



City of Sebastopol

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: September 2, 2025

=====

**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** Police Chief Sean McDonagh  
 Interim City Manager Mary Gourley  
 City Council Liaison to Non Profits Mayor Zollman  
 City Council Liaison to Non Profits Alternate Vice Mayor McLewis

**Responsible Department:** Police

**Subject:** Approval to authorize City staff to submit an application to Sonoma County Department of Health Services for:

- a. Extension of Heart Personnel beyond the Pilot Program; Request is to extend the HEART pilot program through June 30 2026.
- b. Funding to support dedicated Mobile Support Teams (MST) for Sebastopol to working collaboration with the City Police Department when responding to mental health situations  
 (Measure O: Behavioral Health & Homelessness Pathways to Sustainability Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA))

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council, by minute order, authorize City staff to submit an application to the Sonoma County Department of Health Services for:

1. Extension of HEART Personnel beyond the Pilot Program – Request to extend the HEART pilot program through June 30, 2026.
2. Funding to support dedicated Mobile Support Teams (MST) for Sebastopol – To work collaboratively with the City Police Department when responding to mental health situations.

This request is pursuant to the Measure O: Behavioral Health & Homelessness Pathways to Sustainability Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

**PROCESS OF AGENDA ITEM:**

1. If item remains on consent, no presentation of item is required. Item would be approved as a consent calendar item.
2. If item is removed from the consent calendar; item would be placed at the end of the regular agenda items for discussion following the process below:
  - a. Presentation of agenda item by Police Chief
  - b. Questions and discussion from Councilmembers
  - c. Public comment period
  - d. Council deliberation and motion

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Measure O funding, approved by Sonoma County voters, provides resources for behavioral health programs and initiatives addressing homelessness. The Department of Health Services seeks applications from community-based



**City of Sebastopol**

organizations (CBOs) and local governments with existing programs critical to the behavioral health and homelessness support network. Sebastopol’s initial HEART pilot program positions the City as eligible for additional funding.

**BACKGROUND:**

Measure O funding, approved by Sonoma County voters, provides resources for behavioral health programs and initiatives addressing homelessness. The Department of Health Services is looking to use Measure O funding to support the community and help protect the County’s investments in Behavioral Health and Homelessness services and programs. The Department of Health Services is seeking applications from a mix of community-based organizations (CBOs) and local government partners with existing projects critical to these networks that are facing funding uncertainties.

**DISCUSSION:**

The City has need for funding for homeless outreach services to address this critical need in the City. Although it appears the point in time count is considerably lower than the last count, the City of Sebastopol is currently experiencing a sustained and visible presence of unhoused individuals, including established encampments in key public spaces or individuals who have taken up residence in the downtown plaza and city parking lot. Routinely, unsheltered and homeless individuals are observed as living in the Sebastopol Downtown Plaza, the City/Chamber of Commerce parking lot, and along the Joe Rodota Trail within city limits to name a few of the City locations.

The City understands that several other Sonoma County jurisdictions received funding to support mobile crisis response services. Initially, Sebastopol did not apply for these funds, as the City did not have a formal program in place. However, following a recent discussion with the Department of Health Services, it is now clear that our partnership with the County – with the initial three month HEART Pilot program – makes the City of Sebastopol eligible for funding. Sebastopol should be included in the County’s broader strategy and eligible for funding to support its response to homelessness by extending the Pilot program for an additional nine months as well as providing funding to help support a dedicated Mobile Support Teams (MST) for Sebastopol to working collaboration with the City Police Department when responding to mental health situations.

A shared investment between the County and City will allow us to strengthen our coordinated response to homelessness, expand access to mental health and housing services, and reduce strain on emergency and law enforcement resources; as well as be the start of a regional approach which is a key priority of all Sonoma County cities and the Board of Supervisors. I understand that the Mobile Support Team (MST) Offers round-the-clock crisis response through a 24/7 call center at 1-800-746-8181. Services include in-field crisis assessment, de-escalation, intervention, 5150 assessments, safety planning, and transportation. Teams consist of mental health clinicians, substance abuse counselors, and client support specialists and can respond independently from law enforcement when appropriate. Although the City has a contract with WCCS to outreach services, outreach workers are not licensed clinicians and are not equipped to handle acute mental health emergencies. In those cases, the Sonoma County’s Mobile Support Team (MST) would be the appropriate first responder and having Sebastopol have MST services would supplement the services provided by WCCS.

As this is one of the three key priorities of the Sonoma County Mayors and Councilmembers Association, all cities should receive their fair share of the Measure O funds for services for our community.

**STAFF (RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT) ANALYSIS:**

The City was approved for a pilot “HEART” program which will provide professional outreach and support services that extend beyond what law enforcement alone can provide. The addition of dedication of Mobile Support Team services in Sebastopol would be an essential step forward. Our officers frequently encounter individuals experiencing acute mental health crises, and while we strive to respond with care, law enforcement is not always the most appropriate or effective



**City of Sebastopol**

first responder. This would reduce pressure on patrol resources, improve outcomes for individuals in crisis, and enhance public safety for the broader community.

Interim City Manager: Extending the HEART program and adding MST support aligns with County priorities and enhances City-County coordination. Inclusion of Sebastopol in Measure O funding ensures equitable distribution of resources across Sonoma County jurisdictions.

**CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES; AND/OR GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:**

*This agenda item represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:*

*Goal 4: HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION*

*Restoring public trust*

*Improve Public Communications*

*Goal 2: PUBLIC SAFETY*

*Strengthen the public's safety and improve the quality of life. Includes supporting our first responders (police, fire, public works), responding to emergencies, protecting people, property, and businesses, and engaging in emergency preparedness community outreach, public education and prevention activities.*

*Explore Ways to Address Homelessness*

*Pursue no additional costs and or low cost solutions to homelessness*

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date. The City has also used social media to promote and advertise the City Council Meeting Agenda Items.

As of the writing of this agenda item report, the City has not received public comment. If staff receives public comments following the publication and distribution of this agenda item report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting and will be posted to the city website.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact with approval of this item.

**RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council, by minute order, authorize City staff to submit an application to the Sonoma County Department of Health Services for:

1. Extension of HEART Personnel beyond the Pilot Program – Request to extend the HEART pilot program through June 30, 2026.
2. Funding to support dedicated Mobile Support Teams (MST) for Sebastopol – To work collaboratively with the City Police Department when responding to mental health situations.

**OPTIONS:**

The Council can deny the request and provide direction to staff.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

**APPROVALS:**



**City of Sebastopol**

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 8-28-2025  
CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 8-28-2025  
The proposed action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)  
Administrative Services (Financial): Approval Date: 8-28-2025  
Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:  Yes  No  N/A  
Account Code (f applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 8-28-2025  
City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 8-28-2025