

RESOLUTION NO. 48-18

**RESOLUTION OF THE RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL DECLARING
HOMELESSNESS A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY IN THE CITY OF RICHMOND**

WHEREAS, chronic homelessness due to lack of access to affordable and supportive housing is a significant challenge in California cities; and

WHEREAS, in April of 2017 the City of Richmond Homeless Taskforce was commissioned to examine the impact of the unsheltered in Richmond; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Homeless Taskforce consisted of over thirty community members, service providers, advocates, faith leaders, city and county staff and officials; and

WHEREAS, taskforce members devoted a full year of study to the issue of homelessness which included various presentations and conversations with the unsheltered, visits to local emergency and long-term housing providers, conversations with City and County personnel on city procedures, and visits to local encampments; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Contra Costa County Grand Jury (Report No. 1707) issued recommendations to local cities requiring the implementation of strategies to serve the unsheltered; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond provided responses to the Grand Jury report. The City agreed to implement additional outreach services to the homeless population, and agreed to develop a five year strategy to impact homelessness at a local level; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond's Contra Costa Mobile Outreach Team contacted 721 homeless individuals within the City of Richmond within a 16 month period between January 2017 and April 2018; and

WHEREAS, 35.51% of the respondents contacted by the team has been homeless for more than 63 months in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, of the CORE respondents, 15.53% self-reported being survivors of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, of the respondents, 59.36% reported having a disability, with the top three disabilities being reported as a mental health condition, followed by a chronic health condition, and substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, the top three self-reported causes of homelessness as indicated by the data survey were low income status, followed by loss of job, and substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, disability and domestic violence were also key risk factors for loss of housing status; and

WHEREAS, this parallels the county findings of the Contra Costa Grand Jury (Report No. 1707) which states, "The most common reasons for homelessness are mental illness, chronic substance abuse, loss of employment and physical illness"; and

WHEREAS, of the 721 individuals that the outreach team made contact with in Richmond during that 16 month period, 74.48% of those contacted described their prior living situation as "a place not meant for habitation" and 19.14% indicated their last place of habitation was an emergency shelter or motel paid for with a voucher; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, on average the cost of abating approximately three homeless encampments per month expended was approximately \$36,000 annually, with significantly more expended by abatement on non-city property; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Fire Department responded to over a dozen fires in Richmond as a direct result of encampments in 2017; and

WHEREAS, while Richmond unarguably provides a high percentage of emergency housing stock in the county, all cities are lacking the infrastructure to move the unsheltered from uninhabitable places and shelters to supportive and permanent housing; and

WHEREAS; the 2017 Contra Costa Grand Jury report on Homelessness in cities classified an individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more and has at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years, as “**chronically homeless**” ; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond has established public policy models that address long-term challenges through the lens of public health and equity through Health In All Policies; and

WHEREAS, the issue of homelessness is a growing challenge that requires a long-term public policy response which complements the work of the county, non-profits and social service providers.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City Richmond hereby declares homelessness a public health emergency in the City of Richmond and authorizes the City Manager and or his designee to accept the recommendations set forth by the Richmond Homeless Taskforce for analysis and appropriate policy implementation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Richmond City Council finds that a significant number of persons in Richmond are without the ability to obtain supportive shelter, and that this situation has resulted in a threat to the health and safety of these persons.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes the City Manager to incorporate the taskforce recommendations into the City’s existing Health in All Policies framework.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall remain in place, as a working strategy until May 25, 2024.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held June 19, 2018, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Beckles, Choi, Martinez, Myrick, Recinos, Vice Mayor Willis, and Mayor Butt.
NOES: None.
ABSTENTIONS: None.
ABSENT: None.

PAMELA CHRISTIAN
CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND
(SEAL)

Approved:
TOM BUTT
Mayor

Approved as to form:
BRUCE GOODMILLER
City Attorney

State of California }
County of Contra Costa } : ss.
City of Richmond }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of **Resolution No. 48-18**, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on June 19, 2018.

Certified as a True Copy

**PAMELA CHRISTIAN
CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA**

BY *Jessica Lundy*
ASSISTANT