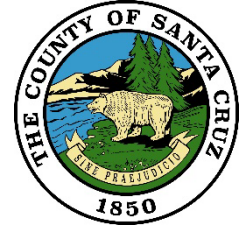


May 12, 2026



HOPE Village Provides Safe Interim Housing and Supportive Services for Residents Along the Pajaro River



Grand opening celebration for community partners May 18, 2026

HOPE Village, a new 24-hour, 34-bed non-congregate low-barrier navigation center located at 118 First Street in Watsonville, provides temporary housing and supportive services focused on helping unhoused residents from the Pajaro River corridor transition into permanent housing.

HOPE stands for *Housing Opportunity Programs and Employment* and reflects the belief that *It Takes a Village to Build a Village*. The project was developed through a partnership between the Counties of Monterey and Santa Cruz, Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency, Westview Presbyterian Church, and Community Action Board of Santa Cruz. Funding was provided through California's Encampment Resolution Fund and Central California Alliance.

Community partners and media are invited to the grand opening celebration of HOPE Village during Affordable Housing Month:

Monday, May 18

1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

118 First Street, Watsonville

If you are interested in attending, please register at: [HOPE Village Grand Opening](#).

“Our priority was to get people indoors and connected to services as quickly as possible,” said Robert Ratner, Director of Housing for Health Division for the County of Santa Cruz. “We are proud to celebrate this milestone during Affordable Housing Month and demonstrate what strong regional partnerships can accomplish for vulnerable residents in our community.”

The project also plays a critical role in preparing the region for the upcoming Pajaro River levee expansion project, which is expected to significantly impact areas where unsheltered individuals have historically resided. Establishing HOPE Village ahead of major infrastructure and flood protection construction efforts helps ensure vulnerable residents are connected to shelter, health care, and supportive services before displacement occurs.

“HOPE Village demonstrates the power of collaboration and proactive planning,” said Roxanne V. Wilson, County Homeless Services Director for the County of Monterey. “This project creates a more humane and coordinated response to homelessness while helping prepare the region for the upcoming Pajaro River levee expansion project.”

HOPE Village is designed as a low-barrier navigation center, meaning services are structured around the realities of homelessness rather than rigid program requirements. Low-barrier programs are

intended to engage individuals who have historically remained unsheltered or disconnected from traditional services by reducing barriers to entry and increasing access to housing-focused support. The site includes modular sleeping units that offer privacy, personal storage, and accommodations for pets and partners. Non-congregate shelter models have demonstrated higher rates of acceptance and retention while helping reduce conflict, support behavioral health stability, and limit the spread of illness.

The program is operated by Community Action Board of Santa Cruz on property owned by Westview Presbyterian Church.

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