

For Immediate Release

SEBASTOPOL SERVICE CLUBS AND THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL ORGANIZE A NEEDS SUMMIT

Sebastopol's Service Clubs, in partnership with the City of Sebastopol and CoMission, are organizing a community needs summit. The goal is to bring together all organizations in and around Sebastopol that address community needs and all the area's Service Clubs to identify pressing community issues and better organize how the community responds to them. The tentative schedule for the summit is late April or early May.

The Service Clubs and community groups include Active 20-30 Club Sebastopol, The Sebastopol Grange, Gravenstein Lions Club, Kiwanis Club Sebastopol, La Fayette No. 126 Masonic Lodge, Rotary Club of Sebastopol, Rotary Club of Sebastopol Sunrise, Soroptimist West Sonoma County, St Stephens, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. This is the first time so many organizations have joined together in this manner. Following the recent fires and the pandemic, our local support for children in need, education, health, environment, hunger, housing, and other needs is under tremendous stress. There are more needs than ever before. Identifying the challenges that are the most pressing, then figuring out how to efficiently support organizations dealing with those challenges is more critical now than ever.

After a month-long consultation, the City and the Clubs have decided on a plan of action. Starting in the next week, the City and CoMission will send out a survey to identified community service providers, such as West County Community Health, schools, non-profits and more. It is designed to ascertain what organizations see as our community's most pressing problems and invite them to share what they would like to do to improve their programs.

The returned surveys will be summarized and then presented at a summit roughly 45 days later. The summit organizers intend to invite organizations that have completed the surveys, the Service Clubs and others interested in supporting efforts to meet the community's needs. The expected outcome will be partnerships between direct service providers and those who want to support them. The focus will be on projects and ideas that seem to deal with the greatest needs and offer efficient and effective ways to address them.

Sebastopol Councilmember Diana Rich sees real value in this approach: "We know we have real needs in Sebastopol and the greater West County. We are lucky to have many great organizations that are working to improve things. But I know, as a member of Rotary and as an admirer of many other volunteer groups in town, that the clubs and other supporters would really appreciate a more complete picture of the totality of our area's needs and a better understanding of who else might be a partner in providing support. The City of Sebastopol, CoMission, Service Clubs and other funding providers can join together to do exactly that with this summit. We all want our efforts to serve the actual needs of our community. This summit is a key to making that happen. We think it will excite all our service providers by giving them an opportunity to be better supported in their work."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Craig Litwin from CoMission at 707 849 1622 or craig.litwin@comission.group.