



Councilmember Cheryl Davila
District 2

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 25, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Davila, Mayor Jesse Arreguin, and Councilmembers Bartlett and Hahn

Subject: Referral to the City Manager: Adopt Section 8 Landlord Incentives

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the City Manager the adoption of the following measures to encourage landlords to accept Section 8 vouchers:

1. Create a list of qualified, efficient and affordable contractors vetted by the City, and a discount or waiver of permit fees, to support bringing their unit(s) to code;
2. Provide legal and/or mediation support, offered either through the City or a partner, in negotiating Landlord/Tenant disputes out-of-court;
3. Allow parcel and/or property tax reductions based on the percentage of property or units that are currently Section 8 and/or decided during annual Section 8 inspection; and
4. Identify organizations who can support financial literacy and management for Section 8 tenants, including establishing bank accounts with direct deposit to Landlords. We ask City staff to research and develop a proposal of options for implementing these within the next six months.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Loss of income due to parcel and property tax reduction could be offset by an increase in business tax revenue as a result of additional landlords. These might be neutralized by increased revenue from greater fulfillment of Section 8 voucher allotment. Cost of legal services would come from the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Supports an environment in which more of our Section 8 residents or potential residents can find housing and homelessness may be reduced. No ecological impact.

BACKGROUND

Section 8 housing is scarce and urgently needed. Currently we only fulfill 83% of our Section 8 vouchers.. Given the scarcity of and great need for Section 8 housing, it is a priority to immediately implement simple measures to encourage landlords to accept vouchers.

While there is a need for a more comprehensive plan for the Berkeley Housing Authority (BHA) including our Section 8 housing, these measures can increase the current availability and fulfillment of Section 8 vouchers. Adopting these measures can ensure a greater return on each Section 8 dollar received, contributing to greater sustainability and reduced structural deficit.

CONTACT PERSON

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