



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman Council
Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232

Staff Report

File #: 22-619, Version: 1

Item #: C-10.

CC - Approval of a Professional Services Agreement in an Amount Not-to Exceed \$112,500 with We Are RALLY to Develop and Implement a Public Communications and Messaging Program to Educate and Engage the Public About Homelessness and the Proposed Homekey Motel Reuse Projects.

Meeting Date: January 24, 2022

Contact Person/Dept: Tevis Barnes - CDD/Housing
Phone Number:

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing: ☐ **Action Item:** ☒ **Attachments:** ☒

Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒ **Date:**

Public Notification: (Email) Meetings and Agendas-City Council and Housing (01/20/2022); We Are RALLY (12/29/2021); and Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness (11/16/2021 (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (01/20/2022)

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (01/10/2022)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Culver City Council approve a professional services agreement in an amount not-to-exceed \$112,500 with We Are RALLY (RALLY) to develop and implement a public communications and messaging program to educate and engage the public about homelessness, and the proposed Homekey Motel Reuse Projects.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

We Are RALLY

RALLY is an issue-driven communication firm with experts in political, media and digital strategy. The firm employs a variety of tactics to help their clients achieve a legacy of positive change which include strategic communication, coalition building, messaging, design and branding, and digital and

earned media. The firm has experience with outreach campaigns, video production, content writing, messaging, graphics, technology infrastructure, and websites. RALLY has worked with the City of Culver City (City) Community Development Department (CDD) Advanced Planning Division in the messaging surrounding the General Plan Update (GPU). RALLY has extensive experience working with governmental entities which include the California Department of Public Health, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), City of Berkeley, Los Angeles County Department of Transportation, King County Washington, Seattle Public Schools, Washington State Department of Commerce, and the Southern California Association of Governments (SAG). Other companies/organizations that have retained the services of RALLY include Go Fund Me, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the California Wellness Foundation, and Center for Collaborative Planning, Public Health Institute. RALLY has more than 40 staff members in California with offices in Los Angeles and San Francisco, experience with Sacramento and state policy campaigns, and a track record of reaching demographically, culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse and underrepresented communities on health-related issues.

Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness-Goal 5

Homelessness is one of the most complex and vexing challenges in our community. According to the 2020 Greater Los Angeles Point-In-Time (PIT) Homeless Count, 58,936 people were found experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County, a 12% increase from 2018. Culver City's 2021 self-administered (PIT) Homeless Count showed a 35% year-on-year increase in homelessness since January 2020. According to the 2021 PIT Homeless Count results, there were a total of 291 people experiencing homelessness within the City.

Witnessing the growth of homelessness in Culver City and in the region, Council continues to approve programming to implement goals outlined in the 2018 Council-adopted Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness (Plan). Under the Plan, Goal 5 is to Expand Community Education Efforts Around Homelessness and Raise Awareness About Available Resources and Best Practices. Staff recommends the Council effectuate Goal 5 under the Plan by considering the retention of RALLY to develop and implement a public communications and engagement program to inform and educate the community about homelessness.

To implement the communication and engagement program, the Scope of Work (SOW) employed by RALLY will fall into three phases over a six-month period. The phases are as follows: 1) *community engagement planning*, 2) *messaging discovery* and 3) *development, and execution*. Under the SOW, services will include messaging, collateral material development, input sessions and coalition building with community stakeholders, City staff messaging training, and other communication events. The above efforts will assist the City in conducting an effective homeless public education campaign and messaging program, which will include the engagement of the unhoused community to help inform the development of program materials. For more details on the RALLY SOW, please see Attachment No. 1.

Proposed Homekey Motel Reuse- Community Engagement Planning

On December 2021, Council approved a resolution to apply for the creation of 38 interim housing units and 35 permanent supportive housing units under the State Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) Homekey Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). A Homekey

submission requirement involves the development of Community Engagement Planning surrounding the proposed project. RALLY's SOW will also include the development and implementation of the Homekey Motel Reuse Community Engagement Plan. This plan will detail how the City will engage with the target community, including people currently experiencing homelessness and people with lived experience of homelessness to inform the design and implementation of the project. In addition, RALLY will work with staff to hold a stakeholder input session prior to application submission. Attendees of the stakeholder input session will include: Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ACOH), Culver City Saint Joseph Center (SJC) Homeless Outreach Team, the Culver City Police Department (CCPD) Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET), and a grassroots volunteer group who have experience working with unhoused residents at the 405FWY/Venice.

Exemption From the Competitive Bidding Requirements

The selection of RALLY for these professional services is exempt from the competitive bidding requirements pursuant to Section 3.07.065.A. of the Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC), which allows for the award of a contract without complying with competitive bidding provided the contract is based upon competitive quotations, whenever practical, as determined by the City Manager. In this case, competitive quotes have been determined to be impractical based on two factors. First, to be considered for geographic set-aside funds under the Homekey NOFA and additional bonus funding, applications must be submitted by January 31, 2022. This timeframe would not allow for an extensive Request for Proposal (RFP) process and the City must be expeditious in its actions to retain a communications firm. Second, the mission of RALLY is aligned with the City's goal to educate the public about homelessness and to engage the unhoused community in the process. No other communication firm has such a focus. In its own words, RALLY takes "sticky issues and find ways to push forward". Homelessness is such an issue, and it requires a communication firm that is an issues advocate. Nonetheless, Housing staff has surveyed three communication firms and found RALLY pricing to be competitive and reasonable based on the expertise of the firm, RALLY's work with other governmental agencies such as the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), State of California Department of Public Health, City of Berkeley, and King County Washington, qualification of the staffing and scope of work.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The cost of services is an amount not-to-exceed \$112,500. The expansion of community education and messaging around homelessness was approved under the FY 2021-2022 Housing Division budget. There is sufficient funding to support this expenditure from account number 47650710.618100.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment No. 1 - RALLY Proposal

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Approve a professional services agreement in an amount not to exceed \$112,500 with We Are RALLY to develop and implement a public communication and messaging program to educate and engage the public about homelessness; 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.