



SOLANO COUNTY

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

To: Board of Supervisors
 From: Birgitta E. Corsello, County Administrator
 Date: February 21, 2020
 Subject: Significant Issues Update (1 of 2)

Update on Community Investment Fund

In June 2019, the Board of Supervisors established a Community Investment Fund (CIF) to address the top human service needs in the county. This CIF was the result of 3-phase assessment process that consisted of data gathering, key informant interviews, and a community survey. The resultant \$2 million-funded CIF is a three-pronged approach to investing in the community:

\$2,000,000 Community Investment Fund (formerly non-county contributions)		
Legacy Programs	Deep Programming	One-Time Programs
\$450,000 Annually	\$1,300,000 Annually	\$250,000 Annually
3 year commitment	3 year commitment	1 year commitment
Addresses many needs	Addresses top 3 needs	Addresses top 6 needs

Since the approval of the CIF, staff have been working to establish the infrastructure to implement the CIF. An update on each of these program categories is as follows:

LEGACY PROGRAMS

Of all the various programs previously authorized by the Board of Supervisors, there were six (6) programs that stood apart from the rest. These programs were ones that originated with or were initially brought forward by a Board of Supervisor member. These 6 Legacy Programs total \$450,000 annually and address a variety of community needs. The CIF designates funding for these programs for a 3-year period, providing a longer-term commitment to the contractor.

The legacy programs are:

1. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
2. Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

3. Veteran's Court Case Manager
4. North-Bay Stand Down
5. Children's Alliance
6. Senior Coalition.

During the Board of Supervisors discussion at its June 11, 2019 meeting, the Board established the CIF and requested that each of the 6 legacy programs come to present on their work to the Board. The first presentation on the legacy programs is set for February 25, 2020 and will bring forward the Children's Alliance and the Senior Coalition. By the Board's budget hearings, all of the legacy programs will have presented before the Board.

DEEP PROGRAMS

The Board of Supervisors designated the bulk of its \$2 million to address the top 3 needs in the county:

1. *Mental Health* – Mental Health was ranked the highest need in Solano County. Local experts shared that Solano County should clarify the existing System of Care and access points for mental health services and then widely share that information via a community engagement campaign. Secondly, Solano County should help to increase provider understanding of how to respond to residents with mental health needs; one way is by mapping and sharing the existing system of care and another way is to train providers on Mental Health First Aid to better connect clients to mental health services. To implement these strategies, staff have engaged with Touro University's Public Health Department to assist in the mapping of the mental health system of care and community engagement campaign. Additionally, staff are preparing a Request for Proposal to identify contractors that can provide Mental Health First Aid training.
2. *Housing* – Housing was ranked the second highest need in Solano County. While there are many aspects to "housing," housing affordability for lower income residents who are spending most of their income on housing was the main thread. The Board expressed interest in addressing affordable housing as it relates to reducing homelessness. To that end, the County Administrator's Office has plans to hire staff with housing expertise to work directly with cities on this important issue.
3. *Homelessness* – Homelessness was ranked the third highest need in Solano County. Experts cited the lack of coordination efforts and resources between entities trying to address homeless, as well as the lack of provider/community understanding of how to respond to persons who are homeless/at risk of homelessness as the problem to be addressed. Again, the new-hire within CAO will help address policy level issues in this area.

FINANCING

The two mental health strategies (System of care mapping/community engagement campaign and Mental Health First Aid Training) comprise \$600,000 of the \$1.3 million designated for deep investments and will be spent annually for three years.

The remaining \$700,000 is designated to tackle homelessness as well as housing affordability as it relates to reducing homelessness. While housing affordability is primarily in a city's purview, the County can engage in smaller ways by funding wrap-around strategies in partnership with cities to increase the supply of affordable housing. Strategies could be landlord incentives, or other strategies identified by the new CAO staff person in their conversations with city staff.

Additional strategies to address homelessness will be sought via a solicitation for contractors to provide innovative ideas to address homelessness in Solano. These ideas could be the establishment of a new homelessness initiative, provision of technical assistance to providers to increase coordination of care, pursuit of external funding, or could also be a complement to an existing effort to address homelessness.

These innovative ideas will be solicited via competitive proposal and implemented via multiple grants to community partners that engage in this work.

ONE TIME GRANTS

The one-time grants are designated to address any of the top 6 needs in the county:

1. Mental Health
2. Housing
3. Homelessness
4. Early Education
5. Youth Development
6. Safe and stable environments for children

These one-time grants will be funded up to \$50,000 per proposal for a one-year commitment, with \$250,000 designated annually. The proposals will be selected via a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Additionally, the RFP process will establish an eligibility list, so other worthy proposals will be ranked and may be funded should funding become available. Proposals for the one-time grants are due March 6, 2020 by 5 p.m. and the link to the RFP can be found [here](#).

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