

Joint Meeting of the Executive Committees of the Railroad Square Association and Downtown Action Organization

May 26, 2020
12:30pm – 1:30pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 854 6201 9221
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A G E N D A

- 1.0 CALL TO ORDER**
- 2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (limited to two minutes each)**
Comments from the public will be allowed on all agenda items at the time each item is called.
- 3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS**
- 4.0 IMPACTS OF HOMELESSNESS TO BUSINESSES WITHIN ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS**
Discussion from all members around the impacts of current homeless encampments and steps needed to address the issues facing both Railroad Square and Downtown Santa Rosa, including review of action memo to City.
- 5.0 ADJOURNMENT**

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To: [City]

It is urgent and absolutely demanded that the City take immediate steps to control existing encampments and limit their adverse impact on the public and businesses. Such steps are not barred by CDC or federal injunctive considerations.

It is equally urgent that the City work with affected groups to develop and then implement acceptable plans to remove the encampments in the course of the summer so that property owners, businesses and the public can have safe and reasonable access to public spaces.

As part of these needed actions, it is also urgent that public health needs of homeless and indigent persons be responded to.

For that reason we urge:

A. Immediate Intervention to Control and Prevent Encampments, Mitigate Harm to Public, and Provide Medical and Other Services Intervention

1. Consolidate the size of all encampments and impose delineated and enforced social distancing separations.

---The encampments at Railroad Square, adjacent to the Mall, and Doyle Park and, to a lesser extent, at Corporate Center, can be consolidated in place, reducing the land area absorbed by the encampments, and in the case of Railroad Square providing access to (presumably) the southern public lot for parking.

--- The under freeway encampments cannot be readily consolidated but social distancing requirements can be imposed.

--- CDC recommendations include intervention to provide public health protection to the unsheltered including social distancing measures.

--- Consolidation is not prevented by social distancing needs.

2. Install temporary security fencing (with green screening) around the Railroad Square, Corporate Center and Doyle Park encampments.

--- The purpose is to identify egress and ingress locations to minimize unmonitored influx of persons who may violate public health rules; to prevent the expansion of encampments; to create a sense of public safety; and to reduce petty crime and illegal transactions.

3. Provide twenty-four hour uniformed private security for all encampments, both fenced and unfenced, 1 FTE per encampment, twenty-four hours each, as well as security lighting.

---to monitor egress and ingress into the encampments; discourage violence and crime directed towards the homelessness and surrounding neighborhoods; provide greater safety for public health and homeless services personnel; liaise with Police as needed; establish enforceable rules with security personnel monitoring; illuminate areas that are dark and susceptible to surreptitious behavior.

4. Increase and regularize police patrols circulating near the encampments for additional disincentivizing illegal conduct. Provide in-person on-site police response to calls.
 - to date, there has been little visible police presence*
 - At Corporate Center, callers have been directed to file reports on-line only and told police are not available to come to the property*
5. Intervene to identify, test and relocate at-risk homeless persons, quarantining as necessary
 - to date there has been virtually no public health or homeless service intervention at any of the encampments*
6. Collect refuse from and ensure encampments are clean and orderly.
 - Currently, the City is taking no steps to ensure encampments are clean and orderly and not potentially subject to the spread of pathogens within and near the encampments.*
7. Ensure that existing encampments do not continue to grow.
 - Fencing, social distancing, security patrols are tools for this purpose*
 - Caseworkers need to direct additional campers to other designated locations, and such designations must be identified*
 - Potential miniencampments on the east side of the freeway in downtown need to be identified and campers removed from the public space before they grow*

B. Further Intervention to Remove Encampments

1. Establish a City-Public Health-Business-Ad Hoc Group (immediately) to develop plans for elimination of the encampments in the course of the Summer.
2. Establish this plan in ten working days.
3. Clearly the plan requires an accurate census of available resources (including shelter capacity under current and nonsocial distancing rules), an accurate longer term evaluation of interim resources such as motel availability, and a consideration of additional capacity needed, what form such capacity may take, the minimum legal service needs for additional capacity locations, and the potential role of the private sector.
4. It also will require complete preparation and readiness so that when the encampments can be removed under health and legal rules, they in fact will be, and without delay.