



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-1253, **Version:** 1

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors and Board of Commissioners of the Community Development Commission

Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services, Community Development Commission

Staff Name and Phone Number: Tina Rivera, 707-565-7901, Dave Kiff, 707-565-7504

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

24-7 Safe Parking Programs and Indoor-Outdoor Non-Congregate Shelter Opportunities

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize staff to enter into agreements to award the recommended funding levels to the recommended recipients who proposed projects within the recent Notice of Funding Availability for 24/7 Safe Parking Locations and/or Indoor Outdoor Non-Congregate Shelters.
- B) Adopt a budget resolution authorizing adjustments to the Community Development Commission's Fiscal Year 2021-2022 adopted budget programming \$1 million from General Fund and \$1 million from PG&E Settlement Funds as directed during the June 2021 Budget Hearings (4/5th Vote Required).
- C) Direct staff to return back to the Board with an update as to these projects in June 2022.
- D) Authorize the Interim Executive Director of the Community Development Commission (CDC) to file Notices of Exemption in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Executive Summary:

On September 13, 2021, the County released a Notice of Funding Availability ("NOFA") (Attachment 1) to support 24/7 Safe Parking Locations and/or Indoor-Outdoor Non-Congregate Shelters (NCS). The Board of Supervisors had authorized the use of up to \$2 million for this purpose, in large part to increase the supply of safe off-street parking locations with wrap-around services for persons living in cars and recreational vehicles (RVs). The sites would be used to assist in delivering services intended to transition people into more secure housing environments, such as permanent supportive housing or other affordable housing.

Six (6) entities responded to the NOFA with proposals totaling over \$7 million in requested funding assistance. DHS and CDC staffs reviewed these proposals using a scoring rubric (Attachment 2). The ranking and suggested award amounts are included within the discussion section.

Discussion:

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed the interim directors of the Department of Health Services and the Community Development Commission to prepare and release a "24/7 Safe Parking Locations and/or Indoor-Outdoor Non-Congregate Shelters" NOFA on September 13, 2021 in order to increase capacity at the "front end" of the system of care that moves people from an unhoused situation to housing. As a reminder, the housing continuum is generally established as follows, although persons can move from being unhoused to stable market rate housing, or can remain in permanent supportive housing indefinitely:



As the COVID-19 pandemic has continued, beds in emergency shelter have been reduced to increase space between clients in accordance with health protocols and COVID-19 mitigation measures. Without adequate beds and given legal constraints on enforcing camping ordinances on streets and public spaces, encampments involving persons living in RVs, cars, and tents are prevalent. To address the pandemic’s constraints and to provide a safe alternative for the region’s COVID-19 vulnerable homeless population, those over the age of 65 with at-risk medical conditions, the County and others have stood up temporary non-congregate shelter (NCS) locations such as the Astro Motel, Fairground Trailer sites, and the Windsor Holiday Inn.

The County also utilized additional emergency and transitional housing sites such as Los Guilicos Village, Mickey Zane Place (formerly Hotel Azure), and Elderberry Commons (formerly the Sebastopol Inn). These critical sites provide approximately 135 units of needed shelter and housing with wraparound supports and services, but more beds are still needed in this initial shelter phase, given that during the last (2020) Point in Time Count, of the 2,745 persons who were identified as homeless, 1,702 of them were unsheltered.

To this end, during FY 2021/22 budget hearings the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors offered \$1 million of General Fund and \$1 million from PG&E Settlement funds to provide for both more NCS beds and more locations, and to seek proposals for safe off-street parking for persons living in cars or RVs and where service providers can assist them as they move through the system of care. In the diagram below, safe parking would typically fill the second slot, with the same caveats that people follow different paths from being unhoused to long-term housing.



The Board proposed assisting cities and other service providers (as well as the County itself) to increase the Safe Parking and NCS bed supply via a \$2 million NOFA. The objective of the NOFA was as follows:

“Alone or in partnership with cities and CBOs, stand up one or more 24/7 Safe Parking sites, Indoor-Outdoor Shelters with modular housing units (or similar), or some combination of the above in order to significantly increase the amount of non-congregate shelter (NCS) beds available to Sonoma County homeless. Once housed within an NCS facility, the provider will work to ensure the provision of quality wrap-around services that support residents to move into permanent housing.”

Per the NOFA, staff was to evaluate the submitted proposals based on:

- 1) Overall proposal quality

- 2) Projected cost effectiveness - more beds for less cost.
- 3) An ability to accept clients as soon as February 28, 2022
- 4) An ability to maintain full operations for at least a duration that allows substantive supportive sheltering to be stood up to accommodate clients moving from the sites to supportive and/or stable housing.
- 5) Geographic need - “the Board ... may award funds to geographic areas of Sonoma County that have the greatest need for a project.”
- 6) Adherence by the Proposer to the provisions of this NOFA, including but not limited to the Submittal Requirements.

Staff also evaluated the proposals based on the proposer’s ability to stand up the project - including past experience, other resources to apply to the site beyond the \$2 million offered, and the proposer’s control over the site (actual ownership or lease control, or such control being pending).

Six (6) entities submitted proposals, asking for over \$7 million in combinations of capital expenses and operational assistance. All proposals had merit, and were well-intended in their efforts to assist our unhoused population.

Below is a summary of the proposals as well as some of the analysis to rank them. Where we looked at cost/bed, we looked at it through the lens of the County’s net cost per bed (i.e. if the County’s funds would lead to the development of a 50-bed project that involved other funds contributed by the sponsoring entity, we took the County’s contribution/# of beds versus the overall cost of the project/# of beds):

City of Santa Rosa. The City submitted a proposal asking for \$500,000 to assist in the operational support of its planned up to 50-space 24/7 Safe Parking location at the Utilities Field Office off of Stony Point Road. The City itself intends contribute over \$2.3 million of its own or American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) resources to the project, with the intention of supporting the program for up to two (2) years. This proposal scored highly (**98** points out of **100**), thanks to its matching funds, site control, number of persons served (up to 50 at \$10,000 per bed), and ability to be stood up quickly (in January 2022).

City of Petaluma. The City and the Committee on the Shelterless (COTS) submitted a proposal for an interim housing/NCS expansion with up to 25 shelter units at COTS’ location at 900 Hopper Street. The City of Petaluma is proposing assisting the project with up to \$1.3 million in ARPA funds to assist in its development. This proposal involves an experienced provider/partner as well as significant contributions committed from the City, which will be able to keep it going for three (3) years. This also can be stood up quickly on a site-controlled location at 900 Hopper. This project scored **97/100**, with the County’s support at \$30,000/bed.

CDC/County Proposal. The CDC submitted an interim housing/NCS use at George’s Hideaway near Guerneville, to stand-up up to 15 Quickhaven-style shelters at this location following any ownership control of the site. The County should know at or before mid-January 2022 whether we will be able to secure Project Homekey-2 funds to purchase the site and improve it later for permanent supportive housing. Starting up the interim use is reasonable before the end of February 2022. This project ranked well (at **92/100**, at roughly \$19,444/bed) because of its location in an area (River area) that needs close-by NCS shelter facilities. The partner (West County Community Services) is also a successful and experienced collaborator. We believe that we will be able to operate this for at least one year. Should this project be funded, the Board will need to make appropriate CEQA findings for a Non-Congregate Shelter operation at this location.

The next **three proposals** have varying levels of complexity and hurdles to achieve, including (for two - HAS and HBC) a significant portion of the allotted \$2M in funds. They may need some additional review before a

funding award can be made.

Homeless Action Sonoma (HAS) - Sonoma Highway Site (18820 Sonoma Highway). HAS submitted an interim housing/NCS request for funding for 18 Quickhaven shelters (and related improvements to house 22 individuals) at this vacant land site north of the city of Sonoma. This is a project that HAS is working diligently on, and can be an important addition to the Sonoma Valley's housing resources via both interim and permanent housing. The County is working with HAS on Project Homekey-2 funding for this same project. HAS took ownership of the property on November 19, 2021, making this project more viable. At the same time, HAS has limited experience in the supportive services/operational field.

Sonoma Applied Village Services (SAVS) at Aston Barns. SAVS submitted three proposals, winnowing down one to a 24/7 Safe Parking opportunity for up to 36 recreational vehicles (and related support structures) at the Aston Barns location southerly of the Sonoma County Fairgrounds. Under SAVS proposal, the barns would remain in place without demolition, allowing for a faster stand-up of this safe parking space. SAVS is gaining greater experience in this field, and will be working with the City of Sebastopol on a similar effort soon. This proposal has challenges, including the need to address the fire code, seek permission of the Fairgrounds Board, and more.

DHS and CDC staff have been working with SAVS and HAS to coordinate a single project, likely at the HAS site (due to the recent purchase). SAVS and HAS could likely pull together a good project quickly if they work together, including with another local partner like Sonoma Overnight Support (SOS).

Hannah Boys Center (HBC) - Transition-Aged Youth (TAY) project. The HBC submitted an important and welcome proposal to address the region's critical need for long-term housing for TAY. Their proposal involves the renovation of three existing buildings into dormitory-style facilities for up to 30 TAY youth. We believe this to be an important project, but not one that is aligned with the NOFA's purpose and call. The HBC project will take longer to stand up, asks for all \$1.955 million of the \$2 million offered, and involves significant operational costs beyond that (HBC suggested securing \$3,000 per month per resident). As such, DHS and CDC did not propose it for funding. This project may be better suited for California's Project Homekey-3 (in 2022) and another expected carve-out for TAY youth facilities.

A summary of the proposals listed above follows in Table 1:

Table 1

Proposer	Orientation	Number of Persons Served	Total Ask	Recommended	Net Cost/Bed
City of Santa Rosa	24-7 Safe Parking	50 vehicles/RVs	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$10,000
City of Petaluma	NCS Transitional Shelter	25 Modular Units (Quickhaven)	\$1,118,059	\$750,000	\$30,000
County of Sonoma	NCS Transitional Shelter	18 Quickhavens	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$19,444
SAVS	24-7 Safe Parking, no barn removal	36 RVs	\$738,500	see notes	\$11,111
Hanna Boys Center	three buildings housing 30 TAY youth total (ages 18-24)	30 persons	\$3,069,200	\$0	\$65,167
Homeless Action Sonoma	NCS Transitional Shelter	22 persons housed	\$1,368,615	see notes	\$18,182

Based on the analysis noted above, DHS and CDC recommend awarding funding in the below amounts (Table 2) to the below projects. As noted in Table 1, there is a possibility that SAVS and HAS can work together well on the HAS site, as staff pursues that and secures confidence in that partnership, we would ask that \$400,000

be reserved for a SAVS/HAS collaboration at the HAS site:

Table 2 - Recommendations

Total Available	Santa Rosa	Petaluma	County of Sonoma	SAVS/HAS	Hannah Boys Center
\$2,000,000	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$350,000	\$400,000	\$0

Should the Board approve these recommendations, we will enter into agreements with the recipients for the funds and for the specific deliverables, and will report back to the Board by June 2022 with updates as to the expenditures and programs. Should the Board award funds to the George's Hideaway site, staff will make the appropriate CEQA findings relating to that use and project.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly support the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Healthy and Safe Communities

Goal: Goal 4: Reduce the County's overall homeless population by 10% each year by enhancing services through improved coordination and collaboration.

Objective: Objective 5: Continue to collaborate with local partners, including Continuum of Care, to advance planning and policies to address homelessness.

Prior Board Actions:

June 18, 2021 FY 2021-22 Budget Adoption

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY 22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$2,000,000		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$2,000,000	0	0
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$1,000,000		
State/Federal			
Fees/Other: PG&E Settlement	\$1,000,000		
Use of Fund Balance	\$		
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$2,000,000	0	0

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The Board asked to set aside \$1 million in general fund discretionary reserves and \$1 million from PG&E funding during June 2021 Budget Hearings to stand up one or more 24/7 safe parking or non-congregate shelter opportunities in the region. This action follows the Board's direction to call for proposals that would be

suitable for this allocation. Appropriations will be added to the FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget with the attached Budget Resolution for the expenses within CDC. The appropriations were included in the Non-Departmental budget during June Budget Hearings.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
N/A			

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None. Distribution of these resources and related follow-up will be with existing staff at DHS and the CDC.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - September 13, 2021 Notice of Funding Availability

Attachment 2 - Scoring Rubric

Attachment 3 - Budget Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None