



Councilmember Ben Bartlett
City of Berkeley, District 3

CONSENT CALENDAR
October 31, 2017

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett, [Councilmember Sophie Hahn](#),
[Councilmember Kate Harrison](#), [Councilmember Cheryl Davila](#)
Subject: Homeless Youth Policy

Recommendation

Refer to the City Manager, the Homelessness Commission, [the Youth Commission](#), and the Labor Commission to develop a Homeless Youth Policy [and recommended programs](#) for the City of Berkeley. The policy [and programs may include should explore](#) the following ~~items~~ [and other similar items](#) ~~policies and programs~~:

- Designating a percentage of the homelessness budget to be spent on youth-specific homelessness initiatives.
- Designing an organized and comprehensive youth housing and services system that includes identifying appropriate program models and developing a youth-inclusive coordinated entry process.
- ~~Identifying City-owned parcels for the development of housing appropriate for homeless children and youth as well as and emancipated youth.~~
- Identifying opportunities for homeless and emancipated youth to develop job skills including learning the trades (for example, by being involved with the construction of homeless facilities and housing as well as administration) or other skills such as case management, counseling, and technology (including coding and graphic design).
- Developing partnerships with local businesses for workforce development and job training opportunities targeted at homeless youth.
- ~~Coordination with the Berkeley Unified School District to identify homeless youth and connect them to services.~~
- ~~Collaborating with the Berkeley United School District to offer laundry facilities on-site for homeless families with children.~~
- Collaboration with law enforcement, diversion programs, probation officers, and after care programs to identify and engage homeless youth. (A significant number of at-risk youth are involved with the criminal justice system. Collaboration with different programs in this area can help identify at-risk youth early and support better outcomes.)

- Developing a youth-specific mobile outreach team to identify, engage, and provide support to homeless youth as well as connect them to services.
- Educating community members and businesses to be part of the solution, for example, through opening up rooms or volunteering backyards for tiny homes.
- Expansion of shelter and support services targeted at homeless families with children as well as emancipated youth. For example, by exploring Oakland's DreamCatcher Youth Services as a model for providing a safe landing for homeless, disconnected, and at-risk children.
- Explore coordination and collaboration with the Berkeley Unified School District to provide services to homeless children, youth, and homeless families with children. Examples of items to explore include the following:
 - Development of supportive housing targeted at homeless youth as well as homeless families with children
 - Providing laundry facilities to be offered at Berkeley High, Berkeley Technology Academy, or an off-campus site that families can access
 - Providing scholarships for youth to obtain memberships to the YMCA
 - Providing scholarships to supply \$25 fee waivers for homeless children and youth to be able to attend the PE classes of their choice
- Requesting the City Manager to return with budget recommendations relevant to the allocation of Housing Trust Fund and other monies to provide seed and/or ongoing funding money for housing and other programmatic items mentioned above.

Background

The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty found that nationally, 38% of the homeless are families, which includes over 1.35 million children. The U.S. Conference of Mayors annually reports that families with children are the fastest-growing portion of the homeless population.

According to the East Oakland Community Project, an estimated 16,000 people experience homelessness in Alameda County, and children comprise 28% of the county's homeless population. The 2015 point-in-time count conducted in Berkeley by EveryOne Home indicates that a disproportional amount of these children are African American and Latina/o.

Youth experience homelessness for a number of reasons including abuse, family conflict, sexual identity, pregnancy, or family poverty. 20% of homeless youth left home over conflict with their parents about LGBTQI status. Youth may have become disconnected from family, school or work. They may be struggling with mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Young people transitioning out of foster care are extremely vulnerable to homelessness. Without a family support network, typically foster youth turn 18 and have nowhere to go

and nobody to turn to for help. Studies repeatedly show that more than one in three foster youth experience homelessness.

Youth who experience homelessness are especially vulnerable to criminal victimization, sexual exploitation, labor and sex trafficking or traumatic stress. [The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty conclude that 43% of homeless youth were beaten by a foster parent or caretaker and 25% were sexually propositioned by a caretaker.](#)

As a community, we must create systems of support for our homeless or precariously housed youth.

Financial Implications

Staff time.

Contact Person

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