



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** April 4, 2023

**25**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

#### **SUBJECT**

**ENHANCING HOMELESS OUTREACH AND SERVICES THROUGH LIVE WELL ON WHEELS MOBILE OFFICES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### **OVERVIEW**

Over the past two years, the County has taken unprecedented steps to partner with cities and communities across the region to address the urgent homelessness crisis. Under this Board's leadership, we have not settled for the status quo but has instead made bold and innovative investments rooted in evidence and build on the strength of our regional partnerships. In the past year alone, the County launched new homelessness programs including, \$10 million in challenge grants for cities to expand shelter capacity, the Senior Shallow Rental Subsidy program, the Enhanced Street Outreach social worker program, the North Magnolia Avenue safe parking facility, and the Rosecrans shelter with behavioral health support.

Today's action will enhance our innovative homeless outreach and service delivery models and better support the work of our cities and community partners, by adding a dedicated homeless outreach vehicle to the County's mobile fleet.

In 2020, the County launched an innovation in crisis response and service delivery model by introducing the Live Well on Wheels (LiveWoW) vehicle, a forty-foot bus that deploys a wide array of County health and community services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we brought mobile services into communities and to date, over 27,000 COVID-19 tests and over 12,500 COVID-19 vaccines have been administered directly in the most impacted communities.

The County currently has two LiveWoW vehicles in service focusing on general health and social services outreach and disaster response activities, and three additional vehicles on order for arrival in 2024 that will provide specific public health services including outreach and education, infection control screenings and laboratory services. The vehicles are equipped with a private consultation room, workstations, refrigerators that can store medication and vaccines, internal and external TVs, wheelchair lift, ADA compliant bathroom, tables, chairs, pop up tents, and secured Wi-Fi that allows for County staff and partnering agencies to print out secured documents, such as EBT cards, identification cards, and legal documents for clients in real time.

**SUBJECT: ENHANCING HOMELESS OUTREACH AND SERVICES THROUGH LIVE WELL ON WHEELS MOBILE OFFICES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**



In the last fiscal year, LiveWoW vehicles have served 36,943 residents and participated in 44 homeless outreach events. However, the vehicles are increasingly in demand, especially as cities and communities expand homeless outreach pop-up events and encampment resolution strategies.

By adding an additional LiveWoW vehicle dedicated for homeless outreach services, we can better support coordinated regional homeless outreach and engagement activities and provide services in non-traditional locations such as safe parking lots and bridge shelters.

Today's action authorizes the procurement of a LiveWoW vehicle with specifications to support homeless outreach activities. Additionally, if approved, today's actions would authorize the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency, to apply for additional funding opportunities to support mobile homeless outreach services; and direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to consult with the Regional Task Force on Homelessness and other regional partners.

We urge your support on this action, and for this important expansion of our County's homeless outreach and service delivery system.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**VICE-CHAIR TERRA LAWSON-REMER AND SUPERVISOR JOEL ANDERSON**

1. In accordance with Section 401, Article XXIII of the County Administrative Code, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to issue a Competitive Solicitation for a Live Well on Wheels vehicle to address homelessness in the region, and upon successful negotiations and determination of a fair and reasonable price award contract(s), and amend the contract(s) as needed to reflect changes to services and funding.
2. Authorize the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency, to apply for additional funding opportunities, to support mobile homeless outreach services, including

**SUBJECT: ENHANCING HOMELESS OUTREACH AND SERVICES THROUGH LIVE WELL ON WHEELS MOBILE OFFICES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

necessary equipment, parts, training, tools, warranties and services from authorized vendors and maintain the vehicle as part of the County’s fleet.

3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to consult with the Regional Task Force on Homelessness and other regional partners such as cities, service providers, and people with lived experience when developing the vehicle design and service menu.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

In 2022, the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) conducted the We All Count Point-in-Time Count, which identified 8,427 individuals as living on the streets or in shelters throughout San Diego County on one night. Of the 4,106 who were unsheltered, 25% were 55 years of age or older, 8% were youth and 15% reported chronic homelessness. Data indicated that people of color are disproportionately impacted among those experiencing homelessness, with 24% identifying as Black or African American, which is nearly five times the proportion of African Americans in the region; 3% identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native, which is nearly three times the proportion in the region. In addition to the We All Count Point-in-Time Count, the RTFH Community Snapshot Dashboard, shows that approximately 30% of people experiencing homelessness identified as Hispanic in 2021.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Today’s proposed actions support the County of San Diego’s Sustainability Goal #1 to engage the community; Sustainability Goal #2 to provide just and equitable access; and Sustainability Goal #3 to protect health and wellbeing.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for this request are not included in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in no change in costs and revenue in FY 2022-23. No costs would be incurred in subsequent years until funding is identified. One-time costs are estimated at \$800,000 to procure the Live Well on Wheels vehicle, and annual ongoing costs are estimated at \$734,000 for operations and maintenance of the vehicle and staffing to support outreach activities. Funding for the costs will need to be identified by Health and Human Services Agency before the project proceeds. The Department will monitor its budget and return to the Board with mid-year action to adjust the budget if necessary and/or incorporate in future operational plans as funding becomes available. At this time, there is no impact to net General Fund costs, and there will be no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

Over the past two years, the County has taken unprecedented steps to partner with cities and communities across the region to address the urgent homelessness crisis. Under this Board’s

**SUBJECT: ENHANCING HOMELESS OUTREACH AND SERVICES THROUGH  
LIVE WELL ON WHEELS MOBILE OFFICES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

leadership, we have not settled for the status quo but has instead made bold and innovative investments that are rooted in evidence and build on the strength of our regional partnerships. In the past year alone, the County launched new homelessness programs including, \$10 million in challenge grants for cities to expand shelter capacity, the Senior Shallow Rental Subsidy program for seniors on the verge of homelessness, the Enhanced Street Outreach social worker program, the North Magnolia Avenue safe parking facility, and the Rosecrans shelter with behavioral health support.

Today's action will enhance our innovative homeless outreach and service delivery models and better support the work of our city and community partners, by adding a dedicated homeless outreach vehicle to the County's mobile fleet.

In 2020, the County launched an innovation in crisis response and service delivery by introducing the Live Well on Wheels (LiveWoW) vehicle, a forty-foot bus that deploys a variety of health and community services. During the COVID-19 pandemic we brought mobile services into communities and to date, over 27,000 COVID-19 tests and over 12,500 COVID-19 vaccines have been administered directly in the most impacted communities.

The County currently has two LiveWoW vehicles in service focusing on health and social services outreach and disaster response activities, and three additional vehicles on order for arrival in 2024 that will provide specific public health services including outreach and education, infection control screenings and laboratory services. The vehicles are equipped with a private consultation room, workstations, refrigerators that can store medication and vaccines, internal and external TVs, wheelchair lift, ADA compliant bathroom, tables, chairs, pop up tents, and secured Wi-Fi that allows for County staff and partnering agencies to print out secured documents, such as EBT cards, identification cards, and legal documents for clients in real time.

In the last fiscal year, LiveWoW vehicles have served 36,943 residents and participated in 44 homeless outreach events. However, the LiveWoW vehicles are increasingly in demand as cities and community organizations are expanding homeless outreach pop-up events and encampment resolution strategies.

The County's Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) is partnered with all 18 City jurisdictions and leads homeless outreach in the unincorporated areas of the County. HSEC promotes coordinated outreach countywide and has a network of partners that continues to grow. This new resource would be a very valuable addition to the countywide efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

Last year, utilizing coordinated outreach model and the LiveWoW vehicle, HSEC was able to cleanup and resolve a large encampment in East County, transitioning over 100 people into housing. HSEC also works closely with the District Attorney Office to coordinate Community Coordinated Access to Resources and Engagement (CARE) Events countywide. Since 2021, these events have taken place in all regions of the County. A recent CARE event brought together the County of San Diego and the City of San Diego as well as multiple other partners in a three-day event assisting hundreds of people in the Presidio and San Diego Riverbed areas. CARE events employ a multiagency effort to engage individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in identified priority areas. Field outreach teams canvas the area to engage unsheltered folks and connect them to supportive services. The event provides a one-stop shop with access to case

**SUBJECT: ENHANCING HOMELESS OUTREACH AND SERVICES THROUGH  
LIVE WELL ON WHEELS MOBILE OFFICES (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

management, health education, public benefits, mental health and substance abuse treatment, primary care referrals, and access to hygiene kits, transportation, and basic essentials.

The most requested services at CARE events are generally access to self-sufficiency programs like Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and General Relief, as well as mobile phones through the California Lifeline program. Identification and an address to receive mail are often some of the largest barriers to services. Because the LiveWoW vehicles can be set up with County WiFi, it allows the County Office of Vital Records to print birth certificates on scene, thereby reducing a commonly described barrier to getting an identification card with the DMV. Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards can also be issued on the spot to those who are eligible utilizing Live Well vehicle.

A dedicated LiveWoW vehicle focused on homeless outreach will support street health efforts and help unsheltered individuals get connected to housing faster. People who are unhoused have a life expectancy that is around 30 years shorter than housed individuals. 38% of unhoused individuals have two or more major medical illnesses, 25% have a severe mental illness and 30% have a substance use disorder. Having a diagnosis and receiving care are very different things. Among those who agree they need mental health services, only about a quarter receive care. Mobile services available through the LiveWoW model can help by meeting people where they are, delivering care, generating trust, and ultimately ending their homelessness.

By adding an additional LiveWoW vehicle dedicated for homeless outreach services, we can better support coordinated regional homeless outreach and engagement activities and provide County services in non-traditional locations such as safe parking lots and bridge shelters.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's actions support the County of San Diego's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan initiatives of Sustainability (Resiliency), Equity (Economic Opportunity), and Community (Quality of Life) by supporting programs that reduce and eliminate poverty and increasing availability of programs and resources for individuals experiencing and at risk of homelessness through the continuation and expansion of programs and resources. Today's actions are also aligned with the County's Framework for Ending Homelessness.

Respectfully submitted,



TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Supervisor, Third District



JOEL ANDERSON  
Supervisor, Second District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A