



INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: October 14, 2013

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

DEPARTMENT: City Manager

SUBJECT: Homeward Bound – FY 2014 Agency Allocations

During the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Budget Hearings, the City Council recommended an allocation of \$35,000 for external programs that provide transportation assistance, commonly in the form of bus tickets, to homeless or transient individuals who wished to return to their home communities but lacked the resources to do so. Generally called “Homeward Bound,” these programs provide a needed service for individuals who feel stranded in our community and wish to return home, where family and friend support networks exist.

The \$35,000 allocation was approved in July 2013 with adoption of the FY 2014 City Budget, but the exact distribution among program providers was left to staff determination. This FYI provides notice of the City’s intent to allocate the funds as follows:

\$24,000	Homeless Services Center
\$10,000	M.O.S.T. Program & Downtown Outreach Worker Program
\$1,000	Santa Cruz County Jail (Downtown)

The Homeless Services Center (HSC) has operated a “Homeward Bound” program successfully since 2006. In FY 2013, the City provided \$16,700 to support an expansion of assistance offered to HSC clients interested in returning to their homes. HSC has demonstrated positive outcomes and has been a responsible partner. Demands for the program continue to increase beyond HSC’s ability to provide services. For these reasons, City staff feel an increase to \$24,000 is appropriate.

In 2013, the City supported the County’s Maintaining Ongoing Stability through Treatment (M.O.S.T.) and the City/County Downtown Outreach Worker (DOW) Programs with \$8,000 to help those who M.O.S.T./DOW staff encounter and who wish to leave our community and return home. This mechanism was established via a direct account with Greyhound with M.O.S.T. and DOW staff as authorized users. In addition, the Santa Cruz County Jail is able to refer released arrestees who wish to obtain out-of-county transportation assistance to the M.O.S.T and DOW staff. Similar to the HSC’s program, outcomes have been positive and City staff support a total FY 2014 allocation of \$10,000.

Finally, there is a subset of individuals who live locally but may find themselves without resources or transportation to return home upon their release from County Jail, which is located near Downtown Santa Cruz. To address this need, the City will provide \$1,000 worth of local bus passes to County Jail staff. Staff there can assess need and distribute bus passes as

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appropriate. This mechanism is an avenue to save local individuals from being stranded downtown so they may return home and obtain the support they need.

Each of the three external partners will provide reporting on outcomes—anonimized for the confidentiality of their clients—which will be compiled and provided to the City Council annually.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Submitted by:

Tina Shull
Assistant City Manager