From: Laura Foster
To: Nguyen, Mindy
Subject: Public Comment for HCDC 11/14/2024
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Good Morning Mindy

Below is a public comment for the HCDC meeting tonight.

On behalf of Bill Wilson Center – a local nonprofit in Santa Clara County that is working to end
youth and family homelessness; I want to let the community know that November is Youth HOPE Month. This is a nationwide campaign to increase awareness about homelessness among youth and young adults in our community, and to spotlight the resources available for youth in crisis.

Despite being a technology hub and a center of innovation, Santa Clara County is ranked #1 in the US for having the highest percentage of unsheltered and unaccompanied homeless youth. Between 2022 and 2023 the number of unhoused youth in our region increased by 15%. Unhoused young people between the ages of 18 and 24 are a population disproportionately made up of people of color, LGBTQ+ people, and former foster youth.

The longer a person is unhoused, the longer it takes, and the costlier it is, to help them transition into permanent housing. Lacking adequate employment and skills for independent living, increases the likelihood that unhoused youth will become chronically homeless adults.

Bill Wilson Center has been serving youth and young-parent families experiencing homelessness in our County for over 50 years. The unhoused people we serve typically range from children as young as 12 who have run away from home, to older youth and young adults between the ages of 18-24, some of whom may even have children. Our goal is to provide an integrated system of care that will help youth who are unhoused obtain housing, and also the means to maintain that housing.

If you know a young person who is homeless, please refer them to Bill Wilson Center. They can contact us through our Here4You Call Center at 408-385-2400. The Call Center helps match people to emergency shelters; provides assistance to sustain current housing situations; and makes referrals and linkages to community resources. We accept calls from all over the County.

Thank you,

Laura Foster, LCSW

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