



City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 23-795, Version: 1

Item #: C-8.

CC- CONSENT ITEM: Approval of a Professional Service Agreement with Urban Alchemy as Lead Supportive Service Provider and Operator for the Proposed 20 Suites/Tents Service-Enriched Safe Sleep Site Located at the City-Owned Virginia Avenue Parking Lot for the Period of April 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$3,531,659.

Meeting Date: March 27, 2023

Contact Person/Dept.: Tevis Barnes - Housing and Human Services
Phone Number: (310) 253-5782

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐ **General Fund:** Yes ☒ No ☐

Attachments: Yes ☒ No ☐

Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Notification: (Email) Meetings and Agendas-City Council and Housing (03/22/2023); Urban Alchemy (03/14/2023); and Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness (03/21/2023)

Department Approval: Tevis Barnes - Housing and Human Services Director (03/16/2023)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Culver City Council (Council) approve a professional services agreement with Urban Alchemy as lead supportive service provider and operator for the proposed 20 suites/tents service-enriched Safe Sleep Site located at the City-owned Virginia Avenue Parking Lot for the 15-month period of April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in an amount not-to-exceed \$3,531,659.

BACKGROUND

Over the last several years, the City of Culver City (City) has experienced an increase in the number of individuals maintaining camp facilities for the purposes of living accommodations in public places. According to the 2022 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Point-in-Time final figures, there are approximately 350 persons experiencing homelessness in the City. Staff estimates that there are approximately 40 unhoused individuals living in five encampments with tents and other structures throughout the City, including City public parks.

Maintaining unregulated camp facilities for the purposes of living accommodations in the City's parks and public places can lead to serious health, safety, and accessibility concerns, both for unhoused

and housed persons. Based on the foregoing and other conditions of threat to the public health and safety, the City Manager, in his capacity as Director of Emergency Services, proclaimed a local emergency on homelessness on January 3, 2023; the Local Emergency was ratified by City Council at the January 9, 2023, Council meeting.

At the Council Meeting on January 23, 2023, an Ordinance was introduced prohibiting camping in public places. The Council directed the City Manager to defer enforcement of the Ordinance until the City has completed the following three tasks: (1) Open for occupancy 73 new units of interim and permanent supportive housing, known as Culver City Project Homekey Interim and Permanent Supportive Housing Program, located at 3868 and 3900 Sepulveda Boulevard; (2) Open for occupancy a safe-camping site with wrap-around supportive services for up to 40 people on a City-owned Virginia Avenue Parking Lot; and (3) Enter into long-term agreements with local motels for additional rooms for temporary housing.

DISCUSSION

To effectuate Council direction and activate a Safe Sleep Site, staff researched various Safe Sleep and Safe Parking service providers and locations in the Los Angeles region. Staff solicited proposals from three local Safe Sleep and Safe Parking providers. Staff recommends Urban Alchemy (UA) to be the lead supportive service provider and operator of the Culver City Safe Sleeping Site. Staff conducted a site visit of the UA Los Angeles Safe Sleep site on February 23, 2023 and was impressed with the site planning, level of supportive services, and administration of the program. UA employs persons with lived homeless experience at all levels of program operations. Members of the Council visited the UA Los Angeles Safe Sleep site on March 14, 2023. The UA Culver City Safe Sleep proposed Scope of Work (SOW) is detailed in Attachment 1.

What is Safe Sleep (Camp)?

The Safe Sleep approach provides safe temporary interim housing for our unhoused neighbors. The primary focus of Safe Sleep is to provide temporary safe sleeping areas and respite to unsheltered adults living in the community who are not ready to come inside. Safe Sleep programming gives access to basic human dignities, such as bathrooms, showers, on-site supportive and case management services, laundry service, food/nutrition, open/recreational space, garbage/recycling service, 24-hour security, and a sense of safety and community.

Through staff's discussion with Safe Camping providers, it was noted that the term *Safe Sleep* is used instead of *Safe Camp* because the program environment allows for an individual to feel safe and secure while sleeping. The *tents* are referred to as *suites*, and *the participants* are referred to as *guests* to create a welcoming environment and a sense of community.

Urban Alchemy

UA is a nonprofit organization with the mission of transforming people and places through respect, compassion, and love to heal communities challenged by the intersection of extreme poverty, mental illness, addiction, and homelessness. The name *Urban Alchemy* references the process of spiritual and social transformation that UA staff engages in - both internally and in practice with all members

of the public. Founded in 2018, UA has grown into a thriving social enterprise with over 1,100 employees. UA provides community outreach and engagement, temporary housing for people experiencing homelessness, mobile bathrooms and showers, and street cleaning services. UA currently operates in the San Francisco Bay Area; Los Angeles County; Portland, Oregon; and Austin, Texas. Over 95% of UA employees (including those in executive leadership roles) have experienced incarceration and/or homelessness.

UA operates Safe Sleep Sites in the following cities:

- San Francisco: 5 - 200 Beds Total
- Los Angeles: 1 - 78 Beds Total
- Portland: 2 - 150 Beds Total

UA operates 800 beds of shelter nightly and operates other Interim Housing interventions in Los Angeles and San Francisco, California and Austin, Texas including:

- Tiny Home Villages
- Vehicle Triage Centers
- Congregate Living Shelters
- Shelter In Place Sites

Culver City Safe Sleep Programming

The proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site will provide temporary safe sleeping quarters and respite for up to 40 unsheltered adults (within 20 suites/tents) within a service-enriched low-barrier, trauma informed, harm reduction living environment. The proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site programming is designed to meet our unhoused neighbors where they are and to create a safe and supportive environment to help them take the next steps towards self-sufficiency. Participation in the Culver City Safe Sleep does not require guests to abstain from alcohol and substance use. Onsite alcohol and substance use is discouraged; however, it is not a cause for expulsion from the program. Guests will take part in case management and life skills courses to help them build a sense of agency and make healthier life choices. Each guest is required to execute a Community Participation Agreement (Attachment 2) which defines how the program is administered. The Community Participation Agreement defines a safe environment where staff and guests mutually support respectfulness, safety, cleanliness, and peaceful working through disagreements that may arise.

The proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site will follow the UA model of low-barrier with high support which includes:

- Partnership with recovery supports
- Regular wellness checks and monitoring
- Regular community events and activities
- On site service connection

Safety of the Culver City Safe Sleep participants and the surrounding community is paramount. The UA Safety and Service over Security model will be employed at the Culver City Safe Sleep site which includes:

- De-escalation and Conflict Resolution
- Community Agreements & Trust Building
- Narcan and Overdose Reversal Training
- Harm Reduction Service Model

UA will also focus on Building Whole Community at the proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site through:

- Stakeholder & Community Engagement
- On Site Contact
- 24-hour Response
- Scheduled Perimeter Monitoring

The physical space and provision of service of the proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site is detailed below:

Infrastructure and Physical Environment

- Picnic area/open space
- Park benches/outdoor seating
- Environmental shade/covering
- Onsite restrooms/showers (Including ADA)
- Storage and bike racks
- Pet Area
- Wi-Fi Access
- Structures and bedding of fire-resistant materials
- Staff Parking
- Perimeter fencing with security screening
- Potable drinking water
- Exterior and interior lighting
- Solid waste disposal
- Human waste disposal provisions
- Safe electrical systems

Provision of Services

- 24-hour/7-day a week onsite service provider/connection to supportive services
- Access to weekly laundry service
- Access to weekly medical care
- 24-hour/7-day a week onsite security through de-escalation and conflict resolution
- Three nutritious meals daily

UA Culver City Safe Sleep Staffing

UA follows a ratio of 5 to 1 staffing, which means one staff member for every five guests (program participants). The proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site will have 24-hour/7-day a week staffing.

Daily, there will be a minimum of five staff on-site engaged in program administration, care/service coordination, addressing site and residential needs, and site and guest safety. There will be three shifts total: Morning (7am-3:30pm), Swing (3pm-11:30pm), and Graveyard (11pm-7:30am) for 24-hour site coverage.

Listed below are the staff who will serve the proposed Culver City Safe Sleeping Site. More detailed staff descriptions are located under Attachment 3.

- Director of Operations
- Deputy Director
- Project Director
- Project Deputy Director
- Residential Supervisor
- Residential Practitioner
- Care Coordinator Practitioner

FISCAL ANALYSIS

On January 9, 2023, City Council adopted a resolution ratifying the Proclamation of Local Emergency on Homelessness by the Director of Emergency Services of the City of Culver City, California, issued by the City Manager on January 3, 2023. Council also authorized the City Manager to approve emergency response agreements and purchases up to the existing budget authority in the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 in Account #10116100.619800 (Non-Departmental - Other Contractual Services). Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Sections 3.07.060.B and 3.09.040 enable the City to purchase equipment, goods, supplies and services made in connection with emergency activities in the event of a locally declared emergency without following the bidding procedures otherwise required by the CCMC.

The City is exercising its authority under the Homeless Emergency declared on January 3, 2023, to waive formal procurement procedures to secure the services of UA to serve as lead supportive service provider and operator of the proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site. Staff did solicit proposals from three local Safe Sleep and Safe Park service providers and recommends UA for their overall mission, experience, and level of services provided to program guests.

The cost of services and operation for the 15-month period of April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 is an amount not-to-exceed \$3,531,659. This includes 15 months of operations based on the annual (12-month) operating expense of \$2,765,327 for personnel and supportive services including three daily meals for guests and \$75,000 for one-time start-up expenses. The proposed Culver City Safe Sleep Site will be service-enriched, staffed by an equivalent 28.03 Full-Time Employees (FTEs) to allow for 24-hour/7-day a week staffing. A minimum of five staff will be on site daily at any given time. Additionally, the City will cover the costs for utilities, sanitation and increased insurance required to operate the site.

The Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 includes sufficient funding for the start-up costs and the first three months of the agreement which total \$766,332. Funding for the remainder of the agreement (\$2,765,327) and other ongoing costs will be included in the Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

ATTACHMENT

1. ATT No. 1 - Urban Alchemy Culver City Safe Proposal
2. ATT NO. 2 - Community Participation Agreement
3. ATT No. 3 - Urban Alchemy Staffing Descriptions

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Approve a professional services agreement with Urban Alchemy as lead supportive service provider and operator for the proposed 20 suites/tents service-enriched Safe Sleep Site located at the City-owned Virginia Avenue Parking Lot for the 15-month period of April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in an amount not-to-exceed \$3,531,659; and
2. Authorize the City Attorney to review/prepare the necessary documents; and,
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute such documents on behalf of the City.