



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: June 18, 2019
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 30 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department George Chapjian, Community Service Director 805-568-2485
Director(s)
Contact Info: Dinah Lockhart, Deputy Director 805-568-3523
Kimberlee Albers, Homeless Assistance Program Manager
805-560-1090

SUBJECT: 2019 Phase I Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness in Santa Barbara County

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form:

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions: That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Receive and file a staff report on the 2019 Phase I Homeless Plan (“Plan”), which identifies key strategies to address homelessness and ensures compliance with State of California requirements demonstrating a regional planning process;
- B. Adopt the 2019 Phase I Homeless Plan; and
- C. Determine the receipt of the documents is 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 project is an organizational or administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

Summary Text: The Phase I Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness in Santa Barbara County (“Phase I Homeless Plan”) was sponsored by the County’s Community Services and Behavioral Wellness Departments. A collaborative process, with input from over 135 community members and key stakeholders, took place in the fall of 2018. HomeBase, a public policy and HUD technical assistance provider to CSD, convened stakeholders, gathered and assimilated information, and developed tables and charts for the Plan.

The Plan includes an executive summary, a description of the strategic planning process employed, with major sections, which cover the following areas:

- Characteristics of homelessness in the County
- A description of the Homeless System of Care in the County
- Special challenges and barriers to serving target populations
- Strategies that will be used to address the unmet needs of those experiencing homelessness
- How the County will track progress toward its goals
- What the next steps are in the planning process for homeless system of care
- Appendices which provide background on previous planning processes, public meetings, a listing of stakeholders, and involvement of homeless youth and families of persons living with serious mental illness

Strategies recommended to address homelessness include:

- Increase access to safe, affordable housing;
- Use best practices to deliver tailored supportive services to meet individual needs;
- Build a collective action plan; Improve data sharing;
- Strengthen support systems available to help residents obtain and maintain housing;
- Build provider capacity to address the needs of specific populations.

Adoption of the Phase I Homeless Plan by the Board of Supervisors will enable the County and local jurisdictions to be eligible for future State homeless grant funding that the legislature may make available.

Discussion:

Regional planning to address homelessness is essential to maximize resources and enhance collaboration among stakeholders. The Phase I Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness is the result of a community-based process beginning in fall of 2018 through January 2019. The planning process included two large community meetings (Santa Maria and Goleta) to help identify gaps, set priorities, and establish strategies to address unmet needs. At the Goleta meeting, 75 people representing 35 unique agencies attended, and 20 people submitted written public comments. At the Santa Maria meeting, 55 people representing 26 unique agencies attended, and four people submitted written comments. Interviews with key stakeholders were also conducted. All of the comments received were addressed and considered as part of the development of this Phase I Community Action Plan.

A consumer focus group was held with individuals who were experiencing homelessness to hear feedback on system gaps, barriers, unmet needs and ideas for solutions and strategies to improve the system of care. Feedback from consumers was considered and incorporated.

To ensure the strategic plan development process was thorough, effective, and built upon existing structures, networks, and resources throughout Santa Barbara County, the following preparations were conducted before community engagement and plan development:

- Environmental scan of the homeless and housing environment in Santa Barbara County to identify the unique characteristics, strengths, challenges, and barriers.
- Review of all related material, processes and planning from the past several years, including the recently expired 10-year plan to End Homelessness (Bringing Our Community Home), Mental Health Service Act plans, and multiple jurisdictional plans and documents.

One of the primary challenges in Santa Barbara County is the lack of affordable and supportive housing. Various studies have shown that housing is a crucial component in recovery and stabilization for those suffering from mental health challenges.

Characteristics of Homelessness in Santa Barbara County

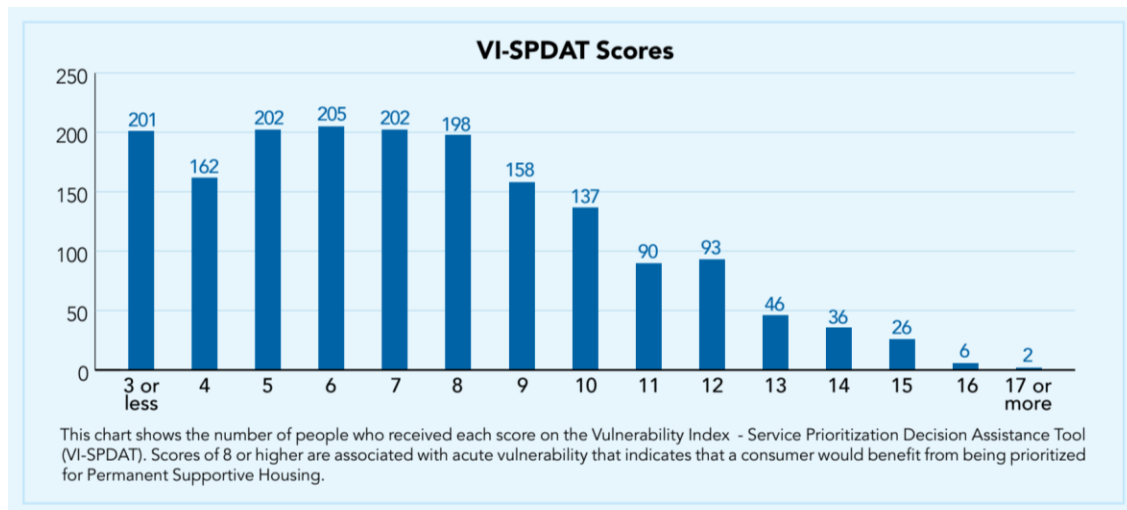
The overall number of people experiencing homelessness (sheltered and unsheltered) in Santa Barbara County has remained relatively consistent since the 2013 PIT Count.

PIT Count Year-to-Year Comparison

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of Persons Experiencing Homelessness	1,882	1,832	1,729	1,813	1,860	1,706	1,803

Incidence of Severity of Need within Homeless Population

One source of data on people experiencing homelessness with co-occurring disorders is the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), a structured interview offered to all clients who are experiencing homelessness, including people who are living in institutions like hospitals and jails. In the most recent grant year prior to the publication of the Phase I Homeless Plan, the VI-SPDAT had been administered to 1,542 single individuals and 222 families, for 1,764 households. The VI-SPDAT can be used to produce a quantitative vulnerability score that estimates how urgently a person needs to receive housing in order to avoid serious health risks. The graph below shows the spread of the VI-SPDAT scores that have been calculated in Santa Barbara County in 2018. People who are experiencing chronic homelessness, who have at least one disabling condition, and who score an eight or more on the VI-SPDAT are generally prioritized for Permanent Supportive Housing. Nearly 45% (790) of persons assessed by VI-SPDAT scored 8 or higher.



The Phase I Plan includes goals for increasing access to housing and the necessary support services to maintain that housing, preventing homelessness whenever possible, developing adequate supports for the sub-populations experiencing and at-risk for homelessness, and improving the systemic response, including data sharing and collective planning. Strategies to meet these goals include:

- Increase access to safe, affordable housing;
- Use best practices to deliver tailored supportive services to meet individual needs;
- Build a collective action plan; Improve data sharing;
- Strengthen support systems available to help residents obtain and maintain housing; and
- Build provider capacity to address the needs of specific populations.

Adoption of the Phase I Homeless Plan by the Board of Supervisors will enable the County and local jurisdictions to be eligible for future State homeless grant funding. The May revision to the Governor’s proposed 2019-20 budget for the State includes a proposal for the Homeless Aid for Planning and Shelter Program (HAPS), which if adopted, will be a new source of homeless funding for local communities. A requirement for HAPS eligibility is a local jurisdiction’s demonstration of a Continuum of Care planning process that included participation of local and regional partners, and resulted in a plan adopted by a city council, county board of supervisors, or board of directors of a Continuum of Care, as appropriate, and is currently in place.

Phase II Regional Action Plan to Address Homelessness

HCD in collaboration with the Homeless Inter-Agency Policy Council, the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care, municipal jurisdictions and other key stakeholders has begun work on Phase II for the regional planning effort. The Phase II Plan will provide a strategic plan on the specific number, type and geographic distribution of units needed to address current and future needs and how funding resources may be more specifically targeted. A consultant to assist with the development of the Phase II Plan and regional planning process is being identified and retained. The planning process will examine additional data being collected that is essential in determining the needs of the community and

the effectiveness of current policies and allocation of resources. A Strategic Planning Workgroup will be formed to oversee the development of the Phase II Plan. With the guidance of the workgroup and consultant, further community engagement will be conducted including forums, consumer focus groups, surveys, additional interviews. Phase II will include actionable steps to the identified strategies and provide cost analysis for those efforts. The anticipated timeline to complete Phase II is 6-9 months.

Performance Measure: The County will collect and review data from multiple sources, including the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), annual compliance reports, demographic surveys, project performance reports, utilization records from the corrections system, and utilization records from the health care system. Reductions in homeless chronicity (length of time being homeless), improved service utilization by homeless households, and overall reductions in homeless households are measurable outcomes.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Fiscal Analysis:

Key Contract Risks:

Staffing Impacts:

Special Instructions: Please email an electronic copy of the Minute Order to Kimberlee Albers at kalbers@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

Attachments:

Authored by:

Jett Black-Maertz, Housing and Community Development Division (805-568-3503)