



Berkeley, District 7  
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**ACTION CALENDAR**  
May 1, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington  
Subject: City Manager Referral: Innovation Grant & Increase Mental Health Response to Public Disturbances

**RECOMMENDATION:**

City Manager Referral; the City applies for Innovation Grants in Increasing Mental Health Response to Public Disturbances.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Berkeley and the Mental Health Department have the unique opportunity to build upon recent mental health service improvements. Berkeley has created a HOTT Team. Now we have an opportunity to get increased resources for a vehicle, staff, and whatever is needed for the most healthy and effective response. In the event an individual becomes a public disturbance, we should have a response that is streamlined and immediate, by mental health professionals. Such a system would ideally provide specific response teams staffed by trained professionals that better address mental health cases. The service should also have a different and direct contact number. Having a mental health response team will generate various benefits to the local community. This can provide a quicker and sensitive response to individuals facing mental health crises. This can also improve public safety in commercial corridors. Currently, the practice of using local law enforcement agencies to deal with disturbances is a fiscally intensive practice. The police are overburdened, understaffed, and underfunded. The mental health response system is a more affordable alternative that will lessen the strain on local enforcement. This will free up Berkeley Police Department's time. Additionally, this ensures that those struggling with mental health are cared for. Currently, there is 6 million dollar in innovation grants available. The District Attorney has expressed support for the concept of this use of grant funds. This grant gives us the opportunity to address both public safety and public health for the community.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

6 million that can be applied for through innovation grants and other state funding through Alameda County.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:**

Consistent with Berkeley's Environmental Sustainability Goals and no negative impact.

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