



December 5, 2016

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jennifer Williams, President
Social Service Human Relations Board

Subject: Social Service Human Relations Board Recommendations
Regarding the Public Services FY 17-18 CDBG Action Plan,
and Housing and Community Development Needs

The Social Service Human Relations Board (SSHRB) advises the City Council regarding social service and human relations needs in Alameda. In 1997, the Council asked the SSHRB to participate in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) process by reviewing and commenting on the public service needs and funding recommendations. This letter represents our input for the annual needs process, culminating in the CDBG Needs Hearing at the January 3, 2017 City Council meeting.

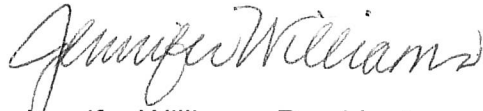
At our December 1, 2016 meeting, we heard a staff presentation on the CDBG process, received input from multiple service providers and reviewed the comments we provided to the Council in 2016. The input offered by the service providers informed us about what is working well in Alameda, and where potential service gaps may exist.

CDBG funding continues to be an important source of funding for agencies addressing basic safety net needs, and for those agencies working with the homeless and survivors of domestic violence. SSHRB recommends that funding should be directed to services for families and individuals who are vulnerable and in crisis, including domestic violence survivors, seniors, and other groups faced with challenges to meet basic needs, through programs that provide food and shelter for all residents, with particular attention toward programs that address providing shelter and services to currently unsheltered homeless.

The Operation Dignity homeless services team, contracted by the City, found the number of Alameda's homeless living on the streets and lacking basic needs has increased from 18 to 33 since the two SSHRB-sponsored homeless counts in 2014 and 2015. Funding for this population should include case management services and outreach, short-term rental assistance support, utility assistance, and support for those in need of rapid relocation as a direct result of eviction. We realize the needs in the areas of youth services, job training, health, wellness, transportation, and economic development remain, yet current funding is not sufficient to meet any but the most critical safety net needs of the community.

Next year, SSHRB will be conducting a comprehensive Community Needs Survey, much like the one it conducted in 2011-12, which received responses from 1,911 Alameda households. The Board looks forward to sharing data from this survey with the Council as we work together to identify and meet the needs of those in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Williams". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jennifer Williams, President
Social Service Human Relations Board