

## Stockton Blvd. Safe Stay Community Shelter Opens

**Sacramento County, in partnership with the State of California and the City of Sacramento, welcomed guests into its third and largest-to-date Safe Stay Community.**

The on-site operator, First Step Communities (FSC), manages day-to-day care and coordination. The site provides clients with individual sleeping cabins (155 cabins total – 135 single occupancy and 20 double occupancy), including double occupancy cabins for identified couples or adult families, food, bathrooms and showers, laundry services, a pet relief area, possession storage, case management and behavioral health services, job placement and housing assistance.

The site is the first tiny home site gifted and funded by the state through the Governor's tiny home project and \$17.6 million in Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) grant through **California's Department of Housing and Community Development Agency**. The state donated the materials and construction of the site, and the ERF grant will fund operational costs for three years. The County Department of Health Services has also contributed a little over \$500,000 per year in Behavioral Health Bridge Housing funds to support clients that need support for mental health and substance abuse services and are also experiencing homelessness.

As part of the State **encampment resolution funding** for the Stockton Boulevard Safe Stay, the W/X streets corridor and nearby neighborhoods have been designated as the focus



for outreach and engagement for the new site. Outreach workers from the **City's Department of Community Response (DCR)** have been working in this area for an extended period of time and have developed a by-name list of eligible clients. DCR staff are currently out in the field daily, communicating with unsheltered residents eligible for a spot at the Stockton Boulevard site and helping with intake.

The campus was designed and constructed by the State of California. The Department of General Services (DGS) was proud to work with its local partners to design and construct this project.

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) has also been a key community partner. SMUD's vision for a clean energy future is about transforming the communities they

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## Expanding TWO Behavioral Health Service Programs

**Sacramento County is expanding two Behavioral Health Service programs, combining Access and Substance Use Prevention Treatment (SUPT) services to streamline care, address critical needs and enhance the health and safety of our community.**

### **Behavioral Health Services-Screening and Coordination (BHS-SAC) Call Center**

The new BHS-SAC Call Center simplifies access to mental health and substance use treatment services by combining multiple phone numbers into one centralized line: 916-875-1055. This new service integrates the Mental Health Access Team and the Substance Use Prevention and Treatment System of Care under one number. By doing so, Sacramento County ensures that individuals in need can receive timely coordination among providers and improve health outcomes for those struggling with mental health and substance use challenges.



### **Implementation of Senate Bill 43 (SB 43)**

Sacramento County will implement the State's modernized law for involuntary psychiatric holds which expands the definition of "gravely disabled." This new definition includes individuals unable to care for their basic needs for health and safety due to a severe substance use disorder or a co-occurring mental health disorder and severe substance use disorder.

SB 43 also broadens the definition of "basic needs" to include a person's ability to obtain necessary medical care, personal safety, food, weather-appropriate clothing, and/or shelter.

The updated law will expand access to acute and long-term care for our most vulnerable community members who meet the definition of gravely disabled and are suffering from a severe substance use disorder.

These efforts are part of a broader initiative in California to address homelessness, mental health crises and substance abuse treatment. The efforts implemented reflect the County's dedication to providing comprehensive care and fostering collaboration between health services and community partners. For more information about these programs, visit **Sacramento County's Department of Health Services' Behavioral Health website** at <https://dhs.sacounty.gov/BHS/Pages/BHS-Home.aspx>.

## Sacramento County Launches CARE Court Program

Sacramento County officially launched its **Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act Program** (known as CARE Court) on Dec. 1, 2024 to connect individuals struggling with schizophrenia spectrum or other psychotic disorders with voluntary, community-based treatment through a civil court process

The program is available to individuals aged 18 and older who are diagnosed with a schizophrenia spectrum or other psychotic disorder, currently experiencing behaviors and symptoms associated with severe mental illness (SMI), unable

to stabilize through existing voluntary treatment, and unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision.

The CARE process begins with an individual, family members, behavioral health professionals, directors of organizations or hospitals involved in their care filing a petition, which is reviewed by a **Sacramento County Superior Court** judge to determine eligibility. If criteria are met, the court may order Sacramento County's Behavioral Health Services Division to investigate and develop a CARE agreement or plan tailored to the



participant's needs. Through this process, participants can receive support through the program for up to 24 months, ensuring continuity of care and ongoing access to essential services.

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## Reducing Hurdles To Affordable Housing Development



**Sacramento County is taking steps to address the region's affordable housing crisis.** An

ordinance was introduced to amend sections of the Sacramento County Code relating to County impact fees for affordable housing projects, and a resolution was adopted to implement a three-year Development Impact Fee Offset Program.

This three-year pilot program is designed to reduce barriers to affordable housing construction by offsetting certain development impact fees for projects providing housing to low-income residents. Sacramento County collects development impact fees to fund public infrastructure but

acknowledges that these fees can sometimes be a barrier to affordable housing construction.

### A little bit of background:

On April 11, 2024, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to explore new and innovative financing mechanisms, including the potential use of up to \$10 million (\$5 million from the Affordable Housing Incentive General Fund Reserve and up to \$5 million from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and Affordable Housing Ordinance Programs) to help fund a three-year pilot program to offset County development impact fees that are attributable to eligible Affordable Housing Projects.

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## \$2.7M Awarded for Community Development Projects

**Sacramento County will receive \$2,718,235 as part of a historic \$100 million awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to communities across 15 states. The funding, announced under HUD's Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) program, aims to cut red tape, boost housing production at all income levels and reduce housing costs.**

### The grant funds will support three key initiatives:

- » **Comprehensive Corridor Planning:** Modernization of land use planning documents for Stockton Boulevard and North Watt Avenue commercial corridors, conducting infrastructure need and priority phasing analyses, and exploring establishing financing districts that would earmark a percentage of funds specifically for affordable housing development and related infrastructure needs in these corridors and identification of necessary resources to support positive outcomes for lower-income households.
- » **Adaptive Reuse Program and Streamlining Affordable Housing in Special Planning Areas:** Advancing an adaptive reuse program for conversions of structures in commercial zones for residential use; and removing discretionary requirements for affordable housing projects in SPAs, including Neighborhood Preservation Areas (NPAs).
- » **Completing Round 2 of the Housing Element/Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA):** Rezoning in planned communities where substantial residential development interests already exist.



"This funding is a crucial step toward addressing our community's housing challenges and improving infrastructure to support sustainable growth in important infill and environmental justice areas," said Todd Smith, Sacramento County Planning Director.

The PRO Housing program, launched in 2024, aims to help local governments and planning organizations tackle challenges like outdated land-use policies, aging infrastructure and high development costs. Sacramento County's projects exemplify the program's goal of creating housing-forward communities while fostering community resilience and equity in two of Sacramento County's Environmental Justice communities.

The grant represents a significant step in addressing housing challenges in Sacramento County and supports its ongoing commitment to creating more inclusive, affordable and sustainable communities.

### Stockton Blvd. Safe Stay Community Shelter Opens, *Continued*

serve. SMUD's investment of \$165,385 to the State of California has contributed to the installation of heat pump-HVAC wall units and electric resistance water heating equipment in the 155 tiny homes. This community partnership supports an important cause by helping build healthier, more resilient communities and empowering residents to be active participants in building a clean energy future.

### Day to Day Operations

FSC is dedicated to creating interim housing and emergency shelters where people experiencing homelessness can live with safety and dignity. Its mission is to provide a foundation of support, offering essential services that help individuals take their first steps toward self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

At the Stockton Blvd Safe Stay, every guest receives personalized, wraparound services and work closely with a case manager to break the cycle of homelessness. FSC is proud to collaborate with incredible community organizations that bring critical resources directly to the shelter. These include therapy, substance use support, medical care and more — tailored to meet each individual's unique needs. We are excited to share the successes of this shelter and the positive impact it is making in our community.

FSC provides a Code of Conduct document guests must sign and adhere to, agreeing that they will conduct themselves as good neighbors in the community. While the goal is for clients to only stay in the Safe Stay Community for three months, the site will allow most of the program participants to stay past three months and until they are connected to housing, as long as they are engaged in a support service plan and following the Code of Conduct.

For more information about how Sacramento County is addressing homelessness, visit [schs.sacounty.gov](https://schs.sacounty.gov).

### Sacramento County Launches CARE Court Program, *Continued*

The CARE Act embodies Sacramento County's commitment to a compassionate, recovery-focused approach for addressing mental health challenges. By empowering individuals with the resources and support they need, the program fosters connections within the community, prioritizing dignity and respect throughout the recovery process.

For more information about the CARE Court Program, including eligibility details and the forms to fill out a petition, visit [Sacramento County's CARE Court program webpage](https://dhs.sacounty.gov/BHS/Pages/Community-Assistance%2c-Recovery-and-Empowerment.aspx) at <https://dhs.sacounty.gov/BHS/Pages/Community-Assistance%2c-Recovery-and-Empowerment.aspx>.

### Reducing Hurdles, *Continued*

On Sept. 24, 2024, the Community Development Department came before the Board of Supervisors to present two options for the establishment of a three-year pilot development impact fee offset program, and the Board chose the option that offsets fees for 100% affordable housing projects (up to 80% AMI), with a \$10,000 per unit cap. The average cost of County impact fees is estimated at \$4 million annually.

At that time, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to come back to introduce an ordinance amending relevant chapters of the Sacramento County Code to capture and implement their preferred option for the Offset Program. **The ordinance was adopted on Jan. 7, 2025.**

Staff have been instructed to give a status update on the pilot program in one year, so stay tuned for that!

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