



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: February 23, 2021
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 3 Hours
Continued Item:
If Yes, date from:
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: Phase II of the Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Risk Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive a presentation on homelessness in Santa Barbara County, including a report on the Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness (“Plan”), which identifies key strategies and priority areas to address homelessness and ensures compliance with State of California requirements demonstrating a regional planning process;
- b) Adopt the Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness;
- c) Provide direction, as appropriate, for the implementation work plan priorities;
- d) Provide other direction, as appropriate; and
- e) 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 was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on June 18, 2019. This report identified five key strategies to address homelessness:

1. Increase access to safe, affordable housing;
2. Use best practices to deliver tailored support services;

3. Build a collective action plan;
4. Strengthen support system to obtain and maintain housing;
5. Build provider capacity to address complex needs.

The Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness development process began in October 2019 and concluded in January 2021, and included community outreach and input from over 400 community members, key stakeholder groups, and feedback during the Consolidated Plan process. Staff gathered data on funding amounts for housing and services dedicated to homelessness in Santa Barbara County for a 12-month period and analyzed recent state and federal investments to address homelessness. The Phase II Plan includes the Phase I Plan's five key strategies to address homelessness, priorities, with greater elaboration on implementation. Phase II calls out Regional System Level Goals focusing on Priority Populations, New Resources, and Performance, such as:

- I. Prioritize ending/dramatically reducing homelessness for specific populations.
- II. Increase housing inventory dedicated to homelessness and affordability.
- III. Create a culture of diversion and prevention across the homeless response system.
- IV. Improve overall homeless system performance.
- V. Achieve Continuum of Care strategies and benchmarks approved in 2019.

The housing and shelter needs identified were based on a gaps analysis conducted by LeSar Development, led by an experienced senior staff of proven industry professionals. The gaps analysis included system modeling using data from the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the Coordinated Entry System (CES), Point in Time (PIT) Count, and other data sources. These critical steps assisted both the CoC and County to identify resource gaps, key eligible activities and uses, and meet threshold criteria for the CoC and County to apply for federal and state funds. Attachment B presents the key sections of the Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness (Attachment A).

The Phase II Action Plan includes a detailed Implementation Work Plan that outlines specific strategies and actions, suggested community partners, timelines for accomplishing specific actions, and potential resources to be used. If approved, staff will present the Phase II Plan to City Councils and other key jurisdictional leadership bodies. This step will encourage community awareness and community leader commitment to addressing homelessness in the region.

Background: The Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness seeks to integrate strategies, cost analysis, and data, and organize those activities so all sectors of the community can work together toward a common set of actionable goals. Crafting a collective response to homelessness required an in-depth community-based planning process in coordination with County and jurisdictional staff, analysis of data, and drafting of this comprehensive, specific regional strategy in collaboration with the Continuum of Care and municipal jurisdictions. The Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness will guide strategic resource decisions and comply with funding resources including the State of California's Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, No Place Like Home (NPLH) Program, Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP), and California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH) Program. In 2018, Phase I of the Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness in Santa Barbara County was completed. This first effort sought to meet the obligations of various funding sources, which require homeless planning data and analysis as a condition of funding.

The collective vision for Santa Barbara County to address homelessness is as follows:
Create a regionally unified response and an urgent, flexible system of care that is driven by data, guided by best practices, and seeks to prevent homelessness whenever possible. It is through commitment, collaboration, and connection that we will minimize homelessness and ensure it is rare, brief and non-recurring.

For Santa Barbara County to reach this vision, the community needs to be guided by a core set of principles that serve as the foundation and create a culture for how the region addresses homelessness. These guiding principles include:

- *Respond with urgency*
- *Grounded in community with regular and ongoing communication*
- *Promote cross-sector collaboration and collective support*
- *Incorporate those with lived experience at all levels of planning, policy, and implementation*
- *Embrace best practices and be housing focused*
- *Use objective data to drive decision making*
- *Support homeless services providers and value contribution*
- *Maintain transparency and accountability at all levels of decision making*
- *Commit to ongoing performance management and process improvement*

The Phase I Plan identified five key strategies to address homelessness, and priorities, which were included in the Phase II Plan with further elaboration in a detailed implementation plan:

Strategy 1: Increase Access to Safe, Affordable Housing

- Priority 1: Increase Inventory of Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing
- Priority 2: Increase the Pool of Funding Available to Provide Housing and Services
- Priority 3: Expand and Enhance the Shelter System and Implement Best Practices
- Priority 4: Develop and Improve Partnerships with Landlords to Secure Housing in the Private Rental Market

Strategy 2: Use Best Practices to Deliver Tailored Supportive Services to Meet Individual Needs

- Priority 1: Provide education and ongoing training opportunities to stakeholders on best practices
- Priority 2: Expand Supportive Services to Meet Client Needs
- Priority 3: Connect Clients to Mainstream Services

Strategy 3: Build a Collective Action Plan; Improve Data Sharing

- Priority 1: Craft a Collective Response to Homelessness
- Priority 2: Improve Data Collection Countywide and Enhance the Use of HMIS as Person-Centered Tool
- Priority 3: Create a data-driven culture and use data to drive decision making
- Priority 4: Implement Cross Sector Data Sharing to improve Care Coordination and Outcomes

Strategy 4: Strengthen Support Systems Available to Help Residents Obtain and Maintain Housing

- Priority 1: Ensure a Coordinated Response System to Quickly Access Appropriate Housing and Services
- Priority 2: Improve Prevention and Diversion Programs
- Priority 3: Reach Out to Those Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
- Priority 4: Create Meaningful Opportunities for Employment

Strategy 5: Build Provider Capacity to Address the Needs of Specific Populations

- Priority 1: Provider Training
- Priority 2: Address Implementation Challenges
- Priority 3: Provider Coordination and Management
- Priority 4: System Management and Maintenance

Phase II also calls out Regional System Level Goals focusing on Priority Populations, New Resources, and Performance:

- I. Prioritize ending/dramatically reducing homelessness for specific populations.**
 - Immediate (October 2020 – December 2021): End homelessness among veterans
 - Immediate (July 2020 – February 2021): End unsheltered homelessness among youth
 - Short term (2021-2024): Prevent and end homelessness for families
 - Longer term (2021-2026): End homelessness for all other populations including unsheltered and chronically homeless persons
- II. Increase housing inventory dedicated to homeless households and affordability.**
- III. Create a culture of diversion and prevention across the homeless response system.**
- IV. Improve overall homeless system performance.**
- V. Achieve Continuum of Care strategies and benchmarks approved in 2019.**
 - Increase Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) bed coverages to 85%
 - Address individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless *and* increase the rate at which individuals and families in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and rapid rehousing exit to permanent housing
 - Re-house families with children within 30 days of becoming homeless
 - Increase the rate at which individuals and families in permanent housing retain their housing or exit to other permanent housing *and* minimize returns to homelessness
 - Increase access to employment, volunteerism, and community service *and* promote partnerships and access to employment opportunities with private employers and private employment organizations
 - Increase non-employment cash income (mainstream benefits) *and* increase access to other cash income/ Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Implementation Work Plan Priorities and Structure

The Phase II Action Plan includes a detailed Implementation Work Plan that outlines specific strategies and actions, suggested community partners, timelines for accomplishing specific actions, and potential resources to be used. As indicated in board letter recommendation “c)”, staff recommends the Board provide input on the Phase II Implementation Work Plan priorities. The work plan is comprehensive in addressing homelessness and funding availability often guides timelines. This input is valuable to staff in moving forward with the many action steps.

In order to drive the Action Plan implementation forward, County staff will engage stakeholders in championing the larger vision and goals of the plan, and in managing day to day responsibilities to ensure that specific actions are in progress and performance is monitored to ensure accountability at all levels. The quarterly Elected Leaders Forum advisory group will provide direction and oversight to the bodies implementing the work plan objectives. The Elected Leaders group is also where the Phase II plan progress will be monitored. It is anticipated that in order to provide timely follow up direction and track progress

the Elected Leaders Forum advisory group would meet on a monthly basis. Regular updates and progress will also be reported the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care.

If approved, staff will present the Phase II Plan, to City Councils and other key jurisdictional leadership bodies for adoption. This step will encourage community awareness and community leader commitment to addressing homelessness in the region. Staff also intends to coordinate communications via forums, meetings, and presentations to existing groups that meet on a regular basis, which includes but is not limited to: Homeless Inter-Agency Policy Council (HIAPC), Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care, jurisdictional working groups, and periodic regional meetings between the County and city managers. Staff is committed to hosting and participating in community meetings to present findings, progress and proposed solutions.

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

Attachments:

- A. Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness
- B. Presentation

Authored by:

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