



Office of the City Manager

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ACTION CALENDAR  
September 24, 2019  
(Continued from September 10, 2019)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Kelly Wallace, Interim Director, Health, Housing and Community Services

Subject: Referral Response: Lava Mae Mobile Shower and Hygiene Services

INTRODUCTION

In response to two separate Council referrals, this report provides information on the City's ongoing collaboration with the nonprofit organization Lava Mae to provide the City's homeless community with access to mobile showers and hygiene services.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

This report responds to two referrals: 1) referral # DMND0002483 that originally appeared on the agenda of the May 26, 2015 Council meeting and was sponsored by Councilmember Droste; and 2) a short term referral from the City Council that originally appeared on the agenda of the November 13, 2018 Council meeting and was sponsored by Councilmembers Davila and Hahn.

Coordinating mobile hygiene efforts in partnership with Lava Mae is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to provide housing support services for our most vulnerable community members.

Staff from HHCS and Public Works coordinated with Lava Mae staff to select two pilot sites for mobile hygiene stations: West Berkeley at Second Street and Cedar Street (adjacent to the STAIR Center) and South Berkeley at the Progressive Baptist Church parking lot on Alcatraz Avenue and King Street (one block from Adeline Street). These sites were selected using several criteria: proximity to current encampments, geographic distribution across the city, ability to accommodate Lava Mae's truck and trailer and the access to necessary water and sewer infrastructure.

Lava Mae established weekly service beginning in May 2019, serving the South Berkeley site on Mondays and the West Berkeley site on Thursdays. Staff notified the service providers in the North County Coordinated Entry System and Lava Mae did direct outreach to local residents, businesses and encampments in proximity to the pilot sites. The South Berkeley location is averaging eight guests per service time (48 showers total) and the West Berkeley site is averaging seven guests (47 showers total).

Lava Mae noted typically by this point they are averaging 20 guests per location. Lava Mae and HHCS staff are working together to identify ways to improve and increase outreach and consider alternative options for pilot sites that may better reach the community, including the safe parking site as appropriate.

#### BACKGROUND

Lava Mae is a nonprofit organization founded in 2013 that provides mobile hygiene services, including hot showers, to homeless community members in the Bay Area and Los Angeles. They've served over 19,000 guests and provided over 69,000 showers since their launch. They've recently innovated one-stop "Pop-Up Care Villages" to dramatically expand access to essential services for people living on the streets.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

#### POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The City could consider entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Lava Mae to coordinate and improve services and outreach for the local homeless community. The City could also consider hosting one of Lava Mae's "Pop Up Care Village" which brings in partners to provide expanded services including food, clothing, haircuts, animal care, vaccines, health screenings and access to legal and social services.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Lava Mae provides services free of charge to Berkeley residents. There are costs associated with the staff time required to conduct outreach, coordinate services and ensure water and sewer infrastructure is working properly.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Mike Uberti, Community Development Project Coordinator, HHCS, (510) 981-5114.

#### Attachments:

- 1: Original Referral Report #1 from May 26, 2015: Mobile Shower Referral
- 2: Original Referral Report #2 from November 13, 2018: Short-term referral to City Manager to complete steps necessary to establish Lava Mae services in Berkeley

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 26, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Lori Droste  
Subject: Mobile Shower Referral

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Homeless Commission and City Manager the establishment of a mobile shower unit in Berkeley and assess the feasibility/cost of such a project in comparison to existing programs.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, Berkeley had 680 people without permanent housing. With its large homeless population, Berkeley could benefit from a mobile shower program. The City's website currently lists two locations for showers available to the homeless- one in the downtown area, and one in Willard Park. A mobile shower unit could potentially serve more people in a more efficient manner.

The City of San Francisco has been developing a mobile shower program in conjunction with Lavamae.org. The program is housed in a former MTA bus and can serve multiple people in different communities every day. Lavamae.org offers resources, budgets, and outlines for replicating their project. This referral would use those resources and documents, as well as other information, to outline the feasibility of creating a similar model in Berkeley.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff time

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

N/A

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Droste, 510-981-7180



Cheryl Davila  
Councilmember  
District 2

ACTION CALENDAR  
November 13, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmembers Cheryl Davila and Sophie Hahn  
Subject: Short-term referral to City Manager to complete steps necessary to establish Lava Mae services in Berkeley

RECOMMENDATION

Short-term referral to the City Manager to coordinate with Fire, Planning and Public Works Department Heads to provide permits, identify locations and allow access to water and disposal hook-ups necessary to bring Lava Mae shower services to Berkeley's homeless populations within 90 days for a 6-8 week pilot.

This includes:

- Determining locations to set up portable shower (Possible locations will be identified by the City of Berkeley Homeless Service Team but could include 2180 Milvia Parking Lot, Adeline & Alcatraz behind Here/There encampment, Harrison and 8<sup>th</sup>, the Corporation Yard and/or Jones and 2<sup>nd</sup>.)
- Identifying water source for hook ups designated to dispense water for showers, either fire hydrants (preferred) or garden hose spigots
- Parking permits for shower trailer
- Identifying sewage manholes designated to pump out/dump gray and black water (H<sub>2</sub>O) into the sewer system
- Calendaring a Fire Department inspection to inspect the propane to heat up the H<sub>2</sub>O on the first day of operation or through a dry run.

Starting January 2019, Lava Mae is prepared to bring shower service two days a week to two consistent locations (one day per a location) at no charge to the City of Berkeley or the users of the services. The proposal is to start with an 8-week pilot in two locations to test sites.

BACKGROUND

Lava Mae brings critical services to the streets to rekindle dignity and hope for people experiencing homelessness through their Mobile Hygiene Service and Pop-Up Care Villages. Doniece Sandoval founded Lava Mae in 2013 when she began by converting public transportation buses into showers and toilets on wheels to deliver hygiene and

rekindle dignity for our unhoused neighbors in San Francisco. Lava Mae has expanded their shower services to Oakland and Los Angeles, serving 15,000+ guests who have taken 52,000+ showers in mobile units across Los Angeles and the Bay Area.

Lava Mae also organizes day-long Pop-Up Care Villages that bring much needed essential services like dental care, holistic health services, haircuts, clothing and hot food offered in a friendly, community setting with art and live music. In addition, they have inspired 100+ new mobile hygiene programs across the United States and around the world, and launched the first-ever open source toolkit and platform to help people everywhere replicate their mobile hygiene service in their own communities.

Lava Mae has raised all of the funds needed to run their program through private sources. Therefore, all of Lava Mae's services are offered free of charge to those utilizing them and to the cities hosting their services. In order to provide these services, Lava Mae needs support in identifying water hook-up, disposal locations, and parking locations; and the required city permits. Anonymous demographic information collected by Lava Mae will be shared with the City of Berkeley. Lava Mae has secured a permit and meter from EBMUD to latch into hydrants.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Lava Mae covers all costs. Lava Mae has a construction meter from EBMUD, which typically cost \$20 per service day for six hours of service water.

The cost to the City is staff time to issue permits, inspect propane system, and identify ideal locations for water hook ups, parking and sewer manholes for pump outs. The cost for the water could be absorbed by the City for approximately, two thousand dollars, annually to provide much needed shower services.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Bringing Lava Mae to Berkeley will increase public health of those who are homeless by providing access to clean showers, health and sanitation services. Lava Mae expanding its services to Berkeley can also be a resource in case of a climate emergency event or an earthquake if people lack access to home showers.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Cheryl Davila, Councilmember District 2                      510.981.7120

#### ATTACHMENTS & LINKS:

- Lava Mae details
- Lava Mae Pop-Up Care Village flyer
- [Lava Mae website](#)
- Video testimonies:
  - <https://youtu.be/rmpBGWEmYWk>
  - <https://youtu.be/Sa2xnW31q0s>



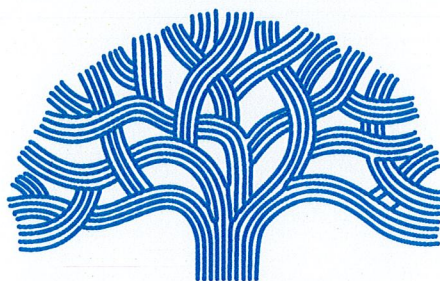
Lava Mae is a San Francisco based non-profit that brings critical services to the streets - delivered with an unexpected level of care we call Radical Hospitality - to rekindle dignity and hope for people experiencing homelessness through our Mobile Hygiene Service, Pop Up Care Villages, and BuildIt Toolkit for replication of our services.

We come equipped with a mobile hygiene trailer with three individual and private stalls featuring full bathrooms. One is ADA accessible and designed for ease of use with wheelchair access. We provide all necessary hygiene items including fresh towels, socks, soap, shampoo/conditioner, moisturizer, razors, toothbrush/toothpaste, and many more. Our services are 5 ½ hours long of actual shower time and each guest gets 15-20 minutes. We typically serve anywhere from 30-50 guests in a day. **We cover all of the costs associated with providing our services.**

**In order to operate Lava Mae, we need:**

- **Parking:** Our truck and trailer total 40 ft in length which is about 2 parking spaces long. We need a City-sanctioned parking location and permit.
- **Water source:** We have an EBMUD hydrant meter so most hydrants will work depending on the fitting or adapter needed. We can also hook to a standard garden hose faucet bibb. We need the City to identify water hook-ups.
- **Sewage Manhole Dumping:** Our trailer comes with a 330 gallon black/greywater tank that needs to be dumped twice per a day of service. Preferably somewhere within a few blocks and relatively safe. We need the City to identify and approve a manhole for this use. The dumping process takes no more than 10-15 minutes.

**lava mae** 



**POP-UP CARE VILLAGE**  
OAKLAND

**Tuesday, October 30th,**  
**11am - 4pm**

Hot Food, Clothing, Haircuts, Art, Medical,  
Live Music & More

