

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 11/30/21

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 21-0882

LOG NAME: 02AMENDMENTS TO HOMELESS SERVICE AGENCY AGREEMENTS

SUBJECT

(ALL) Authorize Execution of Amendment to Contract with The Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County, Inc., to Increase the Contract Amount by \$283,000.00 for a Total Contract Amount of \$683,000.00 and Authorize Execution of Amendment to Contract with Tarrant County Homeless Coalition to Increase Contract Amount by \$228,000.000 for a Total Contract Amount of \$300,000.00 for the Continuation of Directions Home Initiatives; Find that Amendments Serve a Public Purpose and that Adequate Controls are In Place

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute an amendment to agreement with The Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County Inc., in the amount of \$283,000.00 for a total contract amount of \$683,000.00
 2. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute an amendment to agreement with Tarrant County Homeless Coalition in the amount of \$228,000.000 for a total contract amount of \$300,000.00
 3. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to amend the agreements if necessary to achieve program goals provided the amendment is within the scope of the program and in compliance with City policies and applicable laws and regulations
 4. Find that such amendments serve a public purpose and that adequate controls are in place.
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DISCUSSION:

In 2019, the City of Fort Worth (City) introduced a rapid exit program to the homeless system. Rapid exit provides brief rental assistance and case management to help quickly house households who do not need ongoing rental assistance or case management. The City contracted with Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County, Inc. (PNS) to provide rapid exit and diversion services. Diversion in the local homeless system means exiting someone back to housing within 14 days.

In reviewing homeless system data, the average number of households experiencing homelessness started declining in 2019. The Continuum of Care's lead agency, Tarrant County Homeless Coalition (TCHC), has cited this decline as coinciding with the implementation of rapid exit. Even those households who are employed or have benefits rarely have \$2,000.00 or more saved to lease an apartment. This program allows people who are employed to quickly get off the street or out of the shelter by paying for fees associated with move-in in addition to the first month's rent. This reduces the person's time in homelessness and also frees up emergency shelter beds. Since 2019, PNS has moved 659 households (1,224 individuals) into housing through the rapid exit program. For households who exited the program between November 1, 2019 and October 31, 2020, the rate of return to homelessness was 11% (national goal is less than 15%).

As the system becomes more sharply focused on housing, one change is that PNS is restructuring its programming at True Worth Place, its day shelter, to maximize exits from homelessness to permanent housing. Because True Worth Place serves approximately 90% of those experiencing homelessness in Fort Worth during the course of the year, this restructure will have a system-wide impact. The intent is to have more housing and income focused staff and funding for diversion and rapid exits in order to increase the number of people who can exit homelessness. As a day shelter, True Worth Place will continue to provide basic services to all in the morning. Because of the success of rapid exit and the identified system need to increase the rapid exit program, staff is recommending increasing the contract with PNS (City Secretary Contract No. 54513) by \$283,000.00 to \$683,000.00 to allow more clients to be served.

Besides the PNS's diversion and rapid exit program, the other major diversion program is the Direct Client Service Fund administered by TCHC and funded by the City (City Secretary Contract No. 54548). This program removes barriers to housing by paying required fees other programs cannot pay and also providing one time assistance to clients who need very limited help in exiting homelessness. Many homeless service providers access these funds to assist them in housing clients. Staff is recommending increasing this contract by \$228,000.00 to a total of \$300,000.00 to enable more clients to be housed.

By increasing funding to diversion and rapid exit programs, the City is responding to an identified system need that will better position the community to reduce homelessness. By approval of this M&C, the City Council finds that the increased funding for these two critical services serve the public purpose of reducing homelessness and increasing the health and wellbeing of Fort Worth residents and that adequate controls are in place through the two contracts to ensure the public purpose is carried out.

Directions Home services and programs are available in ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that funds are available in the current operating budget, as previously appropriated, in the General Fund to support the approval of the above recommendations and execution of the agreement. Prior to any expenditure being incurred, the City Manager's

Office has the responsibility to validate the availability of funds.

Submitted for City Manager's Office by: Fernando Costa 6122

Originating Business Unit Head: Tara Perez 2235

Additional Information Contact: Tara Perez 2235