



MEMORANDUM

Date: April 8, 2020

To: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

From: Diana Durazo 
Special Projects Manager

Re: **Information Update on County Food Distribution Effort**

The County continues to reach out to communities to assess current needs. Additionally, the County has received numerous requests for food assistance from different areas, primarily our rural communities, that are struggling to procure food supplies or provide delivery services.

Community Outreach

Staff with Community Development has been reaching out to rural food pantries serving their communities and local non-profits to assess needs in each, such as Amado, Ajo, Arivaca, Catalina, Vail and others. This needs assessment is necessary prior to issuing emergency funding contracts that will assist these community groups with personnel, operations, materials and supplies, storage and food purchase needs. Concerns expressed by some is that the Community Food Bank (CFB) is curtailing resources to rural areas as demand in metro Tucson continues to grow. Discussions with CFB are ongoing to determine whether food supplies will be an issue or if it primarily relates to distribution limitations to rural communities. We are identifying County resources, such as staff to assist with deliveries, forklift and large vehicle operators, enclosed vans and other large similar vehicles, and equipment for delivery site preparation that can be made available to expand CFB efforts in rural areas using CDBG funds. Below is a table showing current status of outreach to these communities and estimated funding needs.

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Communities and Towns	Outreach	Estimated Funding Need
Ajo	Coordinating with Ajo Center for Sustainable Agriculture and CFB for food and deliveries.	\$50,000
Arivaca	Coordinating with Arivaca Human Resources group and CFB for food and deliveries.	\$20,000
Vail	Coordinating with Vail for assistance with deliveries	\$10,000
Sahuarita	Met with them today to assess needs for food and deliveries	\$50,000
Catalina	Still awaiting response	TBD
Robles Junction	Working with Altar Valley Fire Dept. and Friends of group	TBD

South Tucson	Meeting scheduled for 4/9; possible coordination through Catholic Community Services or Pio Decimo	TBD
Marana	Meeting scheduled for 4/9	TBD
Amado	Discussions with CFB ongoing	TBD
Green Valley	Determining whether any activities had already scheduled by CFB	TBD
Picture Rocks	Awaiting response	TBD
Oro Valley	Meeting scheduled for 4/9	TBD

We will continue to provide updates on these and delivery operations.

Community Food Bank (CFB)

The County is working closely with the CFB to provide food for distribution. They can assist with getting food to these communities via our partnerships with area non-profits. Distribution sites can be set up at County facilities or community-managed locations like churches, schools or similar facilities, including mobile distributions in parking lots. CFB can purchase food in bulk for partners and groups to purchase at a discount. They can also assist with deliveries and have used the National Guard to assist with distribution. Limitations will be in staffing levels, and they will need volunteers to assist and manage food distribution in rural communities.

Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)

The RTA has been coordinating with the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) to authorize them delivering meals during this health crisis. FTA 5311 relief funds can be used for limited delivery of meals for seniors, people with disabilities and low-income. The RTA has requested that these funds be extended to also include residents that are homebound. The funds apply to rural areas, but can also be used in northern Marana, Tucson Estates, San Xavier District, Sahuarita/Green Valley and Ajo. The RTA also conveyed to us that they have 20 drivers and vehicles that can assist in food deliveries if requested.

Follow-up on Outreach and Requests Received

Green Valley Council (GVC)

We reached out to the GVC to assess whether food and delivery assistance was needed. They reported that the Council contacted most HOAs in Green Valley, including non-members on this. In terms of numbers, total rooftops contacted equal to about 13,000, with an estimated 20,800 residents. HOAs reported back that plans for obtaining supplies were provided to their residents, including people assigned to picking up online orders, doing shopping for others who cannot and other assistance available. Valley Assistance Services, a local volunteer non-profit continues to provide assistance in grocery shopping, pick-up order, and driving residents to medical appointments. Friends in Deed, another volunteer organization also drives people to their medical appointments. The Pima County Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers are assisting with checking on residents. They have a list of about 70 people identified as highly vulnerable residents that they contact on a daily basis for a wellness check. The fire department also assists in this effort. The GVC will continue to monitor and reach out to HOAs and let us know of any changes or need.

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Tucson Estates Community

The County reached out to the Tucson Estates HOA, which is listed as having the highest number of older residents in unincorporated Pima County, with over 1,000. At this time, similar to GVC, their volunteer groups are providing the assistance needed for their residents. This also goes for the neighboring Tucson Mountain Sanctuary and Tucson Estates II HOAs. These three HOAs round up the top three HOAs with the highest number of seniors, with just over 2,000 collectively. They too will continue to monitor the situation for any changes in need.

Town of Ajo

Ajo is experiencing a shortage of food, with their grocery store being cleaned out and food and supplies dwindling. We are currently coordinating food delivery on two fronts. It is our understanding that Bashas warehouses are providing food and supplies to their grocery stores and affiliates requesting it. They are using the National Guard to assist with delivering food and supplies to their stores. We are asking the grocery store in Ajo to contact their Bashas warehouse to request restocking of all food and supplies, as they are a Bashas affiliate. Once submitted, they are placed on the National Guard's delivery rotation. We are also coordinating with the Community Food Bank to schedule food deliveries to Ajo. Logistics include people to receive/host food delivery, set up of delivery and distribution site (including equipment), identifying a location best suited for this operation while adhering to COVID-19 guidelines. CFB also works with the National Guard for transport to delivery sites. This is an ongoing effort and working with everyone to quickly set this up, as this will establish a process that can be used in Ajo and other rural communities.

City of South Tucson

South Tucson reached out to the County requesting assistance with procuring food supplies and deliveries. The County is working to assess their need and coordinate the provision of food and people to assist in deliveries. This effort is ongoing.

Ongoing Activities

We have scheduled meetings with remaining communities and will follow-up with those we are still waiting to hear from. The County can provide CDBG funds to both rural and community agencies to assist in purchasing food and distribution, and to the CFB directly for those areas that do not have an organized local group. They have offered to assist us with that if needed. The County can make staff available to assist in distribution efforts where gaps or limitations in volunteers are identified, including drivers, forklift operators and warehouse personnel if needed. County facilities can also be made available if distribution sites are needed and found to be suitable. We are currently pooling all information from departments to develop a list of all resources that can assist in this effort. We will also touch base with the OEM, as they maintain a volunteer base and list of resources that may assist us in our distribution efforts.

Updates will continue to be provided.

DD/dr