



# PRESS RELEASE

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## County/City Release CORE Investment Recommendations

The City of Santa Cruz and County of Santa Cruz have jointly released a set of funding recommendations committing nearly \$16 million over three years to community-based programs that benefit youth, seniors, immigrants, homeless persons, individuals with behavioral health challenges and other vulnerable populations.

Overseen by an expert panel of reviewers, the recommendations represent the first significant adjustment of funding priorities since local funding of the social safety net began in the 1980s. In addition to increasing taxpayer investment in these programs by 10 percent over 2016 levels, the recommendations are based on several community-based strategic plans and targeted to address four areas: health, children and youth, homelessness and seniors.

The recommendations represent a high level of continuity, with 94 percent of the investment going to programs that previously received funding. A majority of those programs see funding increases, and several new programs were funded, including the Seven Challenges program to reduce teen alcohol and drug abuse in Pajaro Valley, funds to prevent and help end homelessness among South County families, substance abuse treatment and support for low-income Latina mothers and a Spanish-language mental health family support group.

"We're grateful for the opportunity to compete for these important safety-net funds. They will help address a critical unmet need – supporting the families of those with mental health issues," said Sheryl Lee, program director for NAMI of Santa Cruz County, which received funding for a new "Sustaining Families" program.

Overall, there were requests for \$10 million in annual funding compared to a little more than \$5 million in available funding. The City and County wish to praise applicants for the high quality of applications, and hope the new process pays dividends by demonstrating the value of competing for grants to benefit local residents.

A full list of grant recipients is available at [cityofsantacruz.com](http://cityofsantacruz.com) or [santacruzcounty.us](http://santacruzcounty.us).