



Connie Beck, Director  
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

## news release

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Sept. 28, 2020

### Project Homekey funds to create new homeless housing

California Gov. Gavin Newsom announced more than \$4.3 million in Project Homekey funds Monday that will help make it possible for the Humboldt Inn on Fourth Street in Eureka to become permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness.

The Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services and Providence Supportive Housing jointly applied for the multimillion-dollar award in August to supplement the \$3.5 million Providence is contributing and the nearly \$300,000 from the county. The money will be used to transition the motel's 44 rooms into 48 individual units with small kitchens.

Sen. Mike McGuire said, "It's an all-hands-on-deck effort to solve the state's homeless crisis, and this state grant will be a massive shot in the arm for Humboldt County. The downtown Eureka project will provide 48 rooms for permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness. Obviously, there is a lot more work to be done and we are grateful for the leadership of the County of Humboldt, Providence St. Joseph Health and the City of Eureka on this critical project."

Since the pandemic started, DHHS has utilized the Humboldt Inn to house and provide supportive services to people experiencing homelessness who needed to be in quarantine or isolation because of possible exposure or who were at high risk of contracting COVID-19, thus helping to prevent the spread of the virus in the community. DHHS will continue to provide these services once the sale of the motel goes through until construction begins in the late spring.

Humboldt County Fourth District Supervisor Virginia Bass said, "This is a great example of the county, Providence St. Joseph Health and the City of Eureka coming together in an effort to help the homeless," adding that the Humboldt Inn has been supportive by opening its doors during COVID. "This work has done more than we could ever know to slow the spread of this virus. The benefits of this work will extend well beyond the pandemic and

most importantly will help the lives of those who are experiencing homelessness.”

Martha Shanahan, director of Community Health Investment for St. Joseph Health – Humboldt County (SJH-HC), said after renovations, the facility will have a welcoming presence along Fourth and M streets. Native plants will be included in the landscaping and local artists will be commissioned to paint murals on two sides of the building in keeping with Eureka’s street art initiative. Secure fencing around all sides of the site will be installed as well as additional lighting and pedestrian-friendly improvements. The facility is designed to be energy efficient and manage stormwater on-site.

Providence Supportive Housing will provide 24/7 security when the new facility opens in early 2022.

SJH-HC Chief Executive Dr. Roberta Luskin-Hawk said, “There is strong evidence connecting housing stability with health. Providence St. Joseph Health is privileged to be in a position to provide the necessary resources to ensure those most at risk have access to the resources they need to lead a healthier life.” SJH-HC is part of Providence St. Joseph Health, a health care organization with 51 hospitals across seven western states.

DHHS Director Connie Beck said there are many to thank for this project including staff from the City of Eureka, the county and St. Joseph Hospital and First District County Supervisor Rex Bohn who worked closely to connect the Humboldt Inn owners and hospital representatives. “Partnering with St. Joseph Hospital’s CARE Network and Providence Supportive Housing to provide more local housing is a win-win,” Beck said. “This new complex will provide housing and services for some of those who need them most.”

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