

WHAT IS A MICRO-COMMUNITY?

Frequently Asked Questions

Micro-communities are interim supportive housing sites that are operated by the City of Sacramento where stable seniors 55 years and older who are on a fixed income - and cannot find housing they can afford - can live for an interim period of time.



Why is the City building micro-communities?

Seniors are one of the fastest growing demographics in California. In Sacramento, 22% of the City's homeless population are 55 years and older. Many seniors are on a fixed income, cannot afford housing and often end up in City homeless shelters as their only option. Most could live independently if there were available housing they could afford. Micro-communities are a cost effective way for the City to quickly stand up new units for seniors.

How will people be selected to participate in micro-communities?

Stable seniors in current City programs will be referred into micro-communities by the Department of Community Response (DCR). Participants will need to have income to participate in the program and a history of demonstrating they will be successful living independently. There will be no walk-up intakes.

What features will micro-communities have?

Micro-communities will have no more than 40 pre-manufactured units that are 120 square feet each. The units will have electricity, heating and air conditioning, internet, storage, a microwave and a refrigerator/freezer. Bathrooms, showers and laundry will be located in various areas of the community so no one is more than a few steps away. A percentage of the units will be ADA and meet accessibility requirements. Communities will also include outdoor gathering spaces, community cooking areas, gardens, and dog-runs. While pets will be allowed, there will be a maximum number of pets allowed per site.

Will there be security?

24-hour security monitoring will be provided at the micro-communities. Sites will be fenced with restricted access. Daytime visiting hours will be established, and no overnight guests will be allowed. Bag checks will be required upon entry.



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What services will be provided to residents?

Outreach/case management staff will be in the communities daily, offering connections to all supportive services that are currently available. For example, there will be connections to programs offering meals and transportation to appointments. Office spaces will be included on-site for residents to meet with service providers.

Are micro-communities the same as traditional emergency shelters?

No. Micro-Communities differ significantly from emergency shelters, which traditionally are larger facilities that serve the most vulnerable for a limited time (usually up to six months). Micro-Communities by contrast are smaller and serve stable seniors who have a demonstrated history of being able to live more independently. People can also stay longer in Micro-Communities. Technically speaking, Micro-Communities are defined as "interim supportive housing," which is a form of emergency housing and offers a middle ground between shelters and permanent housing.

Why are people being asked to pay part of their income to stay in a micro-community?

Participants will pay 30% of their income per month after an initial 90-day grace period. The City will assess and collect the program fees, which will be used to help offset operating costs of the communities and allow us to use that savings to help others. The City believes that paying a program fee encourages self-sufficiency, promotes dignity and increases program sustainability. Survey results from City shelter participants indicated 89% of respondents would sign-up for a micro-community and be willing to pay the program fee.

How many micro-communities are currently being planned in the City?

The City of Sacramento is currently planning four micro-community sites in various parts of the City including Council Districts 1, 5, 7 and 8. While specific sites have been identified in Districts 1, 5 and 8, the location in D7 is in the process of being determined.

Is Sacramento the first city to establish micro-communities?

While other cities across California, including San Jose, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, and others, have been utilizing a variety of tiny-home community models, those projects have been mostly emergency shelter in nature with time limited stays. Sacramento will be the first to offer this type of interim supportive housing where, as long as clients abide by the rules and requirements, participants can stay until a permanent housing option becomes available.

