



5Cities Homeless Coalition, County of San Luis Obispo & City of Grover Beach

NEWS RELEASE

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Ordinance that Would Enable New Temporary Emergency Shelter for South County Before SLO County Supervisors Sept. 28

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA – The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors will hold a [public hearing on September 28, 2021](#) to consider an ordinance that would allow the implementation of a joint effort to construct a temporary emergency shelter for homeless individuals on County property in Grover Beach. With a lack of emergency shelters available in South County, [5Cities Homeless Coalition \(5CHC\)](#) has partnered with the [County of San Luis Obispo \(SLO\)](#) and [City of Grover Beach](#) to pilot a new, temporary emergency shelter model to help those experiencing homelessness in the area. The immediate goal is to make this a transitional housing solution for those in need of emergency shelter. The ultimate goal is to help clients with the services they need to find and secure permanent housing.

“Our Board of Supervisors, along with the seven local Cities, recognize the ever-growing challenge of homelessness and declared a homeless shelter crisis in 2018, which opened up funding opportunities to address our region’s biggest needs like this one,” said Carolyn Berg, Principal Administrative Analyst. “Only by collaboratively working with various government agencies and nonprofit organizations will we be able to tackle the complexities of homelessness and make a difference.” Berg also explained that having the shelter close to County services like public health and behavioral health will make it easier for people to get the services they need.

“The [new temporary emergency shelter model we are seeking to implement is on County land in Grover Beach](#), close to County services needed by the people it serves. It would pilot the use of modular cabins called ‘pallet shelters’ which have found success all over California and throughout the country,” said Janna Nichols, 5CHC Executive Director. “This facility would enable us to help lift people out of homelessness and into supportive services and permanent housing through a comprehensive system of care that incorporates both compassion and structured guidance via an intensive case-managed, limited-stay program on a restricted campus.”

This non-congregate shelter model would temporarily house individuals in independent cabins rather than sleeping all together under one roof. This approach is more efficient from a construction standpoint and



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has added health benefits. In this model individuals are less susceptible to airborne health risks like COVID-19, which has led to limited access to and sometimes even shut down many congregate shelters during the pandemic.

While services and resources such as this are desperately needed to assist in addressing homelessness throughout the region, all three organizational partners recognize that projects like this often lead to a variety of questions and concerns. Therefore, 5CHC, SLO County and City of Grover Beach are committed to a transparent process from the start, and as this project potentially unfolds. They also commit to prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of both the on-site clients and the surrounding neighborhoods.

“Our Grover Beach Police Department is committed to ongoing coordination with 5CHC and the County to ensure safety and security at and around the site. The fenced campus will include 24-hour staffing, video cameras and other security measures to help bring peace of mind for everyone, program residents and community members alike,” said Matthew Bronson, Grover Beach City Manager. “Housing and homelessness initiatives are a priority for Grover Beach and we are looking forward to helping advance a solution that can make a difference for individuals experiencing homelessness and our community as a whole.”

Facilities like this and related programs are one of many steps being taken to help communities across the county reclaim parks and public spaces for recreational uses rather than being used as pop-up shelters. This particular property is a public space that best fits the needs of everyone in the community for addressing the issue with meaningful effort toward solving underlying issues.

The proposed emergency shelter ordinance will be presented to the SLO County Board of Supervisors during a public hearing on September 28, 2021. If adopted, this ordinance will serve as the mechanism that will allow the installation and piloting of the temporary emergency shelter on County property in Grover Beach which could begin operations as early as 2022.

About [5Cities Homeless Coalition](#): 5Cities Homeless Coalition serves families and individuals throughout the County, with a special focus on South County through its outreach and sheltering programs. By providing resources, support and hope, the Coalition works to ensure that clients have the plan, skill sets and support needed to be successful and self-sufficient. The backbone of the 5Cities Homeless Coalition is its strength in channeling community resources, volunteers and donor assets to meet the needs of those who are experiencing homelessness through existing and new programs.



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About [County of San Luis Obispo](#): The County of San Luis Obispo governs over approximately 3,300 square miles, divided into five supervisory districts that are each represented by an elected official who serves on the Board of Supervisors. The County provides a wide variety of public services including social services, behavioral health (including mental health and substance use disorder treatment), public health, law enforcement, animal control, flu shots, transportation planning, foster care and more.

About [Grover Beach](#): Founded in 1887 and situated along the picturesque central coast of California, the City of Grover Beach is home to nearly 13,000 residents who enjoy 2.25 square miles of laid-back coastal charm, outdoor activities and culinary and arts scene. The City is part of the “Five Cities” area and is easily accessible due to its proximity to Pacific Coast Highway, Highway 101 and Amtrak’s Pacific Surfliner train.

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