



PRESS RELEASE

CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Homelessness Update

May 13, 2019...San Clemente, California... The City of San Clemente, including the City Council and City staff, has taken the issue of homelessness extremely serious. Homelessness is not confined to one city; it affects every city in Orange County, and the problem is growing. Every city in the region has struggled to create solutions, and San Clemente has likewise been working hard to develop both temporary and permanent solutions to this regional crisis.

On February 27, 2019, a class action lawsuit against the cities of Irvine, Aliso Viejo, Dana Point, San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, alleging that these cities are not doing enough to assist their homeless populations and are interfering with their protected status. The lawsuit asserts a broad range of legal theories. Although San Clemente has yet to be served with the lawsuit, its existence severely limits the City's ability to discuss these issues publicly without risk that that out-of-court statements on the topic could impair the City's defense.

The lack of communication should not be misinterpreted as a lack of attention to this issue - nothing could be further from the truth. To the extent open meeting laws so permit,

the City Council has discussed the allegations in the pending litigation extensively in several closed sessions. Pursuant to directions from the Council, staff has been working daily to investigate potential sites for temporary shelters as well as longer-term solutions. At the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting on May 21, 2019, City staff intends to provide an update in open session on site options, zoning and CEQA implications, site preparation costs, operating costs, and potential timelines associated with temporary shelter options.

With respect to costs, the City's initial estimates (based on the recent experience of the City of Costa Mesa and the City of Tustin) is that set-up for a temporary shelter facility could cost as much as \$500,000, with operating costs reaching as much as \$1.9 million annually. These cost projections pose a fiscal challenge for the City. The City has been engaged in multiple discussions with the County of Orange to seek funding for such a facility or for regional shelter options, but there has been little progress on the County's part. The City of San Clemente believes that a true regional solution is necessary to fully address this issue.

"I am hopeful the County of Orange will take leadership on homelessness in the region. They have already seen success in funding the regional shelter solutions in North and Central Orange County and we believe that South Orange County deserves a comparable solution," said Mayor Pro Tem Dan Bane.

The City will continue to work collaboratively with our partners in neighboring cities and at the County to come up with long-term solutions and work towards delivering resources that will help get people experiencing homelessness off our streets. We remain committed to doing everything in our power to address this serious issue and ensure the safety of all of our residents.

The San Clemente City Council has always focused on the quality of life of our residents and businesses. The City Council is currently fighting to ensure that there are no toll road impacts to the City from those seeking to destroy protected open space and the safety of our homes and children; to protect hospital and emergency services for those living in San Clemente; and to preserve the character of our city from vacation rentals and sober living facilities. As with these other important issues, the City is approaching the impacts of homelessness in San Clemente responsibly, to limit liability, maintain fiscal stewardship, and work towards mitigating homelessness effectively.

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