



CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT


TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Scott Means
Interim Director, Human
Services Department

SUBJECT: State Trailer Donation and
Programming

DATE: March 7, 2024

City Administrator Approval


Jestin Johnson (Mar 15, 2024 10:56 PDT)

Date: Mar 15, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council:

- (1) Authorize The City Administrator To Enter Into A) A Donation Agreement With The City And County Of San Francisco To Accept And Tow Between 25 And 60 Habitable Trailers, And B) Donation Agreements To Donate Up To 25 Trailers To One Or More Nonprofit Organizations Determined By The City Administrator For Use As Shelter Or Services For People Experiencing Homelessness In The City Of Oakland; And**
- (2) Make Findings That Accept The Trailers And Donating Up To 25 Trailers For Shelter Use Is In The Best Interests Of The City; And**
- (3) Waive Competitive Bidding Requirements And Award A One-year Professional Service Agreement To Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods In An Amount Not To Exceed \$75,000 To Tow And Install The Trailers In One More City Shelter Programs; And**
- (4) Amend The Professional Services Agreement With The Housing Consortium Of The East Bay For The Homebase Safe Parking Program To Extend The Term An Additional Two Years Through June 30, 2026 And Increase The Original Amount Of \$1,535,000 By Up To \$3,500,000, For A Total Amount Not To Exceed \$5,035,000 In State Homeless Housing Assistance And Prevention Funds.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City and County of San Francisco is no longer able to host a homeless intervention on Pier 94, where they have been providing shelter services to homeless households by way of the recreational vehicle trailers provided by the State of California in 2020.

City Council
March 19, 2024

With the City and County of San Francisco no longer having space or funding to maintain the trailer program, they inquired if the City of Oakland would be interested in acquiring these trailers at no cost.

San Francisco is looking to have the trailers removed from the Pier 94 in March 2024, as they are in violation of an expired lease. If the City of Oakland does not acquire the trailers immediately, San Francisco will have to auction them off as they do not have another identified location to store the trailers.

The City of Oakland has an existing emergency shelter program that utilizes similar RV trailers from the State of California. This program is known as Homebase and is located at 633 Hegenberger road in East Oakland. The current HomeBase program site is able to accommodate up to an additional 15 trailers. These additional trailers will increase the service population by 15 - 30 participants, increasing the capacity of the program site. The City of Oakland has an existing professional services agreement with Housing Consortium of the East Bay (HCEB), an experienced homeless services provider in Oakland, to provide 24/7 site management as well as housing-focused case management. The professional services agreement with HCEB will need to be extended an additional two years through June 30, 2026 and the total amount of the agreement will need to be increased up to \$3,500,000, for a total amount not to exceed \$5,035,000 in state homeless housing assistance and prevention funds.

In addition to the Homebase, the City of Oakland is also looking to provide trailers to community partners supporting the homeless population. Up to twenty-five (25) trailers will be deployed to privately owned lots to support the unsheltered population in Oakland including individuals who are identified as homeless, victims of trafficking, and gender-based violence. The Interfaith Council of Alameda County (ICAC) is working with the City of Oakland to develop program sites and program designs to support the homeless populations in their neighborhoods.

The City of Oakland funds the operation of several outdoor homeless interventions throughout the City. These programs regularly provide feedback regarding the need for additional staff space and service space. The opportunity to accept these trailers provides the ability to supply additional staff and service space to existing programs. Therefore, CoO plans to utilize up to 20 additional trailers at existing program sites. These organizations will use the trailers for various purposes including shelter, community services, and staff work space.

REASON FOR URGENCY

The City and County of San Francisco will only donate these habitable trailers within the next month.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

In October 2017, the City Council adopted an ordinance pursuant to Government Code 8698 declaring a shelter crisis and allowing flexibility or suspension of certain state and local regulations as they apply to Government Code 8698 City facilities to address the homelessness problem, to the extent that strict compliance would prevent, hinder, or delay efforts to mitigate the shelter crisis. Since that time, the City Council and staff have taken substantial steps to coordinate homeless services, provide additional budget resources and designate staff to lead

more focused efforts. Since the origin of the shelter crisis ordinance, programs for RVs and single adults have opened across the city to support homeless households that have taken up shelter in trailers. In addition, over 250 beds were added through the Homebase and Lake Merritt Lodge programs.

Due to a 25% increase in unsheltered populations between 2015-2017, City Council approved Resolution No. 87403, in November 2019, to provide an interim RV safe parking program in the City. Currently, three RV safe parking programs have been developed around the City to assist with unsheltered populations.

City Council approved Resolution No. 87350, on September 13, 2018 to provide housing navigation and site management to unsheltered persons in Oakland as it was identified the majority of homeless individuals in Alameda County resided in Oakland. Since then the programs have expanded to provide housing navigation, linkages to support services and employment supports.

To stem the tide of homelessness in Oakland and to serve high-risk and medically vulnerable people over the age of 65, the State of California donated recreational vehicle trailers to the City of Oakland in 2020. The City has been using these trailers as a public health-driven intervention known as Homebase. The trailers are situated on City-owned land at 633 Hegenberger Road in East Oakland in District 7.

The City Council approved Resolution No. 89777 on June 6, 2023, authorizing the acceptance and appropriation of Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funds from the State of California in the amount of \$26,044,615 for the provision of emergency homeless interventions. Of that total amount, \$1,535,000 was appropriated for a professional services agreement with Housing Consortium of the East Bay (HCEB) to manage the HomeBase Project. HCEB is an experienced homeless services provider which also operates the Lake Merritt Community Cabin site and 71st RV Safe Parking Site for the City of Oakland in addition to permanent supportive housing programs.

The City Council approved Resolution No. 13744 on July 5, 2023, authorizing the lease of the land where the HomeBase site is located for use as an emergency shelter and intervention.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Homelessness has been, and continues to be, a crisis throughout California. With Oakland being the most impacted City in Alameda County. Oakland residents are regularly displaced from their homes to the streets of the City and are in need of urgent support. As of the most recent 2022 point-in-time count, there are an estimated 5,055 individuals living without shelter. Over fifty percent of the unsheltered have taken up residence in some type of vehicle on the streets of Oakland. The City currently funds over 1,000 shelter beds and over 200 RV program spaces. In addition, there are approximately 110 beds added to the system during the winter months. These interventions are in addition to County funded resources. The homelessness problem affects Oakland's population disproportionately: a majority of the homeless identify as Black or African American while Black and African American households are a minority in the City's overall population. Similarly, the majority of homeless residents identify as male.

To understand the shelter crisis, it is necessary to look at all conditions causing and extending homelessness for many community members. The primary reason identified for entering into homelessness is around financial constraints. This includes the inability to afford housing prices, lack of adequate employment, and the inability to save money which is key to maintaining permanent housing. In addition, homelessness may be accompanied by co-occurring challenges which the trauma of homelessness either creates or exasperates. These challenges range from mental health disorders, chronic physical illness including debilitating disorders, and victimization. Overtime, the trauma associated with these challenges may lead to self-devaluation creating further complexities for people to reintegrate into society in addition to the previously noted financial barriers. Homelessness may also lead to acts of survival such as participation in criminal activities and self-medication, reinforcing negative stereotypes of the homeless population and again adding additional barriers. In response to the homeless crisis, encampments have developed and increased in number throughout the city. Despite the number of shelter beds and resources offered by both the City and the County, the need continues to exceed the capacity. With the current deficiency in support and the need for stronger State and Federal legislation, many homeless residents have come together to build community and develop their own homes outdoors. Unfortunately, these encampments often present public health and safety threats to both those residing in the encampments and housed residents in the vicinity of the encampments. Those residing on the street in encampments or alone, have an increased vulnerability to crime, including robbery, sexual attacks, and violence. Those encampments lacking hygiene services are also at high risk for spreading communicable diseases, including COVID and RTIs. Many homeless residents and advocates urge for increased support for individuals living on the street and in emergency shelters. The lack of affordable housing and need for additional housing and supportive services maintains the need to increase access to interim shelter options.

At Homebase, HCEB provides 24/7 site management as well as housing-focused case management. HCEB has been prioritizing hiring staff with lived experience of homelessness, including former residents of Community Cabins and Safe RV Parking sites.

Program Participants are supported with:

- Linkages to the mainstream homeless services system
- Each trailer has hot and cold running water including a full bathroom with a shower, toilet and sink in each unit for maximum safety and dignity
- Each trailer has full electricity, a kitchenette with a microwave and refrigerator
- Storage within the trailer as well as additional storage on site
- On site garbage service
- Linkages to healthcare, mental health, and addiction recovery services
- Assistance securing benefits, acquiring California ID, and seeking jobs]
- Access to hot meals and groceries onsite

The program provides all basic needs, including meals, on-site laundry service, and free wireless internet. Each trailer is large enough to allow physical distancing, and residents may share a trailer with a chosen roommate or partner.

The program offers security, privacy (one or two people per trailer with a lock on the door), and a community tent with television, microwave, and water.

The City has already made significant utility upgrades to the site including water, sewer, and electrical improvements to accommodate the trailers. Under the professional services agreement between the City of Oakland and HCEB to manage the site, there is a maintenance line item in the budget to cover repairs of the trailers on-site as needed.

The City and County of San Francisco had been using similar trailers from the State of California for a similar intervention at Pier 94. However, San Francisco is discontinuing this intervention due to lack of space and funding. The City of Oakland worked with a contractor to assess the condition of these trailers and confirm the habitability of said trailers. San Francisco had over 100 trailers available to repurpose. Approximately 60 were identified as being in good sustainable condition. Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods set-up the original Homebase program site. They are familiar with the design of the program and the necessities to quickly connect additional program trailers.

This resolution would advance the Citywide **Housing** priority by increasing the number of available shelter spaces available at a site where case management and other support services are also available. The additional trailers will also increase the capacity of our community partners to provide similar services to the City's unsheltered and housing insecure residents.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City of Oakland will absorb the cost towing the trailers to Oakland and installation into their destination. Up to \$75,000 will be allocated to cover costs to tow the trailers and install power and water services. These expenses will be funded through CHS funds in the amount of \$75,000, which is available in: Measure Q - Parks & Recreation Preservation, Litter Reduction, and Homelessness Support Act Fund (2244), Community Housing Services Organization (78411), Measure Q Homeless Project (1005349), and Homeless Services & Support Program (NB41).

The City will also extend the professional services agreement with HCEB to manage the HomeBase site for an additional two years at an additional cost of \$3,500,000. The existing agreement is for one year at up to \$1,535,000. The funds will come out of Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (2159) funds from the State of California, Community Housing Services Organization (78411), HHAP ROUND 4 Project (1006961), and Homeless Services & Support Program (NB41).

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No direct public outreach was conducted in the completion of this report.

COORDINATION

This report was developed by the Community Homelessness Services Division of the Human Services Department in coordination with the Office of the City Attorney.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

To date, in FY2023, HomeBase served 142 individual adults. 60% identified as male, and 40% identified as female. 73% identified as Black, African American, or African. 15% identified as White. 10% identified as multiple races. 34% had a chronic health condition, 22% had a physical disability, and 10% had a mental health disorder. These demographics are aligned with the overall demographics we see across the full homeless population in the City of Oakland.

69% of the adults who stayed at HomeBase were chronically homeless. 44 adults who stayed at HomeBase exited to positive housing destinations. 11 ended up in permanent housing, and 33 ended up in a rental unit.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The homelessness crisis has ongoing fiscal impact to the City of Oakland. It also has a component of human suffering for unhoused residents and their housed neighbors that can't be calculated through the scope of this report. Assuming unhoused residents were supported in maintaining their foothold in the City of Oakland, of which they are equal to access as any other resident, would require the City to have more funding available than what it can generate alone. This is an economic issue that is not just a problem within the City of Oakland, but the entire Bay Area, and would likely need economic interventions from the State and Federal levels to fundamentally right this crisis.

Environmental: The homelessness crisis impacts the health of the City's local environment. Encampments and associated debris and waste can foul the City's local water and soil.

Race & Equity: There are significant racial equity considerations to homelessness in Oakland. At a high level, the homelessness crisis is fundamentally an equity issue. The 2022 PIT Count estimated 5,055 people in Oakland are unhoused, with a majority of those individuals coming from Oakland's black community. Black residents of Oakland are over-represented in this population at roughly 70% as compared to their representation in the City's general population at roughly 24% per the latest U.S. Census 2020 data. That makes this issue, per the City's commitment to racial equity, a high priority problem to solve in order to advance the aims of the City's vision as articulated in Municipal Code 2.29.170.1 as well as the City's recently passed the Resolution Racism is a Public Health Crisis. This Resolution was jointly offered to the City Council in June 2022 by the City Administrator, the City Attorney, and the Director of Oakland's Department of Race & Equity, which City Council ratified.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

Staff has determined that the actions authorized by this Resolution are exempt from further CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), 15304 (Minor Alterations of Land), 15311 (Accessory Structures), 15322 (In Fill Development Projects), 15183 (Projects Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning), and that no exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply. The leases, site improvements, and service agreements

are also exempt under the statutory CEQA exemption embodied in Government Code Section 8698.4(a)(4). Each of the foregoing provides a separate and independent basis for CEQA clearance and when viewed collectively provide an overall basis for CEQA clearance

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact C'Mone Falls, Community Homelessness Services Manager, at 510-238-6186.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Means

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