



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** COUNTY MANAGER

**File #:** 20-172

Board Meeting Date: 3/31/2020

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Michael P. Callagy, County Manager

**Subject:** Approve a Partial Distribution Plan for the Measure K Contribution to the San Mateo County Strong Fund

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve a Partial Distribution Plan for the Measure K Contribution to the San Mateo County Strong Fund.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On March 24, 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved a \$3 million donation of Measure K funds to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to seed "San Mateo County Strong," a COVID-19 recovery fund. At that meeting, the Board approved distributing the County's contribution to three groups:

- Individuals and families in San Mateo County needing assistance with basic needs due to COVID 19
- Non-profit organizations that provide services and support to the most vulnerable San Mateo County residents for operating support
- San Mateo County small businesses affected by COVID-19

In addition to approving the donation, the Board requested a distribution plan and appointed Supervisors Carole Groom and David Canepa to an ad hoc SMC Strong Advisory Committee (the "Committee"). A memorandum outlining the partial distribution plan was sent to the Committee on March 27, 2020, and the Committee's input has been incorporated into this memorandum.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Providing financial assistance to County residents most in need as quickly as possible is essential. Therefore, staff recommends directing \$2 million of the County's contribution to the SMC Strong Fund to programs for low income households and homeless residents currently operated by long established County non-profit partners. These partners will leverage SMC Strong funds to serve as

many residents as possible, report on the use of these funds monthly and run programs that have fraud prevention processes in place. The non-profits recommended for funding are culturally competent, trusted in their communities and located throughout all five districts of the County.

The specific proposals to distribute funds for individuals and families and non-profits are detailed below. A plan for the distribution of assistance for small businesses will be brought to your Board in collaboration with the San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA) on April 7, 2020.

The purpose of this partial distribution plan is to provide immediate assistance to residents most in need and to the non-profit agencies that support those residents. The County understands that there are many non-profit organizations doing important work. As further donations are received by the SMC Strong fund, staff anticipates presenting a second phase distribution plan to the Board that will consider ways to potentially fund other organizations directly assisting those in need.

**Individuals and Families: Allocate \$1 million to SVCF’ s “Regional Response Fund” for distribution through the County’s eight Core Services Agencies to fund the emergency financial assistance program for individuals and families adversely impacted by COVID-19**

Through the eight Core Services Agencies, listed along with their service areas in the chart below, San Mateo County has provided emergency financial assistance to the lowest income residents since 2013 through the County’s Measure K funded “Emergency Financial Assistance Program”:

<b>Core Service Agency</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
Daly City Community Services Center	Daly City, Colma and Broadmoor
YMCA Community Resource Center	South San Francisco, Brisbane and San Bruno
Pacifica Resource Center	Pacifica
Samaritan House	San Mateo, Burlingame, Millbrae, Hillsborough, Foster City, Belmont and San Carlos
Fair Oaks Community Center	Redwood City, North Fair Oaks, Portola Valley, Woodside and Atherton
Samaritan House South	East Palo Alto and Menlo Park
Coastside Hope	El Granada, Moss Beach, Montara and Half Moon Bay
Puente	Pescadero, La Honda, Loma Mar and San Gregorio

Samaritan House is the fiscal agent for the Emergency Financial Assistance Program which distributed \$1.7 million for rent and deposits, utilities, transportation-related costs and medical expenses to 684 households in 2019. This emergency financial assistance has kept families housed and provided needed economic support. The need for this support is only more acute due to COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on low-income County residents.

To be eligible for emergency financial assistance, households must earn less than 60% of the area

median income, which is \$67,740 for one person and \$96,720 for a family of four. Assistance applications for the SMC Strong funds, which must include proof of County residency and proof of need due to COVID-19, will be accepted at the eight Core Service Agencies located throughout the County. The Core Service Agencies route applications to Samaritan House for review and approval, based on the applicant's eligibility and the availability of funds. For approved applications, Samaritan House issues checks for the benefit of the appropriate applicant. This program does not give money directly to applicants. Instead, it pays for specific, immediate needs and can serve any eligible County residents, regardless of immigration status. For example, a check could be issued directly to an applicant's landlord, utility company, or possibly a car repair shop for emergency car repairs.

Staff proposes using the existing emergency financial assistance program to assist people adversely affected by COVID-19 by adding an application requirement to demonstrate that the applicant's financial need was caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. To ensure that assistance funds are distributed Countywide, each Core Service Agency would utilize a pro-rated allocation of the \$1 million to assist their community residents with needs related to COVID-19. That allocation would be based on past approved applications submitted through that specific Core Service Agency. The approved applications will be tracked for each Core Service Agency and, if necessary, funding can be rebalanced among the Core Service Agencies to ensure that funds are directed to County residents most in need. Thus, for example, if one Core Service Agency does not use all their allocated funds, that funding could be transferred to another Agency with approved but unfunded applications. Also, if SMC Strong funds are available and the Board approves additional funding for the Emergency Assistance Program, those funds could be distributed based on the number of applications for COVID-19 emergency assistance received by each Core Service Agency.

Staff recognizes that COVID-19 is affecting people throughout the County who are not familiar with the Core Service Agencies. Information on how to apply for COVID-19 Emergency Financial Assistance will be available on multiple County websites, promoted through social media and shared with the cities, faith community, other social service agencies and all elected officials.

**Non-Profit Organizations: Allocate \$1 million to SVCF's "Regional Non-Profit Emergency Fund" for distribution as described below to cover increased operating costs due to the increased demand for services and operating expenses related to COVID-19**

Staff recommends distributing \$1 million to the following non-profit organizations:

- \$150,000 to Samaritan House for the 15% program operation costs and administration fee for the above-referenced COVID 19 Emergency Financial Assistance Program (\$150,000 based on the \$1 million in funds for this program), which covers its accounting, financial management, reporting, and oversight of the program;
- \$425,000 for the eight Core Service Agencies distributed through an equal percentage increase to all eight agencies' current contracts;
- \$425,000 to the seven agencies - Samaritan House, LifeMoves, Project WeHOPE, Mental Health Association, StarVista, CORA, and Home and Hope - that operate homeless shelters, distributed by the number of homeless households served by that agency in 2019.

These contributions will provide the Core Service Agencies and the homeless shelter providers with additional operating funds to cover increased costs due to increased demand for their services,

needed supplies such as technology for social distancing and sanitizing work spaces and facilities, extra staff to backfill the loss of volunteers and loss of revenue due to delayed or canceled fundraising events.

**Small Businesses: Hold \$1 million in SVCF’s “Small Business Relief Fund” for two weeks while SAMCEDA completes its research and develops recommendations regarding application and distribution options**

SAMCEDA is currently developing an application and distribution plan for the small business assistance program by surveying members about their current needs and reviewing the federal business and individual assistance programs just approved by Congress. SAMCEDA is also researching partnership options for the distribution of the funds and exploring ways to help with federal business assistance program applications. The distribution plan for the small business program will be presented to the Board at its April 7th meeting.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact on the County General Fund associated with approving this distribution plan for \$2 million in Measure K funds donated to the SMC Strong Fund.