



HOUSING DIVISION

CITY HALL
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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting: November 19, 2020

Subject

Emergency Assistance Funds to assist unhoused members of the encampments located along Wolfe Road near Interstate 280 (Wolfe Road encampment) to mitigate safety hazards including COVID-19; related budget modification.

Recommended Action

1. Adopt Resolution approving Budget Modification #2021-107 transferring \$200,000 in existing appropriations from the General Fund to the Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Special Revenue Fund; approving the allocation of \$200,000 in BMR Affordable Housing Funds (AFH) for emergency assistance to assist unhoused members of the Wolfe Road encampment, and authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute any contracts necessary to facilitate the emergency assistance.

Discussion

In June 2020, the City formed a Homelessness Task Force to evaluate and formulate a response to the growing needs of the unhoused members in Cupertino. The City's Task Force has engaged regularly with the County of Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing (OSH), Abode Services, and many non-profits and social service providers serving the unhoused in Cupertino. The Task Force determined the COVID-19 pandemic has impaired the normal countywide system to provide services to persons experiencing homelessness. These unusual circumstances require an extraordinary response to prioritize a pathway to housing for persons experiencing homelessness.

The Task Force has identified the Wolfe Road encampment as a serious concern due to the COVID-19 pandemic, impending inclement weather, and proximity to high-speed traffic entering the freeway. Since July 2020, regular and continuous outreach efforts lead by OSH and Abode Services have identified and assessed fifteen unhoused individuals residing at the Wolfe Road encampment. Through a cooperative effort between the City, OSH, and Abode Services, it has been determined that six months of temporary lodging, supportive services, and storage could provide a pathway to housing for the original fifteen encampment members.

During the month of October, outreach teams have reported that the encampment has grown beyond the original fifteen members. These additional encampment members will be offered temporary shelter and services through the County coordination and referral system. The City is also offering a temporary, alternative outdoor location to maintain the public health guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic and avoid disbursement of encampment members. The term of the temporary outdoor site will be determined by the current COVID-19 shelter in place orders. It is estimated that the monthly cost of maintaining the temporary outdoor location is \$3,600, for an estimated cost of \$21,600 for six months.

Funding Sources

In cooperation with OSH and Abode Services, the City has coordinated six months of temporary lodging, supportive services, and storage administered by Abode Services at an estimated total cost of \$315,000. On October 2, 2020, City Council adopted Resolution No. 20-116 increasing General Fund appropriations by \$735,259 for COVID-19 related activities. Staff is recommending \$200,000 of the existing General Fund COVID-19 appropriations be transferred to the BMR Housing Special Revenue Fund to assist with the costs associated with six months of temporary lodging, supportive services, and storage for the fifteen encampment members. BMR AHF programs and projects are funded by housing mitigation fees collected from residential and non-residential development projects. Funds targeting extremely-low income households and/or persons with special needs are a permitted use of the City's BMR AHF.

The remaining \$115,000 will come from services and funding from the County of Santa Clara and Housing Trust Silicon Valley, as well as donations from public/private partnerships. Staff will continue to work closely with community partners, including potential funders, to explore additional efforts to support unhoused members of our community.

Sustainability Impact

There are no sustainability impacts.

Fiscal Impact

The General Fund is transferring \$200,000 in existing COVID-19 appropriations to the BMR Housing Special Revenue Fund to provide emergency assistance funds. This transfer will have no net fiscal impact on the City.

Prepared by: Kerri Heusler, Housing Manager

Approved for submission by: Deborah Feng, City Manager

Attachments:

A - Resolution