



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

County Manager's Office

DATE: July 2, 2009
BOARD MEETING DATE: July 14, 2009
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: David S. Boesch, County Manager
SUBJECT: Economic Urgency Initiative – Update

RECOMMENDATION:

- A) Accept a report on the status of the Economic Urgency Initiative
- B) Adopt an Appropriation Transfer Request transferring \$500,000 from Non-Departmental Reserves to County Manager Grants and Contributions

BACKGROUND:

In response to the economic downturn and the growing need for safety-net services, your Board on March 31, 2009, authorized the County Manager to approve funding requests for emergency assistance to a maximum of \$500,000 through December 31, 2010. The funds were authorized as a dollar-for-dollar match with an outside agency. This funding complemented efforts initiated by County staff in December 2008 to collaborate with community partners, link residents with service providers and enhance community awareness about available services. The goal was to provide a coordinated response to urgent needs for food, shelter, healthcare, employment, housing assistance and other critical services.

DISCUSSION:

As a result of your Board's action, the County teamed with Silicon Valley Community Foundation to distribute \$1 million in grants to nonprofit organizations that are helping San Mateo County residents survive the recession. Of the total amount, \$500,000 is the County's authorized funds and the other \$500,000 is part of the Foundation's \$1 million safety net fund to be awarded to food and shelter



organizations in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The Foundation collaborated with the County to provide funding for organizations that provide food and shelter, while the County agreed to provide funding for food and shelter as well as short-term assistance for health services, employment counseling and other health and human services. The County and Foundation issued a joint request for proposals on May 1, 2009, outlining eligibility and evaluation criteria. These included a demonstrated need for the services provided, clarity of project activities, meaningful benchmarks, an established track record and other characteristics. Responses were due on May 28 at 5 p.m.

Nearly 50 county-serving organizations applied for funding. Foundation staff and County staff reviewed applications as outlined in the request for proposals based upon the published criteria. On June 30 the Foundation and County jointly announced that a total of 32 organizations were selected to receive grant funds for food, shelter, and other safety net services. Of these, 27 organizations would provide food and shelter to county residents for a total of \$766,000 in grants from the Foundation and the County's Economic Urgency Assistance Program. Five organizations would provide health and dental care, services for victims of domestic violence and employment counseling to county residents for a total of \$234,000 from the County's Economic Urgency Assistance Program. Grants ranged from \$5,000 to \$100,000.

At the staff level, numerous additional efforts have been launched under the Economic Urgency Initiative. These include:

- Developing the SMC Helps website, a one-stop information resource for those in need. Total page views from May 1 to June 30 is 4,825.
- Creating and publishing 40,000 brochures in English and Spanish: San Mateo County Survival Guide to Housing, Credit & Unemployment. Brochures have been distributed Countywide. Additional copies may soon be needed. Through the County partnership with the Foundation, the Foundation paid for the printing of the brochures.
- Assisting clients of Workforce Development by engaging displaced workers as volunteers to help others enroll in PeninsulaWorks and receive job search assistance and potential training resources. This project is under development.
- Convening a Food and Shelter Community Workgroup that includes representatives from more than 30 community-based organizations, staff from local foundations and a multi-departmental County team. The workgroup contributed to the development of the website and the brochures and has provided a forum for information sharing.
- Developing and doing quarterly updates of an economic well being "dashboard" to track trends in key indicators of both the economic health of the county and the impact of the economic downturn on San Mateo County residents.

- Purchasing two large storage containers for Second Harvest Food Bank.
- Working to provide a single phone number referral service to access an array of community support services.

County staff will continue efforts to boost the capacity of non-profit organizations throughout our community to provide much-needed assistance, leverage resources and be positioned to receive funding from government agencies or foundations. The County will also continue to monitor key economic indicators that demonstrate the need for services.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Board approved the use of Non-Departmental Reserves in the amount of \$500,000 for this purpose on March 31, 2009. Because funds will be distributed in the new fiscal year, another Appropriation Transfer Request (ATR) is needed to transfer \$500,000 from Non-Departmental Reserves to Grants and Contributions in the County Manager's memberships and contributions budget where funds will actually be disbursed. Funds have been matched dollar-for-dollar by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, bringing the total amount of grant awards to \$1 million. Of the 32 non-profit organizations that were awarded grants, the County will enter into agreements with 16 of the organizations, totaling \$500,000, and the Foundation will enter into agreements with the remaining organizations, which will allow for a more efficient distribution of funds and execution of agreements.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - List of Grantees

Attachment 2 - Joint Request for Proposals Safety-Net Services

Attachment 3 - San Mateo County Survival Guide (English and Spanish versions)

Attachment 4 - SMC Helps website screenshot

Attachment 5 - San Mateo County "Dashboard" of Economic Well Being Indicators