



City of Rohnert Park PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Don Schwartz
707-588-2242

dschwartz@rpcity.org

For Immediate Release

Rohnert Park City Council Accepts County Funding for Continued Homelessness Services

Rohnert Park, CA (August 4, 2023) – On July 25, Rohnert Park City Council voted to accept \$384,000 in grant funding through the Sonoma County Measure O program for the City-run Roberts Lake Safe Sleeping Program.

“We are grateful for this funding from Sonoma County, which will help us meet our goal of addressing homelessness effectively,” said Rohnert Park Mayor Samantha Rodriguez. “Our efforts have had a positive impact on the community, and we continue to make strides to resolve the Safe Sleeping Program in the near future.”

Rohnert Park’s updated budget covers the program’s operational costs, including on-site services and security. The program is funded using both City funds and outside grant funding. In June, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors awarded Rohnert Park \$384,000 in County **Measure O Program** funding for operation of the Safe Sleeping Program.

The city has teamed up with HomeFirst and Defense Block Security to provide direct services for the program. HomeFirst operates the site and provides housing-focused supportive services to residents. Defense Block Security provides 24/7 safety and security services for the site and residents, staff and guards. The approved budget revision increases the total compensation for HomeFirst and Defense Block Security to continue these services through mid-January.

The city’s goal is to eventually close the Safe Sleeping Program, and it has seen promising results. In October 2022, the initial roster included 130 individuals. The current population is around 27. Since November 2022, the program has served 68 individuals. Of the 68 participants, 41 have exited the program including 14 exits to interim housing, and eight exits to permanent housing.

Additionally, there has been a drop in calls for public safety service and arrests in the Roberts Lake area. Since Defense Block Security was installed in the camp in October 2022, the number of calls has decreased by 80% in Roberts Lake Park & Ride and surrounding areas.

###