



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: January 23, 2018
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department George Chapjian, Community Services Director, (805) 568-2467
Director(s)
Contact Info: Dinah Lockhart, Deputy Director, (805) 568-3523
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and the United Way of Northern Santa Barbara County related to the Santa Barbara County Coordinated Entry System (CES) Coordinating Agency

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and the United Way of Northern Santa Barbara County (United Way) designating the United Way as the Coordinated Entry System (CES) Coordinating Agency and outlining their respective roles and responsibilities related to CES implementation (Attachment A); and,
- b) Determine that the recommended actions do not constitute a project subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), finding that the project is an organizational or administrative activity of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment, and direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption (NOE) (Attachment C).

Summary Text:

The Board is being asked to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between County of Santa Barbara and the United Way of Northern Santa Barbara County (United Way), designating the United Way as the Coordinated Entry System (CES) Coordinating Agency of the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara

Continuum of Care (CoC). The CoC determined the need to identify a qualified provider to serve as the Coordinating Agency for the CES in order to facilitate the implementation and operation of the CES, and to assist in coordinating the multiple stakeholders across the county needed to implement a successful CES. The Board has previously approved the County's roles as the HMIS Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant of the CoC which will cooperate with the Coordinating Agency for the CES. The MOU outlines the roles and responsibilities of the County and United Way with respect to the implementation of the Santa Barbara County Coordinated Entry System (CES). HUD requires each local CoC implement a CES by January 23, 2018 in order to remain eligible for federal CoC funding. No funds are awarded through this MOU. A staff report will be provided to the Board at a future meeting which will recommend designated state and federal CES funding for the United Way in its role as CES Lead Agency.

Background:

A Coordinated Entry System (CES) is a community-wide system to standardize and expedite the process by which people experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness, access housing and homeless resources. It connects the community's network of homeless services and housing resources while streamlining, standardizing and coordinating the homeless intake, assessment, and referral processes. Through CES, people experiencing homelessness will be matched to services and housing based on their preferences and level of need.

Coordinated Entry Systems are a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program recipient agencies such as the County of Santa Barbara. HUD has mandated that all local Continuums of Care (CoCs) implement their CES by January 23, 2018. Other Federal programs providing funding for homeless services, including those provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs, also require recipient agencies to participate in CES. The State of California mandates that agencies, such as the County, receiving State ESG funds and No Place Like Home funds participate in their community's CES.

Leading up to the January 2018 implementation, the County, its consultants and the local CoC conducted an extensive planning process to gain consensus among stakeholders on the type of CES that would best meet local needs and the details of policies, procedures and implementation. Specifically, the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara Continuum of Care (CoC) is looking to implement a de-centralized CES within three geographical regions of the County: North, Mid-, and South County. In order to facilitate the implementation and operation of the CES, and to assist in coordinating the multiple stakeholders across the county needed to implement a successful CES, the CoC determined the need to identify a qualified provider to serve as the Coordinating Agency for the CES. The CES Coordinating Agency will partner with the County, the CoC Board and members, and the network of homeless and mainstream service providers to ensure streamlined access to services and housing, particularly for the most vulnerable amongst the homeless population. And through coordinating efforts to boost positive housing and service outcomes across the CoC, the CES Coordinating Agency will contribute to raising awareness of and generating additional, tangible support for, housing and supportive services throughout the County.

On October 6, 2017, at the request of the CoC board, the County released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a CES Coordinating Agency (Attachment B). One agency, the Northern Santa Barbara County United Way (United Way), responded to the RFQ. An ad hoc RFQ review panel comprised of County staff and members of the CoC Board met and reviewed the United Way's proposal and determined it to

be responsive and sufficient. On November 6, 2017, the CoC Board recommended that the United Way be selected as the CES Coordinating Agency for Santa Barbara County.

The United Way has relevant experience that will contribute to the success of CES:

- Within the last several months the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H) has been integrated into the overall function of the United Way, specifically their Home for Good Santa Barbara County (HFG) campaign. The core mission of C3H (now HFGSBC) has evolved to focus on direct services, specifically street outreach, convening regional coordination meetings between multiple stakeholders key and raising funds to address homelessness.
- United Way/HFGSBC staff has used the CES Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to prioritize homeless individuals and families for services since 2011.
- The United Way/HFGSBC is committed to using the County-managed Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- The United Way has experience managing federal funds and programs, including Americorps, which can provide a cost-effective method of supporting CES activities.
- The United Way manages the Landlord Liaison Program which works with local housing providers to mediate conflict, thereby enhancing housing retention, and encouraging participation in efforts to house homeless households.
- The United Way is experienced in, and committed to, developing an extensive marketing campaign to educate the community about CES, and to raise public and private funds to sustain CES.

The recommended actions are intended to establish an agreement between the County of Santa Barbara and the United Way of Northern Santa Barbara County designating the United Way as the CES Coordinating Agency and outlining their respective roles and responsibilities with respect to the implementation of the Santa Barbara County CES. The County, in its role as the Collaborative Applicant and Grant Administrator, has applied for State Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and federal CoC funding which may be subgranted to an eligible grantee designated as the CES Coordinating Agency by the local CoC. If the United Way of Northern Santa Barbara County is not designated as Coordinating Agency, or is unable to carry out the responsibilities of implementing CES, the CoC is still responsible for ensuring the continued operation of the CES and could request that the County take on that responsibility. No funds are awarded through this MOU, however once funds become available for the activities of the CES Coordinating Agency through funding applications submitted by the County through the 2017 State ESG and 2017 HUD Continuum of Care funding competitions, sub-recipient grant agreements will be brought to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. HUD does not require the submission of the executed MOU to confirm the selection of a Coordinating Agency; however the executed MOU may be submitted as an attachment to future CoC funding grant applications as substantiating documentation that the local CoC has carried out HUD's requirement of implementing CES in the local CoC geographic area.

Discussion:

The guiding principles of a CES include:

- Low-barrier, low-threshold points of entry that take into consideration transit issues and regional preferences, and will meet people where they are, which may include but not be limited to: through street outreach teams, emergency shelters, warming centers, health care

providers, behavior health care providers, jails, information lines/211, veterans services providers, and drop-in and warming centers.

- A standardized assessment tool and process across all points of access. The assessment will be made available via multiple methods, such as over the phone, in person at entry points and in the field.
- A prioritization scheme developed by the community to prioritize, based on vulnerability and need, homeless individuals and families for access to housing resources including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and emergency services.
- Regular housing conference meetings to ensure coordination among participating providers and expediting housing readiness, placement and retention.
- Reliance on the HMIS, a centralized database managed by the County.
- A strong communication and affirmative marketing plan to educate consumers, providers and the community about CES.
- Strategies to address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, victims of trafficking, and homeless youth.
- Coordination with other systems of care within Santa Barbara County, including but not limited to the health and behavioral health care systems, the criminal justice system, educational institutions, and providers of government and private mainstream resources.

Qualifications of the United Way as CES Coordinating Agency:

The Northern Santa Barbara County United Way has long-served as the fiscal agent for the Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H). Within the last several months C3H has been integrated into the overall function of the United Way, specifically their Home for Good Santa Barbara County (HFGSBC) campaign – a multi-faceted initiative aimed at addressing homelessness countywide. C3H was initially formed to serve as the Lead Agency of the CoC; however, the core mission and activities of C3H (now HFGSBC) have evolved to include direct services, particularly street outreach and convening regional coordination meetings between multiple key stakeholders, and raising funds to address homelessness. United Way/HFGSBC staff has used the CES assessment tool to prioritize homeless individuals and families for services in a more informal way than CES mandates, but their experiences in this area provide a framework for implementing CES, including the transition to using the County-managed HMIS. The United Way has experience managing federal funds and programs, including Americorps, which can provide a cost-effective method of supporting CES activities. The United Way manages the Landlord Liaison Program which works with local housing providers to mediate conflict, thereby enhancing housing retention, and encouraging participation in efforts to house homeless households. And the United Way is experienced in, and committed to, developing an extensive marketing campaign to educate the community about CES, and to raise public and private funds to sustain CES activities into the future.

Funding the CES:

CoC providers in the County who currently receive HUD Continuum of Care funds and/or Federal or State ESG funds are required to participate in CES. One way these providers can participate in CES is to serve as a physical entry point for CES and/or dedicate existing staff to conduct CES assessments, to participate in housing conference meetings, and to provide necessary services to high-priority individuals and families identified through CES. Other CoC members and community stakeholders are providing in-kind resources to CES as well, including the County Department of Behavioral Health. Funds for the CES Coordinating Agency include \$90,000 in County general funds already received by the United Way to

help fund homeless outreach activities carried out by C3H/ HFGSBC, which will now support CES. In addition, the County applied for \$38,951 in 2017 State ESG funds, and \$130,675 (including \$5,900 for County administrative activities) in 2017 HUD Continuum of Care funds for CES Coordinating Agency activities. County Housing and Community Development staff anticipate that these funding applications will be successful, and will bring sub-recipient grant agreements between the County and the United Way to the Board of Supervisors for approval once these funds are available. These funding sources, combined with leverage provided by the United Way, will be sufficient to begin implementation of the CES on January 23, 2018. The CoC and United Way have begun reaching out to private funding sources to augment public funds to support a more robust CES that is sustainable into the future.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Funds for the CES Coordinating Agency include \$90,000 in General Funds from the County Executive Office's budget already received by the United Way to help fund homeless outreach activities carried out by C3H/ HFGSBC which will now support CES. In addition, the County applied for \$38,951 in 2017 State ESG funds, and \$130,675 (including \$5,900 for County administrative activities) in 2017 HUD Continuum of Care funds for CES Coordinating Agency activities. In addition, the CSD/HCD has a Housing Programs Specialist position which oversees all federal, state, and local grants funds directed to homeless programs. Currently, this position oversees all homeless programs administered by CSD/HCD including the activities of the CES Coordinating Agency, such that the span of control of grant funds and programs overseen by this staff position is insufficient. The level of complexity of federal and state regulations, grant administration, and report require sufficient staffing in order to avoid potential risk and grant repayment to state and federal granting agencies. Currently this Housing Programs Specialist position provides Collaborative Applicant, Grant Administrator support, oversees the State ESG Program for the county, and oversees the County's General Fund shelter program and the Warming Center Program. At a future Board meeting, staff will provide a report to the Board on options for providing optimal administrative oversight to implement Coordinated Entry and other initiatives to address and reduce the incidence of homelessness.

Special Instructions:

Please email an electronic copy of the Minute Order to Dinah Lockhart (x3523) at dlockhard@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the United Way of Northern Santa Barbara County related to the Santa Barbara County Coordinated Entry System Coordinating Agency

Attachment B: County of Santa Barbara Request for Qualifications for Coordinated Entry System Coordinating Agency

Attachment C: CEQA Notice of Exemption

Authored by:

Dinah Lockhart, Deputy Director, Housing and Community Development Division