

# Social Services

The vision of the Department of Social Services is to facilitate individuals and families to become emotionally, socially, and fiscally self-sufficient and to contribute to a healthy community. Social Services accomplishes this vision by assisting clients to identify and meet their needs through the administering of federal, state and county programs. Social Services strives to establish partnerships with individuals and community groups to ensure collaborative solutions.

The department is continuing the process of identifying unmet capital needs and implementing technological advances to increase efficiency and deliver excellent customer service. Changes in federal and state mandates require vigilant attention to our business processes along with capital and technological advances. With the completion of the CalWIN computer system implementation, a new strategic project will be to develop a Benefit Call Center to streamline our benefits operations.

The department, through the Child Welfare Division, is required to provide emergency shelter for children removed from their families, monitor the number of children in shelter care, the number of bed-days utilized and the geographical location of shelter and foster care need. The department continues to build its resources to house foster children as they enter the dependency system or need housing between placements.

All departmental capital projects are guided by the needs of the community, state and federal requirements. The Director Kathy Gallagher, Administrative Deputy Director, Michele Fitzpatrick, Operations Manager Molly Marino along with the other deputy directors, participate in reviewing the capital needs of the department on an ongoing basis.

The department website can be viewed at [www.countyofsb.org/social\\_services/](http://www.countyofsb.org/social_services/)

**Benefit Services Center - New**

**Function:** Health & Public Assistance

**Department:** Social Services

**StartDate:** 11/1/2007

**EndDate:** 9/30/2008

**Description**

This project establishes a Benefits Services Center in Santa Maria to serve Medi-Cal and Food Stamp clients served by employees who currently work in the three different regions of Santa Barbara County. The Center will house these 100 workers and will enable client caseloads to be pooled and shared through technical innovations. Automatic phone call distribution and document imaging will provide the supporting infrastructure for the Center. These new systems will improve the efficiency of delivery of services to clients. Additionally, the location of the Center in Santa Maria will enable a growing number of employees to work in the community in which they live.

The Department has received state and federal allocations which will be used along with monies from the Department's Special Revenue Fund to pay for the start up costs of this project. The start up costs include the cost of building out leased space for the Services Center, procuring telephony technology and consultant fees to direct the implementation of the technology used to operate the Center. Total costs are estimated to be \$2.9 million for the first two fiscal years of the project. The capital cost for this project is made up of the design and tenant improvements which total \$825,000. The remaining start up costs of \$2,075,000 are for hardware, software, telephony equipment, communications, furniture, moving and consultant fees.



**Status**

The Center is scheduled to begin operations in September 2008. This project was approved by the Board of Supervisors in October of 2007 and will be located in leased space in Santa Maria.

**Net Impact on Operating Budget**

The Benefit Services Center will be funded through existing federal and state revenue streams. Due to the efficiencies realized by implementation of the telephony technology the department projects savings in the overall operating budget over the next five years leading to a cumulative cost avoidance of \$8.2 million by FY 2013-14.

**Estimated Project Costs**

| <b>Construction Costs</b> |            | <b>Annual O &amp; M Costs</b> |            |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| Preliminary               | 0          | Utilities                     | 68         |
| Design                    | 75         | Maintenance                   | 95         |
| Acquisition               | 0          | Personnel                     | 0          |
| Construction              | 750        | Other                         | 489        |
| Other                     | 0          |                               |            |
| <b>Total Cost</b>         | <b>825</b> | <b>Total Cost</b>             | <b>652</b> |

| Source of Funds  | Fund | Prior Year(s) Expense | Est Act 2007-08 | Proposed 2008-09 |             |              | Projected Requirements |                |                |                |       | Five Year Total | Future Years | Project Total |
|--|------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
|  |      |                       |                 | Carry Forward    | New Funding | Year 1 Total | Year 2 2009-10         | Year 3 2010-11 | Year 4 2011-12 | Year 5 2012-13 |       |                 |              |               |
| Federal/State/Dept. of Social Services                 | 0055 |                       | 125             |                  | 150         | 150          | 150                    | 150            | 150            | 100            | 700   |                 | 825          |               |
| <b>Totals</b>  |      |                       | 125             |                  | 150         | 150          | 150                    | 150            | 150            | 100            | 700   |                 | 825          |               |
| <b>Operating &amp; Maintenance Costs for Fund 0055</b> |      |                       | 156             | Year 1 Impact:   | 416         | 572          | 622                    | 632            | 642            | 652            | 3,120 |                 |              |               |

**Major Improvement to Building Facilities - Fully Funded**