

**MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration**

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Jeffrey S. Brown, M.P.H., M.S.W., Director of Health and Human Services
Graham Knaus, Assistant Director of Health and Human Services
DATE: September 23, 2014
SUBJECT: Homeless Needs Assessment and Action Plan

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Approve a contract with Marbut Consulting to provide a homeless needs assessment and action plan not to exceed \$49,500 and authorize the Director of Health and Human Services to sign the resulting contract and subsequent amendments up to 10 percent of the original contract amount, consistent with the contract's subject matter and scope of work.

BACKGROUND:

In 2004, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. The plan was based on census data from 2002 and documented 405 homeless individuals in Placer County and several gaps in services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It also offered several recommendations to enhance the continuum of services available to this population.

Using the data and recommendations from the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness and with support from the Board and key community stakeholders, the Placer County community has made significant improvements in the last 10 years to address the service gaps that were identified in the 10-Year Plan. Some examples of community improvements that have been implemented since 2004 include:

- Initiated nomadic homeless shelter in South Placer County including Auburn (The Gathering Inn).
- Expansion of homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing assistance through The Salvation Army, Roseville Home Start, The Lazarus Project, and The Gathering Inn.
- Expansion of temporary housing assistance (motel vouchers, rent assistance) through Homeless Assistance/CalWORKS, and Placer County Adult and Children's Systems of Care.
- Additional rent subsidies through Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8).
- Assistance for victims of domestic violence including shelter in the Lake Tahoe region and additional long-term housing assistance through Stand Up Placer.
- Expansion of transitional and permanent supportive housing and assistance for people with serious mental illness through Placer County Adult System of Care and Advocates for Mentally Ill Housing.
- Expansion and enhanced coordination of food banks.
- Expanded substance use disorder treatment services (sober living houses, outpatient services) through a number of providers in South Placer County.

Despite these accomplishments, homelessness remains a significant issue in several Placer County communities. According to 2013 census information, there are 594 homeless individuals in Placer County. This is a 23 percent increase in the homeless population since 2005 (oldest year using current counting methodology and housing definitions), compared to a 14 percent increase in the overall population of Placer County during this time frame. Since 2005, the number of homeless people who are unsheltered and who are long-term homeless continues to escalate. In particular, the number of unsheltered homeless people with substance use disorders and serious mental illness continues to grow.

There is interest from both service providers and community groups in a comprehensive assessment of homelessness in Placer County and an exploration of potential opportunities to better align services and housing to identify needs for people who are homeless and to minimize the impact of homelessness on our communities.

Dr. Robert Marbut has extensive experience working in the area of policy and services for people who are homeless. He has provided consultation to numerous cities and counties throughout the United States, offering a comprehensive assessment of gaps between available services and needs, and options for the community to consider related to housing and services for the homeless. This contract will provide a detailed assessment of existing and projected future needs and capacity of services provided through the County, community providers, and other local agencies. The assessment will include the Auburn, Tahoe, and South County regions of the County. In addition, this study will be linked to a subsequent item for Board consideration regarding a potential Site Access Agreement to be granted to The Lazarus Project for a South Placer parcel owned by the County.

To maximize the responsiveness to the community, the effort will be coordinated through a homeless advisory group which will include Dr. Marbut and key community stakeholders.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding for this contract is included in the FY 2014-15 Final Budget.