



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Community Services
Department No.: 057
For Agenda Of: April 8, 2025
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department
Director(s) Jesús Armas, Community Services Director (805) 568-2467

DS
JA

Contact Info: Joe Dzvonik, Deputy Director Housing and Community
Development (805) 568-3523

SUBJECT: Professional Services Agreement with CommUnify to Develop and Maintain a
Youth-focused Community Resources Mobile Application

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair of the Board to execute and ratify a Professional Services Agreement with the Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County dba CommUnify (CommUnify), providing funding not to exceed \$66,967.52 in Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the coordination of the development of a mobile application that offers a trusted and reliable source of critical information and resource connections targeted to homeless and at-risk youth during the implementation period, March 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026 (Agreement);
- b) Determine the above recommended actions are not the approval of a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), finding that the actions are organizational or administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

Summary Text:

Staff is recommending the approval of a Professional Services Agreement (Attachment A) with CommUnify to coordinate, develop, promote, maintain, and enhance a new mobile application to serve as a trusted countywide and centralized resource for youth and transitional age youth. This application will

be developed for and promoted to people in Santa Barbara County aged 12-24 who may be experiencing homelessness, are emerging from foster care, or who find themselves needing to develop independent life skills. This project will be funded by the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) planning grant as administered by the County's Community Services Department (CSD) under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Background:

HUD has awarded approximately \$72 million to selected YHDP Communities since 2022, with grant awards ranging from \$1 million to \$15 million per community, based on the service area's youth population size and poverty rate. YHDP Communities that are selected and awarded by HUD must develop and implement a youth-focused coordinated community plan, which includes specific structural components, including: 1) statement of need; 2) list of community stakeholders, 3) discussion of vision and action steps; 4) potential new projects; 5) governance structure; and, 6) signatures of official representatives from key systems.

CSD, as the Collaborative Applicant administering and operating the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care (CoC), is working with the Youth Action Board, a committee of the CoC, and with local community groups to implement the regional youth-focused Coordinated Community Plan (CCP), adopted in May 2023. This work is supported by planning funds to operate the first 3 years of YHDP, which budget was authorized by Board action on December 13, 2022.

The Youth Action Board (YAB) is comprised of a group of community leaders between the ages of 14-24 who are CoC participants, and has convened in this role with various membership since 2018. The YAB elevates youth voices and identifies the specialized needs of this vulnerable population to augment the existing Community Action Plan to address and end homelessness.

In so doing, and with the support of Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley (FBSMV) in its role as a County YHDP subrecipient to support YAB coordination and operations, the YAB requested development of a new mobile application for regional resource referrals and as a trusted source of information to help meet identified needs of the target population.

Responding to this request and recognizing its alignment with activities described by the CCP and YHDP funding terms and conditions, staff solicited proposals from qualified entities that described various approaches to coordinating, planning, building, developing, and implementing a new mobile resource application to serve the target population through June, 2026. Upon review and evaluation by YAB members, CommUnify was identified as the preferred partner based on the strength of its proposal and aligned budget.

CommUnify is an experienced Helpline Call Center Provider consistent with applicable professional standards, including the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) standards. CommUnify has since 2014 served in the ongoing role as the 211 local community host and helpline service. This experience and specialized knowledge were cited by YAB members as assets that will combine with a subcontracted mobile application software developer, selected by CommUnify, to fully realize this youth-focused tool for connecting individuals who are homeless and/or at-risk with resources and support services.

Performance Measure:

CommUnify will provide the following during the term of the Professional Services Agreement:

<u>PERFORMANCE MEASURE</u>	<u>GOAL</u>
Youth Advisory Board engagement meetings for planning, input/feedback, enhancement, promotion (one each per quarter plus one additional per month during initial six-month launch and promotional window)	12
Mobile application user downloads (term of Agreement)	500
Average Monthly Active Users	100
Mobile application user growth rate (quarterly, after first quarter)	50%

Key Contract Risks:

The County assumes responsibility for the administration of funding in accordance with all state and federal requirements governing their use.

Fiscal Impacts:

All costs for work conducted by the Subrecipient are budgeted within the Community Services Department, Housing and Community Development Division, budget, as part of the contract with HUD for YHDP funds.

Staffing Impacts:

Administration of this Agreement is within currently budgeted staff positions.

Legal Positions:

N/A

FTEs:

N/A

Special Instructions:

- 1) Please email an electronic copy of the Minute Order to Joe Dzvonik at jdzvonvik@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

- A. Professional Services Agreement with CommUnify

Authored by:

Matthew Rector, Housing Program Specialist Sr., CSD