dryers will be provided on site for the occupants to launder personal items and clothing.

SECURITY: 24-7 on-site security will be contracted to a private firm in a manner similar to the Lewis Center.

ESTIMATED COST:

<u>OPERATOR STAFFING:</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Cost per</u>	<u>Total Costs</u>
Housing/Engagement Tech	34	\$25,000	\$850,000
LPNs	4	\$40,000	\$160,000
Shift Coordinators	4	\$45,000	\$180,000
Sr. Program Manager	1	\$65,000	\$65,000
Case Managers	8.5	\$45,000	\$382,500
Receptionist	2	\$25,000	\$50,000
Driver	1	\$25,100	\$25,100
Benefits @ 20%			\$342,520
TOTAL OPERATOR STAFFING			\$2,055,120

COUNTY STAFFING

Case Managers (Rapid Rehousing)	5	\$59,748	\$298,740
Housing Specialist	1	\$60,845	\$60,845
Coordinated Entry Specialist	2	\$59,450	\$118,900
General Maintenance Mechanic	1	\$51,000	\$51,000
TOTAL COUNTY STAFFING			\$529,485

EXPENSES:

Client Supplies		\$75,000
Food (.99 meal x 3 meals x 125 people x 365 days)		\$135,500
Transportation/Palm Tran/Other		\$150,000
Supplies/Postage		\$22,500
Equipment Repairs		\$5,000
Vech. Maint./leasing/insur		\$50,257
Tags and Registrations		\$200
Staff Mileage		\$2,333
Employee drug screens/recruitment		\$4,000
Staff Training		\$3,430
General Liability		\$425
Data Processing Licenses		\$1,982
Security		\$568,000
Laundry Services		\$2,000
Building Maintenance		\$60,000
Custodial ²		\$126,000
Contract Services - Employment Prep		\$100,000
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$1,306,627

² Includes pest control

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,306,627
TOTAL OPERATOR STAFFING	\$2,055,120
TOTAL COUNTY STAFFING	\$ 529,485
ADMIN OVERHEAD (12%) ³	\$ 278,430
RAPID RE-HOUSING FUNDS	\$1,000,000
PBSO JP PARK PATROL	\$ 280,000
TOTAL ANNUAL COST	\$5,449,662

<u>PHYSICAL PLANT START-UP EXPENSES (non-recurring):</u> ⁴	
Building Prep ⁵	\$150,000
AV/CCTV/Rad	\$53,000
Fire Alarm	\$75,000
Portable Gate House	\$60,000
IT Data Infrastructure	\$250,000
Computers/Printers	\$40,000
Laundry and Food Service Equipment ⁶	\$44,000
Mattresses/Bedding/Towels ⁷	\$60,000
Furniture ⁸	\$65,000
Misc. Equipment and Modifications ⁹	\$95,000
TOTAL START-UP COST	\$892,000

START-UP TIMING: 6-8 weeks from BCC approval to prepare facility, hire and train staff and open doors.

³ Administrative Percentage applied only to operator staffing and expenses.
⁴ These estimates will likely be reduced as the detailed operational plan is developed.
⁵ Includes costs to move stored materials, general cleaning, repairs to make existing systems operational.
⁶ Includes refrigerators for incidental food, refrigerators for meds, microwaves, food transport units and trays, washing machines, dryers
⁷ Includes 150 mattresses with integrated pillows and 300 sheets, blankets and towel sets
⁸ Includes privacy screens, operator storage, occupant storage, outdoor furniture, misc office
⁹ Includes heat treatment unit, parking/fencing, softening of facility