



Board Report

File #: 19-1272, **Version:** 1

Receive an oral report from the Department of Social Services regarding County efforts and opportunities to strengthen services to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Presenter: Glorietta Rowland, MA II

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Health, Housing, and Human Services Committee receive an update on key activities related to homeless prevention and intervention.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

1. Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP)

The California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC) announced the launch of the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), a \$500 million block grant program designed to provide direct assistance to cities and counties to address the homelessness crisis throughout California. HEAP is authorized by Senate Bill (SB) 850, which was signed into law by Governor Brown in June 2018. Funding estimates based on total homeless enumerated during the 2017 Point-in-Time census indicate the “Salinas/Monterey, San Benito Counties” jurisdiction is eligible to receive approximately \$12.5 million in HEAP funding. The Notice of Funds Available (NOFA) was released on September 5, 2018.

The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers (CHSP) is the designated Administrative Entity for HEAP related items and monitoring activities. CHSP has entered into an agreement with the Monterey County Department of Social Services who will serve as fiscal agent for HEAP funds. CHSP coordinated a variety of community engagement forums throughout October and November 2018 to gather community input. Input was obtained from the professional sector (service providers, law enforcement, jurisdictions, medical, etc.), the Salinas community, South County community, North County community, Monterey Peninsula community and the homeless population. Dates and locations of the community meetings were published and shared through many media outlets. Formal reports were prepared and presented to the Leadership Council. The Leadership Council made preliminary decisions based upon input received.

The program priorities voted on by the community through the community engagement meetings prioritized services in the following ranking:

1. Targeted street outreach, health and safety education programs, criminal justice diversion programs (52 votes)
2. Expand current homeless bed inventory through new emergency shelter beds (44 votes)
3. Enhanced client services through housing navigation, landlord mitigation programs, and targeted case management (44 votes)
4. Programs for homeless youth or youth at risk of homelessness (unaccompanied youth ages 18-24) (39 votes)
5. Rental assistance and rapid rehousing programs (32 votes)
6. Expand current homeless bed inventory through transitional or other sorts of housing (18 votes)
7. Operating support for expanded homeless beds (2 votes)

The full summary and analysis report of the HEAP community meetings is available on the Coalition of Homeless Services Providers website:

<https://www.chspmontereycounty.org/wp-content/themes/chsp/img/Final-HEAP-Regional-Report.pdf>

On December 12, 2018, the Coalition of Homeless Services Providers submitted the initial application on behalf of the Monterey and San Benito Counties CoC. Approval was received on December 28, 2018 for the full amount of \$12,505,250.30. CHSP is currently working with the State to execute final documents and prepare for receipt of funds. It is projected that funds will be received within sixty (days). CHSP is currently preparing a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) and project applications which will be reviewed by the Leadership Council on January 23, 2019. The RFP will be released following Leadership Council approval and the community process for project selection will begin.

2. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care Competition

The annual HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) application, supporting documents and exhibits were submitted in September 2018. The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers (CHSP) serves as the CoC representative and is responsible for coordinating all activities related to the annual submission. \$2,091,205 has been requested representing 13 renewal and 1 new program. Programs include transitional housing projects, permanent supportive housing programs, rental assistance programs designed to serve homeless veterans, people with serious mental illness, families, unaccompanied youth, chronic homeless, and other vulnerable homeless populations.

HUD typically takes several months to announce awards and has yet to make such announcement. It is not known if the government shut down has impacted timing related to HUD announcements.

3. Monterey County Homeless Census

Every two years, during the last two weeks of January, communities across the country conduct comprehensive counts of the local population experiencing homelessness. The biennial Point-in-Time counts of sheltered and unsheltered persons are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all jurisdictions receiving federal funding to provide homeless services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Monterey County receives approximately \$2 million in Continuum of Care federal funding that supports county non-profit shelter and homeless service providers. Census numbers are also utilized by state and other funding sources to determine the level of funding. The January 2017 census count found 2,837 individuals experiencing homelessness in Monterey County. The next Monterey County Homeless Census will be conducted on January 31, 2019. The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers (CHSP) is responsible for coordinating activities related to the homeless census.

4. Year-Round Homeless Shelter Development

The City of Salinas and County of Monterey have been collaborating on the proposed developments of a Year-Round Homeless Shelter located at 855 E. Laurel Drive and Permanent Housing located at 1220 Natividad Road given new funding opportunity made available through HEAP. With this goal in mind, the City and County established a Memorandum of Understanding, which establishes the roles and responsibilities for the developments and operation of a Shelter and Housing. The County Board of Supervisors approved the MOU on September 25, 2018 and was approved by City Council on October 9, 2018.

The City and County are now working together to develop a community engagement plan to gather

input for the shelter operations. The City and County are committed to working with the community during the planning process of the proposed Shelter and Housing developments. Together, both entities will address community concerns and immediate needs for homeless services in the County.

In addition, the County is working in collaboration with Monterey peninsula region jurisdictions on development of a homeless shelter in this region. It is anticipated that a proposal for HEAP funds will be submitted for consideration as a potential site is under strong consideration.

5. Winter Warming Shelter Operations

The Department of Social Services, in partnership with the City of Salinas, has operated a Winter Warming Shelter for the past four years. Within the recently approved MOU between the County and the City of Salinas to work collaboratively on developing and operating a year-round homeless shelter, it was also agreed to extend the use of the Warming Shelter at 111 W. Alisal Street or other mutually agreeable location until the year-round shelter can be established.

The current service contract, an amendment approved in October 2018, added \$156,200 of County funds to extend operations of the Warming Shelter from November 1, 2018 - February 28, 2019. Continued funding for operations beyond February were anticipated to be a part of the local HEAP request, however current time estimates indicate that the local RFP awards may not be established until April or May 2019. The City of Salinas had agreed to contribute an equal share to the operations of the warming shelter through a separate agreement with the provider and could fund another extension without additional County funds. However, due to a delay by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in submitting their Action Plan to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the current government shutdown, the City of Salinas cannot currently access HCD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds and there is no clear estimate of when the funds may be available. Funding rules prohibit the City of Salinas from spending the funds before the award is finalized. The uncertainty of the funding source creates a roadblock to moving forward as development of an amendment must begin immediately if the Warming Shelter is to remain operational beyond February 2019.

Recent numbers indicate consistent maximum occupancy of the warming shelter by men, women, and families. The current occupancy report is attached.

6. Safe Parking Program

The Monterey County Safe Parking Program at 2616 First Ave., Marina officially opened on December 15, 2017. The Safe Parking Program was implemented as a response to community complaints and concerns regarding persons living in their vehicles in an area just north of the City of Marina. Orphan Productions, a 501c (3) community-based organization presently contracts with Department of Social Services to administer the Safe Parking program. Use of the program has continued to increase and presently has reached capacity. The program provides participants a safe parking space to sleep in their vehicle and offers case management services that include job search, housing search, and other support as uniquely identified. Portable hygiene, security and garbage facilities are on-site to support the program's operation. On November 6, 2018, the Board of Supervisors approved an extension of the Safe Parking Program through March 31, 2019. Continued funding for operations beyond March were anticipated to be a part of the local HEAP request, however current time estimates indicate that the local RFP awards may not be established until April or May 2019. Furthermore, in assessment of the high competition for HEAP funds and high prioritization for infrastructure and development projects, alternative funding sources should be assessed in the event this program is not awarded HEAP funding.

Safe Parking program participation continues at a steady rate of utilization with work primarily focused on handling information and referral calls and supporting program participants with employment and housing support. A current activity report is attached.

7. Rapid-Rehousing for CalWORKs Families

Since implementation in 2014, the Housing Support Program (HSP) for homeless CalWORKs families has provided services to over 770 families which include over 1,600 children and over 1000 adults. The HSP has assisted over 213 families move into permanent housing, administering over \$1,750,000 in direct financial assistance alone. For the 2018-19 fiscal year, Monterey County was awarded an increase in HSP funds, bringing the total program budget to \$1,000,000. In the first six months of the current fiscal year, HRC has so far placed 35 families into permanent housing.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Department of Social Services, and the CAO have been partnering with the City of Salinas and partner jurisdictions to develop collaborations to strengthen homeless services throughout the county. These efforts are under the oversight of the CoC Lead Me Home Leadership Council.

FINANCING:

There is no impact to the County General Fund with receipt of this update.

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