



DATE: April 3, 2018

TO: Nick Chiulos, Assistant County Administrative Officer
County of Monterey

FROM: Michelle Slade, Chief Strategist
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RE: **Highlights of Community Prioritization Advocacy -
Cannabis Tax Revenue Community Forums**

Following are highlights of initial insights and findings gleaned from the five Cannabis Tax Revenue Community Forums held in March 2018 to assist the Board of Supervisors in understanding what their constituents would like prioritized when determining the budget for excess cannabis tax revenue:

1. ***Three hundred fifty (350) constituents participated*** in total with ***an average of 70 participants*** per Forum.
2. ***100%*** of participants completing Forum Feedback cards answered ***YES*** to the question:

Would you like the Board of Supervisors to continue hosting forums like these to gain public input?
3. Attached in Appendix is a summary of ***key themes of Forum Feedback responses*** to these prompts:
 - a. ***What Worked:*** What did you like about the Forum? What was helpful?
 - b. ***Improvements:*** What would have made this Forum better?
 - c. ***Additional Comments:*** Any additional comments, questions, concerns, recommendations you would like your Supervisor and the rest of the Board of Supervisors to consider?
 - d. ***How did you learn about this Forum?***
4. Across the five Forums, the following ***ranking of Community Priorities*** emerged:
 - a. **Education - 29%**
 - b. **Health - 28%**
 - c. **Economic Self-Sufficiency - 22%**
 - d. **Safety - 15%**
 - e. **Overall County Services - 6%**

5. Within all of the Community Priority Areas (Economic Self-Sufficiency, Education, Health, Safety, and Overall County Services), providing services through an ***equity lens and ensuring culturally relevant and competency*** in program/service design and delivery was a notable theme.
6. Within the **Education Priority Area**, the following programs/services received the most advocacy for investment:

<i>Investing in Early Childhood Development & Pre-School Programs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Early childhood education and preschool programs</i> ● <i>In South County, universal, expand center, better pay for providers, provide technical assistance</i> ● <i>Free universal preschool for all, particularly system impacted families and displaced parents</i> ● <i>Increase infant/toddler services with slots in North County</i> ● <i>More playgroups to empower parents to gain additional tools for positive parenting and understanding the importance of early childhood experiences</i> ● <i>Provide more playgroups and parenting classes in Greenfield and King City to educate parents in early childhood development</i> ● <i>Provide support for proposed early childhood education center near Oscar Loya School</i> ● <i>Library materials for children of color</i> ● <i>Fund direct services from Bright Beginnings</i>
<i>Expanding Youth Services - Out of School Time Programming: After School & Summer Programs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Expand After-school Programs</i> ● <i>Expand existing afterschool programs (e.g., Boys & Girls Club in Greenfield, YMCA)</i> ● <i>Expand summer youth programs in North Monterey County during Summer in partnership with NMCUSD</i> ● <i>Invest in Parks & Recreation: soccer fields, BMX tracks, nature trails</i> ● <i>Provide more arts programming</i> ● <i>Provide more sports programming, including funding for soccer complex</i> ● <i>Social worker paid mental health staff onsite at schools and afterschool programs</i> ● <i>More educational, academic enrichment, e.g., college prep, vocational training and career readiness, digital literacy, restorative justice</i> ● <i>Refer youth to Rancho Cielo</i>
<i>Supporting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How to be a parent</i>

Parent Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parenting programs ● Programs for single mothers and their children (health, work trainings) ● Increase parent capacity to students as they navigate higher education ● Going to local schools and educate teachers, students, and parents (Cannabis Education) ● Programs to help parents understand how to be the best parents possible
Fostering Civic Education & Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programs to enhance people's participation in local government ● Mentoring program for youth with with local elected officials and law enforcement

7. Within the **Health Priority Area**, the Community advocated for the greatest investment in the following:

Ensuring Affordable, Quality Healthcare (with special emphasis on prevention, mental health, and wellness services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing quality healthcare, including mental health care, for County residents ● Funding for Esperanza care - Health Care for All ● Behavioral Health ● Further investment in mental behavioral health- trauma informed care ● Giving more support for preventative mental health treatment for children and more mental health treatment centers for youth and children ● Increased maternal mental health support ● Free healthcare for justice impacted youth, foster care, displaced and homeless, elderly ● In Home support services more funding for children, elders, people with disabilities ● Health services for veterans - Free medical cannabis as mental health treatment and veterans with PTSD ● Holistic programs for families, parental education and mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wellness and nutrition ○ Yoga and meditation ● Opportunities for family screening and care coordination for multiple and varied need ● Lowering restrictions on who can receive mental health services for example someone with depression can be seen if they meet a criteria
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Expanding Public Health Education - Substance Abuse Prevention & Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance abuse education, prevention, and treatment programs • Rehabilitation centers for those with addiction to marijuana and cocaine • Treatment options for youth- residential, outpatient, relapse prevention • Culturally relevant rites of passage for youth and young adults that address drug and alcohol • Substance abuse treatment programs for youth in Greenfield and King City • Rehab mental health services for anyone who wants it; top priority drug arrests/ alternative to jail • Use arts (theatre) for substance abuse education • Targeted support for communities that have been impacted by illegal status of marijuana • Recommend 25% be set aside for the next 5 years for marijuana, opioid and other drug abuse prevention treatment and recovery services
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8. Within the **Economic Self-Sufficiency Priority Area**, the following emerged as the top 3 areas receiving the most advocacy for investment (noted by category and specific programs/services):

Ensuring Housing Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs that help people find affordable housing here and prevent displacement • Rent Control • Add more housing to be able to use the affordable housing programs • Section 8 housing availability • Inclusionary housing for low-income East Garrison Project • Emergency housing/shelter for low income and/or families who demonstrate need • Housing for aging out foster youth- safe spaces for learning and spending time • Domestic abuse and homeless shelters • Housing for the homeless • Small houses for affordable housing for homeless • Funding for the new Salinas/County homeless shelter • Building affordable housing; Support MBEP Policy
Providing Services for the Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services for homeless families and adults • Programs and services for non-citizens regardless of their immigration status • Emergency Assistance programs: eviction, deportations, deaths

Increasing Economic Development - Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Programs to provide training for County residents to help attract businesses to come here and provide residents with good jobs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Vocational training</i> ○ <i>Community laboratory and small business incubator</i> ○ <i>Diversify Monterey county economic portfolio for ex: build biotech industry</i> ○ <i>Home-grown companies: cannabis, agtech, biotech</i> ● <i>Equitable economic development opportunities in the Cannabis industry</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Special permit of cannabis conviction for communities affected by past criminalization those not included because of startup costs</i> ○ <i>Prioritization for licences for sale for communities that have been impacted by the war on drugs</i> ● <i>Support re-entry employment & reparations</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Support union jobs with good wages and benefits for system impacted and previously incarcerated regardless of immigration status</i> ○ <i>Expungements for those w/ marijuana charges</i> ○ <i>Reparations for marijuana drug offenses- clear records and reduce sentences</i>
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9. Within the **Safety Priority Area**, key programs/services the Community advocated for the greatest investment are:

Providing Re-Entry & Diversion Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Programs that help people when they get out of prison to stay out of prison</i> ● <i>Re-entry programs: help people give back to their community with program and jobs</i> ● <i>Reparations - Amnesty program for cannabis conviction; Help for people with past drug convictions; Expunge records, help people get out of prison for past arrests for marijuana</i> ● <i>Training (including on the job training) & employment</i> ● <i>Youth arts programs as alternatives to punitive practices in the justice system</i> ● <i>Gang reduction activities-provide alternative pathways</i> ● <i>Rehabilitation programs for at-risk populations</i>
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Strengthening Crime, Violence Prevention & Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Funded coordinated enforcement to protect legal growers from being undercut</i> • <i>Protect the public from illegal grows</i> • <i>Protect the county from loss of legal grows and lower Prop Y revenue</i> • <i>Establish program to respond to grows, include a way to report</i> • <i>Fund a dedicated Sheriff's Field Unit with drones and other surveillance equipment to locate, close down, and arrest illegal grows</i> • <i>Fund DA to prosecute.</i> • <i>More security and safety</i> • <i>Prevention & justice reform</i> • <i>More programs and vigilance in the community to prevent crime and violence.</i> • <i>More security by increasing police presence in the streets.</i>
Improving Transportation & Safer Built Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Improved public transportation, as well as increasing safe places for people to bike and walk</i> • <i>New bus routes and free passes for people below poverty line</i> • <i>Improve built environment</i> • <i>Improve lighting</i> • <i>More street lights (King City)</i> • <i>More lighting and install security cameras</i> • <i>Safe places for people to bike and walk</i>

10. Within the **Overall County Services Priority Area**, key programs/services the Community advocated for the greatest investment are:

Maintaining Existing Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Avoid cuts in existing services</i> • <i>Support our County libraries; Library services- to reverse cutbacks and hours, staff and materials</i> • <i>Funding parks</i> • <i>Support existing animal shelters</i>
Ensuring County Solvency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Replenishing some of the county's reserve funds</i>
Investing in Public Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Water for 300k new residents</i>

In addition to the insights and findings shared above, particularly noteworthy additional themes were expressed by participants regarding the engagement process (representative direct comments noted in *italics*):

1. **APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY** - Participants deeply appreciated that the Board of Supervisors sought their perspectives and provided a robust opportunity to express and advocate for their points of view; again, **100%** of participants completing the Forum Feedback cards responded **YES**, that they would like the Board of Supervisors to continue hosting forums like these to gain public input:
 - *Thank you for providing me with this opportunity.*
 - *Very pleased that Supervisor Alejo was present to hear his constituents ideas and proposals for the investment of the tax revenues.*
 - *Keep us involved in the process.*
 - *Keep hosting forums!*
 - *Keep it going!*
 - *Thank you for bringing other organizations to support the Forums.*
2. **LIKED THE FORUM APPROACH** - Participants liked the approach to the Forums, especially the opportunity to have dialogue with other community members and supportive facilitation:
 - *We got to talk to people who will help us make our community a better place. What I liked was that we got to come up with good ideas for the community.*
 - *I like learning about the County's budget. I liked how we were put into groups and voted for what was important to us. Hearing other people's opinion was helpful to get their viewpoint.*
 - *Small groups worked. I liked the small group discussion and large sharing. It was helpful to have facilitator and participants it present.*
 - *Translation, facilitator involvement, coffee, group sizes and informative slides at beginning of the Forum.*
3. **HOPEFUL FOR ACTION, TRANSPARENCY** - Participants expressed hope their input would be acted upon and a desire to be kept informed, including access to information from the overall Community Engagement process (inclusive of the Forums, polling, on-line survey) and what action was taken upon this information:
 - *Please make it public that way our input is going to be used and now things will be priorities people want it to be feel that their input matters.*
 - *When will the county let us know what decisions were made? How will you use this feedback/ input? How will you decide where the money will go?*
 - *I just don't want this process to be for nothing and fall on deaf ears so please listen to the people.*
 - *Please be honest to people's wishes.*

I look forward to providing you and the Board of Supervisors with a full report. Thank you for the opportunity to partner with you, your fantastic team and the Board of Supervisors to engage our community to ensure: ***Together, a healthy, safe, thriving Monterey County!***