



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: Sara Bedford
Director, Human Services

SUBJECT: FY 2021-2022 Information &
Assistance (I&A) Program Grant

DATE: June 23, 2021

City Administrator Approval

Date: Jul 7, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:

- 1. Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate A Grant In An Amount Not To Exceed \$63,664 For Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 From Alameda County Social Services Agency For Continued Operation Of The Information And Assistance (I&A) Program For Oakland Seniors For The Period Of July 1, 2021 Through June 30, 2022; And Accept And Appropriate Any Additional Funds From The Grantor For The I&A Program Within The Grant Term; And**
- 2. Authorizing A Contribution From The General Purpose Fund For Central Services Overhead Charges In An Estimated Amount of \$13,210 For FY 2021-2022.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The acceptance of this grant from Alameda County will allow the Aging and Adult Services Division of the Human Services Department to provide Information and Assistance program services at the City's four Senior Centers. This funding will sustain a program that supports the needs of Oakland's most vulnerable older residents.

According to the 2010 US Census, more than 20 percent of Oakland residents over the age of 65 live alone. These seniors may have challenges accessing services necessary to live independently. Studies have found that individuals of any age who live alone are at higher risk of developing behavioral conditions such as depression, dementia and hoarding. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of three adults age 65 and older will experience a fall each year, and falls are a leading cause of injury, death, and hospital admissions for seniors who live alone.

This funding will address the needs of Oakland's most vulnerable seniors, including monolingual and low-income seniors living alone, enabling them to access available resources to remain safely and independently in their homes. Resource referrals and connections include food, housing, healthcare, personal care, employment, and healthy living activities.

City Council
July 20, 2021

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The City of Oakland has been a municipal advocate for low-income, diverse residents since the 1960s, when a federal Community Action Agency (CAA) office was established in Oakland to provide services designed to eradicate poverty. The first of four community senior centers at the Veterans Memorial Building was established in 1985, following the City Council's adoption of the first "Comprehensive Plan for Seniors."

For more than twenty years the Human Services Department Division of Aging and Adult Services has received funding from Alameda County to provide Information and Assistance (I&A) Program services to senior residents. During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite or because of the closure of senior centers, Oakland I&A staff provided information, referral and follow-up to more than 4,000 local seniors.

I&A outreach ensures that seniors have access to information about federal, state and local programs that meet their individual needs. The Human Services Department I&A staff assist seniors in applying for senior programs offered through the City of Oakland, including the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), Senior Companion caregiver support, ASSETS senior employment, and various Paratransit services.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The I&A Program serves primarily low-income Oakland residents age 60 and older. I&A services are currently available by phone via the East and West Oakland Senior Centers during the pandemic. Services will be available in person by appointment this summer until full re-opening of the centers after which they will be available by phone and in person. Each year I&A staff provide information about housing, health care options, transportation, utility discounts, nutrition programs and other programs to more than 4,000 seniors, the majority of whom live in Oakland.

The City of Oakland will continue to use the grant funding to pay for staff, materials and classes in order to ensure that the most relevant information is shared with seniors. This information may include discounts available to seniors who need transportation services, food assistance, respite, housing assistance, adult day care programs, utility payment assistance, adaptive devices, home repairs, and other basic necessities that will allow them to live independently in Oakland. Staff will continue to document all contacts and referrals, as required by the County of Alameda.

Should additional funding for I&A programs be directed to the City of Oakland, as happened in 2021 when Alameda County Social Services received mid-year appropriations through the Federal Coronavirus Relief, Recovery and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the City of Oakland will use the augmentation of funds to expand services for Oakland seniors.

FISCAL IMPACT

This agreement is funded by Alameda County. Funding has been appropriated to Human Services Department by the County of Alameda and is included in the fiscal year (FY) 2021-22 adopted budget: (Grants) Fund (2160), HSD Outreach Program Organization (75251), Outreach Program FY2122 Project (1005543), Information & Assistance Award (23373), Empowering Seniors and People with Disabilities Program (YS14). There are no matching funds required. Expenses include the costs of two part-time I&A caseworkers, training, transportation and materials. HSD is requesting as it has in prior years, a contribution from the General Purpose Fund in an amount equivalent to Central Services Overhead in an estimated amount of \$13,210 per year.

If additional grant funding becomes available from the grantor (Alameda County Social Services Agency), for the same purpose, within the existing grant term, staff is seeking authorization to accept and appropriate funds for the I&A Program without returning to Council within the duration of the grant term, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

Aging and Adult Services staff are trained to recognize and refer eligible individuals to the I&A program. Referrals also come from community partners, and through I&A staff community outreach and word-of-mouth.

COORDINATION

The Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau have each been consulted in the development of this report and resolution.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The City of Oakland Aging and Adult Services Division has been the sub grantee, through the Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, for the Federal Community Based Services Information and Assistance program. The I&A program provides direct counseling services to seniors and their families, supporting their independence by providing information and assistance to programs and benefits.

The I&A funding has supported an effective Oakland program hosted in the City's senior centers for 18 years. Performance is reviewed by Alameda County on a quarterly basis, and at no time during the extended annual contracting period has the City been found to be out of compliance with the requirements of the contract. The current contract requires that the I&A outreach specialists provide information, referral and follow-up services to at least 400 new senior residents each year.

Performance measurements, including the number of clients served and type of services provided, are monitored by Alameda County.

I&A staff are expected to attend meetings and events to remain informed and up-to-date on benefits and services for seniors such as Medicare, MediCal, housing support, transportation and other programs.

An internal peer review process is conducted bi-monthly and reported to the California State Department of Aging. An external Utilization Review is conducted biennially by the California State Department of Aging.

Informal feedback from clients in the form of phone calls, thank you cards or letters expressing satisfaction with the service is tracked by staff.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: This program hires Information and Referral staff from the Oakland senior community whenever possible, and seeks to connect low-income seniors to key support systems and programs, including senior employment programs, that can stabilize their income and economic well-being.

Environmental: In the past, the I&A grant has coordinated with the County Area Agency on Aging and the Alameda County Community Food Bank to distribute nutritional vouchers for fresh produce from Farmers Markets in Oakland. The program provides seniors with access to information about Oakland recycling, utilities, and other environmental support programs.

Race & Equity: Data demonstrates that risk of both adverse health outcomes and homelessness increase for Oaklanders as they become older. African American seniors are disproportionately impacted by these adverse social outcomes. In an effort to address this disproportionality, the Human Services Department has focused its services in the highest-need communities of East and West Oakland and prioritizes hiring African American seniors from these communities.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Scott Means, Aging and Adult Services Manager, at (510) 238-6137.

Respectfully submitted,



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Human Services Department

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Aging & Adult Services Division