



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 25, 2005

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: *PK* Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted by: Stephen Barton, Director, Housing Department

Subject: Winter Homeless Shelter Programs

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing: 1) the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Oakland Department of Human Services and execute subsequent amendments as necessary for the Winter Shelter Program at the Oakland Army Base; 2) payment not to exceed \$42,000 for transportation for residents to and from the Winter Shelter; and 3) payment of up to \$14,642 to provide vouchers to homeless households for emergency housing at local motels and the Berkeley YMCA.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The FY 2006 budget includes \$103,914 for the Winter Shelter Program, and \$19,728 for the Winter Voucher Program. The budget for the Winter Shelter Program consists of: a) \$56,000 payable to the City of Oakland, which represents the City of Berkeley's pro-rata share for the operating costs associated with the Winter Shelter; b) \$5,914 payable to the Berkeley Food and Housing Project for administrative costs associated with coordination of referrals to the shelter; and c) \$42,000 to provide daily transportation via Bay Area Rapid Transit or AC Transit for the shelter residents to get to and from the shelter site in West Oakland. Of the above amounts, the allocation of \$56,000 payable to the City of Oakland has been previously authorized in the City's budget per Resolution No 62,976 – N.S., and the \$5,914 for the Berkeley Food and Housing Project has been authorized per Resolution No 63,041-N.S.

The City's financial commitment to the Winter Voucher Program totals \$19,728, which consists of: a) \$14,642 available for emergency housing vouchers; and b) \$5,086 payable to the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center for the administrative costs associated with coordination of referrals for the Winter Voucher Program. Of these amounts, the \$5,086 for the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center has been previously authorized in the City's budget per Resolution No 63,041-N.S.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

In 2003 Alameda County Continuum of Care Council conducted a count and survey of homeless people in Alameda County. According to the analysis of the extensive data collected through the Alameda Countywide Shelter and Services Survey, approximately 835 people are homeless in the City of Berkeley on any given night, including 785 adults and 50 children.

Currently the City has 150 shelter beds available at four emergency shelters that operate throughout the year. The demand for these beds consistently exceeds the actual number of beds available. The Winter Shelter and Winter Voucher Programs not only fill a critical gap in emergency housing, but also provide shelter for many of the most fragile among the local homeless population when the need for shelter from inclement weather is most urgent.

BACKGROUND

The City's response to the need for additional homeless shelter during the winter months primarily includes three program components: 1) the Winter Voucher program provides emergency housing vouchers to families and disabled individuals who are homeless in Berkeley who are unable to access one of the regular emergency shelters; 2) the Winter Shelter Program located at the Oakland Army Base, which the City operates in conjunction with the City of Oakland and the County of Alameda; and 3) the Berkeley Emergency Storm Shelter Project (BESS), which is operated by Dorothy Day House (DDH) and provides shelter space on particularly stormy nights for single adults on the streets who are otherwise unable to obtain shelter.

The first component, the Winter Voucher Program, is funded in the amount of \$19,728 for the period December 1, 2005 through April 30, 2006. This program is designed to provide emergency housing for homeless families and disabled individuals with medically fragile conditions at Berkeley area motels and the Berkeley YMCA. The Women's Daytime Drop-In Center (WDDC) provides screening and placement of eligible individuals and families into this emergency housing for up to a two-week period.

The second component, the Winter Shelter Program, involves operating a 100-bed emergency winter shelter at a large facility at the Oakland Army Base, from approximately November 15, 2005 through April 15, 2006. This program is a collaborative effort between the City of Berkeley, the City of Oakland, and Alameda County, along with Berkeley and Oakland service providers. The shelter is designed to serve single men and women. Out of the 100 beds in the shelter, 50 are designated for homeless people from Berkeley who are referred by one of the following service agencies: the Center for Independent Living, Building Opportunities for Self Sufficiency, the Women's Daytime Drop-In Center, the Homeless Action Center, the Berkeley Drop-In Center, and Berkeley Mental Health. The Berkeley Food and Housing Project is the designated lead agency for coordinating the referrals from these agencies in order to fill the 50 beds on a nightly basis. The overall operating budget for the Winter Shelter Program at the Oakland Army Base is approximately \$400,000. Berkeley's contribution to this program totals \$103,914, or approximately 26% of the program's overall operating budget. The remainder of the operating budget is funded by Alameda County, the City of Oakland and the state of California. The City of Oakland is the fiscal agency for the project, and contracts with a non-profit agency to staff and operate the shelter. The City of Berkeley contributes \$56,000 to the City of Oakland towards the costs of operating the shelter, and provides an additional \$42,000 to provide daily transportation via BART or AC Transit to the site of the shelter.

The third component, the Berkeley Emergency Storm Shelter Project (BESS), was initiated in the winter of 2004 in order to expand shelter capacity on the nights when demand for shelter is the highest and most needed. BESS is designed to provide emergency shelter on short notice during 15 to 20 of the stormiest nights during the winter season, providing refuge for up to 50 men and women. BESS is primarily staffed by volunteers with oversight from a coordinator employed by Dorothy Day House, and St. Mark's Episcopal Church donates the space for the shelter. The City of Berkeley has allocated \$15,000 for the project, and these funds have been previously authorized through the City's adopted budget for FY 2006 (Resolution No 62,976-N.S.)

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

By significantly expanding capacity for emergency shelter and services through the Winter Voucher Program and the Winter Shelter Programs, the City provides a humane response to the needs of the most vulnerable of the homeless population during the harsh winter months. In addition, the collaborative provision of shelter at the Oakland Army Base is consistent with the City's efforts to regionalize its approach to homelessness. Through this type of partnership, services can be more cost-effective and provided to a larger number of homeless individuals in need, while minimizing program impact to adjacent residential and commercial areas.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

No alternative actions are being considered at this time.

CONTACT PERSON

Andrew Wicker, Community Services Specialist, Housing Department, 981-5418

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

WINTER SHELTER PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is committed to a regional approach to addressing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has implemented a seasonal winter shelter program in collaboration with the City of Oakland and Alameda County, in addition to a winter voucher program, consistent with the City-adopted Continuum of Care Plan; and

WHEREAS, funds for these programs are in the City's FY 2006 adopted budget in budget codes 010-7906-463-3038 and 010-7906-463-5010.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley hereby authorizes a payment not to exceed \$42,000 for the transportation of shelter residents to the Winter Shelter Program site.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Berkeley hereby authorizes \$14,642 for the provision of motel vouchers to provide temporary shelter for homeless families and individuals with special needs or medically fragile conditions.