

TOWN *Of* **PARADISE VALLEY**



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Bien-Willner and Town Council Members

FROM: Jill Keimach, Town Manager
Duncan Miller, Town Clerk

DATE: May 25, 2023

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager
Jill Keimach, 480-348-3354

AGENDA TITLE:
Discussion and Approval of FY 24 Funding for Homelessness Initiatives

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

On May 11, 2023 the majority of the Town Council directed staff to return with a FY 24 funding proposal to work with regional partners on homelessness initiatives. During the FY 24 Budget study sessions, the Town Council discussed and approved in the FY24 Tentative Budget \$200,000 for homeless shelter services. Staff discussed several options with Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) for enhanced emergency shelters and is recommending the budgeted funding be directed to MAG with the following Council policy direction:

1. MAG accept the Town funds for distribution to emergency shelter bed facilities within the cities of Scottsdale or Phoenix since the Town of Paradise Valley does not have homeless individuals living, nor the land or zoning within its jurisdiction to accommodate such a facility; and
2. The entirety of these funds be transferred directly to an agency that in the discretion of MAG, provides shelter beds for the benefit of the entire Valley such that local governments, including Paradise Valley, have a location to temporarily house individuals; and
3. The homelessness initiative for shelter beds includes a component for 'wrap around' services for social, mental and socioeconomic services to help enable individuals from becoming permanently homeless and transition individuals into permanent housing and employment; and
4. MAG provide a memo to staff confirming the final disposition of the Town's funds in accordance with the above Council policy direction.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Paradise Valley has awarded funding to various community service organizations benefiting the Town, its residents, and the broader community since 1986.

At the March 9th Study Session, the Town Council discussed the annual Community Services Funding Program. At that meeting, Mayor Bien-Willner requested the Council consider an increase in the Town's contribution specifically for homeless shelter beds. Although Paradise Valley has been fortunate to not directly experience homelessness, the Town recognizes the regional need for homeless shelters and the additional need to provide a pathway out of homelessness for struggling individuals. The goal of the Council was to be part of a solution to reduce the number of homeless individuals in the Valley and adjacent communities. In short, the Town has allocated funding in previous years to assist with regional homelessness initiatives and continues to recognize the importance of partnering with neighboring communities to find long-term solutions for this regional problem.

Last fiscal year, the Town of Paradise Valley, along with other communities in the Valley, partnered with the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) on the Pathways Home: Regional Action Plan for Local and Tribal Governments. The goal of this comprehensive plan is to reduce homelessness by 25% by 2027. The Town provided \$25,000 to help fund the Regional Public Education Campaign.

During the FY 24 budget process, there was Council consensus to include \$200,000 in the budget for homelessness initiatives. It was noted that the Town is not a "full-service government" and relies on private and non-profit organizations to provide valuable services that the Town is not staffed or equipped to provide. By partnering with neighboring communities on programs to reduce homelessness, the Town could amplify its impact.

Following the budget meetings, the Town contacted MAG and they submitted a funding proposal for Enhanced Shelter Opportunities. Emergency shelters are a crucial part of the homelessness response system. Although shelter space has dramatically increased in the Valley in the past three years with financial support from CARES and American Rescue Plan funding, there is still a need for additional space and/or funding. The cities of Scottsdale and Phoenix both have projects underway to enhance shelter beds and services and both are in need of additional funding.

Town staff recommends the Council direct the Town's \$200,000 investment to MAG for its distribution to homelessness initiatives that meet the proposed policy direction by Council and assist our neighboring communities in either Scottsdale or Phoenix to aid their efforts to reduce homelessness.

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize an appropriation of \$200,000 from the FY24 Town Council budget line item and authorize the Town Manager to take any actions necessary to disburse FY24 funds to MAG for regional homelessness initiatives in conformity with the Council approved policy direction.

BUDGET IMPACT

The Town Council budgeted \$200,000 in FY 24 for homelessness initiatives.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Staff Report