



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

March 9, 2021

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín, Councilmember Susan Wengraf,
Councilmember Sophie Hahn

Subject: HelpBerkeley: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund
and Grant of Such Fund

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$250 per Councilmember including \$250 from Mayor Arreguin, to HelpBerkeley with funds relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Mayor Arreguin and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

BACKGROUND

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has placed a significant strain on the economy and people's ability to travel – even short distances within the City. According to the Office of Economic Development's dashboard presented in February 2021, thousands of jobs have been lost, including 25% of jobs within the food and beverage sector, and a tripling of unemployment in December 2020 compared to December 2019. Access to food became difficult for those who for health reasons needed to shelter in place and could not risk going to grocery stores. Food bank demand has skyrocketed due to people becoming economically impacted by COVID-19 and volunteer services having to reduce services to comply with necessary Health Orders.

HelpBerkeley was created not long after the first Health Order went into effect in March 2020. The program partners with local restaurants to provide dinner and lunch at a cost of \$10. Volunteers then deliver the food from the restaurant directly to the customer's home. What began as an idea to help neighbors has since expanded, providing over 20,000 meals in 2020 with the help of over 300 volunteers and 450 donors.

During the holiday season, HelpBerkeley provided over 1,000 free meals. Recognizing the needs created by food insecurity, in February 2021 HelpBerkeley launched a regular subsidized and free food program, with the aim of providing six meals per person per week. They are currently working on a fundraising campaign to raise \$600k to ensure the long-term viability of the program.

HelpBerkeley has received recognition for its services, including the Jefferson Award for Public Service and a Mayoral Proclamation from the City of Berkeley. Supporting them

as they expand their program will help in providing food assistance to vulnerable members of the Berkeley community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No General Fund impact; \$250 is available from Mayor Arreguin's Office Budget discretionary accounts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with adopting this recommendation.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguín 510-981-7100

Attachments:

1: Resolution for Council Expenditures

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS FOR A GRANT TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES FOR A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC PURPOSE

WHEREAS, Mayor Jesse Arreguin has surplus funds in his office expenditure account; and

WHEREAS, a California non-profit tax exempt corporation, HelpBerkeley seeks funds in the amount of \$250 to provide the following public services: providing food assistance to people impacted during the COVID-19 crisis while supporting local restaurants; and

WHEREAS, the provision of such services would fulfill the following municipal public Purpose: helping reduce the spread of COVID-19 among vulnerable populations by providing food deliveries to eligible Berkeley, Albany, and Kensington residents, including those over 60 and those who need to self-isolate; supporting the local economy by coordinating with restaurants for preparation of meals.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their Council Office Budget up to \$250 per office shall be granted to HelpBerkeley to fund the following services of providing meals to people who have been impacted by COVID-19 and supporting local businesses that have seen a reduction in patronage as a result of COVID-19.

