



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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October 1, 2019

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Sachi A. Hamai
Chief Executive Officer

RESPONDING TO THE HOMELESS COUNT (ITEM NO. 80B, MAY 14, 2019 AGENDA)

On May 14, 2019, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to report back to the Board during Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-20 Final Changes Budget with a report that analyzes the 2019 Homeless Count and its implications for the allocation of both State and Measure H funding to prevent and combat homelessness. On June 24, 2019, the CEO submitted a report to the Board that identified three potential areas within which to augment the approved FY 2019-20 Measure H funding allocations to respond to the Point-in-Time Count Results. These areas were:

- Implementation of the Mainstream Systems Homelessness Prevention Action Plan;
- Funding to address youth homelessness; and
- Enhanced Services for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness.

The Board motion also directed the CEO to return to the Board during FY 2019-20 Supplemental Changes with: (1) recommendations, if any, to shift Measure H funding allocated in FY 2019-20 between and/or within the approved Measure H-funded Homeless Initiative strategies and use new State funding to fill behind any allocated Measure H funding which is shifted for areas that potentially need additional funding based on the Point-in-Time count; and (2) recommendations for utilization of some, or all of the County's share of new State funding to address potential areas that may also need additional funding based on the homeless count.

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The Attachment outlines recommendations for use of unallocated, unspent Measure H funding from FY 2018-19 in the three areas identified for potential augmentations in the CEO's June 24, 2019 memo.

If you have any questions, please contact Phil Ansell, Homeless Initiative Director, at (213) 974-1752, or pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov.

SAH:FAD:PA
JR:EBI:tv

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

Recommended Augmentations to the Approved Fiscal Year 2019-20 Measure H Funding Allocations to Respond to the 2019 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Results

On June 4, 2019, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) released the results of the 2019 PIT Homeless Count, which was conducted over a three-day period in January 2019. On June 24, 2019, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) provided the Board of Supervisors (Board) with a report analyzing the 2019 PIT Count. In the report, the CEO noted the substantial increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County (County). The Countywide total of 58,936 people experiencing homelessness represents a 12 percent increase from 2018. While noting the gravity of this increase, the report also highlighted the significant progress the County and its partners have made in moving individuals and families out of homelessness and into permanent housing – progress that is counterbalanced by the overwhelming inflow of individuals and families into homelessness due to the affordable housing crisis in the region.

Several key trends in the PIT Count data were highlighted in the June 24 report, including:

- The consistently high percentage of people experiencing homelessness in the County who are unsheltered, including those living in vehicles;
- The increase in the number of youth experiencing homelessness;
- The increase in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness;
- The nearly one quarter of those counted who experienced homelessness for the first time in the preceding year; and
- The Countywide increase in homelessness.

Despite the fact that the Board approved the recommended Measure H Funding Allocations for FY 2019-20 prior to the release of the PIT Count data, the approved allocations direct resources in several important ways that are responsive to the trends identified in the PIT Count, including increases in funding for prevention, permanent supportive housing serving people experiencing chronic homelessness, employment programs, and safe parking for people residing in vehicles.

Recommended Augmentations to the Approved FY 2019-20 Measure H Funding Allocations to Respond to the PIT Count Results

In the June 24 report, CEO identified three areas for potential enhancements based on the PIT Count Results. These were: implementation of a mainstream system homelessness prevention action plan, funding to address youth homelessness, and enhanced services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The CEO recommends utilizing unspent, unallocated Measure H funding from FY 2018-19 to support several efforts that fall into these three areas and thereby augment the approved FY 2019-20 Measure H funding allocations for various strategies. These efforts, and the recommended funding to support them, are described below.

Implementation of Prevention Action Plan

- *Mainstream Systems Prevention: Provide \$3 million to implement recommendations from the forthcoming Prevention Action Plan. These funds would be added to HI Strategies A1 and A5, "Homeless Prevention Program for Families" and "Homeless Prevention Program for Adults," respectively.*

On May 21, 2019, the Board directed the CEO in collaboration with various County departments, LAHSA, legal services providers, research organizations, and other experts to assess how to strengthen homelessness prevention efforts within mainstream County departments and provide an interim report to the Board in 90 days, and an action plan by November 21, 2019. The CEO provided the interim report to the Board on August 22, 2019. The specific recommended uses of this \$3 million will be identified in the November 2019 action plan that will be submitted to the Board.

- *Eviction Defense Services: Utilize \$2 million to commence implementation of Phase 1 of an Eviction Defense and Prevention Program. These funds would be added to HI Strategies A1 and A5.*

On May 21, 2019, the Board directed the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) and the CEO, in collaboration with various County departments, to report on expanding eviction defense services in the County. The report was submitted to the Board on August 26, 2019. On September 10, 2019, the Board adopted a motion directing the CEO to fund the FY 2019-20 start-up and operations of a phased-in Program with \$2 million in Measure H funds.

Funding to Address Youth Homelessness

- *Enhancing services for Transition Age Youth (TAY): Utilize \$4 million to support services to address increases in homelessness among TAY. These funds would be added to HI Strategy E14, "Enhanced Services for Transition Age Youth."*

Consistent with the growing need for youth-specific homeless services, as indicated by the increase in youth experiencing homelessness according to the PIT Count, these funds will enhance current efforts to serve TAY. Additional funding will support increased access to Rapid Re-housing, TAY-specific Interim Housing, Access Centers, and Education and Employment Services. This one-time Measure H funding will be a bridge to new State funding through the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAPP), where a minimum of 8 percent of the total funding must be utilized to combat homelessness among youth.

Enhanced Services for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

- *County Skid Row Coordinator: Add \$205,000 for a County Skid Row Coordinator in the Department of Health Services. These funds would be added to HI Strategy E7, "Strengthen the Coordinated Entry System."*

According to the 2019 Homeless Count, there are approximately 2,783 unsheltered persons living in the Skid Row area of downtown Los Angeles (an additional 1,974 persons are sheltered). The County Skid Row Coordinator will serve as the lead for coordinating and integrating the work of County departments on Skid Row. The Coordinator will work with all County departments that have a presence in the area or provide services to Skid Row residents (directly and/or through contractors) with a specific emphasis on coordinating the work of the Departments of Health Services, Mental Health, Public Health, Public Social Services, and Children and Family Services. In addition, the County Skid Row Coordinator will work closely with both the City of Los Angeles and LAHSA Skid Row Coordinators.

- *Motel Master Leasing: Provide \$3 million to launch the Motel Master Lease pilot program to use motel rooms as interim housing for chronically homeless individuals and potentially also use the motel parking lots for Safe Parking. The funds would be added to HI Strategy E8, "Enhance the Emergency Shelter System."*

On June 18, 2019, the Board approved a motion to develop a plan to identify at least one motel in each Service Planning Area with which the County can enter into master lease agreements to shelter homeless individuals and evaluate the feasibility of using the motel parking lots for Safe Parking programs.

- *Housing for Public Health: Add \$756,000 for four public health nurses at the Department of Public Health, who will be dedicated full-time to the Housing for Public Health Program. The funds would be added to HI Strategy E6, Countywide Outreach System.*

On October 16, 2018, the Board approved a motion establishing a Housing for Public Health pilot program to conduct robust outreach and engagement at large encampments with a high risk for public health crises. The pilot took place on May 1 and 2, 2019; in addition to regular outreach services, it included administration of vaccinations, training on the use of Naloxone, and the issuance of Naloxone kits. The additional funding will support the scaling of the pilot Countywide. The added public health nurses will work with outreach teams to provide services at identified high-risk encampments throughout the County.

- *Safe Storage: Utilize \$810,000 to support staffing and one-time costs for supplies and equipment for the first six months of a safe storage program. The funds would be added to HI Strategy E6, "Countywide Outreach System."*

On June 4, 2019, the Board approved a motion directing the CEO to explore the feasibility of developing and launching a Storage Pilot Program for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness. The CEO-HI convened a workgroup to develop a Safe Storage Program, with the goal of siting one location in each Supervisorial District. Safe Storage programs provide a place for people experiencing homelessness to temporarily store their personal belongings so that they can attend medical appointments, receive inpatient health, mental health, and/or substance abuse treatment, and enter shelter.

Next Steps

The CEO has included the above items in its FY 2019-20 Supplemental Changes budget and will move forward with implementation should the Board approve this budget.