



Homeless Commission

ACTION CALENDAR
September 10, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Homeless Commission
 Submitted by: Carole Marasovic, Chair, Homeless Commission
 Subject: Utilization of City-Owned Property at 1281 University Avenue to House up to 8- 10 RV Dwellers

RECOMMENDATION

The Homeless Commission recommends that the currently unused City-owned property at 1281 University Avenue be used to house, on an interim basis, up to 8-10 RV dwellers, or as many as the property can safely accommodate, selected by the City of Berkeley. The RV dwellers would be selected by the City of Berkeley based on the strength of their ties to the community such as employment in Berkeley, attending school in Berkeley and families with children in Berkeley schools.

SUMMARY

Currently, the City-owned property at 1281 University Avenue is going unused. This property could accommodate up to 8-10 RVs.

FISCAL IMPACT of RECOMMENDATION:

There would be costs associated with possibly leveling/paving the lot, a curb cut and otherwise, making it suitable to hold up to 8-10 vehicles. There would be costs associated with providing sanitation facilities and trash pick-up.

CURRENT SITUATION and its EFFECTS

Council is in the process of establishing a RV ban for vehicles during the hours of 2:00 a.m.-5:00 a.m. based on complaints from the community as to the RVs growing presence. Many RV dwellers rely on their RV as affordable housing for themselves at a time that traditional housing costs are skyrocketing in Berkeley.

City staff report that they have been unable to identify a location for RVs. Meanwhile, other Bay Area cities also have RV bans so that there is no place for RV dwellers to go from 2:00 a.m.-5:00 a.m.

Many of the RV dwellers have strong ties to the Berkeley community so that displacement would have a severe impact on them. That displacement includes RV dwellers who have jobs in Berkeley, attend school in Berkeley and have children in

Berkeley schools. The most critical need is to keep these persons from being displaced while City staff continue to investigate other potential locations for RVs.

1281 University Avenue is a City-owned site for which a RFP earlier was issued for affordable housing. No nonprofit developers applied.

Thus, at its May 2, 2019 meeting, the Housing Advisory Commission voted as follows: "to recommend to Council a new RFP for residential development at the City-owned site at 1281 University Avenue with a requirement that at least 50% of the on-site units be restricted to 50% AMI or below households, with consideration given to accommodations that serve unhoused or homeless households including nontraditional living arrangements such as tiny homes and that Council consider interim use for the site for housing purposes."

Consistent with the Housing Advisory Commission's recommendation that this property be used to serve unhoused or homeless individuals including nontraditional living arrangements, the Homeless Commission recommends that this lot be used to house up to 8-10 RV dwellers with strong ties to Berkeley who would otherwise be displaced if a location identified for RVs was not provided to them.

BACKGROUND

The Homeless Commission passed the following motion on June 12, 2019:

Action: M/S/C Hill/Marasovic that the Homeless Commission recommends that the currently unused City-owned property at 1281 University Avenue be used to house on an interim basis up to 8-10 RV dwellers, or as many as the property would safely accommodate, selected by the City of Berkeley. The RV dwellers would be selected by the City of Berkeley based on the strength of their ties to the community such as employment in Berkeley, attending school in Berkeley and families with children in Berkeley schools; and to submit the report as amended and authorize the Chair to present on behalf of the Commission on this report.

Vote: Ayes: Behm-Steinberg, Hill, Kealoha-Blake, Marasovic, Mulligan
Noes: None. *Abstain:* None. *Absent:* Hirpara (excused).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There will be a need for managing sanitation and trash pick-up.

RATIONALE for RECOMMENDATION

Without this recommendation and no other location having been identified for RVs, RV dwellers will not have a place to go in Berkeley. Individuals with strong ties to Berkeley such as jobs and schools in Berkeley including families with children in Berkeley schools will suffer disruption and damage to their lives. Those dwellers with the strongest ties to Berkeley will be screened, and selected by, the City to live at this location, insuring that those with the strongest community ties are served.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The Homeless Commission had earlier recommended identifying a location for RVs. City staff has been unable to identify such a location.

CITY MANAGER

See companion report.

CONTACT PERSON

Peter Radu, Commission Secretary, HHCS, (510) 981-5435.

