

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER CARROLL FIFE

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO ALLOW ACCESS TO THE UNDESIGNATED EIGHT ACRES ON THE NORTH GATEWAY PARCEL LOCATED AT THE FORMER OAKLAND ARMY BASE TO SERVE UP TO 300 INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN DISPLACED DUE TO THE WOOD STREET ENCAMPMENT CLOSURE, AND DIRECTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR, IN COLLABORATION WITH STATE AND ALAMEDA COUNTY LEADERS, TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO STAND UP A MORE STABLE HOUSING INTERVENTION WITH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES ON EIGHT ACRES OF THE NORTH GATEWAY PARCEL TO SERVE UNHOUSED COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT DISTRICT 3, WITH PRIORITY TO RESIDENTS FROM THE WOOD STREET AND MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAY ENCAMPMENTS

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland is in the middle of an unprecedented homelessness crisis; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2022 Point-In-Time Homeless Count, the number of individuals in Oakland experiencing homelessness has swelled to 5,055 and nearly 50% of the unsheltered population in Alameda County live in Oakland; and

WHEREAS, with the rise in homelessness, the number of encampments and tent communities around the City, particularly in Council District 3, has increased exponentially; and

WHEREAS, the Wood Street encampment located in West Oakland is the largest encampment in the City and on July 18, 2022, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) announced the closure of the Wood Street encampment on their right of way, placing hundreds of unhoused individuals in an even more precarious position; and

WHEREAS, residents took legal action to stop the eviction and were successful in securing a temporary restraining order from United States District Court Judge William H. Orrick but that restraining order was lifted in late August, allowing Caltrans to commence with the eviction process; and

WHEREAS, Caltrans began removing people on September 9, 2022—nearly 80 unhoused residents were evicted that day and Caltrans will continue the process until all unhoused persons and their belongings have been cleared from Caltrans’ portion of site; and

WHEREAS, the City only has 40 shelter beds to accommodate residents of the encampment who have been displaced; and

WHEREAS, on July 26, 2022, the Council adopted Resolution 89378 C.M.S., accepting, appropriating, and authorizing an agreement for receipt of an Encampment Resolution Funding Grant from the State of California in the amount of \$4,731,300.01 for interim housing construction, operations, and services to relocate a minimum of 100 residents from homeless encampments to safe and stable shelter; and

WHEREAS, the actions the City has taken thus far with regards to Wood Street residents are not reflective of the humanitarian crisis that will result from the removal of people without offering immediate alternatives while formal shelter interventions are being developed; and

WHEREAS, unhoused Wood Street residents will be scattered throughout the streets of Oakland without the community they know and we have a responsibility to our residents most in need to explore all options and take urgent action to address this crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland is in possession of approximately 22 acres of public land, known as the North Gateway parcel, located at the former Oakland Army Base; and

WHEREAS, the City is working with two recyclers, California Waste Solutions (CWS) and Custom Alloy Scrap Sales (CASS), to relocate their recycling operations to the North Gateway parcel; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has authorized the City Administrator to enter into a Lease and Disposition and Development Agreement with CWS for approximately 14 acres of the parcel; and

WHEREAS, the Council approved Resolution No. 88826 C.M.S, which authorized the City to enter into an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with Custom Alloy Scrap Sales (CASS) for the remaining approximately 8 acres of the parcel; and

WHEREAS, the City has not entered into a Lease and Disposition and Development Agreement with CASS for the 8 acres and this undesignated acreage can be used to address the humanitarian crisis spurred by the large-scale removal of individuals from the Wood Street encampment and addressing the overall growing issue of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, utilizing this large public land will allow the City to have a more coordinated approach to providing services to our unhoused neighbors; and

WHEREAS, Council received a report from the administration in June 2022, pursuant to Resolution 89166 C.M.S., regarding the feasibility of standing up a homeless intervention on the parcel and the report concluded that use of the parcel is not feasible due to environmental concerns, the need for remediation of the land to meet state regulatory requirements, and estimated that the operating costs to serve 1,000 people could reach approximately \$22.5 million; and

WHEREAS, Council understands the limitations identified by staff but is declaring that we are in a state of emergency and these are not insurmountable concerns; and

WHEREAS, remediating the North Gateway parcel is possible; much of the land in West Oakland has some level of toxicity and has been subject to remediation or is need of remediation; and

WHEREAS, while this Council acknowledges that cost constraints, the initial action of granting access to 8 acres of the parcel as a temporary place to be for displaced individuals does not require financial commitment on behalf the City; and

WHEREAS, the longer-term direction of establishing a housing solution on the site with supportive services does have financial implications and will require the administration to collaborate with all relevant parties to create a plan and seek out the necessary funds; and

WHEREAS, the City’s approach to homelessness services is already very costly—according to a recently released report from our City Auditor, the City spent a total of nearly \$69 million in fiscal years 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 outsourcing homeless services to third-party entities; and

WHEREAS, addressing homelessness and improving the quality of life for all of our residents requires us to explore all options and take bold steps, including utilizing available public land for displaced people; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City Council directs the City Administrator to immediately allow access to the undesignated eight acres on the North Gateway Parcel to serve up to 300 individuals displaced from the Wood Street encampment; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Council directs the City Administrator to develop a plan, in collaboration with unhoused community members as well as leaders from the State and Alameda County, to establish a stable housing solution with supportive services at the stated site to serve unhoused communities from various encampments throughout District 3, with priority to residents from the Wood Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way encampments.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –
ABSENT –
ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____
ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California