



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

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CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

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PROJECTS TO ADDRESS LOCAL HOMELESSNESS ANNOUNCED

The County of Santa Cruz and Homeless Action Partnership are pleased to announce award recipients through the HEAP/CESH funding process to help address the local homelessness crisis.

In 2018, the State approved unprecedented funding to address homelessness, allocating \$500 million Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and increasing funding to the ongoing California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH) program. Both programs are administered through the local Watsonville/Santa Cruz City/County Continuum of Care (CoC), with the local share of HEAP funds totaling \$9,674,883.45 and CESH funds totaling \$889,424.

The awards include funding for site acquisition, operation of North and South County navigation centers, safe parking programs, a youth homeless resource center, rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention services, housing navigation, work experience, hygiene services and much more. In total, 35 applications requested more than \$30 million, with 22 projects awarded for a total of \$8,975,556.

"The Santa Cruz County community has significant needs when it comes to addressing homelessness at the local level," Santa Cruz County Homeless Services Coordinator Rayne Marr said. "Through this unprecedented opportunity, we're significantly enhancing our system of shelter, services and prevention efforts to better serve the community. We thank all applicants for their thoughtful proposals and dedication to improving the lives of all Santa Cruz County residents."

The awards were issued based on a priority matrix developed by local elected officials, community members and nonprofits. They were selected through a rigorous review process following a strict conflict-of-interest policy. All awards are subject to an appeal process.



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Project agreements are expected to be executed in April, with the expectation that all funds will be expended by June 2021 per the terms of the HEAP program. All applicants are expected to contribute client-level and program-level data to the Santa Cruz County HMIS, participate in the Santa Cruz Smart Path Coordinated Entry System, and comply with other HEAP and CESH program requirements.

Through a previous emergency allocation process, the County and HAP awarded \$1 million in emergency HEAP funds through a letter of interest process, resulting in immediate and additional shelter and service options for local homeless persons.