



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR

April 27, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: Lisa Warhuus, Director, Health, Housing and Community Services
 Subject: Rebuilding Together East Bay-North Contract Continuation Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution:

1. Providing additional two-year General Fund allocations for Rebuilding Together East Bay-North's Safe at Home and Community Facility Improvement programs; and
2. Authorizing the City Manager to enter into any agreements or amendments to effectuate this action, including an amendment to Contract No. 31900263 with Rebuilding Together East Bay-North for an amended amount not to exceed \$491,400 and extending the contract term to June 30, 2023.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Adopting these recommendations will require continued allocations of General Fund for Rebuilding Together East Bay-North's (RTEBN) Safe at Home Program (\$24,575) and Community Facility Improvement program (\$98,275) for a total amount not to exceed \$122,850 per year, or \$245,700 over two years, Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 & FY 2023.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

RTEBN funding is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to create affordable housing and housing support service for our most vulnerable community members.

In response to the FY2020-2023 Community Agency Funding Request for Proposals, RTEBN applied for federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for two programs: Safe at Home Program and Community Facility Improvements.

CDBG funds come with significant reporting and recordkeeping requirements. The City Manager did not recommend that RTEBN receive the four-year CDBG grant for either program due to concerns with their adherence to federal reporting requirements and issues with recordkeeping. However, the City recognized the organization's deep community roots and successful experience in providing free rehabilitation repairs and ADA accessibility improvements to Berkeley homes and community facilities.

At the time, the Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) also recognized that RTEBN's financial controls were not meeting federal standards. For those reasons, the HAC recommended that the agency receive General Fund at FY 2019 levels to provide RTEBN the opportunity to tighten their fiscal controls and hire an Executive Director so that the agency could become fully compliant and be eligible for future CDBG funding. In addition, the HAC recommended that an evaluation be conducted after the first 18 months to determine whether the organization's fiscal reporting would become compliant with CDBG reporting requirements.

Unfortunately, while RTEBN did start projects in 2020, due to the impacts of COVID-19 on small construction sites and the high-risk population served under the rehabilitation grant programs, and the fact that RTEBN completes a majority of their annual work in the spring, RTEBN did not complete any construction projects in either program in FY2020. While RTEBN's delay in completing projects meant that City staff were unable to complete an evaluation, some evidence of improvement have been observed. RTEBN has hired a new Executive Director, is communicating regularly with City staff, has submitted required reports, and raised outside funding to leverage City funds.

Further, the Executive Director was able to put in place COVID-19 safety protocols and agency staff resumed the coordination of rehabilitation work at homes and community facilities. So far this fiscal year (FY2021), RTEBN has reported completing seven home rehabilitation projects and four community facility improvement projects. The agency projects that it will successfully meet its contract targets of 20 home rehabilitation projects and five community facility improvement projects.

BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley Health, Housing & Community Services (HHCS) Department funds and manages rehabilitation grant programs that provide free health and safety repairs and ADA accessibility improvements to homes and community facilities that serve low-to-moderate income homeowners and residents with a focus on serving seniors, individuals with a disability, and veterans. The rehabilitation grant programs assist low-income residents to remain safe in their homes, keep home ownership affordable, preserve Berkeley's aging housing stock, and provide health and safety and accessibility improvements to Berkeley's community facilities.

RTEBN is a nonprofit agency that currently receives City funding to operate its Safe at Home Program and its Community Facility Improvement program; both of which provide ADA accessibility improvements and health and safety repairs for low-income homeowners and community facilities serving low-to-moderate income populations. Rehabilitation work includes bringing buildings up to current electrical and plumbing codes, improving lighting, energy and water efficiency, and performing lead-based paint mitigation.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

RTEBN can repair older homes and community facilities so that they become more energy efficient and reduce the carbon footprint for low-income Berkeley homeowners and community facilities.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The City recognizes that RTEBN is a valuable partner in providing free ADA accessibility improvements and significant health and safety repairs to homes occupied primarily by seniors, individuals with a disability and veterans, and community facilities that serve the low-to-moderate income Berkeley residents.

This program complements the Single Family Rehabilitation Program's portfolio by providing RTEBN the flexibility to respond to emergency rehabilitation repairs since General Funds do not have to follow all federal procedures governing rehabilitation, which can cause delays in responding to some homeowners' emergency repair needs.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

If the Council decides not to fund RTEBN's programs, it would reduce the number of low-to-moderate income homeowners and community facilities receiving no-cost rehabilitation repairs and improvements. Currently, RTEBN is the only agency performing community facilities improvements outside the City's Public Facility Improvement Project NOFA that has a minimum project funding request of \$100,000.

CONTACT PERSON

Rhianna Babka, Community Services Specialist III, HHCS, (510) 981-5410

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

FISCAL YEAR 2022 – FISCAL YEAR 2023 REBUILDING TOGETHER EAST BAY
NORTH CONTRACT CONTINUATION

WHEREAS, the City funds several Single Family Rehabilitation programs for low-to-moderate income residents; and

WHEREAS, Rebuilding Together East Bay-North is one of the City's partners that has been providing free rehabilitation and critical repairs services to the low-to-moderate income community since its inception in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Rebuilding Together East Bay-North applied for FY2020-2023 Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to fund two programs: Safe at Home Program and Community Facility Improvement; and

WHEREAS, in spring of 2019, the Housing Advisory Commission and City Manager recommended that Rebuilding Together East Bay-North be funded for FY2020-FY2021 with General Fund; and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2019, by Resolution No 69,010-N.S., Council authorized a General Fund (011-51-507-506-0000-000-459-636110) allocation to Rebuilding Together East Bay-North for FY2020 and FY2021; and

WHEREAS, the City has entered into a contract with Rebuilding Together East Bay-North to provide free home rehabilitation repairs and community facilities improvements for a total contract amount not to exceed \$245,700 for a contract period expiring June 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Rebuilding Together East Bay-North has made some progress in improving performance, but staff has not been able to complete a full evaluation of the agency's ability to comply with CDBG funding requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic, though it expects that the agency will meet its program deliverables for FY 2021; and

WHEREAS, Rebuilding Together East Bay-North has an existing contract with the City of Berkeley (Contract No. 31900263).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that Rebuilding Building Together East Bay-North be funded at \$24,575 for the Safe at Home Program and \$98,275 for the Community Facility Improvement an amount not to exceed \$122,850 from General Fund each year, an amount not to exceed \$245,700 over two years for FY2022 and FY2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized to amend Contract No. 31900263 with RTEBN to effectuate this action. A record copy of said agreement will be on file with the office of the City Clerk.