



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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NEWS RELEASE

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CORE INVESTMENTS RELEASES AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

County & City of Santa Cruz elected officials to allocate over \$1 million

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce 28 programs recommended for \$3.44 million in competitive CORE (Collective of Results and Evidence-Based) Investments funding, out of the \$3.79 million available through competitive procurement. The recommended programs are the results of a community-based, competitive procurement system to target funding to priority areas established by the Board of Supervisors and Santa Cruz City Council.

Together, the awards will advance the health and well-being of 10,000 county residents by assisting older adults, children and families; promoting lifelong learning and education and protecting the environment. Through additional Board of Supervisors and City Council direction, \$1.5 million in CORE funds has also been dedicated to provide shelter and help resolve housing insecurity for residents, including in South County, which will take place through a future funding process. The [full list of recommendations](#) may be found on the CORE website.

More than 50 percent of the funding is being directed to services for South County residents. Additionally, the share of funding recommended for seniors programming will remain proportionally similar to the level in the prior CORE funding cycle. The recommendations will be considered by the Board of Supervisors and Santa Cruz City Council during their November 19, 2024, meetings. In addition, the Board and City Council will also be allocating over \$1 million in funding set aside to address emerging needs and proposals not otherwise recommended for awards.

The current CORE Investments RFP process began in 2023, informed by robust community engagement which first identified and then applied lessons learned from the previous CORE process. Responding to both community service providers' and elected officials' request for more opportunities for public input early in the process, three public hearings were held as well as reviews and input during multiple Board of Supervisors and City Council meetings. As a result, the current CORE procurement's focus areas were narrowed from eight priorities to three: Lifelong Learning & Education; Thriving Families (Older Adults and Children &

Family); Stable, Affordable Housing & Shelter. The Board provided additional direction to include funding for Healthy Environments.

In April, the Board of Supervisors and City Council approved a draft request for proposals including scoring criteria and directed staff to set aside \$1 million to focus on shelter services across the county, and \$500,000 in homeless prevention funds focused on South County, where homelessness rose 60 percent between 2023 and 2024 according to the latest [Point-in-Time Count](#). Additionally, the Board established a set aside fund for elected officials to address emerging needs. Following extensive public input opportunities, no further direction to carve out additional dedicated funding for specific programs or services was provided.

Approximately 100 CORE applications were submitted, totaling over \$15 million in requests for the available funding. The \$3.44 million recommended for awards represent the highest-ranked applications in each focus area and grant tier. The funding recommendations coming to the Board on November 19 are the result of community-based panels using objective criteria. The remaining balance of available CORE funding creates a pool of approximately \$1 million that can be used at the discretion of elected officials for emerging needs, including projects not initially recommended for funding.

For more information on the CORE Investments RFP, including the timetable of all major dates and all corresponding documents, please visit:

<https://www.santacruzhumanservices.org/Home/FundingOpportunities/COREInvestments>.

Additional Links:

[April 30, 2024 Board of Supervisors Agenda Item April](#)

[30, 2024 Santa Cruz City Council Minutes September](#)

[10, 2024 Board of Supervisors Agenda Item](#)

[September 24, 2024, Santa Cruz City Council Minutes](#)