

Date: November 21, 2018

To: Social Service Human Relations Board

From: Ana Bagtas, Management Analyst

Re: Homeless Emergency Aid Program

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Senate Bill (SB) 850, signed into law in June 2018, established the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), a \$500 million block grant to provide immediate emergency assistance to people experiencing homelessness statewide. Continuums of Care (COC) and large cities with over 330,000 people are eligible to apply directly to the State of California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC) for funding. Smaller, incorporated cities are eligible to apply for HEAP funds through their COCs by adopting a resolution declaring a “shelter crisis.” At its October 2, 2018 meeting, the Alameda City Council approved a shelter crisis declaration making the City eligible to apply for a portion of the \$16.2 million HEAP funds allocated to Alameda County.

The County will submit a consolidated application to HCFC on behalf of cities and unincorporated areas in the county by December 31, 2018. Based on a funding formula approved by the Board of Supervisors on November 20, 2018, the City of Alameda is allocated \$756,524. The program requires a 30% match and allows up to 2.5% to be set aside for administrative costs. On November 6, 2018, the County asked each jurisdiction to submit a proposal by November 8, 2018, for the spending of its HEAP allocation.

Staff recommends that the Social Service Human Relations Board (Board) review the preliminary projects submitted by the Base Reuse and Community Development Department to the County. Staff requests the Board’s input on the proposed project’s and welcomes its suggestions on the use of HEAP funds. The Board’s recommendations will be provided to the City Council when it considers expenditure of the HEAP funds at its January 15, 2019 meeting.

## BACKGROUND

In August 2018, the State of California HCFC issued an announcement of funding availability for HEAP monies. HEAP is a \$500 million block grant program that provides direct assistance to cities and counties to address the homelessness crisis throughout California. HEAP was authorized by Senate Bill 850 and signed into law by Governor Brown in June 2018.

COC and large cities with over 330,000 people are eligible to apply directly to the state,

for HEAP funds. COCs are regional or local planning organizations designed to promote a community-wide commitment to end homelessness by providing: 1) funding for efforts by nonprofit and public agencies to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families; 2) access to and increasing utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and 3) optimizing self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness.

An Administrative Entity (AE) must be identified for the purposes of applying for the HEAP funds and for the governance of the program. The County of Alameda is the AE. The HEAP statute mandates that 50 percent of the awarded funds must be contractually obligated by January 1, 2020. Additionally, 100 percent of the funds must be expended by June 30, 2021. Unexpended funds must be returned to the State.

The State has allocated \$16,192,049 in HEAP funds to Alameda County. All cities and counties within a COC that wish to receive HEAP funds are required to declare a shelter crisis through a resolution. The Alameda City Council adopted a resolution declaring a shelter crisis at its October 2, 2018 meeting.

On November 6, 2018, the County issued its proposed allocation of HEAP funds for each of the 14 incorporated cities and unincorporated areas in Alameda County and asked for a proposal, due two days later, from each jurisdiction for the use of its allocated funds. The City of Alameda's HEAP allocation totals \$756,524, which requires a 30% match and allows for up to 2.5% to be used for administrative expenses. Cities were required to identify an allocation of funds in one or more of the following HEAP-eligible categories: services, rental assistance or subsidies, and capital improvements in their proposals.

Through ongoing engagement with the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)/Collaboration Advancing Resources, Efforts, and Supports for Alameda's Homeless (CARES), the City's Base Reuse and Community Development Department (BRCD), as the coordinating agency providing backbone support to the team, has been keeping track of the needs of the homeless in our community. Given the short response time provided to cities to submit an allocation plan for the use of HEAP funds, BRCD followed recommendation from the feedback from HOT/CARES in determining the distribution of funds to the HEAP-eligible categories. The County provides flexibility in changing the use of the funds and will allow redistribution of the monies to allow communities to exercise flexibility and creativity in developing local solutions to meet the specific needs of the homeless population in their jurisdictions.

## DISCUSSION

In 2017, the City of Alameda participated in the Point-In-Time count, an inventory of the homeless in a specific area on a particular day. The count revealed that Alameda had 204 homeless people, with 94 sheltered and 110 unsheltered. In addition, the Alameda Unified School District estimates that more than 60 children and youth are currently homeless, a number not reflected in the count because these children and their families

are usually not visible and do not readily self-identify as homeless. They are often staying with relatives, living in cars, or couch surfing. Therefore, these children and their families are outside of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development criteria and methodology for accounting for the homeless in the Point-In-Time count.

In addition to participating in the Point-In-Time count, the Board conducted a community needs assessment at the end of 2017. Survey results indicate that residents found homeless shelters/homeless services as the second most pressing social services need in the City of Alameda, behind transportation. In March 2018, the City Council accepted a report on Homelessness Programs and Policies and allocated funds to implement key initiatives recommended in the report. This report was prepared by the Board and staff in response to a City Council referral regarding identifying best practices for addressing the homelessness crisis in the City and the region. The availability of HEAP funds provides the City of Alameda with additional opportunities to develop creative solutions to address its homeless population's most critical needs.

The City of Alameda submitted a proposal to the County on November 8, 2018, for the use of \$756,524 in HEAP funds as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Examples Activities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Administration	Staff Costs	\$18,913
Services	Mobil Shower/Hygiene Unit	\$147,522
Rental Assistance Subsidies	Hotel vouchers and emergency housing assistance	\$73,761
Capital Improvements	Public restrooms & sanctioned parking areas.	\$516,328

Under services, staff proposes using the funds to form a regional partnership with the Cities of Fremont, Hayward, San Leandro, and Union City for a shared mobile hygiene unit and safe car and RV parking area. Housing and hotel vouchers will be made available for homeless individuals using the allocation in the rental assistance or subsidies category. Capital improvement projects include building public bathrooms in the two main street areas in the city.

Staff is recommending that the Board review and provide input on the preliminary projects proposed for the use of HEAP funds. The Board's recommendations will be provided to the City Council when it considers expenditure of the HEAP funds at its January 15, 2019 meeting.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Provide input on the preliminary proposal for the use of HEAP funds and recommend these projects for adoption by the City Council.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ana Bagtas, Management Analyst