



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

**Department:** BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**DISTRICT 2**  
**File #:** 24-846

Board Meeting Date: 11/12/2024

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

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Michael P. Callagy, County Executive  
**Subject:** Use of District-Discretionary **Measure K** Funds - Supervisorial District 2

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Measure K:** Adopt a resolution authorizing a one-time grant of district-discretionary **Measure K** funds, not to exceed \$50,000, to Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto to protect tenants' rights and prevent displacement through legal services and rental assistance in District 2, and authorizing the County Executive, or designee, to execute the grant agreement.

### **BACKGROUND:**

**Measure K** is the half-cent general sales tax initially approved by San Mateo County voters in November 2012 and extended in November 2016 for a total of thirty years. The Board of Supervisors (Board) held study sessions on **Measure K** expenditures and approved funds for the fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 budget cycle, divided evenly among the five supervisorial districts, for one-time district-discretionary needs and projects. District 2 has submitted a request to use their district-discretionary **Measure K** funds as shown below and described in the Project Summary section of this memorandum:

<b>District/Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>
District 2 (Supervisor Noelia Corzo) - Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto to protect tenants' rights and prevent displacement through legal services and rental assistance in District 2	\$50,000

This item is consistent with the criteria for district-discretionary **Measure K** funds approved by the Board in December 2018. District 2 indicates that this organization is either a public agency operating within the county, or a nonprofit organization registered and in good standing with the California Attorney General. District 2 indicates that the sponsoring Board member, member's family, and member's supervisorial staff do not serve as an officer, director, or play a policy role for the grantee organization.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

This is a request to authorize a grant to Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA), and resulting grant agreement, in an amount not to exceed \$50,000, to protect tenants' rights and prevent displacement through legal services and rental assistance in District 2. The County Executive's Office will administer and manage the proposed agreement.

District 2 indicates that this organization has not previously received Measure K district-discretionary funding.

Renters in San Mateo County face significant hardships, and those hardships disproportionately impact the most vulnerable renters. Many renters experience substandard housing conditions caused by deferred or improper maintenance. Facing the threat of eviction, many tenants fear retaliation if they report these issues, and many families thus live every day in unsafe or unsanitary conditions that their landlords are obligated to rectify but do not.

Facing rent increases upwards of 10 percent, many renters in San Mateo County live in incredibly precarious economic circumstances where one paycheck or one rent increase can make the difference between being housed and being unhoused. To afford a 2-bedroom rental in San Mateo County, a renter must make \$127,520.

Additionally, all of these challenges disproportionately impact communities of color, people living with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. Language-accessible legal resources and education are crucial for renters who do not speak English and may have especially limited access to legal information about their rights. Additionally, undocumented renters, whose access to financial assistance and programs is often significantly limited, are less likely to report rent increases or unsafe conditions out of increased fear of retaliation.

CLSEPA provides legal services focused on immigration, housing, workers' rights, and economic security for low-income residents. Their work extends beyond East Palo Alto to other communities in San Mateo County and beyond. CLSEPA seeks to empower individuals, families, and communities through legal education, advocacy, representation, and direct resources. CLSEPA's team includes attorneys, paralegals, and social workers, in addition to volunteers.

This funding will support the provision of legal services and rental assistance to vulnerable tenants facing challenges that threaten their access to safe and secure housing in District 2. CLSEPA's services are accessible in English and Spanish, and in other languages through translation services. While CLSEPA's programs serve tenants across the County, these funds will specifically serve tenants who live in District 2. Funds will be expended by June 30, 2025.

- CLSEPA will provide legal services to 10 District 2 families facing eviction, harassment, or other circumstances that threaten their access to safe and secure housing. Legal services include counseling tenants about their legal options, serving as a legal advocate for tenants as they communicate with their landlords, and directly representing tenants in court.
- CLSEPA will provide rental assistance via its Rescue Housing Fund to families in District 2 who are facing eviction. CLSEPA maintains a fund to provide tenants who are facing eviction with emergency rental assistance up to a maximum of \$5,000 per family to keep families housed in their communities and prevent displacement.

Without legal services, tenants are often not aware of their options to contest unlawful detainer lawsuits, illegal and/or unsafe conditions, unlawful rent increases, or other similar circumstances. CLSEPA keeps families and individuals rooted in their communities when they might otherwise be

displaced or even become homeless, and ensures that they have access to safe and secure housing.

Preventing evictions has far-reaching benefits, from keeping children in school without disruption to keeping families within their community networks. Families facing eviction all too frequently already face deep economic precarity. If a family or individual is evicted from their home, they may lose access to housing altogether and become unhoused, which can have far-reaching consequences. Beyond the basic importance of keeping families housed, preventing evictions reduces the County's future financial burden in providing services that families may not need if they still had access to housing.

**Budget**

- Attorneys (102 hours w/ benefits): \$5,980
- Paralegals (101 hours w/ benefits): \$4,475
- Rescue Housing Fund (rental assistance to be distributed to families): \$35,000

Subtotal Direct Costs: \$45,455

Overhead at 10%: \$4,545

**Total Measure K Request: Not to Exceed \$50,000**

The release of funds will be contingent on the execution of an agreement providing for the County's confirmation of the expenditure of funds for the purposes stated herein. The County will disburse the funds to the following organization for the purposes described above:

Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto  
Madeline Musante, Associate Director of Development  
1861 Bay Road  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303  
Email: mmusante@clsepa.org  
Phone: (650) 422-2110

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Target</b>
Provide full-scope legal representation or advice, including counseling families about their legal options and as appropriate, providing legal advocacy and representing tenant families in eviction court, to 10 District 2 tenant families facing threats to their housing.	Complete
Provide \$35,000 in rental assistance to District 2 families in active eviction proceedings to keep them safely housed within our community.	Complete
Survey all recipients of services funded by this grant six months after their case has closed to measure their ongoing housing stability.	Complete

The County Attorney's Office has reviewed and approved the agreement and resolution as to form.

**EQUITY IMPACT:**

The support provided by these funds will benefit marginalized groups who face systemic economic barriers and are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity. Renters, on average, have lower incomes compared to residents who own their own homes, and often live paycheck to paycheck. Additionally, people of color and residents from other marginalized communities are more likely to be renters, and face disproportionate and unique barriers to accessing safe, secure, and affordable

housing. This allocation will help vulnerable renters in District 2 by providing crucial emergency rent relief, legal representation and advocacy to keep families housed and rooted in their communities.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are sufficient **Measure K** funds for this specific FY 2024-25 **Measure K** request. These funds are budgeted in the Non-Departmental Services FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget.