

Memorandum

EXHIBIT 2

To: City Council

From: C'Mone Falls, Housing and Human Services Division, City of Alameda

Date: April 2, 2026

Subject: Vetting Process for Restorative Pathways as a Low-Barrier Shelter Program Operator

This memo summarizes the due diligence and vetting process conducted to evaluate the capacity of Restorative Pathways to operate the combined day center/safe parking/overnight shelter program on behalf of the City of Alameda. The provider applied to the competitive request for proposal (RFP) process. They ranked number 1 for the Emergency Supportive Housing Program and number 2 for the Day Center/Safe Parking/Emergency Shelter program. The review process included site visits to existing shelter programs, reference checks with current and former contracting agencies, and direct engagement with the organization's leadership team. The Executive Director confirmed the agency has not had any lawsuits in the last ten years. An online search resulted in only positive press.

Site Visits

As part of the vetting process, C'Mone Falls, Housing and Human Services Manager, conducted in-person site visits at two service programs currently operated by Restorative Pathways:

- Solara House located in Oakland is a 24/7 120 bed shelter serving various populations including transitional age youth, families, individuals in recovery, and domestic violence and human trafficking survivors.
- Drop-in Center located in Castro Valley provides resource connection, hygiene services, and on-site counseling.

The purpose of these visits was to observe day-to-day program operations, staffing presence, site management, and participant engagement. During both visits, the facilities appeared orderly and actively staffed, and program staff were engaged with participants. The homeless program sites were well maintained and reflected a high level of care in the way the environment was organized and presented. Restorative Pathways' demonstrated experience managing programs serving individuals experiencing homelessness.

I previously conducted a site visit to their Hayward shelter program serving homeless families, unaccompanied minors, and trafficking survivors.

Reference Checks

As part of this evaluation, Ms. Falls assessed Restorative Pathways' qualifications and performance history through a reference check.

References were provided by:

- Alameda County Social Services Agency - Shane Rogge is the Program Services Coordinator overseeing shelter contracts for Alameda County.
- Abode Services – Vivian Wan is the Chief Operating Officer for Abode Services. Ms. Falls has worked with her in partnership with homeless services for over 10 years and she is highly regarded in the field.
- City of Oakland – Karen Boyd is a former director with the City of Oakland and now works as a consultant and Vice President of External Affairs for Goodwill. She also spoke with Oakland's City Manager and he provided positive reviews.

All references provided positive feedback regarding their experience working with the organization. The agencies reported that Restorative Pathways met contractual expectations, maintained professional working relationships with partner agencies, and operated programs without generating significant community concerns. Respondents also spoke favorably about the organization's leadership team, particularly the Executive Director, Sophora Acheson, noting that leadership was communicative, collaborative, and responsive in addressing operational issues. References reported frequent interaction with the organization's Executive Director, Associate Executive Director, Chief Program Officer, and program leadership staff. These individuals were also described as responsive, collaborative, solution-oriented, and accountable in their communications and program management.

The County specifically indicated that on-site staffing levels were met and leadership met contract performance expectations established under the standard services agreement. No compliance issues were identified. References confirmed that Restorative Pathways has experience operating low-barrier shelter environments with hard to serve clients that require consistent monitoring and site management. While the County contract primarily requires the organization to connect participants to behavioral health services, the reference noted that the organization has also initiated a project related to substance use disorder (SUD) services at one of its locations.

Online Search Results

Restorative Pathways

A Google search did not identify anything negative. Social media searches on X (Twitter), Facebook, and Instagram found accounts for Restorative Pathways with a number of posts. There is little engagement in the comments and nothing controversial identified. A search was conducted on Reddit with nothing identified. A Google search was conducted on Co-Presidents Sophora Acheson and Oriel Eksi. Nothing negative was identified.

Ruby's Place

Restorative Pathways was formerly known as Ruby's Place. Ruby's Place is also the name of their domestic abuse treatment center in Castro Valley. A Google search did not identify any controversies or negative press. There are some negative reviews on Google and Indeed. On Google, Ruby's Place has a 3.4 rating from 25 reviews which range from 10 months to 12 years old. The negative reviews mention rudeness, individuals being kicked out, the site being full, and racism by staff. The positive reviews mention caring staff, the support needed provided, and help finding housing after homelessness. On Indeed, Ruby's Place has 3.1 stars and 11 reviews. The negative reviews mention unpleasant staff, no guidance from management, little security, and a toxic work culture. The positive reviews mention rewarding work, great pay and benefits, and plenty of resources. A social media search found Facebook/Instagram accounts with no controversial posts. The only mention of Ruby's Place on Reddit is a post about donating items to the shelter.

Solara House

A shelter and trauma recovery center in Oakland managed by Restorative Pathways. A Google search did not identify anything of note. Facebook/Instagram – On a post from Jan 28 by Lena Tam, a commenter from two weeks ago mentioned an individual experiencing a mental health episode being kicked out of Solara House without medications. The post also mentions he was assaulted by another resident. Comment also made on Lena Tam's Instagram. The same individual also made the same comment on a Feb 10 post by Strong Families Alliance of Alameda County. Nothing else of note identified.

Charity Tracker

EIN: 94-2212241

[Charity Navigator](#): 100% rating

[IRS Form 990](#)

Charity Tracker is a well-known and respected website to assess nonprofit organizations. Restorative Pathways (previously Ruby's Place) received 100% points for all categories that include review of their board and accountability, website, IRS Form 990 and tax disclosures and policies, financial metrics.

This includes a review of employee ratio pay that was verified from Form 990. The highest-paid employee earns 3.7 times more than the average staff member. According to Charity Navigator, this compensation ratio is expected to range from 1 to 24 so this organization is on the lower end, meaning the highest paid employees are not significantly paid more than their average employees.

A review of the organization's program expenses shows that 81% - 92% of expenses are program related with 7% - 18% spent on administrative expenses and the remaining on fundraising.

Alameda Site Visit

In addition to site visits and reference checks, I met with the leadership team from Restorative Pathways and provided a tour of the shelter program site that the organization would be contracted to operate for the City. During this meeting, leadership reviewed the facility layout, operational expectations, and program needs.

The leadership team demonstrated familiarity with low-barrier shelter operations and acknowledged the operational requirements associated with the site. Based on this meeting, it is my assessment that the organization understands the program environment and is prepared to implement appropriate staffing, oversight, and service coordination necessary to support the shelter program.

Based on my professional experience, knowledge in this field, and the due diligence conducted—including site visits, reference checks with multiple agencies, and direct engagement with the organization's leadership—Restorative Pathways appears to have the operational experience and leadership capacity necessary to operate the day center/safe parking/emergency shelter program located at 431 Stardust Place in Alameda. I recommend moving forward with the Restorative Pathways as new service provider for this program site.



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To: City Council
From: Leigh Grossman, Police Auditor, City of Alameda
Date: April 8, 2026
Subject: Vetting Process for Restorative Pathways

Based on the information supplied by Housing and Human Services Division on Restorative Pathways (Exhibit 2) and my non-exhaustive Google and social media searches, I did not identify anything that would disqualify the applicant from operating the shelter program.

Leigh Grossman

Leigh Grossman, Ph.D.
Police Auditor