




Memorandum

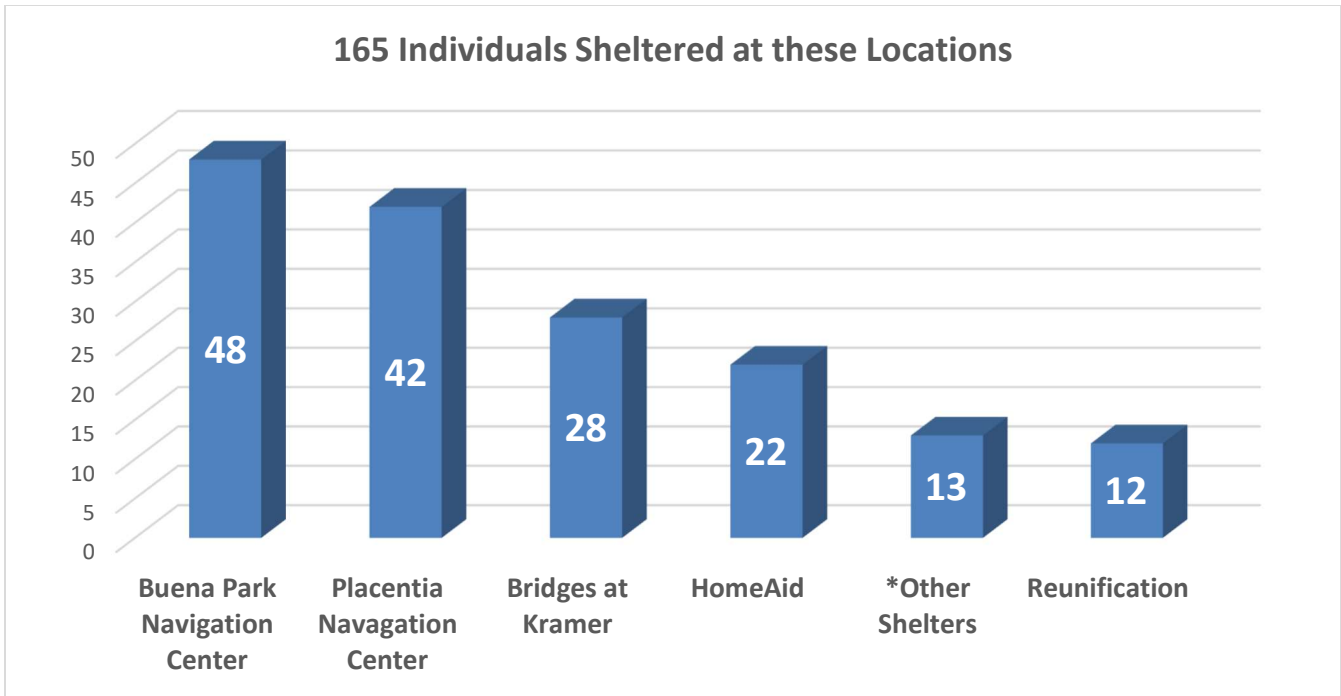
To: Tom Kisela, City Manager
From: Dan Adams, Chief of Police 
Date: March 4, 2024
Re: **2023 Homeless and HEART Report**

The Orange Police Department dedicates significant resources to the homeless community with a sergeant who oversees two officers assigned to the The Homeless, Engagement, Assistance, & Resource Team (H.E.A.R.T.), three officers assigned to the Bike Team, and two civilians assigned as Homeless Outreach Workers (H.O.S.). The teams will work together on clean-up efforts, respond to large encampments, enforcement, and special projects.

H.E.A.R.T. maintains an effective presence in the community by providing field support to homeless individuals. They are routinely called upon by field patrol officers, specialized units, City departments, and community members for short and long-term solutions related to homelessness. Their solutions include connecting the homeless with various types of shelters, rehabilitation, counseling services, family reunifications, and immediate basic needs. H.E.A.R.T will take enforcement action with persistent, repeat violations, and other issues that generally mandate enforcement (i.e. narcotics, vandalism, theft). The Bike Team's focus remains primarily enforcement and will handle other community issues apart from homelessness.

In 2023, there were 3,882 homeless related calls for service (CFS) citywide, a 15% increase from 2022. In 2023, the Bike Team, H.O.S. Team and H.E.A.R.T. made a total of 6,132 contacts throughout the City, which included non-homeless specific contacts and repeated contacts with homeless specific individuals. This was a 49% increase from 2022. There were 1,321 arrested for various crimes (e.g., warrants, trespassing, drug related activity, assaults, and theft). This was a 28% increase from 2022. 146 arrests were made for felony offenses (65% increase over 2022), and 1,175 arrests made for misdemeanor offenses (24% increase over 2022).

H.E.A.R.T. sheltered 165 homeless individuals. This is primarily a result of the team's pro-active approach, but also includes referrals and relationship building. Approximately 104 individuals were sheltered from the City Resource Provider (The Hub OC) at 517 W. Struck Ave. The other 61 individuals were sheltered from areas throughout our City (Hart Park, El Camino Park, Train Depot, Creek Bed, etc.). This was a 38% increase in sheltered individuals and families from 2022 when only 120 accepted a shelter (see chart on following page). Other Shelters include Laura's House, Yale Navigation Center, Olive Crest Host Families, Veteran Affairs, Salvation Army and Be Well Residential program.



The team continues to refer homeless individuals willing to accept shelter into the Placentia Navigation Center, the Buena Park Navigation Center, the Bridges at Kraemer Shelter, and HomeAid Family Care Center. The Orange Police Department remains one of the highest utilizers of these shelters. These locations continue to have COVID outbreaks which restricts them from allowing individuals into the facilities during their lock downs. Unfortunately, many of the sheltered individuals leave the shelters after a short time for a variety of reasons, including curfew violations, drug related violations and not wanting to follow the shelters' code of conduct.

H.E.A.R.T. refers individuals into the Salvation Army Program and the Be Well Center in Orange for substance abuse-detox programs. In 2023, H.E.A.R.T. and H.O.S. were able to assist 17 individuals with admission into rehab programs. H.E.A.R.T. also works weekly with the Orange County Outreach Team, offering various services to those in need (such as shelter, detox, medical, etc.). The Orange County Health Care Agency provides a Mental Health P.E.R.T. Clinician who accompanies H.E.A.R.T. every Monday and every other Thursday. The clinician serves as a valuable mental health resource for members of the homeless community and non-homeless residents. The clinician also brings knowledge about the county's mental health and homeless related programs. In 2023, H.E.A.R.T. and the Mental Health Clinician conducted 134 mental health follow ups (54% increase from 2022), 18 mental health evaluations, and placed 13 individuals on mental health holds. These individuals were lodged at local hospitals, UCI Medical Center, St. Joseph Hospital, CHOC, Chapman Global, BeWell and the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) in Santa Ana.

H.E.A.R.T. maintains relationships with private and government outreach groups, such as The Beacon of Orange, One Church in Orange, Micah's Way, Mercy House, P.A.T.H., The Orange County Rescue Mission, Orange County Outreach Team, Orange County Health Care Agency, and the Volunteers of America who specialize in assisting homeless veterans. H.E.A.R.T. assisted them with acquiring food, showers, clothing, hygiene kits, medical attention, government documents, detox programs, and mental health services.

H.E.A.R.T. collaborates with The Beacon of Orange, who funds and maintains a reserve of cash to be used for the homeless Re-Unification Program and other homeless related needs. This fund is called the HEART FUND and is comprised of cash donations given by different churches and organizations associated with One Church in Orange.

Through the Re-Unification Program, H.E.A.R.T. and H.O.S. were able to reunify two families this year. One of the families was a family of nine that had two parents and seven children between the ages of one and ten. This family came to California from Ohio. The family was first contacted by H.E.A.R.T. while they were living in an RV parked on the streets. The RV had expired registration and was parked in an industrial area for many months. The family was connected with The HUB OC and were given access to food, showers, clothing, and other needs. The parents worked with The HUB OC, the H.O.S. team and other services but were unable to find temporary housing due to their large family size. The parents decided they wanted to return to Ohio after their extended family offered assistance. H.E.A.R.T. and H.O.S. purchased nine plane tickets for the family with the H.E.A.R.T. FUND. H.E.A.R.T. and the H.O.S. team transported the family to John Wayne Airport the next day for their flight back to Ohio.

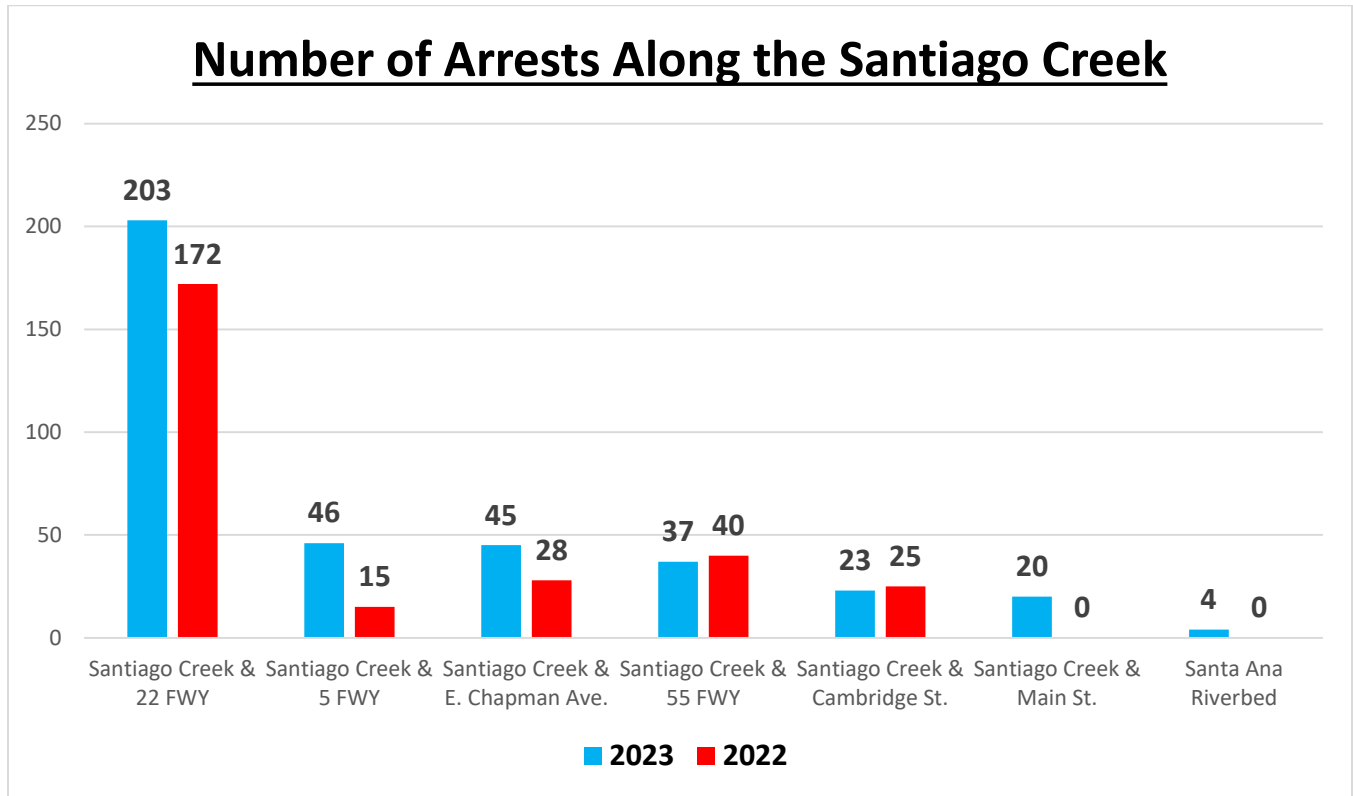
There were 27 calls for service at The HUB OC in 2023, which was a 46% decrease from 2022. This success can be attributed to the management of The HUB OC, the relationship with the Police Department, and clientele who desire assistance. Only one call was classified as a major incident involving a weapon brandishing. 3 calls were medical aids, 4 were disturbance of peace calls, 6 involved a physical altercation, 1 was a welfare checks / 5150 evaluation, and 12 were other miscellaneous type calls.

As The HUB OC has become more well known in the community, there has been a noticeable increase in individuals loitering outside of the location along the curb. While there is no law prohibiting loitering, these individuals have been contacted for smoking marijuana, drinking alcohol, blocking the roadway with their personal belongings, parking illegally and having outstanding warrants. Additionally, H.E.A.R.T. and H.O.S. have contacted thousands of homeless individuals from surrounding Orange County Cities (primarily from Anaheim, Santa Ana, Garden Grove, Fullerton, Buena Park), states (Washington, Ohio, Florida, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, etc.) and countries (Mexico, Peru, Iran, Italy, Ukraine). H.E.A.R.T. and H.O.S. continue to work with The HUB OC to provide these individuals with the most applicable resource needed for that specific individual.

The Bike Team and H.E.A.R.T. continue to maintain a working relationship with California Highway Patrol (C.H.P.) and Caltrans for state-related properties in and around the City. C.H.P. has supplemented the teams and helped with outreach and law enforcement along freeway ramps, underpasses, and non-state-related properties throughout the City. They also removed abandoned encampments, trash, and graffiti from multiple areas. Multiple arrests were made for trespassing, drugs, drug paraphernalia and warrants. During 2023, the Bike Team, H.E.A.R.T., and H.O.S. participated in several multi-organizational outreach and cleanups. These cleanups took place in January, May, and September 2023.

The Bike Team, H.E.A.R.T., and C.H.P. continue to enforce trespassing laws along Santiago Creek between E. Chapman Ave. to the SR 22 freeway underpass. Most of the subjects located along the areas of Santiago Creek are trespassers/repeat offenders who abuse illicit narcotics, illegally lodge, conduct vandalism, and are responsible for various thefts throughout the City. The H.O.S. team provided outreach and resources to multiple individuals with opportunities to go to a shelter. Some were receptive to the

resource but none of them were willing to go to a shelter that had availability. The Bike Team and H.E.A.R.T. made approximately 378 arrests for a variety of offenses including trespassing in this area. This was a 34% increase over 2022. See below chart for a breakdown of arrest locations.



In July 2023, the Bike Team, H.E.A.R.T., and H.O.S. teamed with the Union Pacific Railroad police, CityNet (outreach specialist) and a third-party work crew for a cleanup. The work crews utilized tractors and dump trucks to clear out encampments located near the railroad tracks, between the Santa Ana Riverbed and N. Main St. Multiple subjects were arrested for various crimes and were receptive to resources. These individuals also utilize the resources at The HUB OC and have been sheltered previously. H.E.A.R.T. and the Bike Team continue to patrol the railroad right of ways in an effort to prevent encampments from forming and collaborate with rail agencies such as, Metrolink, Union Pacific, and B.N.S.F. to address encampment issues early and to prevent those issues from occurring within the City. Since July 2023, there has not been a significant recurrence of encampments on the railroad.

In accordance with the Orange Municipal Code (O.M.C.), H.E.A.R.T. conducted outreach and enforcement for homeless subjects living in recreational vehicles throughout the City. H.E.A.R.T. received citizen complaints reference these vehicles congregating in the lots and dumping feces and urine along the pavement and grass areas. H.E.A.R.T. continues to offer outreach services, education of City ordinances, and following up with enforcement activity. H.E.A.R.T. used various enforcement methods to gain compliance through citations and OMC abandoned vehicle notices.

The North Orange County Service Planning Area (North SPA) provided \$118,000 for collaborative efforts in 2023. These funds divided amongst the Police Department for enforcement, Public Works for trash clean-up, and Community Services for additional park security. Throughout the year, the Bike Team and

H.E.A.R.T. have continued collaborating with Community Services and the Public Work for cleanups throughout the City. Most of the cleanups have taken place along Santiago Creek from Hart Park to Grijalva Park. During these clean ups, Public Works and community volunteers removed trash and abandoned property from the waterways. Public Works was present during the Cal Trans clean-ups. Additionally, the City continues to contract with West Coast Arborists yearly to clear out brush and non-native plants along Santiago Creek. This effectively takes away the ability for repeat offenders to conceal themselves and their encampments. As a result of all these collaborations, approximately 200 encampments were removed throughout the City in 2023.

H.E.A.R.T. and the Bike Team continue to maintain open communication with the City Attorney's Office to apply the O.M.C. in a manner consistent with recent civil litigation. The sections regarding camping in public and being in the park after closure still require verbal warnings before enforcement. The O.M.C. also contains a trespassing section related to business, section 9.35.010, to assist local businesses. In addition, the City Attorney's office drafted a Director's Order from the Community Services Director that implemented specifically prohibited activity in the parks. For example, O.M.C. 12.48.120 prohibited possession of multiple bicycle parts in the park and leaving property in the park after closure. H.E.A.R.T. provided the research material from neighboring cities to assist with the writing of order.

The Bike Team and H.E.A.R.T. also worked with the City's Code Enforcement to address code-compliance violations. This has been an area of significant improvement related to problem vacant properties that have been since demolished. During 2023, there were no significant abandoned property issues.

H.E.A.R.T. continues to collaborate with other Orange County Agencies' Homeless Liaison Officers (HLO) from Anaheim, Tustin, Santa Ana, Garden Grove, Buena Park, Brea, Placentia, Fullerton, Newport Beach, Huntington Beach, Laguna Beach, Irvine and Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Upon receiving numerous case rejections from the Orange County District Attorney's Office, H.E.A.R.T. and the Bike Team met with several attorneys from the District Attorney's Office, Central Division. The purpose of the meeting was to stress the significance of homelessness to the community of Orange and to explain the detrimental impact not filing criminal cases has on the residents and businesses of Orange. The result has been better communication and collaboration to ensure proper criminal filings and improved police reports.

In collaboration with its many public and private partners, H.E.A.R.T., Bike Team, and H.O.S. continue to build partnerships and closely monitor any homeless-related activities to reduce homelessness in the City of Orange.