



Monterey County

Item No.

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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August 29, 2022

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- a. Receive a presentation on unsheltered homelessness and the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) opportunity offered through the California Interagency Council on Homelessness; and,
- b. Support a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to apply for Encampment Resolution Funds to assist with housing of people living in the Pajaro River encampment and restoring the property back to its original use.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Homelessness Committee:

- c. Receive a presentation on unsheltered homelessness and the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) opportunity offered through the California Interagency Council on Homelessness; and,
- d. Support a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to apply for Encampment Resolution Funds to assist with housing of people living in the Pajaro River encampment and restoring the property back to its original use.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

While homelessness in Monterey County has been on a consistent downward trend since 2019, unsheltered homelessness continues to be a concern in Monterey County, as approximately 1/5 of the entire unsheltered population has consistently resided within the County jurisdiction over the past 5 years.

Under the authority of Chapter 7 of Part 1 of Division 31 of the California Health and Safety Code (sections 50250 et seq.), the Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Program was established to increase collaboration between the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (CAL ICH), local jurisdictions, and continuums of care (CoC's) to accomplish the following:

- Assist local jurisdictions in ensuring the wellness and safety of people experiencing homelessness in encampments, including their immediate physical and mental wellness and safety needs arising from unsheltered homelessness and their longer-term needs addressed through a path to safe and stable housing.
- Provide encampment resolution grants to local jurisdictions and continuums of care to support innovative and replicable efforts to resolve critical encampment concerns and to support individuals to access safe and stable housing, using Housing First approaches.
- Encourage a data-informed, coordinated approach to address unsheltered homelessness at encampments by establishing, through the encampment resolution grants, effective, scalable, and replicable demonstration projects.

In 2021, \$47 million was made available for competition to CoC's and local jurisdictions, and the sole entity that pursued round 1 of funding was the City of Salinas, where they were awarded \$4,079,416.72. The 2022-2023 State budget significantly increased the funding availability to \$300 million for FY 2022-2023 (round 2) and \$400 million for FY 2023-2024 (round 3).

The ERF is a flexible funding opportunity, however strong applications must:

- Demonstrate cross-systems collaboration
- Leverage local resources and initiatives
- Demonstrate the capacity to implement a Housing First approach
- Create pathways to permanent housing

Encampment Resolution Funding program regulations of the round 1 allocation required the identified encampment site to be on public property and to be hosting a minimum of fifty (50) encampment residents. At this time, it has not been confirmed if future rounds will have the same requirements.

Pajaro River continues to be a major health and safety concern and would fit the requirements of the program should they remain unchanged from round 1 of funding. Therefore, it is recommended that this encampment be the target focus of a round 2 funding application.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The County Administrative Office anticipates collaborating with Public Works, Water Resources Agency, Department of Social Services, Sheriff's Dept., Housing and Community Development, the Bureau of Behavioral Health, Coalition of Homeless Services Providers as the local Continuum of Care lead agency. We believe that collaboration with the City of Watsonville, County of Santa Cruz, and Santa Cruz' Continuum of Care is necessary to ensure the best person-centered and collaborative approach to resolving the Pajaro Encampment. Staff level discussions have been initiated.

FINANCING:

This project proposal will likely exceed \$10 million, of which 5% of administration costs would be included.

The proposed project would include temporary shelter, a path to permanent housing, outreach, trash mitigation, enforcement, site restoration and repairs to the levee (local leverage).

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

This initiative correlates to the Health & Human Services Strategic Initiative adopted by the Board of supervisors by working collaboratively to address and develop a plan for ending homelessness.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives

- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

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Attachments:

Presentation on Unsheltered Homelessness