

TOWN *Of* PARADISE VALLEY



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Bien-Willner and Town Council Members

FROM: Jill Keimach, Town Manager
Duncan Miller, Town Clerk

DATE: May 11, 2023

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager
Duncan Miller, 480-348-3610

AGENDA TITLE:

Discussion of FY 23 Community Services Funding Recommendations, FY 24 Funding for Homelessness Initiatives, and Funding Request for the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

This study session item includes three subjects:

1. FY 23 Community Services Funding Program. The Town Council budgeted \$65,000 in this fiscal year and directed staff to conduct a needs assessment to identify services and programs benefitting underserved populations in the Town or broader community. Staff will present funding recommendations for Central Arizona Shelter Services and Duet: Partners In Health and Aging
2. FY 24 funding proposal to work with regional partners on homelessness initiatives. During the FY 24 Budget study sessions, the Town Council discussed including \$200,000 in the budget for homeless shelter services. Staff discussed several options with Maricopa Association of Governments for enhanced emergency shelters and will present a funding recommendation.
3. FY 23 funding request from the Scottsdale Railroad & Mechanical Society to help finance a new facility at the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park located at Indian Bend and Scottsdale Road

1. BACKGROUND – Fiscal Year 2023 Community Services Funding Program

At the March 9th Study Session, the Town Council discussed the annual Community Services Funding Program. The policy which governs the program gives the Council discretion to either invite applications for funding from government, non-profit, educational institutions, or civic groups that provide valuable services to the community; or conduct a community services needs assessment to identify essential services not provided by the Town or under-served populations in need of assistance. There was Council consensus to direct staff to conduct a needs assessment and, based on those findings, investigate

agencies or programs which address the needs identified. The Council suggested that focus areas should include regional partnerships to address homelessness (even though the Town has not experienced homeless camps or issues) and support services for older residents.

An interdepartmental working group comprised of staff members from the Police Department and Town Manager's Office identified the following agencies or programs that would provide needed services consistent with the Council's direction.

Regional Homeless Initiatives

The Town has allocated funding in previous years to assist with regional homelessness initiatives and continues to recognize the importance of partnering with neighboring communities to find long-term solutions for this regional problem.

CASS

To further assist with this initiative, it is recommended that the Town continue its long-standing support for the Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS). CASS is the largest emergency shelter in Arizona. CASS serves single adults and families with children. Their clients include individuals with serious mental illnesses, those with addictions to alcohol and drugs, victims of domestic violence, veterans, the elderly and young adults, single parents, and those who are chronically homeless.

Their mission is to end homelessness. In addition to providing beds for the night, they also offer case management and/or other support to all clients and work with them to obtain employment, benefits, medical care, mental health treatment, dental care, housing and more. Their case management model meets clients where they are to address barriers, with the goal of helping them permanently resolve their homelessness.

Demand for CASS Services is Increasing

CASS provided the following statistics to the Town underscoring the need for a regional approach to homelessness, as well as a summary of the new initiatives they are implementing to respond to the increased demand.

- In FY22, CASS provided services to 30% more individuals than the prior year. In response to the increased need for service, CASS expanded their downtown shelter from 470 beds to 600 beds in 2022. CASS sheltered 5,051 individuals in their emergency shelter program, for a total of 231,492 bed nights.
- CASS served 39% more young adults (ages 18-24) than the year prior, rising to 423 young adults served. Additionally, their veteran's population increased by 45% over the prior year.
- CASS's data has shown a rapid rise in seniors over age 55, accounting for 30% of those served at CASS. Last year, CASS served 1,717 seniors, which was a 43% increase over the prior year. In July 2023, CASS will open the Senior Haven shelter with a 170-bed capacity expected to serve 500 homeless seniors aged 55 and older
- Last year, CASS created housing plans with 6,119 individuals, provided case management support to 2,203 individuals, and were proudly able to support 1,262 of our clients' moving into safe and stable housing through our many support services.

- In 2024, in partnership with COPA Health, CASS will open a 54-bed transitional housing facility for individuals with serious mental illness.
- CASS also operates a center in Glendale offering robust services, including housing programs, street outreach, vocational training, ID assistance and more. CASS served more than 6,600 people last year with safe shelter, diverse case management services, extensive housing services, resources, and more.
- Their wrap-around case management and supportive services include Rapid Rehousing, flexible financial assistance, employment support, assistance with finance and budgeting, hygiene kits, a clothing bank, and move-in kits

It is recommended that the Town provide funding in the amount of \$55,000 in Fiscal Year 2023, which is consistent with previous years. The Town has provided funding assistance to CASS since the 1990s with support ranging from \$18,000 to \$50,000.

Support Services for Older Residents

Duet: Partners In Health and Aging

Duet is a private non-profit organization based in Phoenix. Their mission is to promote health and well-being for homebound adults and family caregivers. The Town has partnered with this organization for many years. The specific recommendation is to provide funding for their program called Promoting Independence through In-Home Services. This program uses volunteers to provide transportation to homebound seniors and disabled adults to medical appointments, social service agencies, grocery stores, shopping centers and other locations. The volunteers also help unload groceries at their home or shop for and deliver groceries when needed. They assist with paperwork, minor home repairs, and other routine needs.

2022 Statistics Provided by Duet

- 214 homebound adults received transportation to medical appointments and 214 to grocery stores, including 4 Paradise Valley residents
- Duet provided 28,617 one-way escorted rides to medical appointments and grocery shopping. This includes 362 rides for Paradise Valley residents which is a 126% increase from the previous year
- 66 new volunteers were recruited to participate in the program, including 2 from Paradise Valley.
- Duet conducted 12 volunteer orientations.
- 7 volunteers from Paradise Valley served their neighbors by providing transportation, assisting with paperwork, and/or conducting friendly visits.

It is recommended that the Town continue to support this program in the amount of \$10,000 in Fiscal Year 2023, which is consistent with previous years. The Town has provided funding assistance to Duet since the 2000s with support ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

2. BACKGROUND – FY 2024 Funding to Work with Regional Partners on Homelessness Initiatives

Last fiscal year, the Town of Paradise Valley, along with other communities in the Valley, partnered with the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) on the Pathways Home: Regional Action Plan for Local and Tribal Governments. The goal of this comprehensive plan is to reduce homelessness by 25% by 2027. The Town provided \$25,000 to help fund the Regional Public Education Campaign.

During the FY 24 budget process, there was Council consensus to include \$200,000 in the budget for homelessness initiatives. It was noted that the Town is not a “full-service government” and relies on private and non-profit organizations to provide valuable services that the Town is not staffed or equipped to provide. By partnering with neighboring communities on programs to reduce homelessness, the Town could amplify its impact.

Following the budget meetings, the Town contacted MAG and they submitted a funding proposal for Enhanced Shelter Opportunities. Emergency shelters are a crucial part of the homelessness response system. Although shelter space has dramatically increased in the Valley in the past three years with financial support from CARES and American Rescue Plan funding, there is still a need for additional space. The cities of Scottsdale and Phoenix both have active contracts underway to enhance shelter and both are in need of additional funding.

In conversations with MAG, Town staff propose to direct the Town’s \$200,000 investment to the City of Scottsdale which has an active contract and the Town’s contribution can have immediate benefit to serve and assist our neighboring community in their efforts to reduce homelessness.

3. BACKGROUND - McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park Roundhouse

The Town received a request from the Scottsdale Railroad & Mechanical Society (SRMS) to help finance a new building with indoor play structures at the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park (Park) located at Indian Bend and Scottsdale Road. The project is included in the City of Scottsdale Capital Improvement Plan and the SRMS has committed \$1 million in funding; however, there is a budget shortfall of approximately \$4 million. SRMS is requesting additional funding from Scottsdale and is seeking other financial support to bridge the gap. A copy of the conceptual plan is attached as Attachment C.

Since there are no parks or playground facilities for families in Paradise Valley, residents have benefitted from the amenities provided by the Park just across the border in Scottsdale. The Town has provided funding to the Park at least three times over the years. Most notably, the Town shared in the cost to construct, and later extend, the “Friendship Tunnel” that the train passes through on its journey around the Park. The Town was also instrumental in securing funds for the casting, transporting, and installing of the Bil Keane Memorial Sculpture located at the Park.

The Council may wish to consider financial support in the amount of \$50,000 through a FY23 fund transfer from budget savings.

NEXT STEP

Staff is asking for Council direction on whether the Town should provide financial assistance to any or all agencies (i.e. CASS, Duet, Scottsdale/MAG, and SRMS) and at what amount. Based on that direction, staff will bring back funding agreements for action at the May 25th meeting.

BUDGET IMPACT

The Town Council budgeted \$65,000 in FY 23 for community services and \$200,000 in FY 24 for homelessness initiatives. If there is Council support to provide funding to the Railroad Park, staff would propose an interdepartmental fund transfer from current year budget savings to cover the expenditure.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Staff Report
- B. PowerPoint Presentation
- C. Railroad Park Capital Improvement Project