



Board Agenda Item 40

DATE: April 28, 2020

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Delfino E. Neira, Director, Department of Social Services
Jean M. Rousseau, County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Retroactive Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Fresno for COVID-19
Emergency Homelessness Funds

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute a retroactive Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Fresno for revenue to support the COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Response plan, effective March 19, 2020, total not to exceed \$1,012,869.

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Approval of the recommended action is necessary for the County to receive COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness funds to implement joint response services in coordination with the City of Fresno. The funding will increase support of the County's ongoing prevention and containment efforts for those experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There are no viable alternative actions. Should your Board elect not to approve the recommended action, the County would forfeit \$1,012,869 in funding intended to help protect the vulnerable homeless population and reduce the spread of COVID-19 by safely moving individuals into shelter and providing immediate housing options. If the recommended action is not approved, the County will not have sufficient funding to support the previously executed agreements that are providing low-barrier emergency shelter during the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

RETROACTIVE AGREEMENT:

The COVID-19 outbreak requires immediate action to protect the health and safety of the County's vulnerable unsheltered homeless population. The recommended memorandum of understanding (MOU) was approved by the Fresno City Council on April 16, 2020 and is retroactive to March 19, 2020 in alignment with the Fresno City Council's verbal approval of joint planning efforts between the City and County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The City of Fresno has been awarded a COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Funding Allocation of \$1,012,869. There is no matching contribution required for these funds. In accordance with State regulations, the funds must be obligated by June 30, 2020. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues will be included in a Budget Resolution presented to your Board on May 12, 2020 for the Department's COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Special Revenue Fund Org 1135 and the Department's Org 5610 FY 2019-20 Adopted

Budget and if necessary, will be included in subsequent budget requests.

DISCUSSION:

During the month of March 2020, State and local states of emergency related to COVID-19 were proclaimed by Governor Newsom, the County's Emergency Services Director/County Administrative Officer, and the Mayor of Fresno.

On March 17, 2020, your Board ratified the proclamation of a local emergency related to COVID-19. The Department has received guidance from the State and Federal government regarding aiding unsheltered homeless and those living in large shelter settings who are particularly susceptible to COVID-19. Additionally, on the same date, the Governor signed Senate Bill 89: Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review. Budget Act of 2019. (Chapter 2, Statutes of 2020) (SB 89), emergency legislation that authorized immediate funding to help fight COVID-19. The funding allocated to Continuums of Care, Counties, and the 13 largest cities is to be used for shelter support and emergency housing to address COVID-19 among the homeless population.

On March 24, 2020, your Board approved Agreement No. A-20-126 with RH Community Builders to expand low-barrier emergency shelter available during the COVID-19 State of Emergency in order to mitigate the risks of transmission among the unsheltered homeless population. The recommended MOU will provide additional support for these services.

On April 14, 2020, your Board approved Revenue Agreement Nos. A-20-145 and A-20-146 with the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) for the Department, acting as the Administrative Entity on behalf of the County and Fresno-Madera Continuum of Care, to receive COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Funding, authorized by SB 89, intended to protect the health and safety of homeless populations and reduce the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, on the same date, your Board approved Agreement No. A-20-147 with Poverello House to expand low-barrier emergency shelter available during the COVID-19 State of Emergency in order to mitigate the risks of transmission among the unsheltered homeless population. The recommended MOU will provide additional support for these services.

If approved, the recommended action will enable the Department to implement COVID-19 homelessness response services in coordination with the City of Fresno. Services will include investment in COVID-19 prevention and containment efforts for temporary shelters, including, but not limited to, medically indicated services and supplies, such as testing and handwashing stations, and enhancements to existing shelter facilities. The recommended action would expand support for low-barrier emergency shelter services provided during the COVID-19 State of Emergency and help mitigate the risks of transmission among the unsheltered homeless population.

This MOU may be terminated without cause by either party upon providing seven-day advance written notice.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #38 & #40, April 14, 2020
BAI #10.2, March 24, 2020
BAI #2, March 17, 2020

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Fresno

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa