



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Angel Rios, Jr.  
Margaret McCahan

**SUBJECT: HOMELESS RESPONSE  
TEAM PARK RANGERS  
EXTENSION**

**DATE:** May 21, 2018

Approved

Date

5/22/18

## RECOMMENDATION

Approve the following amendments to the 2018-2019 Proposed Budget as follows:

- a. Increase the estimate for Revenue from Local Agencies in the General Fund by \$175,000;
- b. Increase the General Fund City-Wide Expenses Homeless Response Team budget in the amount of \$175,000; and
- c. Extend the limit-date for 2.0 Park Ranger positions assigned to the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department through June 30, 2019.

## BACKGROUND

In 2013-2014, the Housing Department and the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Department partnered to establish a Homeless Response Team (Team) to address community concerns about the growth of homeless encampments with three primary goals:

- 1) Significantly reduce and limit the current levels of entrenchment at large encampments;
- 2) Maintain an active presence to deter re-encampment at cleaned sites and prevent new encampments from forming; and
- 3) Create a sustained outreach plan to provide homeless encampment residents suitable housing alternatives.

Since 2013-2014, the City has included 4.0 Park Ranger positions in the Adopted Operating Budget to support Homeless Response Team efforts. Of the 4.0 positions, 2.0 positions were initially funded through June 2016 with the use of the Homeless Response Team Earmarked Reserve. Prior to expiration, those 2.0 positions were made ongoing as part of the 2015-2016 Adopted Operating Budget; however, the 2.0 remaining limit-dated positions continue to be renewed year-to-year based on the annual renewal of the Santa Clara Water Valley District's

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commitment to reimburse the City for these costs. The 2.0 positions were last extended through June 30, 2018 as part of the 2017-2018 Adopted Operating Budget.

The current amended agreement with the Water District states: "Upon mutual written consent of the parties, the term of this Agreement may be extended for additional one-year terms through June 30, 2019 upon the same terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement subject to City Council appropriation of funds and Water District's annual budget approval." This memorandum requests the approval of the appropriation actions necessary to advance the extension in accordance with these terms.

### **ANALYSIS**

The Park Rangers were tasked with patrolling and providing enforcement of homeless encampments along Coyote Creek and Guadalupe River Park corridors. These corridors represent 28 miles of trails and serve as gateways to the City. As such, the public safety and habitat destruction issues created by the encampments require ongoing attention provided by the Team and the Park Rangers, in particular. Since 2013-2014, the Park Rangers have provided the following enforcement, clean-up, and support:

- Identification of encampment sites and coordinated removal;
- Removal of trash and debris from the watershed in conjunction with park maintenance staff and the San Jose Conservation Corps;
- Issue of citations to chronic violators, and arrest of subjects for various misdemeanor violations;
- Service of warnings for violations of the San José Municipal Code, California Penal Code, and Fish and Wildlife Code;
- Partnerships with volunteer groups such as Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful, Friends of Los Gatos Creek, and the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy to conduct volunteer cleanup events;
- Collaboration with the City Attorney's Office to prosecute individuals whose actions violate State and local laws and regulations; and
- Coordination with Game Wardens from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to locate and remove serious violations from the watershed.

Both PRNS and the Water District wish to continue the 2.0 District-funded positions through June 30, 2019 and plan to amend the current 5-year contract accordingly, subject to the City Council's appropriation of the necessary funds. If this allocation is approved, 2018-2019 will be the final extension year on the existing contract and a contract renewal for subsequent years will need to be brought forward for City Council consideration and approval at a later date.

By approving the appropriation for these 2.0 positions, the Team will have the capacity to continue its momentum in improving public safety; reducing encampments, dumping and re-encampments; reducing stream pollution and litter in the riparian corridor; protecting water

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quality, fish, and other wildlife; and, reducing blockages in local creeks for improved flood protection. With daily patrols and enforcement along the designated areas, the Team can continue to work toward mitigating unwanted activities and restoring natural resources to their native condition.

In the meantime, PRNS is continuing to evaluate the current Park Ranger Program operating model to ensure safe, efficient, and effective service delivery to the community on an ongoing basis.

**COORDINATION**

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.

/s/

ANGEL RIOS, JR.  
Director, Parks, Recreation and  
Neighborhood Services Department



MARGARET McCAHAN  
Budget Director

For questions please contact Justin Long, Parks Division Deputy Director, at (408) 793-5579.