



CITY OF FORT BRAGG

Incorporated August 5, 1889

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August 16, 2021

Donna Moschetti, Chair
Mental Health Treatment Act Citizens Oversight Committee

Dear Ms. Moschetti and Measure B Committee:

The City of Fort Bragg Homeless Ad Hoc Committee respectfully submits the request below for a Crisis Respite Facility and Services on the Coast located in or near the City of Fort Bragg.

Request for Crisis Respite Treatment in Fort Bragg

For some time, there has been an ongoing discussion by Mendocino Coast residents and other stakeholders about the need for accessible Crisis Respite (or Crisis Residential) services for Mendocino County Coastal residents. At this time, there is only one Crisis Respite program in Mendocino County which is located in the greater Ukiah area (The Crisis Residential facility currently under construction is also located in Ukiah). Accessing inland Crisis Respite services by coastal residents is difficult and often not practical. It is also almost prohibitive for coastal clients who do access the inland Crisis Respite program to participate in building a post-crisis support team, coordinating housing solutions, receiving warm handoffs to ongoing mental health services or connecting to coast medical services and so forth.

Crisis Respite offers a safe, comforting environment for those who are experiencing a temporary mental health crisis that may be severe, but is not life threatening and would not require the individual be placed in a psychiatric hospital, if a crisis placement option existed. Crisis Respite is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and provides an immediate opportunity to take a time-out and receive support. The inland Crisis Respite program "Madrone House" has demonstrated the benefits of a Crisis Respite program for inland Mendocino County residents.

In fiscal year 2019-2020, 128 clients were admitted to Madrone House, allowing them to stay within the community for treatment services resulting in a 14% reduction in

Mendocino County residents needing to leave the county for services. In addition to providing the ability for individuals to stay within the community for treatment and staying connected with family, the program also benefited the local emergency rooms with a 12% reduction in the average number of days patients waited for placement in the hospital emergency rooms.

During the same fiscal year of 2019-2020, the Coast Mental Health Crisis Program assessed 479 patients. Of those patients, 319 were opened to Mental Health services and 112 of these clients were hospitalized due to the need for a high level of care and the lack of a Crisis Respite or Residential treatment program on the coast. Very few of them were able to participate in the preventative or transitional services available through a Crisis Respite program because the only program is located in Ukiah. A Crisis Respite program on the coast would allow coastal residents to be served locally and within the community. It would also provide relief to the local hospital and law enforcement, by allowing a viable and beneficial alternative for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

A distinguishing detail of this proposal is that access to the Crisis Respite program is available to every client regardless of insurance payer. Often, the roadblock to matching a client in need with services is that they have private insurance or Medicare and therefore are not eligible. Mental health resources are scarce, especially here on the coast and this solution will meet the needs of the community by providing a resource that is also available to all coastal residents who voted for and financially support Measure B.

This request for Measure B funding to support a Crisis Respite program has been analyzed and reviewed. That process included looking at the cost and the options for housing the program, with the goal of getting valuable resources available to coast residents as soon as possible.

Facility: The potential for creating a Mendocino Coast Crisis Respite program received a big boost by the recent Adventist Health Coast Hospital decision to make a building available to use as a Crisis Respite facility. This building is located on the Coast Hospital campus and has an existing 2-bedroom suite that can be remodeled to accommodate up to four patients. The Crisis Respite facility could be ready to accept Crisis Respite patients in 3-4 months depending on how soon contracts can be completed, funding issues resolved and building permits acquired.

Service Provider: Redwood Community Services (RCS) is the County's service provider in Fort Bragg for mental health crisis. Linking the Crisis Respite program to the current service provider offers clients real time decisions and smoother access to this facility. The success of the Madrone House inland, operated by RCS, is the model for the Fort Bragg Crisis Respite program and we are requesting

RCS serve as the facility operator to ensure that a coastal Crisis Respite program is also a success.

Cost: The overall annual operating cost is projected at \$600,000 to provide 24 hours a day, seven days a week Crisis Respite services.

Measure B Funding Request: This request for the Mental Health Treatment Act Citizens Oversight Committee is to allocate \$240,000 per year for four years (total: \$960,000). These funds would cover the cost of Medi-Cal Match, Non-billable services, those with commercial insurance or Medicare, and those with no insurance. We have projected that Medi-Cal or the other funding sources would cover the remaining annual operating cost of \$360,000. Over the next four years, additional funding streams will be explored, including grants, to sustain the program long term.

Fort Bragg is most grateful for the work that the Measure B Committee continues to do and for the benefits that our community will experience because of your efforts. The Fort Bragg Homeless Ad Hoc Committee will be happy to provide the Measure B Committee with any other information that you may require or answer any questions you may have about this proposal.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our much-needed request.

Sincerely,

Bernie Norvell
Bernie Norvell
Mayor

Tabatha Miller
Tabatha Miller
City Manager

Jessica Morsell-Haye
Jessica Morsell-Haye
Vice Mayor

John Naulty
John Naulty
Police Chief

CC: Lillian Chavoy, Committee Clerk