



City of Culver City

Mike Balkman
Council Chambers
9770 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232
(310) 253-5851

Staff Report

File #: 23-666, **Version:** 3

Item #: C-13.

CC - CONSENT ITEM: Approval of a Services Agreement with We Are RALLY (RALLY) to Continue Development and Implementation of the City's Public Communications and Messaging Education and Engagement Program regarding Homelessness and the Homekey Motel Reuse Project in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$112,500.

Meeting Date: February 27, 2023

Contact Person/Dept: Tevis Barnes/Housing and Human Services
Christina Stoffers/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: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council, Housing Issues (02/22/2023); We Are RALLY (02/21/2023); and Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness (02/21/2023)

Department Approval: Tevis Barnes, Acting Housing and Human Services Director (02/14/2023)

RECOMMENDATION:

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

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

We Are Rally

RALLY is an issue-driven communication and advocacy firm designed to drive progress around complex political, cultural, and social issues. 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, 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 extensive experience working with governmental entities and other companies/organizations including Service Employees International Union, Center for Collaborative Planning, and Public Health Institute.

Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness - Goal 5

Homelessness is one of the most complex challenges in the Culver City community. According to the 2022 Greater Los Angeles Point-In-Time (PIT) Homeless Count results, 58,936 people were found experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County, and a total of 350 people were found experiencing homelessness within Culver City, an 53% city-wide increase since January 2021.

Witnessing the growth of homelessness in Culver City and within the region, Council continues to approve programming to implement the goals outlined in the 2018 Council-adopted Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness (Plan). Goal 5 under the Plan states that the City will “Expand Community Education Efforts Around Homelessness and Raise Awareness About Available Resources and Best Practices”. To achieve Goal 5, on January 24, 2002 Council approved a six-month Professional Services Agreement with RALLY to develop a public communications campaign to educate the community on homelessness and the proposed Homekey Motel Reuse Projects.

Through weekly collaboration calls, RALLY has provided guidance to staff on messaging and outreach advice related to homelessness, managing outside vendors and production timelines, and communication support at events and meetings. Rally’s deliverables include:

- **Planning and Messaging**

- Project Homekey Groundbreaking Brief
- Frontline Staff Messaging and Media General Talking Points on Encampments
- City Website Content Plan Recommendations and Monitoring
 - Online and Social Media Workplan
 - Social Media Content Calendar
- Project Homekey Community Engagement Plan
 - Rally conducted a Project Homekey input session with representatives from Culver City Mental Health Evaluation Team, St. Joseph Center, Upward Bound House, the Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ACOH), and the Culver City Palms Advocacy Group, to inform project scope of service and population served.
- Mayor’s Video Work Plan, Production Schedule, First Cut

- **Collateral**

- Project Homekey Groundbreaking Event
 - Community Meeting Invitations to Residents and Businesses

- Community Meeting Agenda
- Community Survey
- Fact Sheet Outline
- Podium Sign / Banner
- Run of Show / Public Program
- Media Advisory and Media List
- Press Release
- Homeless Outreach Video
 - Work Plan, Production Schedule, First Cut

For more details on the RALLY Deliverables, please see Attachment No. 1.

Staff seeks to continue building upon the educational campaign framework as outlined in the deliverables above and recommends the Council consider the retention of RALLY to continue their efforts assisting the City in this process. To implement the communication and engagement program, the Scope of Work (SOW) employed by RALLY includes:

- Assist City staff in creating pathways for unhoused neighbors to tell their story and incorporating unhoused residents in messaging and communications.
- A 60-minute bi-weekly check-in video conference call with the City every other week
- Availability for biweekly meetings with stakeholders, including Culver City Homeless Services staff, the Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ACOH) and Culver City service provider contractors.
- Provide strategic advice on communications community engagement efforts on homelessness campaigns and projects.
- Develop messaging around homelessness and Culver City's solutions, particularly participation in the Homekey program.
- Advise on earned media strategy and support earned media outreach and interview preparation.
- Support on earned media events like groundbreakings, ribbon cuttings of community forums by handling media material drafting, run of show planning, and participant preparation.
- Provide recommendations for website updates and other ways to share content and progress with the public.
- Create a weekly post related the housing and homelessness for the City's main Facebook, Instagram (Posts & Stories), Twitter and Nextdoor accounts.
- Monitor comments and create response guidance to questions related to housing and homelessness on the City's social media outlets.
- Monitor relevant media outlets, blogs, Google Alerts/RSS feeds, and influential community social media sites for conversations related to homelessness issues in Culver City, raising items of interest or concern.
- Create content and collateral that humanize the issue of homelessness and educate on the solutions. Content and collateral can include:

- Up to five flyers, mailers or other printed materials
- Up to five graphics, digital factsheets, brochures or presentations
- Up to three short videos
- Up to five sets of shareable evergreen social media content
- Website copy to share information and materials on Culver City Homeless Service webpage.
- Proofread all materials disseminated to the public, social media, website, printed materials.
- Training and support for Culver City staff and outside stakeholders on the messaging guidance and how to utilize the creative content and collateral.
- Provide a monthly update on completed tasks and deliverables.

These efforts will assist the City in achieving an effective homeless public education campaign and messaging program. For more details on the RALLY SOW, please see Attachment No. 2.

Exemption From the Competitive Bidding Requirements

Pursuant to Culver City Municipal Code Section 3.07.065.A, these services are exempt from the formal competitive bidding process, provided the contract is based on competitive quotations, whenever practical, as determined by the City Manager. Given RALLY's history with the City and knowledge about Culver City's unhoused population and homeless programming, it has been determined that competitive quotes are not practical at this time.

Secondly, 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 the scope of work.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

The cost of services is an amount not-to-exceed \$112,500. Sufficient funding was included in the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 in the operating budgets for Project Homekey. Those accounts are #41450920.619800 (Interim Housing Homekey - Other Contractual Services) and #41450930.619800 (Permanent Housing Homekey - Other Contractual Services).

ATTACHMENTS

1. ATT No. 1 - Rally Deliverables
2. ATT No. - Rally Scope of Work (Extension)

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Approve a Professional Services Agreement with We Are RALLY to Continue to Develop and Implement a Public Communications and Messaging Program to Educate and Engage the Public About Homelessness and the Homekey Motel Reuse Project in an Amount Not-to Exceed \$112,500; 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.