

## **Homeless Services Update**

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# **San Benito County Homeless Services Update May 10, 2016**

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**Prepared By**  
Health & Human Services Agency

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## Pathway to Homeless Services

### Homeless Service Center

At the April 12<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting, the board approved the purchase of 1161 San Felipe Road as the future Homeless Service Center. The location of this site is ideal due to the close proximity of other Health & Human Services located right behind the premise. The offer for the purchase of this property has been submitted with an anticipated close of escrow time frame of mid-May. The purchase of this building is part of the master plan “Pathway to Homeless Services” as a Phase 1 strategy.

**Phase I** – In Phase I the goal is to acquire a site for a homeless service center. This homeless service center should, at minimum have the capacity for a nightly population of thirty-five people and should be supported by public and community organizations with the capability to assess and provide services to the homeless community. To that end the County of San Benito County has been successful in obtaining a 2014 Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) of which \$1.5 million is earmarked for the expenses and administration for the acquisition and improvement of a site. In addition, the County has also been successful in applying for and receiving Intergovernmental Transfer (IGT) funds, a federal source of funding under Medi-Cal funds to support the unmet needs of those in the community, including the homeless community, with chronic unmet medical needs. In 2015-16 the federal funds from IGT are \$155,000 and it is expected that the County can continue to successfully obtain similar or higher amounts in future years.

In 2015-16 the CDBG funds can be used to acquire and improve a site for a homeless service center and to launch Phase I of a Pathway to Homeless Services project. The County is pursuing the purchase of building located at 1161 San Felipe Road with a purchase price range of \$700,000 to \$800,000. With the current \$1.5 million CDBG grant, less estimated administrative expenses would leave an estimated \$500,000 to \$600,000 for improvement and soft costs of the site in a Phase I strategy to develop a 3000-4000 square foot shelter facility supported by services from both public and community organizations. And, operations could then be supported by a combination of a second 2016 CDBG grants, IGT funds in 2016-17, Emergency Shelter Grants and similar funds from other new sources such as Whole Person Care and State Affordable Health Communities funds shown in the chart below.

If San Benito County is successful in the expenditure of 50% of the current CDBG grant for acquisition or \$750,000 by April, 2016, then we may be considered for the 2016 round of CDBG funds. Based on prior years and conversations with the State it is expected that such an application for 2016 will be successful. If we cannot meet the time frame of the 50% expenditure level in 2016 we will also be well positioned to be competitive in 2017.

**Phase II** – In Phase II the goal is to successfully apply for and receive a second round of up to \$2.0 million funding for both acquisition and operations to be used to complete improvement of a homeless services center project which would mean an additional \$1.5 million for improvement of the site for such activities as employment and training assessment and services and up to \$500,000 for ongoing operations and, at this point in time, San Benito County can also project successful applications and receipt of HUD Emergency Shelter Funds in 2016 and future years.

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## Winter Warming Shelter

<b>Objective:</b> Provide daily emergency housing to a maximum of 40 homeless individuals during the months of December-March.	<b>Unduplicated # of Participants- For the Month</b>	<b>Duplicated # of Participants- For the Month</b>	<b>Unduplicated # of Participants- Annual</b>	<b>Duplicated # of Participants- Annual</b>
	1	324	56	3100
<b>Description of progress made towards achieving the objective</b>				

The Winter Warming Shelter opened on December 1<sup>st</sup> with 1 participant. The program steadily increased in numbers as shown below:

<b>Month</b>	<b>New Clients Unduplicated</b>	<b>Max Clients Served for the Month</b>	<b>Daily Average #</b>
December	24	21	14
January	16	33	27
February	10	30	26
March	5	27	25
April	1	24	22

Combined for all months Dec 1, 2015-April 15, 2016, we provided a total of 3,100 warm beds to our homeless community.

Participants are transported to the program to arrive on-site by 5:30 p.m. where they are checked-in by the staff and the security officer. They are then provided a hot dinner at 5:30 p.m. Participants then proceed to their assigned room to rest. Activities are planned throughout the week for participants to participate. Employment services have been conducting workshops to the guests on a weekly basis from 6:30-7:30 pm.

The rule of the program is that participants can receive shelter at night, however, they need to be out of the shelter at 8:00 a.m. Prior to leaving, they are provided a continental style breakfast and a sandwich lunch with chips and water to take with them. Most participants are dropped off at My Father's House where they can receive other services that this organization offers. In addition, participants are dropped off to other location such as attending appointments at HHSA or Behavior Health.

Success for the Warming Shelter Season:

### Linkages to services:

- 17 of the 56 (30%) guests who participated at the Warming Shelter were able to find housing. 2 guests were housed in the Helping Hands program, 1 went to a Veteran's transitional housing, and 1 was reunited with his wife and daughter after being apart from them for 2 years.
- 8 guests were able to attain employment while staying at the Warming Shelter.
- 5 guests were linked to Behavioral Health Services including Drug and Alcohol services. Due to being dropped off for appointments, guests were successful in attending appointments on a consistent basis.
- 6 total guests were able to attend the employment services offered at the America's Job

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Center.

- My Father's House was able to assist 3 of the Warming Shelter guests with being able to enroll in residential treatment services. Thank you to My Father's House for assisting the guests!

We are very happy of all staff for their professionalism, respectfulness of all team members, participants and partners and for their passion and commitment to serving the community of San Benito County and making it a better place to live. All staff is expected to perform to the highest standards in our efforts to providing the best possible program.

## **Quotes from Warming Shelter Guests:**

"In the past I never knew of any of these shelter programs. I had suffered a harmful living life to stay asleep. Now I know there is a Warming Shelter with warm beds, hot food, clean showers and friendly people. I don't have to go to work unshowered or starved. Thank you for the love, time, respect and donations. I hope one day I might be able to repay you. God Bless you all!" Andrea

"I had been trying to remain clean and sober. Since being out here it has given me the opportunity to stay that way. It's been a safe place for me and my wife." Donald

"I found myself homeless for the first time. I came to the shelter for the first time with my head down and a little ashamed. The staff was very understanding and didn't judge me and offered me a place to lay my head and something to eat. No questions asked." Margie

"I walked mostly from San Francisco to Hollister in need of a kind atmosphere and a life and place to be. I found it to be comfortable and safer than being out in the open. Part of a major part of my struggles subsided and fell to the side giving me time to go through my troubles of being without shelter and being fearful of losing all hope. The staff has been compassionate and understanding as much as possible. With kindness and hope restored just when I needed it the most." Justin

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## **Security**

The security services did a fabulous job! Security services were provided from the beginning of the program to the end of the program (4 p.m. to 8 a.m.). These are some security protocols:

- At check-in, all participants are padded and their bags are checked to ensure that nothing illegal is being brought in such as weapons, drugs, alcohol...etc.
- If a participant refuses to be patted or to check their bags, they are not allowed to stay at the shelter.
- If any illegal items are brought, it is immediately confiscated.
- The security officers monitor the grounds all night.
- Staff and the security officers monitor each room by conducting visual walk-through of each room every 15 minutes.
- Participants are required to keep the door unlocked and the blinds open for visual inspections.

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## Other Check-in Protocols

- All Participants are entered into the HMIS system on a daily basis
- All Participants review and sign the program rules and regulations
- At check-in, participants are assigned to a shared room with 3 other participants
- With the assistance of staff, all Participants complete the HMIS Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT). This is an evidenced based tool recognized by HUD and the Continuum of Care (CoC).

## Personnel

The program is lead by the Site Coordinator, who manages plans and leads staff with the implementation of the program. Every shift includes a minimum of two Shelter Workers. There are a total of two shifts (4:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.).

## Maintenance

The program is operated by all staff with high standards, including maintaining the facility and the entire premise clean and organized. Given this, all clients are expected to clean after themselves. Staff is also expected to keep the premise clean and safe. In addition, the Migrant Center Maintenance staff provides professional cleaning on a scheduled basis and on an as needed basis.

The Winter Warming Shelter has been an incredible success ensuring the safety and well-being of the homeless individuals of San Benito County. Without this community resource, many homeless residents would be out in the streets in the cold and in the rain. Thanks to the community, the City of Hollister and the Board of Supervisors for your support. Staff has done a superb job!!!

## Other Homeless Services

### Family Winter Shelter

Emergency Temporary Shelter during the winter months of Dec-March for **30** homeless Families. Families pay a \$300 security deposit and up to \$300 monthly rent. These funds are returned at the conclusion of the program to be used for permanent housing. A case manager assists families with a transition plan to secure permanent housing. There is a waiting list of approximately **150** families and is growing daily. This is a once in a lifetime program.

### Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)

**HOPWA** serves clients who are HIV Positive or living with AIDS & provides rental assistance, food vouchers monthly and dental assistance one time per year. This program serves **8** clients annually.

### Helping Hands Program

This program is funded by HUD Continuum of Care and provides housing to homeless individuals and families. Clients must be chronic homeless with a documented disability. Case Management and support services are provided to all clients. A total of 12 units are leased to house 14 clients. Funds have been received from HUD for the last 4 years.

### Rental Assistance

Rental Assistance is provided to low-income county residents. Services include: 1<sup>st</sup> Months Rental Assistance, Stop-Eviction and Security Deposit. There is a waiting list.

This program has been funded through various grants to include, FEMA, EFSP, EHAP, FESG, CDBG, CSBG, Since 1994 –**1849 families were served**. Currently there are 250 families on the waiting list.

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## Housing Support Services

**CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP):** Funds have recently been secured to provide Rapid Re-housing services to 15-18 CalWORKs homeless families enrolled in the CalWORKs program. The program provides rental assistance of up to 6 months, security deposit, utility assistance, emergency assistance, case management and support services.

## Hotel Vouchers:

Provide Hotel Vouchers to homeless individuals or homeless families. Vouchers are provided only when funds are available and for extreme cases since funds are limited.

## Homeless Service Center:

A \$1.5 million grant was received from CA Housing & Community Development (HCD) for the construction of a Homeless Service Center. The site has been identified and in the process of conducting an appraisal. Once the center is build, it will have approximately 50 beds, a day center where homeless individuals can take a shower, have a mail box, use the computers. Counseling services will be available along with other supportive programs such as job training services, life skills, transportation Assistance, life skills,...etc.

## Transportation Tokens

Bus tokens are provided to homeless individuals when needed.

## Job Training

**Job Training** is offered to all residents including homeless individuals who are “job ready”. This training is offered at the America’s Job Center of CA operated by CSWD & EDD with Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) and CalWORKS Employment funding.

## Utility Assistance

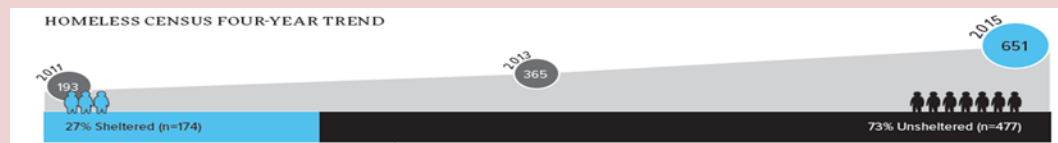
All income eligible clients are able to apply for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) program that help pay for PG&E or Propane utility assistance on an annual basis. Clients whose utilities are included in rent are also able to apply.

## Partners

- My Father’s House: Day center located at 910 Monterey St, Hollister, CA (831) 801-2922.
- Emmaus House: Domestic Violence Shelter for Woman and Children (877) 778-7978
- Community Food Bank: 1131 San Felipe Road, Hollister. The food bank has been providing food to homeless in our community for 35 years.
- City of Hollister, Veteran’s Services.....etc.

San Benito County Health & Human Services Agency, Community Services & Workforce Development (CSWD) has other 25 years providing homeless and housing services in San Benito County. Over the last few years, the homeless population has increased by 286.

## Other Information



Our strategic approach is to provide structured services to better serve this population. By providing housing services, a shelter program, case management, supportive services and creating partnerships with other organizations and the private sector, we are confident that our homeless community will be served effectively; thus reducing blight and concerns it may pose on our community. With the plans to have a Homeless Service Center strategically located near Health & Human Services and other programs, it will lend itself to providing structured and supervised

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programs thus mitigating any concerns our business community may have.

## Summary

There is no doubt that there is an urgent need to serve our homeless community of San Benito County. Over the last several years, the homeless population increased from 365 to 651. That's an increase of 81.48% or 286 homeless individuals (2015 Homeless Census). Health and Human Services Agency has been a leader and a member of the Local Homeless Service Providers Committee addressing the needs of our homeless Community. The Committee is comprised of the City of Hollister, Veteran's Services, COG, Emmaus House, the Community Action Board (CAB), the Probation Department...etc. to name a few and is committed to working together to better serve the needs of homeless individuals. In addition, the Community Action Board (CAB) for years has been supporting programs targeting our Homeless community and has worked with Community Services & Workforce Development (CSWD) with the implementation of these programs.