



# AGENDA REPORT

## Community Development

<b>DATE:</b>	December 20, 2022
<b>TO:</b>	Mayor Butt and Members of the City Council
<b>FROM:</b>	Lina Velasco, Director of Community Development LaShonda White, Interim Director of Community Services Jesus Morales, Housing Manager
<b>Subject:</b>	Contract with RCF Connects to Develop and Implement a Housing First and Short-Term Emergency Housing Assistance Program.
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b>	In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023 budget, the City Council allocated \$425,000 in one-time funds to support a Housing First Program, and \$100,000 in one-time funds to support a short-term Emergency Housing Assistance Program.
<b>PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:</b>	June 21, 2022
<b>STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:</b>	On June 21, 2022, the City Council adopted the FY 2022-2023 budget that included funds for a Housing First Program and a short-term Emergency Housing Assistance Program. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued seeking a consultant to develop and implement one or both programs. Two proposals were received in response to the RFP and City staff members are recommending a contract with RCF Connects for this work.
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	APPROVE a contract with RCF Connects to develop and implement a Housing First Program and a Short-Term Emergency Housing Assistance Program for unhoused individuals and/or families in need of housing-related assistance, for a total amount not to exceed \$525,000, with a term expiration of June 30, 2024 – Community Development/Community Services (Lina Velasco/LaShonda White 510-620-6512).

## **DISCUSSION:**

Homelessness in Richmond, California has been increasing in recent years, with visible signs of its impact on individuals, families, and neighborhoods. According to the 2022 annual Point-In-Time count and survey of persons experiencing homelessness, Richmond's total homeless population increased from 333 individuals in 2019 to 632 in 2022. This represents an almost 90 percent overall increase in Richmond's homeless population. More information from Contra Costa County's Point-In-Time Survey of the unhoused can be found at the Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) Health, Housing & Homeless (H3) Services website: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/PIT-infographic-2022.pdf> and <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/reports.php#PIT>.

In September 2022, the City of Richmond released a Request for Proposals (RFP), via the City's BidsOnline system, seeking one or more qualified consultants to develop and implement a Housing First and/or Short-Term Emergency Housing Assistance Program.

The primary intent of this RFP is to select and contract with qualified organization(s) that can: 1) demonstrate competencies in developing and implementing the Housing First Model and/or Emergency Housing Assistance Model; 2) offer unhoused individuals and families permanent housing options to support health and safety; 3) demonstrate efficient and responsible use of City funds by ensuring the majority of funds are used for direct services; and 4) develop innovative and successful methods for outreaching to and engaging potential landlords and/or other housing providers to participate in the program. Additional information regarding Housing First model and the Emergency Housing Assistance model can be found in the Request for Proposal (Attachment 1).

In Fiscal Year 2022-2023, the City allocated a total of \$425,000 in one-time funds to support a Housing First Program, and \$100,000 for a Short-Term Emergency Housing Assistance Program.

Although the primary focus of both programs is to meet housing needs, supportive services that can help end the cycle of homelessness and assist individuals and families in sustaining housing, acquiring income and employment, and improving the quality of their lives is also desired.

### Request for Proposals (RFP) Process and Review

The RFP was released on September 27, 2022, with a submittal deadline of November 1, 2022 (Attachment 1). The RFP was posted on the City's BidsOnline system for competitive bidding, in which 1,222 vendors were notified (Attachment 2). The City sought proposals from highly-qualified firms to: (1) to develop and administer a Housing First Program that focuses on connecting unhoused individuals and/or families with permanent housing options, while providing access to supportive services, and/or (2) to develop and administer an Emergency Housing Assistance Program for unhoused individuals and/or families in need of short-term housing-related assistance. Organizations were able to provide proposals in response to one or both programs.

On November 1, 2022, the City received two (2) proposals by the deadline from RCF Connects (formerly known as Richmond Community Foundation) and Catholic Charities of the East Bay. The review committee, consisting of City staff from Community Development, Community Services, City Manager's Office, City Council Office, and the Mayor's Office, reviewed and scored the proposals utilizing the criteria outlined in the RFP (Attachment 3). City staff members also conducted interviews with both firms.

Based on total scores, City staff members recommend entering into a contract with RCF Connects (RCF) to develop and implement a Housing First Program and Short-Term Emergency Housing Assistance Program (Attachment 4). RCF is the lead applicant and plans to work with organizations such as Catholic Charities, SparkPoint, Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services, Richmond Rent Program, Safe Organized Spaces (SOS) Richmond, and Collaborising. Although the City decided not to award the contract to Catholic Charities, it was determined that Catholic Charities and RCF would explore the idea of collaborating on one or both programs to benefit the Richmond community.

The proposal submitted by RCF received the highest score from the review committee. RCF was selected because they have an experienced team, the proposal aligned with the RFP requirements, the team has performed similar work in Richmond, they have an understanding of the Richmond community, they are able to leverage the City's funds to help expand the reach of the program, and the reviewers felt that their proposal best met the needs of the community.

#### Proposed Scope of Work

- **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION:** In collaboration with City staff members and approved program partners, develop a Housing First and/or Emergency Housing Program, that is responsive to community needs and based on promising practices.
- **OUTREACH AND INCLUSION:** Plan for a variety of methods and forums to engage stakeholders throughout the process, and outreach to potential landlords as a key component in developing a successful and long-lasting program
- **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES:** Create a supportive services plan which will highlight the type of supportive services to be provided to participants, needs for services are identified and individual service plans are developed, and how your agency will help create linkages for participants to other community resources.
- **EVALUATION:** Develop a system for evaluating the success of the program and tracking the housing options and supportive services provided

#### Proposed Budget

The budget for both programs is outlined in the attached contract. The total not-to-exceed budget for the Housing First Program is \$425,000. RCF plans to use up to \$260,000 of the \$425,000 allocation for staffing-related and indirect costs (salary and benefits for two (2) care managers that will serve as navigators for participants and liaisons with landlords, coaching services, etc.). The remaining \$165,000 will be used to pay up to one (1)-year of rent for individuals that meet established program requirements. Although over 60 percent of the City's allocation is being spent on direct services, RCF is confident that they can leverage the City's funds and secure an additional \$200,000 in outside funding to provide direct housing/rental support.

The budget for the Short-term Emergency Housing Assistance Program is \$100,000. RCF plans to spend 30 percent (30%) or \$30,000 of the \$100,000 allocation on subcontractors that will provide intake, processing, and support for those in need of emergency housing support. The remaining 70 percent (70%) or \$70,000 will provide short-term emergency housing assistance (i.e., rental assistance, hotel/motel vouchers, etc.). RCF believes that they can raise \$100,000 in outside funds to expand this program.

The City, in collaboration with RCF, will amend the budget, as necessary, to best develop and implement the programs. It is the policy of RCF to create and maintain accounting, billing, and cash control policies, procedures, and records that are consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and meet the requirements of state and federal statutes and regulations.

### Timeline and Next Steps

The development and implementation of both programs will begin as soon as the contract is executed, which is anticipated to occur in January 2023. The proposed contract provides flexibility for City staff members to work with RCF and possible collaborators on program design, outreach, performance metrics, evaluation/reporting, and implementation. RCF, in collaboration with City staff members, would work to further define both program models, conduct required outreach to individuals in need of support, service providers, and landlords, and begin to implement the programs.

RCF will evaluate both programs quarterly based on agreed upon metrics and will share with City staff members to allow for continuous improvement of both models. City staff members and RCF plan to provide updates to City Council throughout the pilot program (first 12-months) and will provide a one-year review of both programs in December 2023/January 2024.

### **DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:**

Attachment 1 – Housing First & Emergency Housing Assistance Request for Proposals  
Attachment 2 – Bid Package  
Attachment 3 – Scoring Matrix  
Attachment 4 – RCF Connects Contract