



Office of the City Manager

## **URGENT ITEM AGENDA MATERIAL**

**Meeting Date: May 26, 2020**

**Item Description: Contract with Berkeley Food & Housing Project for COVID-19 Non-Congregate Shelter Services**

This contract with Berkeley Food and Housing Project (BFHP) will allow BFHP to fully decompress its men's and women's shelters currently located at 2140 Dwight Way. This will reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread at these sites. It will also fund BFHP to provide services for other COVID-19-vulnerable populations referred into this non-congregate sheltering program by outreach teams. This item is urgent because City staff and BFHP did not come to an agreement on scope and budget for this program before May 14, the date that the May 26 agenda was published.

The Council may add this item pursuant to the Brown Act under Government Code Section 54954.2(b).

The item may be added to the agenda because there is a need to take immediate action and the need for action came to the attention of the local agency subsequent to the agenda for this meeting being posted.

In order to add this item to the agenda, the council must vote by a 2/3 majority (six yes votes) to add the item to the agenda.

Once the item is added to the agenda (Consent or Action) it must be passed by the standard required vote threshold depending on the item (majority, two-thirds, or 7/9).



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR  
May 26, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
Submitted by: Lisa Warhuus, Director, Health, Housing & Community Services  
Subject: Contract with Berkeley Food & Housing Project for COVID-19 Non-Congregate Shelter Services

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to:

1. Execute one or more sole-source contract(s) and any amendments with Berkeley Food & Housing Project (BFHP) for one year to provide homeless wrap-around supportive services at Berkeley's COVID-19 Respite Sites, located at 1281 University Avenue, 1654 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 701 Harrison Street; and
2. Make an advance payment on this contract from Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) funding sufficient to cover one month's worth of services prior to contract execution.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The total amount of the one-year contract(s) is \$611,789. Funds to support the wrap around services provided by BFHP will likely come from a variety of sources including an allocation of \$50,000 from the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) which is included in the FY2020 budget. The remaining funds will come from the Community Development Block Grant (COVID-19 allocation and annual allocation), and potentially the Catastrophic Reserve, and will be determined in FY2021. It is also anticipated that most of the services will be eligible for FEMA/State reimbursement for up to 93.75% of the total cost to the catastrophic reserve. The City is in the process of securing a third party-resource to assist the city staff in identifying the contract elements that will be FEMA-reimbursable and identifying the best way to allocate various funding resources that the City has received to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

This contract with BFHP will allow BFHP to fully decompress its men's and women's shelters currently located at 2140 Dwight Way. This will reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread at these sites. It will also fund BFHP to provide services for other COVID-19-vulnerable populations referred into this non-congregate sheltering program by outreach teams.

### *Shelter Decompression*

On March 18, 2020, the City of Berkeley's Public Health Officer issued a Shelter in Place (SIP) order which included a 6' social distancing protocol. This action resulted in BFHP expanding its shelter operations to 24/7, requiring additional staff and operational costs for daytime hours.

Homeless shelter participants are particularly vulnerable because they live in congregate settings with limited space and sleep in dorm style quarters. To mitigate the risk of transmission from residing in close quarters, Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless issued guidance recommending shelters have guests sleep head to toe and create barriers between beds that couldn't be moved and were within the 6' distancing requirement. Berkeley shelters implemented this guidance and decompressed shelter censuses through attrition and Alameda County's shelter decompression effort that transferred many vulnerable shelter participants, based on the Center for Disease Control's recommended criteria of 65+ or a specified underlying medical condition, to the County's Project Roomkey Safer Ground Project in Oakland.

While Berkeley Food and Housing Project Dwight Way Men's and Women's shelters participated in the Alameda County's decompression efforts, it still needs to decompress its census further to fully operationalize the 6' physical distancing requirement. The Safer Ground Project in Oakland is now full and no longer accepting referrals. This new contract (or contracts) will allow approximately 8-9 BFHP participants with specific COVID-19 vulnerabilities to move to Berkeley COVID-19 respite sites to protect their health and reduce the potential for transmission of COVID-19 for all shelter participants. Since the majority of the participants will be existing clients of BFHP, this contract (or contracts) with BFHP will be a sole-source contract.

### *Berkeley COVID-19 Respite Program*

The Berkeley COVID-19 Respite Sites are:

- Eight trailers at 1281 University (maximum capacity 8-10 residents);
- A four-bedroom house at 1654 5<sup>th</sup> Street (maximum capacity 4 residents); and
- 10 trailers, received from the State of California via the City of Oakland, located at 701 Harrison Street (maximum capacity – 20 residents).

The approximately 8-9 BFHP residents who will be relocated to these sites will fit the FEMA eligibility requirements for non-congregate sheltering, akin to the Alameda County Safer Ground Model: over 65 years of age and/or with certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease). This leaves space available for up to 26 additional residents. These residents would also meet FEMA eligibility requirements and would be directed through referrals from outreach teams.

BFHP will provide wrap-around services for the Berkeley COVID-19 respite sites, including daily wellness checks, the delivery of three meals a day, coordination of laundry services twice a week, and the provision of hygiene and cleaning supplies for up to 34 participants.

#### BACKGROUND

On March 3, 2020, the City Manager acting as the Director of Emergency Services issued a Proclamation of Local Emergency regarding the novel coronavirus (also known as “COVID-19”), which the City Council subsequently ratified on March 10, 2020. In addition, on March 4, 2020, the Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency in California and the President of the United States Declared a National Emergency on March 13, 2020.

Working through the City’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the City of Berkeley immediately identified a vacant City-owned four-bedroom house and land that could accommodate RVs as potential resources to decompress shelters, reducing spread of COVID-19, and to simultaneously provide non-congregate sheltering to protect those individuals at greatest risk of death from COVID-19 infection. The EOC prepared the house for occupancy, purchased 8 RVs which were located at 1281 University Avenue, and entered into an agreement with the City of Oakland for an additional 10 RVs, which were located at 701 Harrison Street. These resources, which can house up to 34 people, are ready for occupancy.

City staff continue to work with Alameda County staff to identify Berkeley hotels that could accommodate additional unhoused residents who are infected with COVID, exposed to COVID, or at high risk if infected with COVID-19. One hotel opportunity fell through, delaying the start of this program.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental impacts or opportunities associated with the action recommended in this report.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

BFHP shelter census needs to be decompressed to meet the 6’ physical distancing requirement. Many Berkeley shelter residents, as well as many people living in encampments and on the streets of Berkeley are considered highly vulnerable to COVID as they are over the age of 65 and/or they have certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease). To prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and protect the lives of particularly COVID-19 vulnerable Berkeley residents, a respite program like the one recommended above has been adopted in many jurisdictions. Existing programs in Alameda County are now at capacity, limiting access for additional eligible Berkeley residents.

#### ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City of Berkeley will continue to work in partnership with Alameda County to identify hotels in Berkeley to house additional COVID-19 vulnerable unhoused residents. This process will continue to take time, whereas Berkeley's RVs and house are currently ready to be occupied.

CONTACT PERSON

Jennifer Vasquez, Community Services Specialist III

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT AMENDMENT: BERKELEY FOOD AND HOUSING PROJECT

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2020, the City Manager acting as the Director of Emergency Services issued a Proclamation of Local Emergency regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), which the City Council subsequently ratified on March 10, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, the Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency in California and the President of the United States declared a National Emergency on March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Alameda County, and City of Berkeley provided guidance to shelters to reduce their census to implement 6' physical distance requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has issued guidance stating that certain costs associated with non-congregate sheltering of COVID-19 vulnerable populations (65 years and older or with certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease) are eligible for reimbursement through the FEMA Public Assistance Program; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley supports Berkeley Food and Housing Project's efforts to decompress its shelter; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has received 10 Project Roomkey Trailers from the State of California, has renovated a City-owned property and acquired eight trailers as part of its COVID-19 response to support unsheltered Berkeley residents who are vulnerable due to age and/or underlying health conditions; and

WHEREAS, these sites can house an additional 26 people who fit the criteria for FEMA eligible populations, who will be referred from Berkeley homeless outreach teams; and

WHEREAS, Funds to support the wrap around services provided by BFHP will likely come from a variety of sources including an allocation of \$50,000 from the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) (erma Code: 336-51-504-535-0000-000-444-651120) which is included in the FY2020 budget. The remaining funds will come from the Community Development Block Grant (COVID-19 allocation and annual allocation), and potentially the Catastrophic Reserve, and will be determined in FY2021; and

WHEREAS, most of the services will be eligible for FEMA/State reimbursement for up to 93.75% of the total cost to the catastrophic reserve.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or her designee is authorized execute a contract or contracts and any amendments with Berkeley Food & Housing Project (BFHP) for one year, in the amount of \$611,789 to provide homeless wrap-around supportive services at Berkeley's COVID-19 Respite Sites, located at 1281 University Avenue, 1654 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 701 Harrison Street.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized to make an advance payment on this contract from Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) funding sufficient to cover one month's worth of services prior to contract execution. A record copy of said contract and any amendments is on file in the City Clerk Department.