



Recommendation for Action

File #: 22-3422, Agenda Item #: 77.

11/3/2022

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with Austin Area Urban League to provide shelter operations during cold weather activation periods in an amount not to exceed \$1,225,338 for an 11-month term beginning November 1, 2022, with up to four 12-month extension options each in an amount not to exceed \$1,225,338, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$6,126,690.

Lead Department

Austin Public Health.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$1,225,338 is included in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Austin Public Health Department Operating Budget. Funding for the remaining terms is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Prior Council Action:

March 25, 2021 - Council approved resolution No. 20210325-67 directing the City Auditor to conduct an audit of aspects of the City's emergency response to the recent winter storm event, on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Kelly abstaining.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

Approval of this item will authorize the Austin Public Health Department to negotiate and execute an agreement with Austin Area Urban League to provide low-barrier, emergency cold weather shelter to individuals and households experiencing homelessness during qualifying weather conditions and events.

These agreements were awarded through the Request for Proposal (RFP) 2022-008 Cold Weather Shelter. The RFP was informed by the Homeless Strategy Division and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Division of the Austin Public Health Department, and the Downtown Austin Community Court Department, and released on August 25, 2022. One optional pre-bid meeting was conducted on August 31, 2022. In addition, one optional virtual office hours meeting was conducted on September 6, 2022. Applications were due September 22, 2022. Over 650 vendors were solicited, resulting in the submission of two proposals and award of one proposal.

The application evaluation process used set criteria to uniformly review all applicants evaluated by a separate and independent panel. A review panel comprised of individuals with education and expertise in the issue-area rated each application. Evaluators agreed upon strengths and weaknesses of each application, and each received a resultant score based on this process. The criteria for evaluation included the following: fiscal and administrative capacity, experience and cultural competence/racial

equity; program design and performance metrics; data-informed program management; and cost effectiveness.

On July 28, 2022, Council provided direction regarding agreements to operate the Southbridge Bridge Shelter and the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless shelter by directing the City Manager to develop a plan in collaboration with the Homeless Response System Leadership Council and other stakeholders to assess the current citywide shelter plan, and set forth a long-term vision for the design, scope, and funding of Austin's shelter system prior to rebidding these agreements. Council supplement this direction by directing the City Manager to develop a calendar-based emergency shelter response plan for extreme weather events, including heat, cold, and unforeseen weather events, that includes community input from frontline volunteers with outreach experience and response efforts. The City Manager was also directed to increase the availability of shelters other than City-owned facilities by exploring community partnerships to operate and manage sheltering sites. Council directed that culturally competent training focused on crisis response, de-escalation, and harm reduction best practices be made available to staff and volunteers at these sites, and that shelters contain meals, drinking water, hygiene, harm-reduction, first-aid supplies, COVID-19 test kits, and other supply essentials. The City Manager was directed to provide Council with an initial status report of the emergency shelter response plan by November 1, 2022.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Safety.