



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: Sara Bedford
Director, Human Services

SUBJECT: Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Program

DATE: November 15, 2021

City Administrator Approval

Date: Dec 9, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution

- 1. Authorizing The Use Of Up To One Million, Six Hundred Eighty-Nine Thousand, Nine Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$1,689,925) Of Homeless Housing And Assistance Program Grant Funds Awarded To Oakland By The State Of California For Oakland's Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program;**
- 2. Awarding A Professional Service Agreement In An Amount Not To Exceed Four Hundred Ten Thousand, Six Hundred Sixty-Five Dollars (\$410,665) To Young Women's Freedom Center For The Provision Of Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Planning, Recruitment, And Supportive Services From January 1, 2022 Through June 30, 2024;**
- 3. Waiving The Competitive Bidding Process And Awarding A Professional Service Agreement In An Amount Not To Exceed One Million, Two Hundred Seventy-Nine Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$1,279,260) To FII-National, Doing Business As, UpTogether, To Administer The Direct Cash Assistance To Be Provided To Homeless Youth Participating In The Guaranteed Income Program From January 1, 2022 Through June 30, 2024;**
- 4. Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Memorandum Of Understanding With The University Of Chicago, Chapin Hall Policy Research Center To Include Oakland's Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program In A National Research Study Through June 30, 2024; And**
- 5. Accepting A Gift Of In-Kind Services From Point Source Youth To Support Oakland's Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program Valued At Three Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000) And Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Memorandum Of Understanding With Point Source Youth For The Provision Of Said In-Kind Services Through June 30, 2024.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adoption of this resolution will authorize the City Administrator to enter into two professional services agreements (PSA) to implement a guaranteed income pilot program for homeless transitional aged youth (TAY) ages 18 – 24 who are residents of Oakland. Forty-five young adults will receive a monthly stipend for up to 24 months in the amount of \$1,100 a month for single adults and an additional \$150 per child for parenting adults up to two children. The legislation authorizes a PSA with Young Women’s Freedom Center (YWFC) in an amount up to \$410,665 to provide supportive services to program participants including financial literacy, housing support and workforce support. The legislation also authorizes a PSA in an amount up to \$1,279,260, with FII National Doing Business As UpTogether, a platform for administering and distributing the cash transfer payments to participating young people. Ninety-seven percent (97%) or \$1,242,000 of the funds for FII National will be going directly to participants as cash transfers. Because the service provided by FII National is unique and because they are the funds administration partner in the national evaluation discussed below, staff believe it is in the best interest of the City to waive the competitive bidding process in the awarding of this PSA.

The City of Oakland’s pilot will be part of a national homeless TAY guaranteed income/direct cash transfer evaluation (including New York City, Los Angeles, and the State of Minnesota) led by the University of Chicago’s Chapin Hall, an independent policy research center that provides public and private decision-makers with rigorous research to support them in improving the lives of children, families and communities. The jurisdictions participating in the Chapin Hall evaluation are also being supported by Point Source Youth, a national organization seeking to end youth homelessness in 50 cities around the country in the next 10 years. Point Source Youth will provide technical assistance in designing and implementing the guaranteed income program. The proposed legislation also authorizes the City Administrator to accept a gift of in-kind services from Point Source Youth in a value of \$375,000 and to enter into non-fiscal Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with both Chapin Hall and Point Source Youth.

Adoption of this resolution will allow the City of Oakland to contribute to a growing body of evidence supporting the efficacy of guaranteed income/direct cash transfer programs for various populations and, specifically, to be a leader in piloting this model for homeless youth. If successful, the goal of the pilot is to produce evidence that will lead to new policy solutions supporting guaranteed income programs as an economical and effective intervention to end youth homelessness.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

A recent national study found that about 1 in 10 individuals ages 18-25 experienced some form of homelessness during a year. These young people face very high risk for sexual or other exploitation and negative health outcomes, and housing instability disrupts their ability to thrive in education and employment. Most of these young people are Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or identify as LGBTQ.¹

¹Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

In 2019, the Alameda County Continuum of Care (CoC) Point In Time (PIT) Count identified 701 transitional aged youth, the fourth highest youth count amongst all California CoCs. The City of Oakland accounts for over half of these young people- a total of 488 unaccompanied transitional age youth representing 12% of the City's homeless population. Seventy-five percent (75%) of Oakland's homeless youth were unsheltered and twenty-five percent (25%) were sheltered. Experts in the field of youth homelessness often refer to youth as an invisible homeless population, hiding in plain sight. It is recognized that homeless youth are also significantly undercounted in the semi-annual point in time count, more so than any other population.

Homeless data for the City of Oakland shows overwhelming disparities among African Americans experiencing homelessness in the City. Twenty-four percent (24%) of Oakland's population identifies as Black or African American while 70% of Oakland's homeless population identifies as Black or African American. In addition to racial disparities, youth identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning are disproportionately reflected in Oakland's homelessness data. LGBT individuals make up 29% of the youth homeless population compared with 15% of the general Oakland homeless population. In the 2019 PIT count, 36% of homeless youth in Oakland had a history of foster care and homeless youth identified money issues as one of the primary causes of their homelessness.

The City of Oakland currently partners with service providers to provide emergency shelter, transitional housing and rapid rehousing (short term subsidies) to homeless youth. However, the need for services is greater than what is currently provided and traditional youth program models are not the right fit for all homeless young people. There is a clear need to do more and to try doing things differently.

In October 2020, the Community Homelessness Services Division (CHS) began seeking input and gauging interest in a youth guaranteed income program in Oakland. Information and listening sessions were held with youth groups consisting of currently and formerly homeless youth and with homeless youth providers. Youth expressed positive support and feedback for creating a homeless youth guaranteed income pilot in Oakland. Staff then reached out to the state Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) funders to assess interest and eligibility of using HHAP youth set aside funds for this purpose. The state funders were also enthusiastic and supportive of using HHAP funds in this unique way.

As a result, City staff created a guaranteed income planning group (GIPC) to move the planning work forward. The GIPC consisted of currently and formerly homeless youth, a homeless youth service provider, a representative from Alameda County Social Services Agency, a U.C Berkeley intern, and a CHS staff member. The planning group met over four months to develop a basic program design, craft the scope of work for an RFQ and to review the RFQ responses and select a services provider to support the work if it were funded. The planning group also began to meet with Chapin Hall and Point Source Youth to exchange information. From these conversations, the City was invited to join Chapin Hall and Point Source Youth in a national evaluation of this model for homeless youth, the first evaluation of its kind for this population.

On May 20, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 88661 C.M.S., supporting the study and implementation of unconditional guaranteed cash transfer policies and pilots promoting racial equity for low-income Oaklanders at the local, state and national levels. This resolution

also supported the future implementation of a youth guaranteed income program led by the Human Services Department.

In Summer 2021, through a competitive Request for Qualifications process, Young Women's Freedom Center (YWFC) was engaged as a potential, qualified service provider for the pilot.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Evaluations of direct cash transfer programs provide evidence that they reduce poverty, boost well-being, and increase education and employment. Counter to common beliefs, studies show that cash transfers to people experiencing adversity do not result in money poorly spent, increased substance use, or reduced motivation to work. Evaluations have found that recipients mostly spend cash assistance on basic needs, that the financial support has helped people engage in education and productive employment, and that these programs tend to reduce risky behaviors and negative health outcomes.²

To implement the Oakland pilot program, the City of Oakland is proposing a partnership with a collaborative team of three national partners -- Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Point Source Youth (PSY), and FII National- and two local partners, the Young Women's Freedom Center (the project's lead community-based organization), and local youth leaders with lived experience of homelessness.

The program will serve 45 young people from Oakland who are experiencing homelessness with unconditional cash transfers and optional supportive services. The City, along with its partners will design a recruitment strategy to ensure that a diverse group of homeless young people participate in the program. Young Women's Freedom Center will provide optional, but encouraged, support services to participants in financial literacy, obtaining and maintaining housing, education and employment goals, and any other goals that the participating young people set for themselves. YWFC staff will include two full time self-determination advocates, who have previous lived experiences that are similar to the youth they will be supporting. This peer-based support model is a strength of the organization and is a good match for a program that is being co-designed by young people and is based on the concept of self -determination.

The guaranteed income program model proposed in this legislation puts young people experiencing homelessness at the center of the intervention. The model is predicated on the assumption that people experiencing homelessness are in the best position to know what they need and to direct resources in ways that will be most beneficial to them.

Expected outcomes include increases in young adult participants'

- Ability to access safe and stable housing
- Participation in education and employment opportunities
- Mental and physical health and well-being.

² Morton, M., Berger Gonzalez, S., Cohen, L., & Wood, E. (2021). *Readiness Guide Participating in a Multisite Innovation, Evaluation, & Learning Cohort on Direct Cash Transfers to Address Young Adult Homelessness*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

The guaranteed income pilot for homeless youth supports the City's goal of achieving **Housing, Economic and Cultural Security**.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds are available for this program in the required youth set aside portions of State HHAP 1, HHAP-2, and HHAP-3 funds.

Fund	Organization	Account	Project	Amount
2159 State of CA	78411 Community Housing Services	54912 Third Party Contract	1005248/TBD HHAP-1/2/3	\$1,689,925

These funds will be disbursed in the following professional services agreements:

Provider	Amount
Young Women's Freedom Center	\$410,665
FII National	\$1,279,260

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No additional public outreach was deemed necessary for this report, other than the standard posting on the City's website.

COORDINATION

Preparation of this report included coordination with the City Administrator's Office. This report and all corresponding legislation have been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office and the Budget Bureau.

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

This is a new program model but note the evaluations cited from other evaluations of this type of program model.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: All funds proposed in this report are for the purpose of providing services to address and end homelessness. In addition, a guaranteed income program for homeless youth has economic implications providing a more cost-efficient intervention to long-term facilities such as transitional housing.

Environmental: The provision of housing and services for homeless persons is intended to address the environmental degradation caused by homeless families and individuals precariously housed or living on the streets.

Race & Equity: In Oakland, 70 percent of people who are homeless are African American compared to 24 percent of the general population. Among youth homelessness there are also disparities among the LGBTQ+ community. The guaranteed income program will target the most vulnerable and at-risk populations throughout the City and will provide resources and support for essential and basic human services, housing and support. Cash transfers to young people who are disproportionately represented in the homeless population (youth who are Black and/or who identify as LGBTQ) can help address historically unequal distributions of wealth that contribute to these disparities. Moreover, the design and on-going implementation of this project has been and will continue to be informed by young people who are or have experienced homelessness who represent Oakland racially, bringing lived experience into the program design.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution

1. Authorizing The Use Of Up To One Million, Six Hundred Eighty-Nine Thousand, Nine Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$1,689,925) Of Homeless Housing And Assistance Program Grant Funds Awarded To Oakland By The State Of California For Oakland's Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program;
2. Awarding A Professional Service Agreement In An Amount Not To Exceed Four Hundred Ten Thousand, Six Hundred Sixty-Five Dollars (\$410,665) To Young Women's Freedom Center For The Provision Of Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Planning, Recruitment, And Supportive Services From January 1, 2022 Through June 30, 2024;
3. Waiving The Competitive Bidding Process And Awarding A Professional Service Agreement In An Amount Not To Exceed One Million, Two Hundred Seventy-Nine Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$1,279,260) To FII-National, Doing Business As, UpTogether, To Administer The Direct Cash Assistance To Be Provided To Homeless Youth Participating In The Guaranteed Income Program From January 1, 2022 Through June 30, 2024;
4. Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Memorandum Of Understanding With The University Of Chicago, Chapin Hall Policy Research Center To Include Oakland's Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program In A National Research Study Through June 30, 2024; And
5. Accepting A Gift Of In-Kind Services From Point Source Youth To Support Oakland's Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program Valued At Three Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000) And Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Memorandum Of Understanding With Point Source Youth For The Provision Of Said In-Kind Services Through June 30, 2024.

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

Respectfully submitted,



SARA BEDFORD
Director, Human Services

Reviewed by: Lara Tannenbaum
Manager, Community Homelessness Services

Prepared by:
C'Mone Falls, Program Planner
Community Homelessness Services

