



Solano County

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Legislation Text

File #: 18-595, **Version:** 1

Consider the approval of a concept and implementation of a Tiny Shelter Pilot Project; Authorize the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with Community Action NorthBay for the Tuffshed units; and Authorize the County Administrator to take all steps necessary to implement the Pilot Project

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

Supervisor Thomson recommends that the Board:

1. Approve the concept and implementation of a Tiny Shelter Pilot Project (up to five years) adjacent to the William J. Carroll building in Vacaville (APN 0129-320-280 and 0129-320-290); and
2. Authorize the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with Community Action NorthBay for the Tuffshed units; and
3. Authorize the County Administrator to take all steps necessary to implement the Pilot Project in accordance with state law.

SUMMARY:

The 2017 Point in Time Homeless Count found that there were 1,232 homeless individuals living in Solano County, of which 132 were living in shelters and 183 were living in some form of transitional housing. 74% or 917 individuals were living on the streets or in encampments without shelter of any form. State law allows counties to declare a homeless emergency and suspend regulations that prescribe standards for housing to allow for the use of temporary emergency homeless shelters. The proposed Tiny Shelter Pilot Project would allow five Tuffshed units to be placed on County-owned property adjacent to the William J. Carroll building in Vacaville.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no additional impact to the County General Fund at this time. Staff time for preparation of program planning and guidelines is included in the District 5 budget.

DISCUSSION:

Justification:

Solano County has been working with community partners on addressing the homeless population and the lack of adequate homeless shelter capacity in the County to properly house the 1,232 individuals who are currently homeless.

State law allows for cities and counties to declare a homeless emergency and suspend standard housing regulations to provide immediate alternatives for homeless shelters. Pursuant to Government Code section

8698 et seq., when the County declares a shelter crisis, the County becomes immune from liability for ordinary negligence that may occur in providing emergency housing. These statutes further suspend all regulatory statutes and regulations that prescribe standards of housing, health, and safety that would otherwise prohibit the County from allowing the use of Tuffsheds as emergency shelters. The statutes further provide that the County could adopt health and safety standards to ensure minimal public health and safety. Approval of the recommended action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), under Cal. Pub. Resources Code Sections 21080(b)(4) and 21060.3.

The Tuffshed pilot project model would be similar to Yuba County's 14 Forward Project and use a "housing first" model. The location adjacent to the William J. Carroll Center is ideal due to the wrap-around health and social services that are offered, and will be required by the participants/tenants of the project.

Pilot Project Funding:

Staff has received commitments from five organizations or individuals to donate the Tuffsheds to Community Action NorthBay (CAN-B) for the Tiny Shelter Pilot Project. Staff is proposing to execute an MOU with CAN-B to manage the units (Attachment A). Proposed program participation guidelines are attached as Attachment B (prepared by District 5 staff).

Pilot Project Program & Planning:

Health & Social Services Community Services Staff

Onsight Services for:

- Cal Fresh
- Medi Cal
- Mental health screening and service connection
- Substance abuse screening and service connection
- EBT card delivery
- SSI/SSDI application assistance connection

Veteran's Services

Onsight Services for:

- VA Benefits (all)
- Compensation Pension
- Healthcare
- Education

Solano County Workforce Development Board

William J. Carroll Center:

- Employment services
- Financial management education

5th Impact Screening Committee (Health & Social Services Community Services Coordinator, Representative from the Vacaville Homeless Roundtable- There's a Better Way, Homeless Outreach Coordinator, Vacaville Police Department)

- Will screen applicants
- Consult with other invested Stakeholders
- Approve applicants
- Conduct 30-day progress reviews of tenants
- Convene disciplinary hearing if needed

Volunteer Resident Coordinator (TBD will reside on-sight)

- House rules enforcement
- Maintenance liaison
- Tenant support

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board can choose to not authorize the Tiny Shelter Pilot Project; however, that is not recommended since this project will provide immediate shelter for a minimum of 10 homeless individuals through the winter who would otherwise have no form of protection from the elements.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Community Action North Bay, Health & Social Services, County Counsel, Veterans Services, Solano County Workforce Development Board, and Vacaville Police Department have been consulted on the project.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

In order for this pilot project to be implemented, a series of next steps will still need to be acted upon. For example, the completion of the MOU with Community Action North Bay should include a budget for operations and agreed to site plan with details on the coordination of services for the residents of the pilot project. The management of the site, including the feasibility of any utilities, required fencing, other onsite facility needs, as well as access, maintenance, parking needs and other services required should also be reviewed. During the implementation phase of the pilot project, concerns may arise that require further discussions and potential recommendations from staff from both resource management and health and social services departments. The proposed pilot project at this time does not anticipate a general fund contribution, but seeks support from health and social services staff and resources, relies on donations for goods and services and the establishment of several MOU's and supportive agreements. Staff will return to Board should these assumptions change.