



Councilmember Ben Bartlett

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CONSENT CALENDAR

November 12, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett
 Subject: Additional funding to Enhance Services at the Berkeley Drop-In Center

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council refers to the November Budget Annual Appropriations Ordinance to fund \$210,000 to enhance services at the Berkeley Drop-In Center, specifically for the installation of a public shower, installation of washer and dryer, renovation of the existing publicly accessible restroom, and additional payee service capacity. This request will provide one-time funding for the renovation of permits and installation of the washer, dryer, and shower.

CURRENT SITUATION

Public Sanitation

The Berkeley Drop-In Center (BDIC) currently has a public restroom accessible from Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM. As homelessness has increased over the last several years, more publicly accessible restrooms and showers are necessary. Sanitation is a primary need for our unhoused community.

Currently, there is no consistent public shower program in South West Berkeley. The closest program is at Willard Middle School and only operates for only one hour once a day. Installing a shower at BDICr that would be open for 30 hours a week, at a minimum, would significantly address the health and safety needs of unhoused Berkeley residents.

The BDIC is in need of renovations to its publicly accessible restroom. The BDIC will use the allocated dollars to renovate the restroom and install a shower. The restroom/shower would be ADA accessible.

The BDIC will need full-time janitorial and maintenance services for the shower and restroom program. A publicly accessible shower that is available Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM and Saturdays, 9 AM to 12 PM would require supporting staff to ensure the facility complies with standard health and safety requirements.

The estimated breakdown of direct costs for the publicly accessible restroom/shower:

One-time costs:

- \$100,000 would go to the Redesign, Renovation, and City Permits;

- \$5,000 would be allocated to installing Washer and Dryer units.

Annual Costs:

- \$80,000 would be allocated to pay staff and general maintenance.

Representative Payee Services

Many Berkeley residents that receive social security benefits are in need of representative payee services. Every week, the BDIC is forced to reject client requests for payee services because BDIC do not have the capacity to hire the appropriately trained staff to address the mental health issues and other challenges of our unhoused community.

The BDIC is requesting an annual allocation of \$25,000 for supporting staff to accommodate the demand for representative payee services in Berkeley.

BACKGROUND

The Berkeley Drop-In Center (BDIC) is a multi-purpose South Berkeley peer-to-peer community center run by and for past and present mental health clients and persons undergoing varying ranges of emotional distress. The BDIC runs several programs to create a safe place for people to meet and socialize, as well as participate in peer to peer activities and support groups. During the calendar year 2017, the number of clients that voluntarily chose to sign in at the front desk, totalled 12,377.

The BDIC provides the following basic services:

1. Daytime drop-in service (mailboxes for people suffering housing insecurity);
2. Housing advocacy and case management;
3. Payee services;
4. Alcohol and other drug counseling;
5. Women's and men's groups;
6. Volunteer/job training;
7. Mail services;
8. And arts and crafts.

With the proposed budget referral, the Council can assist BDIC in enhancing their services for the community.

The BDIC was selected as the recipient of the 2019 City of Berkeley Mental Health's Achievement Award.

REVIEW OF EXISTING PLANS, PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND LAWS

There is currently only a single public shower program at Willard Middle School that is open for one hour a day in the South Berkeley area, which has the 3rd highest homeless population in the city.

Payee services in the Berkeley area has diminished substantially over the last few years. Many homeless supportive agencies have either reduced or eliminated payee services.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

November Budget Annual Appropriations Ordinance Budget

\$210,000: \$100,000 would go to the redesign, renovation and the cost of city permits; \$5,000 Washer and Dryer; \$80,000 for supporting staff and general maintenance of shower program; and \$25,000 representative payee services;

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

One of the most vital needs of Berkeley's growing unhoused population is sanitation and hygiene. Despite this, Southwest Berkeley lacks any consistent public shower program and the BDIC public sanitation facilities are in need of renovation. The BDIC is the only drop-in center in South Berkeley and has served the City's no-income, very low-income, homeless/mental health community for 30 years. Many of the staff identify as individuals with experience living with mental health challenges; they have been homeless, and/or understand the road to sobriety. By providing the BDIC with funding for a consistent public shower and upgraded public sanitation facilities, the right tools will be placed in the right hands for improving the health of Berkeley's unhoused community. In addition, such funding will ensure clients will receive representative payee services.

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

It is expected that the City of Berkeley will recognize the importance of providing funding for a consistent public shower facility and enhanced services at the Berkeley Drop-In Center to improve health and hygiene for Berkeley's unhoused population. The funding will also enhance BDIC's ability to pay for their expenses and have stable money management.

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