



Office of the City Manager

04

CONSENT CALENDAR
December 1, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Lisa Warhuus, Director, Health, Housing & Community Services

Subject: Contract: Resource Development Associates to Facilitate Specialized Care Unit Community Design Process

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to execute a contract and any amendments with Resource Development Associates (RDA) to facilitate the design of a Specialized Care Unit (SCU) for a total contract limit of \$185,000 for the period beginning January 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. The contract will serve the City of Berkeley by analyzing the current mental health crisis system, engaging community members in visioning an improved system, researching best practice models and gathering local data, and developing a program to re-assign non-criminal police service calls to a Specialized Care Unit (SCU) that will respond without law enforcement.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The total amount of the contract is not-to-exceed \$185,000. Resources for the contract will be provided from the following funds: \$100,000 in General Funds allocated as a result of the Omnibus Public Safety package adopted by City Council on July 14, 2020 (this funding is part of AAO#1.), and \$85,000 in General Funds allocated to the Mental Health Division (this funding will be part of AAO#2).

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On July 14, 2020, in Resolution No. 69,501-N.S., City Council passed a package of items providing direction for the development of a new paradigm of public safety in Berkeley. One of the items adopted by City Council directed the City Manager to analyze and develop a pilot program to re-assign non-criminal police service calls to a Specialized Care Unit (SCU). The SCU will consist of trained crisis-response field workers who will respond to calls that a Public Safety Communications Center evaluate as non-criminal and posing no imminent threat to the safety of community members, responding crisis workers, and/or other involved parties. The work is to include the development of a pilot model that will inform long term implementation of the program.

The Mental Health Division currently operates a Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) that primarily responds to requests from the Berkeley Police Department (BPD) for mental

health support. Community members contact BPD to intervene in a crisis, and BPD dispatches officers to respond. BPD then has the option of contacting the MCT to support the individual in crisis. In addition to contact through BPD, MCT services can also be accessed through a voicemail on which community members can leave confidential messages. MCT staff check this voicemail frequently when on shift and respond to phone messages on a rolling basis. Most messages are returned by phone call, and crisis calls are referred to BPD for cover and crisis response.

A variety of stakeholder groups (including the Berkeley Mental Health Commission) have long indicated that many community members would prefer a mental health crisis response system that does not involve law enforcement. In response, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) under Specification No. 20-11357-C, convened a panel of stakeholders, interviewed representatives from the highest ranked responses, and selected RDA as the most qualified bidder for this contract.

BACKGROUND

The Berkeley Mental Health Commission has long advocated for the need for a 24/7 crisis care program and the need to reduce the role of law enforcement in crisis response. In January of 2020, the Mental Health Division released an RFP to evaluate the current mental health crisis system in Berkeley. On July 14, 2020, City Council directed the City Manager to develop a Specialized Care Unit consisting of trained crisis-response field workers who would respond to mental health crisis occurrences that do not pose an imminent threat to safety without the involvement of law enforcement.

The action by City Council is aligned with the original scope RDA was selected to implement, but requires a deeper community process, more extensive data gathering, and alignment with the other Omnibus efforts. With input from the proposal review team, staff recommends implementing an expanded scope with RDA that incorporates feedback received by City Council.

The contract with RDA will provide for a comprehensive feasibility study, community engagement process, best practice research, data collection, program design, and implementation plan for an SCU to respond to public safety calls that do not require presence of law enforcement. This contract aligns with the Strategic Plan goal to champion and demonstrate social and racial equity.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the action requested in this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

RDA was selected as the vendor for this contract through a competitive RFP process, and the evaluation panel for the RFP included both City Staff and community stakeholders.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

City Council could decide not to approve the attached Resolution and the City could restart the RFP process as the scope of the initial project has significantly expanded. This was rejected by city staff due to the amount of time it takes to complete this process, and the likelihood that similar vendors would apply for another RFP.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES FOR SPECIALIZED CARE
UNIT

WHEREAS, on July 14, 2020, the City Council of the City Berkeley passed a package of items providing direction for the development of a new paradigm of public safety in Berkeley that included direction to the City Manager to analyze and develop a pilot program to re-assign non-criminal police service calls to a Specialized Care Unit (SCU); and

WHEREAS, City of Berkeley community members would prefer a 24/7 mental health crisis response system that does not so heavily involve law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Resource Development Associates will conduct a comprehensive feasibility study, program design and implementation plan for an SCU to respond to public safety calls that do not require presence of law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Resource Development Associates' services align with the Strategic Plan goal to champion and demonstrate social and racial equity; and

WHEREAS, Resource Development Associates was selected through a competitive Request for Proposals process; and

WHEREAS, funds for the contract with RDA will be appropriated in Annual Appropriations Ordinance Number One and Annual Appropriations Ordinance Number Two.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley:

Section 1. The City Manager or her designee is hereby authorized to execute a contract and any amendments with Resource Development Associates (RDA) for the design of a Specialized Care Unit (SCU) for a total contract limit of \$185,000 for the period beginning January 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022.

Section 2. A record signature copy of the contract and any amendments between the City and RDA shall be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.