



COUNTY of VENTURA

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE
SEVET JOHNSON, PsyD
County Executive Officer

February 27, 2024

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Assistant County Executive Officer

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Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: Receive a Presentation On Actions to Implement the Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness Presented by LeSar Development Consultants on December 19, 2023, Provide Direction on Actions and Adopt Recommendations on Actions as Determined Appropriate; Authorize the Human Services Agency to Apply for Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Round 5 Grant Funding up to \$2.6 million; Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the Addition of Two Regular Full-Time Positions to the County Executive Office, Three Regular Full-Time Positions to the Human Services Agency, and Ten Fixed Term Full-Time Positions to the Sheriff's Office.

Recommendations:

It is recommended your Board:

- 1) Receive a Presentation on Actions to Implement the Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness Presented by LeSar Development Consultants on December 19, 2023, Provide Direction on Actions to Implement Plan and Adopt Recommendations on Actions (Exhibit 1) as Determined Appropriate by your Board;
- 2) Authorize the Human Services Agency to Apply for up to \$2.6 Million in Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Round 5 (HHAP-5) Funding through the Ventura County Continuum of Care to Support Two Years of Homelessness Prevention;
- 3) Adopt the attached resolution (Exhibit 2) authorizing the addition of the following fifteen full-time positions effective March 3, 2024:

Job Code	Description	Business Unit	Dept. (Unit)	FTE	Frequency	Salary Range
01642	Program Management Analyst	CEO	1011	1	Salary	\$126,617.68 - \$177,282.13
00108	Deputy Executive Officer	CEO	1011	1	Salary	\$145,197.67- \$203,296.68
00112	HS Homeless Services Social Worker III	HSA	3416	2	Hourly*	\$29.87- \$39.84
01527	HS Program Assistant II	HSA	3412	1	Hourly*	\$27.76- \$37.01
00550	Deputy Sheriff – 3 Year Fixed Term	SHF	2527	8	Hourly*	\$41.05- \$57.31
01780	Sheriff's Sergeant – 3 Year Fixed Term	SHF	2527	2	Hourly*	\$52.49- \$73.59

*Hourly positions are non-exempt from overtime

Ventura County Strategic Plan:

Strategic Priority: Address Homelessness and Lift Up the Most Vulnerable

The Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness directly addresses this priority. The recommendations presented here will improve system effectiveness, efficiency, and facilitate making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Fiscal/Mandates Impact:

Mandatory:	No
Source of Funding:	General Fund – Fund Assigned to Program Mitigation, HHAP-5 Grant Funds, CDBG Administrative Funding and City Contributions
Funding Match Required:	No
Impact on Other Departments:	Minimal

Summary of Revenues and Costs:*

	FY 2023-24	FY2024-25
Revenues:	\$ 0	\$1,815,978
Costs:		\$ 0
Direct	\$ 356,970	\$4,642,661
Indirect-Dept	\$ 0	\$ 0
Indirect-County CAP	\$ 0	\$ 0
Total Cost	\$ 356,970	\$4,642,661
Net County Cost	\$ 356,970	\$2,826,683
Recovered Indirect Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0

Costs for the current fiscal year are anticipated to be approximately \$356,970 and it is anticipated that these costs will be funded from savings in the current fiscal year budgets. Funding for the next fiscal year for the proposed actions will be incorporated into the FY2024-2025 budget for your Board's approval.

Background:

On December 19, 2023, your Board received a presentation from LeSar Development Consultants on the Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. After the presentation, your Board adopted the [Ventura County Homelessness Plan \("Plan"\)](#). The consultant's quantitative analysis identified a system flow imbalance with inflows into homelessness outpacing outflows and the qualitative analysis identified a number of system improvements with a multi-pronged approach over a period of years working in collaboration with cities, community-based organizations, non-profit organizations throughout Ventura County that, taken together, facilitate making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Discussion:

The Plan identifies five specific Action Areas as outlined below:

- Action Area 1: Housing Prioritization & Funding
- Action Area 2: Regional Coordination & Leadership
- Action Area 3: Outreach & Service Delivery
- Action Area 4: Data-Driven Decision Making
- Action Area 5: Representation & Inclusivity

Program Recommendations:

Although the presentation from LeSar Development Consultants in December highlighted eight specific recommendations, staff evaluated the findings within the Plan and formulated a series of specific recommendations to address gaps and improve system performance in response to the direction from your Board on December 19, 2023. These specific recommendations are summarized in Exhibit 1 by Plan Action Area, identifying anticipated one-time and ongoing costs, divided between County contributions and grant funding. Should your Board wish to pursue the recommendations in Exhibit 1, new Homelessness Solutions Director and Housing Solutions Director positions would be created within the CEO's office, two new Homeless Services Social Worker positions (to support an expanded homelessness prevention program), and a Homeless Services Program Assistant position (to support Homeless Management Information System improvements) would be created in the Human Services Agency, and ten positions in the Sheriff's office (eight Deputies and two Sergeants) would be added to form a Homeless

Liaison Unit. The total County investment, after accessing grant funding for numerous programs, would be \$2,826,683 annually. We are seeking your Board's authorization for the Human Services Agency to Apply for up to \$2.6 Million in Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Round 5 (HHAP-5) funding from the Ventura County Continuum of Care to support two years of homelessness prevention as show in Action Area 1 of Exhibit 1. If such grant funding is not awarded, we may need to return to your Board concerning funding; it should also be noted that the grant funds for this program (1-D) and that identified under program 2-A are two-year grant terms.

While staff believes all of the recommendations contained in Exhibit 1 are important, the most critical is addressing regional coordination (**Action Area 2** of the Plan). As emphasized by your Board in December, creating positions to serve as regional coordinators, or 'quarterbacks' are critical for this work. Both the Homeless and Housing Solutions Director positions would provide oversight, guide implementation, and facilitate coordination both within the County family and with external partners. The Housing Solutions Director is a position envisioned to have comprehensive understanding of development strategies, specific knowledge about local housing markets, and an acute awareness about the intricacies surrounding the financing of affordable housing with the ability to create, maintain and enhance partnerships with housing developers and local governments to fill the gaps in housing availability. This position would be expected to seek new resources, pursue innovative development strategies, and maximize the creation of new units in areas of greatest unmet need.

Continuum of Care/CEO staff would convene agencies and organizations whose staff are already engaged in encampment response (**Action Area 3**). Each agency has varying degrees of staff dedicated to this work, with Ambulatory Care in the Health Care Agency's Outreach and Engagement Program (through Backpack Medicine and One Stops) providing substance use, medical treatment, and behavioral health referrals; the Human Services Agency connects persons to social services and makes referrals to housing and/or shelter as it is available; and Watershed Protection District staff address encampments to ensure ecosystem restoration, which requires outreach and engagement prior to any clearance. The Sheriff's Office provided three different proposals for staffing a homeless unit with deputies, attached as Exhibit 3. The CEO, with full support of the Sheriff's Office, recommends the option in the left column of the Exhibit due to budget efficiencies and to help balance the composition of multi-disciplinary teams. The proposed option provides seven day-a-week service countywide. The Sheriff's Office provides homeless liaison unit deputies for safety and security during outreach, helps connect individuals with services and service providers, attends community meetings to educate the public and collaborate with community partners, investigates, and follows up on criminal matters related to homeless/vulnerable populations, provides notices to encampment residents and responds to trespass complaints on private property. While coordinating these multi-disciplinary teams from the CEO's office wouldn't usurp each agency's autonomy or supervision of their staff, it would serve to minimize overlaps,

coordinate responses to areas with highest need, and help to address barriers in communities with limited resources.

The imbalance and the need for ‘right-sizing’ the system, increasing access to housing and reducing inflows into homelessness is described in **Action Area 1**. In consideration of the 10:1:4 ratio (for every one unit of interim housing/shelter ten households are served with homelessness prevention and four units of housing are created), it is recommended that the County’s commitment to Homelessness Prevention be addressed by requesting that Human Services Agency apply for HHAP-5 funding to support two new Homeless Social Workers and provide both one time and flexible funding to keep up to 500 households in their housing. An award of \$2.6 million would support this program for two years, as HSA pursues other funding to sustain the program.

Data driven decision-making is highlighted in **Action Area 4**. Included here are recommendations to enhance access to, and use of, data in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by seeking a new vendor and increasing system support with the addition of a Program Assistant in the Human Services Agency. These investments would improve the quality and timely access to data, allow for regular reporting and transparency, and reduce the administrative burden for partners using the HMIS system.

Lifecycle Cost Analysis Interim Housing vs. Permanent Supportive Housing

In addition to developing the attached recommendations in Exhibit 1, staff conducted a comprehensive analysis of the lifecycle costs for various shelter and housing intervention models. This information is informed by real experiences with local housing/non-congregate shelter options, experiences of nearby communities, and quotes from local vendors. Staff analyzed three local modular interim housing developments and one modular permanent supportive housing development to provide the Board with a magnitude of development costs for these types of housing solutions. The chart below provides the total cost of each development, including a per unit cost:

<u>Development</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u># of Units</u>	<u>Total Development Cost</u>	<u>Total Development Cost/Unit</u>
Hope Village (Interim)	Santa Maria	94	\$7,165,523	\$76,229
La Posada (Interim)	Goleta	80	\$6,947,680	\$86,846
Navigation Center (Interim)	Thousand Oaks	50	\$9,629,854	\$192,597
LifeArk El Monte (Permanent)	El Monte	19	\$3,615,405	\$190,284

The per unit costs described above vary as interim housing units cost less than permanent units. The majority of the costs associated with these developments are site costs, which

include foundations and utility connections. These costs are extremely variable as each site poses unique challenges, such as a lack of infrastructure or the need to add additional fire/life safety improvements (which contributed to increasing the site costs of the Thousand Oaks Navigation Center). The following table is a comparison of costs for non-congregate shelter and permanent housing using per unit cost estimates for a LifeArk (a modular solution) or similar model (both with and without bathrooms/kitchens), development of conventionally built housing and investing in existing affordable housing units for dedication to permanent supportive housing (as units become available).

65 Units - No Site Development Costs					
Housing/Shelter Type	Notes	One Time Capital Cost	10-Year Operating Cost	Total 10-Year Investment	Avg. cost/unit/yr
Interim Shelter - LifeArk or similar ¹	Assumes free land	\$ 4,294,615	\$ 24,050,000	\$ 28,344,615	\$ 43,607
Alternative PSH (LifeArk or similar with kitchens and baths) ²	Assumes free land	\$ 8,385,000	\$ 4,667,650	\$ 13,052,650	\$ 20,081
65 units traditional PSH (traditional build or modular) ³	Integrated into community, scattered site, restricted for 55 years	\$11,933,090	\$ -	\$ 11,933,090	\$ 18,359
Agreements with Housing providers to subsidize 65 units for PSH ⁴	Units available as vacancies occur; subsidy based upon 60% AMI and \$3,100/unit for supportive services	\$ -	\$ 10,907,000	\$ 10,907,000	\$ 16,780

¹ Assumes public land (no cost); \$66K/unit and \$37K/year/unit operations

² Assumes public land (no cost); \$129K/unit and \$7K/year/unit operations

³ Investments spread across multiple projects; County investment 'all in' and includes supportive services. Units restricted for 55 years.

⁴ Unit availability not guaranteed; no net increase in units but very cost-effective for PSH. Integrates individuals into community.

Given the fact that site improvements are location specific and dependent upon access to utilities, location, and other factors, these costs have been eliminated from the analysis. However, for frame of reference, the site costs for these types of developments can range from \$1.2M for a small 19-unit development to several multiple millions of dollars for larger developments.

For consistency, each presumes 65 units and reflects estimated costs for the County's estimated investment (not the total development cost). This comparison is not to suggest that investments should only be made in one type of shelter and housing intervention, but rather should be used to guide decision making as opportunities for investment come forward. For example, even though the fourth option - investing in existing units to dedicate to PSH is the least affordable – such an investment wouldn't contribute to a net increase in the number of housing units available. Furthermore, availability is unpredictable as it depends upon units becoming available, yet it is an extremely

affordable strategy to increase the amount of housing dedicated for this purpose and serves to integrate people into the larger community. As stated earlier, this approach will be formed based upon real-time data and input by service partners we collaborate with.

We would like to thank all the agencies and organizations who contributed to the development of these recommendations. What is being presented is the starting point from which staff will return to your Board on a biannual basis to report on the success, obstacles, and opportunities. Through regular engagement, data analysis and communication with fellow County agencies and external partners, we will continue to make refinements to the recommendations you approve.

This item has been reviewed by the Health Care Agency, Human Services Agency, Sheriff's Office, Auditor-Controller Office, and County Counsel. If you have questions, please contact Mike Pettit, Christy Madden, or Jennifer Harkey at 654-2864, 654-2679 and 658-4342, respectively.

Sincerely,



Christy Madden
Sr. Deputy Executive Officer



Sevet Johnson, PsyD.
County Executive Officer

- Exhibit 1: Actions and Recommendations Summary Spreadsheet
- Exhibit 2: Resolution Adding Twelve Homeless Services Positions
- Exhibit 3: Sheriff's Office Unhoused Unit Proposal