



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR  
September 28, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
 Submitted by: Lisa Warhuus, Director, Health, Housing & Community Services  
 Subject: Memorandum of Understanding with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services for Wellness Center Operations

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Berkeley and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBHCS) for the term July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023 for an expenditure of up to \$491,933 to fund the operational costs of a Mental Health Wellness Center (Wellness Center) located in Berkeley.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The execution of this MOU will result in the transfer of a portion of the City of Berkeley's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Community Services and Supports (CSS) funding allocation to Alameda County BHCS. These funds will be used for operational costs of a Mental Health Wellness Center in Berkeley.

The total amount of money to be expended on the Wellness Center operational costs from the City of Berkeley would be \$491,933 (\$437,500 program contribution over the contract term, in addition to \$54,433 for a one-time reconciling of Fiscal Year [FY] 2021 expenditures). ACBHCS will also contribute \$437,500 for operational costs. The MOU is the mechanism which defines the terms of the fiscal relationship between the City and the County and will enable the transfer of funds. Funding for these services and supports has been included in the FY22 Budget in the Mental Health Service Act Fund 315-51-503-525-2020-000-451-636110-.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On October 13, 2015, via Resolution No. 67,228-N.S., City Council approved an MOU with ACBHCS to implement, manage, and evaluate a Mental Health Wellness Center. On January 29, 2019 via Resolution No. 68,749-N.S., City Council approved an MOU with ACBHCS for the construction of the Wellness Center. On September 15, 2020 via Resolution No. 69,549-N.S. City Council approved funding operational costs of

the Wellness Center. The Mental Health Division and ACBHCS decided to mutually end the previous contracts and enter into negotiations for a new MOU for Wellness Center operations exclusively, which is the subject of this report. The Wellness Center is currently conducting both activity and support groups and providing individualized supportive services to the community in person and via telehealth and telephone.

Bonita House is the vendor who is contracted by ACBHCS for the operation of the Wellness Center, located at 1909 University Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704. Bonita House has estimates of \$875,000 in operational costs for fiscal years 2022 and 2023. This MOU will allow MHSA CSS funding to be spent on operating the Wellness Center. A new agreement is beneficial to all parties involved to allow for enhanced contractual oversight and accountability.

### BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley is partnering with Alameda County to fund continued operation of a Wellness Center for residents of Berkeley. The Wellness Center is modeled after existing Wellness Centers in other parts of Alameda County and provides three level of services. First, the Wellness Center is open to anyone in the community who either needs support or connection to the mental health system. This is the largest level of service and is primarily staffed by individuals with lived experience with mental health illness. Second, for a smaller cohort, the Wellness Center provides short term case management with a licensed clinician. This level of service allows people who are not otherwise connected to care, and who use the Wellness Center, to receive some targeted support for a wide variety of issues. Finally, the Wellness Center has some capacity to provide psychiatry and medication services for individuals not otherwise connected to care.

The Wellness Center has been in operation since late fall of 2019, and has continued to provide services via tele-health through the COVID-19 pandemic. Bonita House will continue to operate and support the goals of the Wellness Center. ACBHCS will utilize the funding provided by the City of Berkeley to pay for approved charges for this project. Previous contracts for the Wellness Center were mutually ended by Berkeley's Mental Health Division and ACBHCS, and new terms were negotiated for an MOU for Wellness Center operations exclusively, which is the subject of this report.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

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

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Providing this funding will support the ability of the vendor to operate a Wellness Center, which provides a needed expansion of the system of care for individuals with mental health issues in Berkeley.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City could decide not to fund the ongoing operational costs of the Wellness Center. This would either lead to the closing of the Wellness Center or greatly complicate its capacity to exist in its current form.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH ALAMEDA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR WELLNESS CENTER OPERATIONS

WHEREAS, as part of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the State of California designated a process for all mental health jurisdictions for expenditures from Community Services and Supports (CSS); and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2015, via Resolution No. 67,228-N.S., City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services to implement, manage, and evaluate a Mental Health Wellness Center (Wellness Center); and

WHEREAS, on January 29, 2019, via Resolution No. 68,749-N.S. City Council approved funding the construction of the Wellness Center located in Berkeley in partnership with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services; and

WHEREAS, on September 15, 2020 via Resolution No. 69,549-N.S. City Council approved funding operational costs of the Wellness Center located in Berkeley in partnership with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services; and

WHEREAS, an MOU will provide the mechanism whereby the City of Berkeley MHSA CSS funds can be transferred to the lead agency, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, to be utilized for the operational costs of the Mental Health Wellness Center; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in the FY 2022 budget code 315-51-503-525-2020-000-451-636110- in the MHSA fund received from the State of California.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or her designee is authorized to adopt a MOU between the City of Berkeley and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services for the term July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023 for an expenditure of up to \$491,933 to fund the operational costs of a Mental Health Wellness Center (Wellness Center) located in Berkeley.