

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 03/19/24

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 24-0200

LOG NAME: 19FUNDING HIGH IMPACT PILOT PROGRAM

SUBJECT

(CD 2, CD 3, CD 4, CD 8, CD 9 and CD 11) Authorize Execution of Contract with My Health My Resources of Tarrant County in the Amount of \$1,096,847.00 For a High-Impact Pilot Program Aimed to Reduce Homelessness in Targeted Areas, Adopt the Appropriation Ordinance Reallocating Appropriations in the General Fund from Non-Departmental to Neighborhood Services Department in the Amount of \$1,096,847.00, and Find the Agreement Serves a Public Purpose and that Adequate Controls are in Place

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize execution of a contract with My Health My Resources of Tarrant County for up to \$1,096,847.00 for a high-impact pilot program aimed to reduce homelessness in targeted areas;
 2. Adopt the attached appropriation ordinance reallocating appropriations in the General Fund by decreasing the Non-Departmental Department by \$1,096,847.00 and increasing the Neighborhood Services Department by the same amount, for the purpose of funding contractual services for the high impact pilot program; and
 3. Find that the agreement serves the public purpose of reducing homelessness and that adequate controls are in place.
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DISCUSSION:

With the end of the eviction moratorium and federal emergency rental assistance funds, homelessness has increased in Fort Worth. Most nights emergency shelters are near capacity resulting in a sharp increase in unsheltered homelessness. Daily citizens regularly report homeless encampments throughout the City.

While many areas of Fort Worth have seen an uptick in unsheltered homelessness and the issues associated with it, there are some areas that have been hit especially hard.

The high impact pilot program is a way to direct resources in a targeted way to reduce issues in seven areas initially identified as hard hit. Data gathered from this pilot project will be used to analyze whether the program should continue, be expanded, or end. If it is expanded, new areas will be selected based on the data at that time of areas that have been most impacted by increased homelessness.

Resources that are currently being used to provide housing assistance and case management across the city will continue. The high impact pilot program brings additional resources to these seven initially selected areas.

Initial Areas:

- Camp Bowie West/Las Vegas Trail (CD 3)
- Seminary/La Gran Plaza/Hemphill (CD 11)
- Downtown (CD 9)
- Near Southside (CD 9)
- Historic Southside/Near Eastside (CD 8)
- Beach Street intersections – from E. Lancaster to N. Tarrant Parkway (CD 4)
- Northside/Stockyards (CD 2)

City-wide Homeless Outreach Program & Enforcement (HOPE) referrals will also be considered.

Street outreach teams, neighborhood police officers and the HOPE team will be asked to refer individuals who have either been reported in that area for a long time (more than two years) or are suspected of having severe mental illness.

These individuals are being referred for housing assistance and services. The level of services offered will depend on the individual's needs. For those individuals with severe mental illness, a new community resource will be offered through this pilot program.

The pilot program will offer low barrier housing and voluntary case management to referred individuals. The housing would be in the form of rental assistance and would be capable of being used at apartments throughout the City or in master leased apartments. Housing assistance for up to 40 people will be provided. The City will also leverage some existing housing vouchers in order to serve more people.

The case management would be provided by My Health My Resources of Tarrant County. Those clients who need a more intensive approach would transition to the care of the Housing First Assertive Community Treatment Team (Housing First ACT Team) which is a high-level team including psychiatric and medical professionals for severely mentally ill clients. The Housing First ACT Team would work with those with severe mental illness who are on the street and also those who are in housing but need more intensive services to stay housed.

Members of Housing First ACT Team:

- Physician Assistant – Psychiatric
- Physician Assistant – Medical
- Registered Nurse
- Program Manager
- Licensed Therapist/Team Lead
- 2 Case Workers
- 2 Certified Peer Specialists
- Patient Benefits Coordinator
- Landlord engagement coordinator

The Housing First ACT Team will work with 80 severely mentally ill clients who are either housed or on the street to meet the physical and mental health care needs of clients directly. The Housing First ACT Team cannot force severely mentally ill folks experiencing homelessness into housing and services.

The pilot program's performance measures will be that at least 70% of those offered housing enter housing within six months and after one year of entering housing, at least 70% are still housed (can be different unit, but must be housed).

In order to gather sufficient data, this is a 17-month pilot beginning May 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2025. It is the intent to request funds in FY 2025 of approximately \$2,200,000.00 for the remaining 12 months of the pilot.

Approval of the M&C will amend the Fiscal Year 2024 Adopted Budget, as approved with Ordinance 26453-09-2023, Section 1 as follows:

General Fund / Department	FY2024 Adopted Budget	Authority	Budget Adjustment	Revised FY2024 Budget
Expenditures				
Neighborhood Services	\$ 23,066,282.00	This M&C	\$ 1,096,847.00	\$ 24,163,129.00
Non-Departmental	\$ 29,147,095.00	This M&C	\$ (1,096,847.00)	\$ 28,050,248.00

A Form 1295 is not required because: This contract will be with a governmental entity, state agency or public institution of higher education: My Health, My Resources of Tarrant County

FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that upon approval of the above recommendations, funds are available in the current operating budget, as previously appropriated, in the General Fund. Prior to an expenditure being incurred, the Neighborhood Services Department has the responsibility to validate the availability of funds.

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