



CITY COUNCIL

Darryl Moore
Councilmember District 2

CONSENT CALENDAR
December 13, 2005

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Darryl Moore
Councilmember Gordon Wozniak

Subject: Referral to the Midyear Budget Process for the Berkeley Guides

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Berkeley City Council refers the following to the midyear budget process: A one-time request for \$10,000 to be used to leverage long-term funding.

BACKGROUND:

History of the current Berkeley Guides Program:

Since 1994, the Berkeley Guides Program has served as the “eyes and ears” of the Berkeley Police. This program started in response to the Rodney King riots, and is scheduled to be cut this December 2005. The Guides have been funded by the City of Berkeley, and contracted through and trained by the Police Department. Guides carry police radios and can often deescalate conflict and effectively filter the activity that needs the attention of the Police. They are strongly oriented to crime watch activity and also serve as visitor information.

Among the DBA membership in general, and especially among major stakeholders located around the core, there is strong interest in retaining this type of program. There is also consensus that a better-defined job description is necessary to ensure that there is clear benefit of the program.

Goal:

Improve the quality of life on the streets and promote a safe environment for business, education and entertainment through provision of a “Joint Security” program. We will provide a security and ambassadorial presence in the downtown district. Special focus would be on the “Core” – the blocks closest to the BART Station.

Strategy:

Recruit major stakeholders of the downtown Berkeley core to finance the Joint Security program to gain the benefits of a full-time street presence. Utilize the experience and longevity of the existing Berkeley Guides Program to launch this new/updated concept. Begin with a six-month pilot project for purposes of innovations in program design, reporting methodologies and accountability structures. Create a model public/private partnership for funding and program design.

Mission:

Increase the public enjoyment and quality of life in downtown Berkeley by improving street behavior.

Job Description:

Three staff would be hired to do foot patrol of the district and provide two basic functions.

- As “**ambassadors**”, they would have first-hand experience about the restaurants, movies, venues, and services available in the district in order to be very pro-active in assisting visitors. They would have schedules of special events and promotions, and information on transit and parking facilities/systems and schedules. Cell phones would allow businesses to call in requests for help in difficult situations.
- As “**public safety**” guides, they would have training and regular communications with City Police, Mental Health, and Office of Emergency Services as well as with service providers, and other key contacts through UC, Vista, BHS, and other institution in order to effectively enforce public behavior standards and deal with emergencies in a coordinated manner.
- As “**clean and safe**” monitors, they would have regular communications with businesses and relevant city and university departments to report issues with graffiti, blight, sidewalks in need of repair and other quality of life infrastructure issues.

An average day would be split between walking patrols, and observation from key vantage points such as Tully’s and other upper offices that allow good visibility to the heavy foot traffic areas. Walking patrols would include delivery of important information to businesses and “customer service” to the public. At all times, the Guides would be accessible by cell phone to respond to requests for help.

The job description would be tailored so as to coordinate well with (and not be redundant with) City and University staff and others involved in public safety.

Management:

The strongest current concept for management is:

The Berkeley Boosters Police Activities League serve as fiscal agent and provide all personnel services. The Boosters have managed the Guides Program for ten years and have the experience, expertise and city-wide contacts to provide maximum leverage for the funders’ investment.

The Downtown Berkeley Association will provide marketing services, and contribute to staff training – especially related to improved communications with the business community. DBA is currently setting the tone for the transition to the improved program concept by meeting weekly with the Guides staff, developing marketing materials, and helping to develop a management plan that ensures the continuation of the Program.

The City of Berkeley Police Department currently funds the Berkeley Guides Program and provides free training through the Police Department and Office of Emergency Services. Due to the 22 year history of collaboration between BPD and Berkeley Boosters PAL, this strong affiliation will continue. A benefit of BPD and Office of Emergency Services training is the additional layer of protection of the involved parties (Boosters, DBA and funders) from liability. In addition, Boosters carry a \$2 million liability insurance policy that has the ability to include funders as additional insured.

Funding:

The Berkeley Boosters Police Activities League is working collaboratively with DBA to recruit private and municipal funds to support on-going operations. The DBA would offer marketing services, and management support on an in-kind basis.

The major stakeholders who agree to contribute funds would be asked to make a multi-year commitment and be given the ability to tailor the program according to their priorities.

The City of Berkeley currently pays \$163,000 annually to fund the current Berkeley Guides Program at three Guides positions. DBA will ask the City to continue to contribute some funds annually to help match the private contributions.

Other donations and in-kind contributions would be recruited from local businesses such as cell phone service, food and drinks, movie and theatre tickets.

The Berkeley Guides have been working on developing a funding model that is in essence a Public/Private partnership to fund public safety/ambassadorial service to the downtown. The Berkeley Guides are proposing a six month pilot project, costing \$80,000 - the idea being that this six months will allow them the opportunity to develop meaningful and productive relationships with new funders - including building new reporting mechanisms, communication modalities, revised scope of service, etc. All for the purpose of seeking long term (three to five year) commitments from the key stakeholders in the downtown in order to secure the sustainability of the Berkeley Guides program as a vital part of the safety, disaster response, and ambassadorship of the downtown area.

They have been successful in securing commitments from two developers with a deep investment in the downtown, and a large stake in its future have been soliciting funding from the University of California, Berkeley. There are three other developers that are in a "holding" pattern right now, partly because they would like to see a commitment on the part of the "Public" side of this Public/Private partnership. A commitment from the City in the small amount of \$10,000 would help to leverage this funding.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

\$10,000

CONTACT PERSON:

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