



# Office of Care Coordination Newsletter FEBRUARY 2018



## Santa Ana Riverbed Trail/Flood Control Channel Update

### Susan Price, Director of Care Coordination

It has been a monumental effort and a very long two weeks for County staff from multiple departments working long hours along the Santa Ana River Trail/Flood Control Channel from Ball Road/Taft Avenue in the north to Memory Lane in the south. Overall, there have been moments of both challenge and inspiration, as staff worked extremely long days to address the needs of Orange County's most entrenched homeless population. This encampment represented homeless people from across the county, as every city is responding to an increase in homelessness in Orange County and across the state – a rise most notably from the 2015 implementation of Proposition 47. The Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA) has provided outreach and engagement in the project area since 2014. On June 6, 2017, the Board of Supervisors authorized a contract with City Net, who has been working intensively for seven months, every day to get folks to leave voluntarily. Since July 2017, City Net has successfully exited 251 people from the flood control channel into the broader system of care, including a number of exits involving family reunification with the Homeward Bound program.

Judge David O. Carter, at the first hearing on February 13, 2018, implored the plaintiffs, the County of Orange, and the cities of Anaheim, Orange and Costa Mesa, to work in collaboration to solve this issue of relocating individuals from the riverbed. He reminded all that the judicial system was not the best place to solve the issue of homelessness. Through extensive dialogue and negotiations, Judge Carter has facilitated the clearing of the encampment by ensuring a humanitarian response by the County in addressing those who remained encamped and had declined

voluntary resources. In speaking to the Judge about whether this endeavor would become precedent for other jurisdictions, I shared with him that I believe that it may be, as this project represents the intersection of self-determination and accountability in public spaces. Nearly every jurisdiction is struggling with this very issue, particularly in California, where one in five of the nation's homeless population resides. Litigation regarding homelessness is known to be contentious and there are no clear winners.

The Judge's actions have assisted an entrenched group in accepting 30-day motel vouchers, in rooms all across the County, where County staff will follow up to transition them to longer-term resources for substance abuse rehabilitation, mental health care and medical recuperative beds – all of which will require voluntary participation. City Net, the County contractor for Flood Control Channel Engagement Initiative, has done exceptional work with those in the encampment areas. They also do a great job in working with community stakeholders. City Net accepts community donations, as we work together to assist those who have realized that now is the time to get the help that each had deferred until the stipulation required movement. Some have talked about new goals, seizing this opportunity to get their lives back on track. It is unclear how many will actually engage in the next steps towards recovery and self-sufficiency. It is anticipated that some will vacate the motel without accessing resources. The 34 cities in Orange County play a key role, led by ACC-OC, for the objective of creating 2,700 permanent supportive housing units

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across the county in the next three years. Private sector engagement has also been critical, as we work across all sectors to effectively address homelessness. While the County is taking actions in response to the stipulation agreed upon in court, the broader solution to homelessness in Orange County will involve stakeholders from across the county. This is an unprecedented time in Orange County, and it is an "all in" project, so please join in, contribute and support these efforts. As of Monday, February 26, 2018, the encampment is cleared, but there is so much more work to do now to assess and offer shelter and treatment options to approximately 700 individuals. Because homelessness is an issue that impacts all of us, please support sustainable solutions so Orange County never experiences a return to this state.

Thank you, Orange County,

Susan Price  
Director of Care Coordination  
County of Orange



Judge Carter holding court session to lift temporary restraining order in the parking lot of Honda Center on Tuesday, February 20, 2018.

## Flood Control Channel Exits through February 25, 2018

Date	Individuals Sheltered in Motels	# of Motel Rooms	Individuals Sheltered in System of Care	Bridges at Kraemer Place	Courtyard Transitional Center	Armory	
*2/1/2018 - 2/13/2018	66	60	0				
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
2/14/2018	8	6	0				
2/15/2018	22	20	0				
2/16/2018	8	7	0				
2/17/2018	30	27	0				
2/18/2018	34	34	0				
2/19/2018	76	63	0				
**2/20/2018	180	132	7	1	6		
2/21/2018	46	42	7	7			
2/22/2018	74	66	8	4	4		
2/23/2018	84	60	10	6	4		
2/24/2018	58	57	1		1		
2/25/2018	11	8	2	1	1		
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>TOTAL Individuals Sheltered</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>732</b>

\*Prior to stipulation negotiated. City Net and HCA BHS O&E combined efforts.

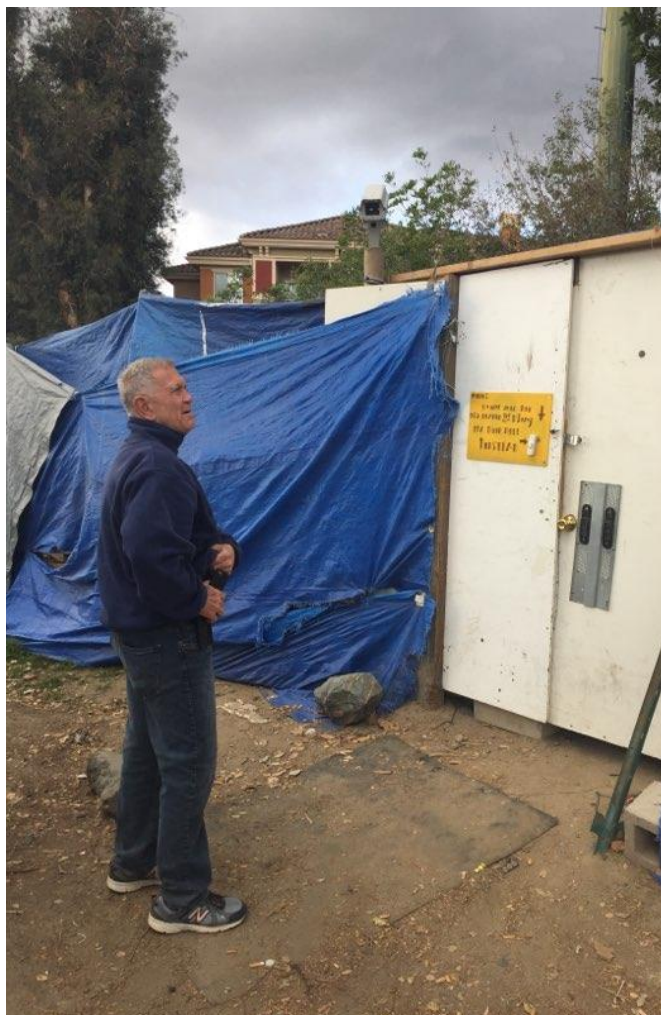
\*\* Temporary Restraining Order Lifted 2/20/2018



Picture taken Tuesday, February 20, 2018, with individuals collecting their belongings and in line to connect with services north of Katella Avenue.



After: Picture taken Tuesday, February 27, 2018, after individuals exited the Santa Ana River Trail and connected with resources.



Judge Carter walked the Santa Ana River Trail and notified folks that they have to pack up belongings and leave.



OC Public Works trucks clearing debris from the Santa Ana Riverbed Trail as part of the environmental remediation project.



OC Public Works is storing property for individuals exiting the Santa Ana Riverbed Trail for up to 90 days.

## Flood Control Channel - Frequently Asked Questions

### 1) Where are the homeless individuals originally from?

The approximately 700 people exited from the Flood Control Channel originate from many cities within the County of Orange, across all three Service Planning Areas. Because homelessness is a regional issue, it will require regional cooperation from our cities, and other stakeholders to respond effectively.

### 2) Why are cities part of the issue of homelessness?

While the County is taking actions in response to the stipulation agreed upon in court, the broader solution to homelessness in Orange County will involve all stakeholders from across the county.

### 3) Where are the motel rooms where individuals from the riverbed were placed?

The County is not publicly disclosing the names and locations of the motels/hotels in order to allow the County to find appropriate and safe locations to place the individuals experiencing homelessness per the court agreement and the Board's direction, as well as to protect the safety of the homeless individuals placed in the motels. Motel rooms were secured based upon availability, and are located in all three Service Planning Areas.

### 4) What will happen now to the individuals in the motel rooms?

County staff and contractors are connecting with those placed in motels to conduct a clinical assessment of their social service and sheltering needs.



Individuals line up to receive services from Health Care Agency Behavioral Health Services Outreach & Engagement on Tuesday, February 20, 2018.

### 5) What resources will be available to assist the individuals?

The County Health Care Agency will be working with a portfolio of mental health treatment beds, drug and alcohol recovery and detox beds, and recuperative care programs to meet the specialized needs of those who qualify. The Social Services Agency will be working with the population to gain access to benefits that they are eligible for, including General Relief, CalFresh and Medi-Cal. The OC Community Resources will coordinate with the broader homeless services system of care to place people into Kraemer (with an expanded capacity of 165 beds, including 13 beds in temporary structures on the back lot), Courtyard, Wise Place, veterans and domestic violence women's services specialize providers.

### 6) What does the County want to express to motel owners?

The County wishes to extend our gratitude to the motel owners who have accepted homeless individuals from the Flood Control Channel project. We appreciate your willingness to provide the first step in each person's process to engage in resources that assist them on the pathway to self-sufficiency.

### 7) What can stakeholders do to contribute?

Stakeholders who wish to contribute to the success of this effort should reach out to City Net at [citynet.org](http://citynet.org), The Midnight Mission, the operator of the Courtyard Transitional Center, at [www.midnightmission.org/program-services/thecourtyard](http://www.midnightmission.org/program-services/thecourtyard) or Mercy House, the operator of Bridges at Kraemer Place, at [mercyhouse.net/portfolios/bridges-at-kraemer-place](http://mercyhouse.net/portfolios/bridges-at-kraemer-place).



Orange County Public Works and County Counsel work with individuals encamped along the Santa Ana River Trail to identify items to be stored and items to be removed as part of environmental remediation project.

## County Expands Temporary Shelter Capacity at Bridges at Kraemer Place

County of Orange has expanded temporary shelter capacity at Bridges at Kraemer Place in Anaheim – providing accommodations for an additional 52 individuals inside the facility and an additional 13 individuals in two temporary structures on the facility property.

The increase in capacity at Bridges at Kraemer Place is one of the provisions of a stipulation reached in federal court February 14 between the County and attorneys representing seven individuals experiencing homelessness along the Santa Ana Riverbed, and the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved the action during a special Board meeting on February 15. To accommodate needs of individuals transitioning from the riverbed, the structures are equipped with privacy partitions and pet crates.

“The County has been working quickly and diligently to increase the bed space at Bridges of Kraemer Place from 100 to 165 in less than a week,” said Supervisor Todd Spitzer, whose Third District is home to the facility. “I’m proud that we can help get people experiencing homelessness away from places like the riverbed and into this shelter, where they not only can get a place to sleep but also get access to a variety of wraparound services.”

The County of Orange is connecting individuals encamped on the Santa Ana Riverbed from Taft Avenue/Ball Road to Memory Lane with available resources, including available space in existing County-run shelters, connections to various behavioral health services, connections to short-term motel/hotel stays and food vouchers for the duration of their motel/hotel stays.

“I am incredibly proud of our County staff. They have worked diligently to

engage with the population on the Santa Ana Riverbed assessing their needs and connecting them with the best, most appropriate resources,” said Chairman Andrew Do, First District Supervisor.

Bridges at Kraemer Place is a referral-based facility; all reservations are secured through outreach and engagement agencies, which receive notification when beds become available. On February 20 alone, six individuals from the Santa Ana Riverbed received referrals to shelter at Bridges at Kraemer Place.

“Bridges at Kraemer Place is a valuable resource for those experiencing homelessness, and I’m glad that the County is able to expand the center’s existing capabilities to meet this demand. I initiated this objective several months ago because I believe a crisis should be responded to with this type of emergency management response, including temporary units, cots and provisions in this case,” said Vice Chairman Shawn Nelson, Fourth District.

One of two tents placed at Bridges at Kraemer Place to increase bed capacity.



Partitions inside tent create private sleeping space for individuals.



# Pilot Phase of Restaurant Meals Program Starts

The pilot phase of the Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) will officially launched in Orange County on February 1, 2018, in participating restaurants in the cities of Anaheim and Santa Ana. Upon launch, Orange County will become the ninth county in California to offer this program to eligible participants.

## Eligible Restaurant Meals Program Participants

The Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) allows elderly, disabled and homeless CalFresh recipients and their spouse to use their Golden State Advantage (EBT) card to purchase prepared meals from participating restaurants. RMP offers meal options for eligible CalFresh recipients who may not be able to prepare meals, have a place to store and cook meals, and/or have access to a grocery store. For more information about eligibility requirements for RMP, [click here](#).

"The new Restaurant Meals Program offers eligible CalFresh recipients a different option to enjoy a hot meal at participating restaurants in Santa Ana and Anaheim. Some residents do not have access to a kitchen; this serves as a more realistic alternative for them to get the proper nutrition they need," said First District Supervisor Andrew Do, Chairman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

"Through this pilot phase of the Restaurant Meals Program, we will be able to further assess the need and potential impact of this additional resource for our county's most vulnerable populations," said Vice Chairman Supervisor Shawn Nelson, Fourth District, of the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

CalFresh clients who are eligible to participate in RMP will be notified prior to February 1, 2018. Should CalWORKs and/or CalFresh recipients have questions regarding RMP, they are encouraged to contact their worker. CalFresh recipients without CalWORKs benefits should go to <http://www.ssa.ocgov.com> for more information.

## Restaurant Participation in the Restaurant Meals Programs

Orange County is continuing to recruit restaurants located in the cities of Anaheim and Santa to participate in the Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) in order to further enhance accessibility to the program.

Restaurant owners in the cities may find out more about how to apply by going to: [http://ssa.ocgov.com/calfresh/calfresh/rmp\\_owner](http://ssa.ocgov.com/calfresh/calfresh/rmp_owner)

"Many restaurants in Orange County provide healthy options that eligible CalFresh recipients may not have had access to in the past. The Restaurant Meals Program is a step in providing nutritious meals to our most needy residents," said Supervisor Michelle Steel, Second District.

## Background on the Restaurant Meals Program

On December 14, 2016, the Orange County Board of Supervisors authorized the Social Services Agency (SSA) to submit a proposed plan to the State of California to implement the pilot phase of RMP.

"The Restaurant Meals Program is one small step we can take to address homelessness with compassion, as basic human needs like shelter and nutrition are essential," said Third District Supervisor Todd Spitzer.

In 2017, SSA worked with the State to obtain approval of the proposed plan. Upon plan approval in April 2017, SSA worked to develop the program, which included the development of a Master Memorandum of Understanding, recruitment of restaurants, review of restaurant applications and staff training. Additionally, SSA has been meeting with stakeholders, including presenting at the Homeless Provider Forum, to ensure that organizations that serve eligible RMP participants are aware of the upcoming program.

"Nutrition and access to proper meals is one of the social determinants of health. The restaurant meals program will allow homeless individuals in Santa Ana and Anaheim to access hot prepared meals and improve their overall health," said Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, Fifth District.

To learn more about the Restaurant Meals Program, please visit <http://ssa.ocgov.com/calfresh/calfresh/rmp>.



## Continuum of Care Award

On Thursday, January 11, 2017, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced \$2.01 billion in funding has been awarded for more than 7,3000 new and renewal homeless housing and service programs across the United States and Guam.

The Orange County Continuum of Care was awarded \$23,458,682 in total funding to renew and expand critical housing resources for existing homeless housing and services countywide for individuals and families who are homeless. All projects in Tier 1 were funded, including two expansion grants of permanent supportive housing that add 20 beds for chronically homeless individuals. Unfortunately, as part of the process not all projects were funded. The Orange County Continuum of Care lost one renewal rapid rehousing project (\$166,789).

Overall, the Orange County Continuum of Care received an increase in funding of \$1,103,835 from the 2016 award as a result of increase Fair Market Rents (FMR) and operation costs. The Continuum of Care award funds 37 renewal projects, two expansion of permanent supportive housing, and a planning grant in Orange County supporting the work of 12 agencies in our community.

## Continuum of Care Board

The inaugural Continuum of Care Board Meeting happened on Wednesday, February 21, 2018. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 16, 2018, [click here](#) for more information.

The Continuum of Care Board will ensure the Orange County Continuum of Care complies with the HEARTH Act and will focus on the system-wide operational effectiveness and coordination of service provision as we connect individuals experiencing homelessness to resources.

## Governance Restructure - Commission to End Homelessness

As part of the Assessment on Homeless Services in Orange County released in October 2016, a recommendation called for a governance restructure to facilitate a coordinated response to the crisis of homelessness.

On January 23, 2018, the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved the formation of the newly restructured Commission to End Homelessness, representing a transition to a regional, systems-based approach to solving homelessness.

The previous commission dissolved effective January 31, 2018, and is followed by the formation of the new Commission designed to better respond to current needs related to homelessness.

The new Commission to End Homelessness will work in collaboration with stakeholders across Orange County to focus on regional strategies to create systemic change to promote an effective response to homelessness within the county.

We value the input and contributions of our many partners participating in the commission as well as members of the public interested in solving homelessness. Homelessness is a complex issue and requires partnership among County and City governments, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, community members, and businesses.

The new Commission to End Homelessness will meet a minimum of six times per year, and each meeting will be open and public.

