



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

October 10, 2006

To: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

From: *PK* Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted by: Stephen Barton, Director, Housing Department

Subject: Application for CSBG Discretionary Funding

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for \$75,000 in Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Discretionary Funding to the State of California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) to facilitate a community process to agree upon meaningful and measurable outcomes for community agencies receiving City funding.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Possible addition of \$75,000 in CSBG discretionary funding to pay for staff time and consultant fees.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The State Department of Community Services and Development issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on September 13, 2006 seeking innovative projects by Community Action Agencies/Partnerships. The City of Berkeley, a Community Action Agency that receives \$173,556 in CSBG funding per year, is eligible to apply for these funds. Staff identified one needed project that is one of the action steps adopted by City Council to implement the Alameda County-wide Homeless And Special Needs Housing Plan (also known as the "Multi-Plan"). This project would aid in the implementation of the Multi-Plan, falls under the area of capacity-building and would be eligible for funding. At their September 20, 2006 meeting, the Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC) voted in favor of submitting the application for discretionary funding to the State Department of Community Services and Development.

BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley is a Community Action Agency and receives Community Services Block Grant funds (CSBG) to support anti-poverty programs. Each year the City receives \$173,556 in CSBG funding for programs that serve people living in poverty. In addition to this regular grant, the Director of the State Department of Community Services and Development can award 1% of the entire California CSBG block grant, in the form of discretionary funding, to special one-time projects. On September 13, 2006, State CSD issued an RFP for funding; the application is due October 13, 2006.

In May 2006, the Berkeley City Council adopted the Alameda Countywide Homeless and Special Needs Housing Plan. This plan, which includes the County's 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness, represents the culmination of a couple of years of work with representatives from City and County government, community agencies, consumers, and other community stakeholders. The plan identifies five primary goals: to prevent homelessness and other crises, to increase housing opportunities, to deliver flexible services that support stability and independence, to measure success and report outcomes, and to develop long-term leadership and build political will. Along with adoption of the plan, the Berkeley City Council also adopted a Berkeley specific action plan that details the steps the City will take to implement the plan. Among the actions in the plan, is the development of an evaluation system that incorporates measuring success and reporting outcomes.

Several years ago, the City of Berkeley began requiring community agencies to report on outcomes achieved through City funded programs. Over time, we have discovered that this outcome data is neither uniform nor focused enough for either the City, or the community agency itself, to use the data as a tool for identifying best practices and for evaluating program quality.

The City of Berkeley proposes a project to increase our community agency partners' capacity to achieve results through improved outcome tracking and reporting. The project will facilitate a community process to agree upon a uniform set of meaningful and measurable outcomes that focus on obtaining permanent housing, maintaining stability, improving quality of life, and increasing self-sufficiency. The project will result in the identification of best practices and will enable the City of Berkeley and our community agency partners to improve and enhance emergency and other support service programs.

The City of Berkeley will retain a consultant to assist us in facilitating a community process in which stakeholders have the opportunity to come to a shared agreement upon a set of measurable outcomes that will enable us to identify what are the best and most promising practices. Over time, these outcome measurements will allow community agencies to self-monitor and make internal system adjustments that enhance their program's ability to achieve results. It will also enable the City of Berkeley to target resources to programs with proven successes.

The project is additionally intended to increase community agencies' capacity to accurately track and report on outcomes and to use this information as an internal tool for service improvement. City of Berkeley staff and consultant will provide technical assistance to community agencies that need additional help in developing outcome-tracking systems. Staff will assist in creating informal mentorship relationships between sophisticated community agencies with systems in place, and agencies for whom this is new territory.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This project seems very appropriate for the CSBG discretionary funding source. It entails one-time expenditures, fits in with the discretionary funding priorities and moves the City forward in

the implementation of the Multi-Plan. It also serves to further refine community agency reporting and overall systems evaluation. Both the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development and the federal Department of Health and Human Services place an emphasis on the development and utilization of outcome measures.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

Kristen Lee, Community Services Specialist, Housing, 981-5427

Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

APPLICATION FOR CSBG DISCRETIONARY FUNDING

WHEREAS, the State Department of Community Services and Development issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on September 13, 2006 for innovative projects by Community Action Agencies/Partnerships; proposals are due on October 13, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley, a Community Action Agency that receives \$173,556 in CSBG funding per year, is eligible to apply for these funds; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley proposes a project to increase our community agency partners' capacity to achieve results through improved outcome tracking and reporting; and

WHEREAS, this project completes one action step in the Alameda Countywide Homeless and Special Needs Housing Plan, adopted by the Berkeley City Council in May 2006, whose primary goals are: to prevent homelessness and other crises, to increase housing opportunities, to deliver flexible services that support stability and independence, to measure success and report outcomes, and to develop long-term leadership and build political will.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to apply for \$75,000 in Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Discretionary Funding to the State of California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) to facilitate a community process to agree upon meaningful and measurable outcomes for community agencies receiving City funding.