

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Discussing an Update of Council Goal No. 5, Action Step No. 7: Begin a Process of Developing Partnerships with North King County Cities and Other Key Stakeholders in Support of Siting a 24/7 Shelter/Navigation Center to Serve Homeless Single Adults in North King County
DEPARTMENT:	Community Services
PRESENTED BY:	Colleen Kelly, Community Services Manager
ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

In April, Council adopted Council Goal No. 5, Action Step No. 7: *Begin a process of developing partnerships with North King County cities and other key stakeholders in support of siting a 24/7 shelter/navigation center to serve homeless single adults in North King County.* In response to this Council direction, staff has been working to explore options for the siting of a 24/7 shelter for single homeless adults to serve the North King County area. A convergence of recent events has created an opportunity for the siting of a shelter much more quickly than could have been anticipated.

In June, staff became aware that The Oaks at Forest Bay Nursing Home (The Oaks), located at 16357 Aurora Avenue North, was closing and the property was going to be offered for sale. Since that time, King County has expressed interest in leasing the property and partnering with the King County Housing Authority for potential acquisition. The facility could serve as an emergency shelter for single adults in the short term (likely three to seven years), and permanent supportive housing in the long term. These actions would fulfill Council Goal No. 5, Action Step No. 7.

Tonight's discussion is intended to provide an update on staff's work on Council Goal No. 5, Action Step No. 7, along with identifying next steps that staff proposes to continue work on this Action Step. Staff is seeking Council concurrence that staff's planned next steps support Council's direction.

RESOURCE/FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This is a discussion item only so there is no immediate financial impact. The City currently provides \$26,000 in Human Services funding to Lake City Partners in support of the rotating winter shelter program and the Homeless Outreach Worker. Staff is currently reviewing Human Services applications for 2021/2022 funding and will consider this potential change when bringing funding recommendations to the Council in September.

RECOMMENDATION

No formal action is required; as this is a discussion item. Tonight's discussion is meant to share recent developments regarding the potential siting of a shelter in Shoreline and to provide an opportunity for Council to ask questions and share feedback. Staff is also seeking Council concurrence on next steps on Council Goal No. 5, Action Step No. 7, which will include a public outreach process and development of interim regulations to allow a shelter to be located at the proposed site.

Approved By: City Manager ***DT*** City Attorney ***JA-T***

BACKGROUND

On February 10, 2020, staff presented the City Council with recommendations regarding priority actions related to effectively addressing the challenge of homelessness in Shoreline. The staff report for this item is available at the following link:

<http://cosweb.ci.shoreline.wa.us/uploads/attachments/cck/council/staffreports/2020/staffreport021020-9b.pdf>.

As part of this Council discussion, staff identified the greatest need and highest priority for Shoreline is to support the siting and development of a year-round shelter for single adults in North King County. Staff also explained that the shelter would ideally serve as a North County Navigation Center, meaning it would be staffed around the clock, allowing individuals to have a place to leave and access personal belongings as well as accommodating those who may need to sleep during the day due to work or health conditions. This operational model also increases the ability to provide case management support focused on housing stability planning.

Following this Council discussion, at the Council's 2020 Strategic Planning Workshop, Council identified the siting of a '24/7' shelter/navigation center for single adults in North King County as an Action Step under City Council Goal No. 5. This Action Step, along with the entire City Council Goal Work Plan, was adopted by the City Council at their meeting on April 6, 2020. The staff report for the adoption of the City Council Goals and Work Plan can be found at the following link:

<http://cosweb.ci.shoreline.wa.us/uploads/attachments/cck/council/staffreports/2020/staffreport040620-7c.pdf>.

The City Council Goal No. 5, Action Step No. 7 reads as follows:

Begin a process of developing partnerships with North King County cities and other key stakeholders in support of siting a 24/7 shelter/navigation center to serve homeless single adults in North King County.

Following adoption of the 2020-2022 Council Goals, the Council indicated support for the staff recommendation to work with other North King County cities and key community stakeholders to begin a process to site a 24/7 shelter for single adults in North King County. Staff proceeded to invite representatives of these cities and stakeholders to join a North King County Shelter Task Force, which held its first meeting on July 9, 2020. Councilmember Robertson is the City's elected representative on the Task Force.

Oaks at Forest Bay Opportunity and Department of Commerce Grant

In early June, before the initial meeting of the North King County Shelter Task Force occurred, staff was notified that The Oaks at Forest Bay Nursing Home (The Oaks), located at 16357 Aurora Avenue North, was discontinuing its operations and would be offered for sale. The City was asked by The Oaks ownership group if it might have interest in the facility.

Also in June of this year, the Washington State Department of Commerce released a grant making significant funds available to expand homeless shelter capacity around the State. Given the availability of these grant funds, staff reached out to colleagues at the King County Department of Community and Human Services (KC DCHS) to inquire about the potential availability of capital funding to lease or purchase The Oaks facility with the idea that it could potentially be included as part of the County's submission for the Department of Commerce grant. KC DCHS staff responded with interest and reached out to the King County Housing Authority (KCHA) to see if it might be willing to serve as an acquisition partner if King County was able to make purchase funding available. KCHA responded, at the time, that it might be able to partner with King County.

While City Council Action Step No. 7 is focused on 24/7 shelter for single adults, both KC DCHS and KCHA are interested in the development of long-term permanent supportive housing at The Oaks site. Both the County and the Housing Authority are aware however that in the interim, this facility could work well as a shelter site. Additionally, with the grant funding provided by the Department of Commerce for shelter operations, potential use of the site as an emergency shelter for single adults in the short-term (likely three to seven years), and permanent supportive housing in the long-term, would seem to meet all the partners' needs.

A site visit of The Oaks was arranged for City staff, KC DCHS staff, KCHA staff, and representatives of Lake City Partners Ending Homelessness (Lake City Partners), which would be the operations partner if the property was acquired by KCHA. The site visit, which was held on July 7, 2020, was promising in terms of the partners' collective assessment of the readiness and capacity of the facility to serve as a 24/7 shelter in the near future.

Lake City Partners subsequently drafted a budget for program operations based on the anticipated size and staffing requirements of the facility. The budget was reviewed by King County staff and deemed to be consistent with the operational costs of other 24/7 shelter facilities. This made this proposal a strong contender for inclusion in the Department of Commerce grant proposal.

A second site visit to The Oaks was held on July 21, 2020, which reinforced the County's interest in working to make this proposal come to fruition and confirmed the willingness of the KCHA to participate in the acquisition. As of the writing of this staff report, King County has submitted its grant application to the Department of Commerce and this application includes requested operational funding for the North King County Shelter project. If King County is successful in obtaining the Department of Commerce grant, the facility would need to be available for use as a 24/7 adult shelter no later than the end of December 2020.

DISCUSSION

It is very unusual that an opportunity to acquire a virtually 'shelter-ready' property would align with another opportunity to access significant operational support for that same facility. It is even more unusual that the many partners and resources required to complete both an acquisition process and a collaborative grant proposal process could

be mobilized in such a short amount of time. While quite a feat on the one hand, it has been limiting in terms of staff's ability to reach out to the surrounding community near The Oaks. While the likelihood that the acquisition process could move forward with all of these partners was not really clear until late July, staff believe that there is still sufficient time for effective outreach to those that may be impacted by this shelter project proposal and to work to mitigate any concerns that are raised.

There is consensus among the partners that this is a unique opportunity to fill a significant service gap in North King County. This facility will have capacity to serve 60 individuals with shelter at the start and potentially more as the operation proceeds. As a former nursing home, The Oaks already provides the physical distance needed to protect both residents and staff during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the project would leverage significant state funding through the Department of Commerce grant, as well as additional funding from King County, the City of Seattle, the City of Shoreline, and potentially other North King County cities, along with private funds raised by Lake City Partners. The City of Shoreline's funding would be provided through its Human Services grant awards. Shoreline currently provides support of \$26,000 to Lake City Partners for the rotating winter shelter and a Homeless Outreach Worker.

Staff understands the importance of clear and transparent communication with the community, and the circumstances of this opportunity have not allowed the advance notice that staff would prefer to have provided. Staff is working internally to develop an outreach and communication plan that will provide as much information as possible to the community about the operational details of the shelter and will allow for the City to hear and understand specific concerns community members may have. Staff expects King County to remain strong partners in terms of working with the City to address community concerns.

Current Property Zoning and Uses

The majority of The Oaks property is zoned R-48 (Residential 48 units per acre), with the parking lot in the NW corner zoned R-18. The Oaks is classified as a nursing facility and is a conditional use in the R-48 Zone. Homeless Shelters are not currently listed as an allowed use in the R-48 Zone. A map of The Oaks parcel and the surrounding zoning is included with this staff report as Attachment A.

If the Council desires to continue this partnership with King County and the other partners and capitalize on these opportunities for fulfilling Action Step No. 7, the City will need to make Homeless Shelters an allowed use on this property. In exploring how to do this expeditiously, while staff initially looked at the Temporary Use Permit process, staff is now recommending that the City create interim development regulations to allow for the operation of a homeless shelter within the R-48 zoning district. Staff is currently investigating the development of index criteria for this zoning district on an interim basis to potentially address community concerns and the needs of stakeholders. The index criteria could identify key constraints that need to be met to site a homeless shelter at a certain location within the R-48 zone, such as R-48 property that is adjacent to a major arterial, or other criteria that would be used to balance siting of a shelter in this zoning district. Staff could potentially present these interim regulations to the Council in September 2020.

As was the case for the recently adopted interim regulations by Council (application extensions and outdoor seating for restaurants and bars), these interim regulations would be adopted by Ordinance and would require a Public Hearing subsequent to adoption, thereby allowing for all interested parties to testify before Council. If the Council desires these regulations to become permanent, then the standard development code adoption process of Planning Commission review, Public Hearing, and recommendation prior to City Council consideration would continue this opportunity for communication with the community and stakeholders.

Alternately, instead of permanently adopting the changes to R-48 zoning, King County and/or KCHA could pursue a rezone of the site to the surrounding Mixed Business zoning which does permit homeless shelters. In the long-term it is likely that if KCHA were to acquire the property with the intent of redeveloping the property to allow for multiple uses, including permanent supportive housing, that a rezone of the property would be necessary.

Next Steps

Staff is proposing the following next steps to continue work on Action Step No. 7. Staff is seeking Council concurrence that staff's planned next steps support Council's direction.

1. Communicate with King County and KCHA that the City is supportive of utilizing the site for an emergency shelter.
2. Implement a public outreach plan to make the surrounding neighborhood and businesses aware that the City and County are partnering to site an emergency shelter at The Oaks property. This will be an opportunity to identify and address community concerns.
3. Develop interim development regulations to allow the siting of the facility at this location for Council's consideration. Staff would be looking to bring back these interim regulations to Council this fall, ideally in September 2020.
4. Support Lake City Partners in preparing to operate an emergency shelter.
5. Evaluate any City budget needs as part of the 2021-2022 Biennial Budget process.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

As noted, the only stakeholders involved so far include the active project partners – King County, KCHA and Lake City Partners. Staff have also shared this opportunity with the North King County Shelter Task Force, which was supportive of the City and project partners pursuing it. Staff are currently working to develop a full community outreach and response strategy.

COUNCIL GOAL(S) ADDRESSED

This item directly responds to Council Goal #5, Action Step #7: Begin a process of developing partnerships with North King County cities and other key stakeholders in support of siting a 24/7 shelter/navigation center to serve homeless single adults in North King County.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Map of The Oaks Parcel and Surrounding Zoning

Attachment A

Map of The Oaks Parcel (in red) at 16357 Aurora Avenue N and N 165th Street and Surrounding Zoning.

