

## Yurok Tribe receives \$2.2 million in Homekey funds to combat homelessness

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The Yurok Tribe was one of the beneficiaries in the state's latest round of Homekey funds released Oct. 16.

Governor Gavin Newsom announced the release of \$30.7 million in the fifth round of awards for Homekey, California's program to purchase and rehabilitate housing — including hotels, motels, vacant apartment buildings and other properties — and convert them into permanent, long-term housing for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. In addition to the Yurok Tribe, the most recent round of Homekey awards also went to the cities of San Luis Obispo and Los Angeles in projects totaling 210 units.

Newsom made the announcement during a digital roundtable discussion where he was joined by state, tribal and local leaders focusing on the impact Homekey has had in rural communities across the state.

The state has now provided all available Homekey funding to local jurisdictions, ahead of schedule. To date, more than \$627 million has been awarded to 45 applicants and 71 projects totaling 4,646 units. In July, Del Norte County received \$2.4 million to purchase and convert the Coastal Inn & Suites in Crescent City into transitional homeless housing.

According to Newsom's office, the average per-unit cost to Homekey is \$135,000 – well below the average cost in California to build new housing units. His administration is working with the Legislature to make an

additional \$200 million in Coronavirus Relief Funding available for Homekey.

“When it comes to homelessness no community is immune, no person is untouched and while the issue is widely thought to affect only our urban centers, the truth is that it occurs in rural areas, small towns and remote parts of our state,” said Newsom. “Through Homekey, we are making historic investments that will have lasting impacts in our big cities, but also our small towns and tribal communities. These investments are helping thousands of Californians vulnerable to COVID-19 exposure get access to permanent, supportive housing.”

The Yurok Tribe was awarded \$2.2 million to acquire 18 units to provide permanent supportive housing with priority given to Native Americans in Humboldt County, where, according to Yurok Tribe Chairman Joseph James, Native Americans represent the second-highest racial group of unsheltered persons and also face increased risks of COVID-19 complications.

“The Yurok Tribe is excited to partner with Arcata House Partnership to provide essential housing to our most vulnerable members of the community,” James said at the roundtable. “This is the beginning of a partnership that will be beneficial to both the Yurok Tribe and Arcata House Partnership with the goal of assisting our most vulnerable community members.”

Senator Mike McGuire, who represents California’s North Coast in the Second District, said at the roundtable that he finds it shameful that communities here have some of the highest rates of homelessness per capita in America.

“That’s why we have been grateful to work with Governor Newsom, day and night, to secure funding that will build permanent housing and expand resources for mental health and substance abuse counseling for our homeless neighbors,” said McGuire. “Project Homekey will help change lives, especially here in rural Northern California, where we need it most.”

In addition, the city of San Luis Obispo received \$15 million to acquire 122 units and the city of Los Angeles received another \$13.5 million to acquire 70 units as interim housing.