

Fresno County

# **Working Group to Address Homeless Encampments**

# Working Group

- ▶ The Working Group was formed in March 2016
- ▶ Includes:
  - Fresno County Sheriff's Office
  - Department of Public Works & Planning
  - Department of Public Health
  - Department of Behavioral Health
  - Department of Social Services
  - County Counsel
  - Board Representatives
  - Fresno County Administrative Office

# Homelessness in the County

- ▶ Homeless encampments in the County are growing at an alarming rate with some camps reaching populations of more than 30 people
- ▶ Impact to public:
  - Trespass on private property
  - Public health and safety concerns
    - Human waste disposal
    - Drug paraphernalia–Used syringes
    - Human trafficking–Prostitution
  - Public nuisance including obstructed streets, sidewalks and alleyways, eyesore and increased property crimes

# Department of Behavioral Health

- ▶ Contribution to encampment cleanup activities
  - Visited encampment sites
  - Ensured Fresno Madera Continuum of Care engaged to provide outreach support to encampment dwellers
- ▶ Continuum of Care
  - Met with encampment dwellers prior to and after dis-encampment activities
  - Offered housing and treatment options over several days/weeks/months at each encampment site
- ▶ Who is utilizing the services?
  - Most dwellers refuse services



# Department of Social Services

- ▶ Provides advisory role as a funder and Regional Representative to the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care
- ▶ Provides information on available services for those who are homeless

# County Counsel

- ▶ Provides advisory role to legal concerns and questions regarding the County's general homeless encampment abatement policies and specific department concerns

# Department of Public Health

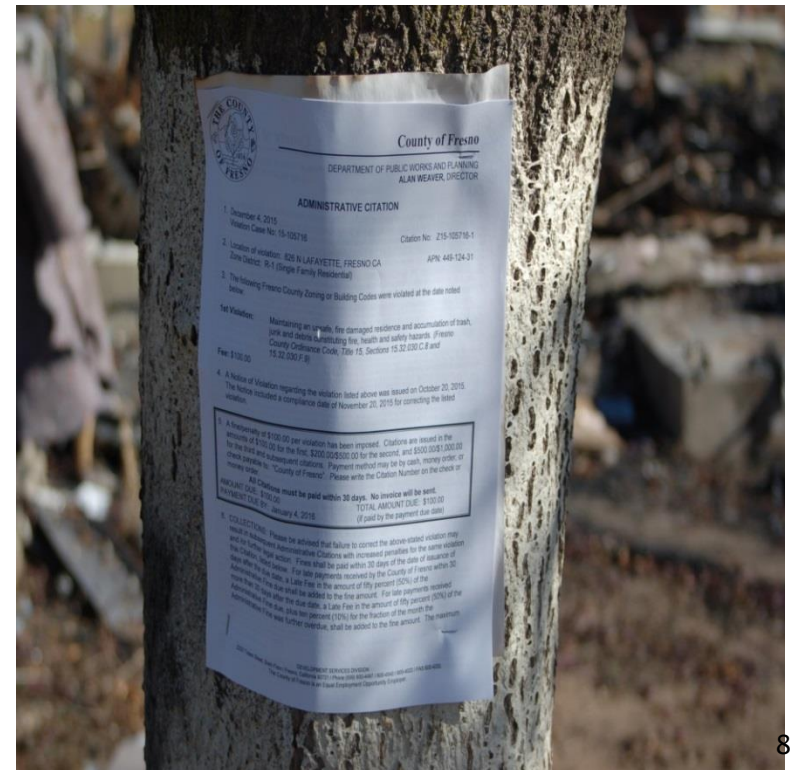
- Involvement during noticing period/hazardous material screening
- Hazardous material and hazardous waste screening during cleanup
- Sharps and pharmaceutical screening and disposal





# Department of Public Works and Planning – Code Enforcement

- ▶ Receives initial complaints and notifies owner of violation
- ▶ Administers citations to non-responsive owners and records liens, if necessary
- ▶ Provides information to other agencies (ownership, maps, photos, etc.)
- ▶ Follow up with property owners to prevent reoccurrence of violations





# Fresno County Sheriff's Office

RCTB (Roll Call Training Bulletin)  
Issued January 8, 2016

Establishes encampment cleanup  
procedures and protocol

Clearly defines terminology

It is a living document that will be  
updated

Created through research of  
existing procedures from other  
agencies with input from County  
Counsel



## ROLL CALL TRAINING BULLETIN FRESNO COUNTY SHERIFF-CORONER'S OFFICE



Bulletin #1  
Volume 2016

January 8, 2016

Margaret Mims  
SHERIFF-CORONER

### Temporary Shelters

#### Purpose

The County of Fresno shall respond to complaints and concerns arising in and around the areas in which individuals have erected temporary shelters. This will be done in a manner that protects the public health, safety and welfare, and which complies with applicable state and federal law. All public streets and public areas, including, but not limited to open space, sidewalks, parks, buildings, and easements within the county should be easily accessible and available to residents and the public.

The use of these areas for camping purposes or storage of personal property interferes with the rights of others to use the areas for which they were intended. The use of these areas for camping purposes or storage of personal property may also be a public nuisance issue. The purpose of this guide is to assist in conserving and maintaining public streets and public areas within the county in a clean and accessible condition.

#### Definitions

**Temporary Shelters** - a place with temporary accommodations consisting of huts, tents, or camp paraphernalia including but not limited to tarpaulins, cots, beds, sleeping bags, hammocks or cooking facilities and similar equipment.

**Public Nuisance** - A public nuisance is one which affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood, or any considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon individuals may be unequal.

**Streets** - Includes all streets, highways, avenues, lanes, alleys, courts, places, squares, curbs, or other public ways in this county which have been or may hereafter be dedicated and open to public use, or such other public property so designated in any law of this state. This definition shall not include any streets, alleys or roads which are within the boundaries of any incorporated city or town of this county unless specifically included therein.

**Sidewalks** - Means hard surfaced construction such as concrete, asphalt or brick existing in that portion of a street between the curb line and the adjacent property line intended for the use of pedestrians.

**Public Areas** - Means and includes, but is not limited to, any County owned or County maintained street, alley, park, right-of-way, public parking area, vacant parcels, or other County owned or County maintained place to which the public has access.

**County Property** - Means any improved or unimproved property owned or controlled by the County of Fresno, including but not limited to all County owned or County leased buildings and grounds in use for providing public services, any county park, square, street or green space.

# Fresno County Sheriff's Office

- ▶ Synopsis of cleanup procedure
  - Homeless Encampment call is entered and documented in Sheriff's Intranet STAR 2.0
  - Camps are prioritized using matrix
  - County agencies and contractors are coordinated including advocate response
  - There is a 7-day minimum posting process before cleanup action to alert occupants to vacate
  - Homeless camp is documented and photos taken everyday during posting period
  - On the day of cleanup remaining occupants are removed, personal property is identified and stored, contractor disposes of trash and cleans site

# Department of Public Works and Planning – Road Maintenance

Assists the Sheriff with the cleanup by providing equipment, personnel and necessary coordination

► Resources utilized for the Cleanup:

**Shields and Sierra Vista cleanup**

1. 8 Public Works employees participated in the 1-day cleanup operation
2. 1 Front-end loader
3. 2-20 cubic yard roll of refuse bin
4. 2 forklifts

Total Cost for this Project: \$6,000



# Department of Public Works and Planning – Road Maintenance

## Shields and Valentine cleanup

1. 11 Public Works employees participated in the 2-day cleanup
2. 1 Front-end loader
3. 2 Rented Backhoes
4. Water truck
5. 20-20 cubic yard roll of refuse bin
6. Forklifts

Total Cost for this Project: \$43,000





# Department of Public Works and Planning – Road Maintenance

## Hughes and the Railroad (Chinese Cemetery) cleanup:

1. This was contracted to PARC Environmental
  2. 1 Public Works employee participated in the 1-day cleanup operation
- Total Cost for this Project: \$7,000

### Type of waste collected:

- Used oil
- E-Waste
- Refrigerator

To date the total cost to the Public Works Department for all of the homeless encampment cleanup is **\$56,000**



# Fresno County Sheriff's Office

- ▶ Retrieving stored personal property
  - Individuals with stored property are given a receipt with contact information and have 90 days to claim their property
  - Deputy schedules a date and time for individuals to claim property stored at County facility
  - Unclaimed property is disposed of 91 days after date of storage

# Fresno County Sheriff's Office

- ▶ Staff and equipment
  - 2 Deputy Sheriffs for initial two week preparation, vehicle abatement and posting period (Follow-Up)
  - 4–6 additional Deputy Sheriffs needed for enforcement and cleanup days
  - Transport Vehicles–Storage Containers
  - Safety Gear:
    - Puncture resistant gloves–boots, coveralls, respirators, face shields, disinfectant, eye wash, etc.



# Sierra Vista – Encampment



# Sierra Vista – After





# Sierra Vista – Today



Sierra Vista/Shields



Chestnut/Shields



# Princeton/Valentine- Encampment





# Princeton/Valentine – After





# Princeton/Valentine – Today





# Hughes / Belmont- Encampment





# Hughes / Belmont – After



# Hughes / Belmont – Today





# Future work

