



## Housing Advisory Commission

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April 19, 2022

Item No. 6.1

### ITEM TITLE

Service Agreement: Consider Entering into an Agreement with Kingdom Cause dba City Net for Homeless Bridge Shelter Operations

**Location:** Homeless Bridge Shelter - 205 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Chula Vista, 91911

**Recommended Action:** Commission provide an advisory recommendation to City Council on approving an agreement with Kingdom Cause dba City Net for operations and services at the Homeless Bridge Shelter.

### SUMMARY

The City of Chula Vista desires to enter into a service provider agreement with Kingdom Cause dba City Net ("City Net" or the "Shelter Operator"), for up to three (3) years with a total budget of \$5.7 million (the "Agreement"), to provide a year-round (365 days per year) bridge housing program for persons experiencing homelessness within the City of Chula Vista.

### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the CEQA State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required.

### DISCUSSION

The national homelessness crisis affects nearly every community. The potential causes of homelessness are varied and further complicated by the wide range of affected people including single adult men and women, families, single mothers with children, transitional age youth, seniors, and veterans. The complexity and diversity of its population creates significant challenges for the City of Chula Vista as it seeks ways to assist the homeless. This problem is further exacerbated for communities that lack safe sheltering options (beds) as clients navigate and attempt their transition into a more stable living situation.

Unfortunately, unsheltered persons frequently occupy public spaces and other places not meant for human habitation, which poses a significant threat to the health and safety of these individuals who are already vulnerable to illness, crime, malnutrition, and harmful weather exposures (such as excessive heat, excessive cold, rain, and flooding). Thus, the establishment of emergency housing is of urgent necessity for the preservation of life, health, and property.

Identifying shelter options to address the homelessness crisis has been a priority for the City for several years. In an effort to address the lack of available beds and housing options, the City created three programs:

- “Chula Vista Seven” - a project consisting of seven scattered housing units designated for extremely low-income households [0 – 30% of area median income (“AMI”)], which are now occupied by previously homeless families, who are finding their way back to self-sufficiency.
- Hotel/Motel Voucher Program - Understanding the critical need of emergency shelter beds, an alternative was created with voucher program funding, providing up to 28 days of a safe space for our Homeless Outreach Team (“HOT”) Team and clients to work together towards stabilization.
- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program - For those requiring longer term housing assistance, HOME Investment Partnerships Program (“HOME”) funds were earmarked to provide up to twenty-four (24) months of rental assistance. Not only have these programs positioned the City of Chula Vista in the right direction but created a clear path of the future goals to develop a more permanent solution in the form of a Bridge Shelter and/or Permanent Supportive Housing.

As these programs are fully operational and have proven to be a great resource and solution for many clients, City staff continued with its planning efforts on developing the first homeless bridge shelter in the City of Chula Vista.

On October 26, 2021, the City Council by Resolution No. 2021-211 authorized the purchase of 65 Pallet Shelter Units for the purposes of developing the City’s first Homeless Bridge Shelter (“Shelter”) on a City-owned property located at 205 27th Street, Chula Vista, CA 91911. The Shelter will provide a year-round (365 days per year) bridge housing program for approximately sixty-five (65) persons, at a time, experiencing homelessness in the city (the “Program”). The Program will provide safe, bridge housing, as well as stabilization and supportive services, to prepare them for the most appropriate longer term or permanent housing interventions, contributing to the regional goals of ensuring instances of homelessness are rare, brief, and non-recurring.

### **Contract Selection Process**

On October 25, 2021, the City of Chula Vista issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”), seeking a contractor to operate the Shelter. The RFP was posted and made available on the PlanetBids website.

At the RFP closing November 12, 2021, three proposals were received. A review was conducted of all proposals determined to be responsive and a source selection committee (inclusive of City staff, a non-profit community representative and a HAC commissioner with expertise in homeless services) evaluated, scored and ranked the responses based on the following criteria:

- Operations and Supportive Services
- Program Concept and Case Management Plan
- Program Readiness
- Organizational Experience and Capacity
- Community Considerations and Projected Costs

All three proposers were invited to meet with member of the source selection committee on March 2, 2022. Below is a summary of the final rankings.

| Organization                             | Ranking |
|--|---------|
| Kingdom Cause dba City Net               | 1       |
| Alpha Project (in partnership with SBCS) | 2       |
| Adjoin                                   | 3       |

After a comprehensive review and consideration, the source selection committee recommended the City of Chula Vista enter into negotiations and subsequently award the contract to City Net.

### **Shelter Operator Experience**

City Net is an experienced operator in California for solutions like pallet shelter villages and has a comprehensive understanding of the associated costs and operational needs, such as staffing, security, and equipment. City Net has been the operator of several bridge housing and emergency housing options for people experiencing homelessness, including COVID quarantine facilities, seasonal winter shelters, and emergency bridge housing solutions from encampment clearings. These sites have ranged from 25 residents to over 100, and have been in cities in Orange, Riverside, and Santa Barbara Counties. Some of these solutions have been enacted in weeks, under intense community, government, and media scrutiny. In each case City Net has been able to staff the sites, intake and manage clients, appease community concerns and fears, satisfy city council requirements and visions, and ultimately save the respective cities money.

While City Net was recently contracted by the City of San Diego, they are new to the City of Chula Vista. To help mitigate and address this, City Net has included in its budget plan, a Community Engagement Specialist who will work exclusively on building rapport, relationships, and ownership with the local community, churches, community service organizations, and relevant partner agencies. Such work and focus will help City Net as an organization to build the bridges, ties, and trust that the operator of such a site will need to increase the overall cost-effectiveness, community buy-in, and overall project support and success, as it has seen in previous efforts when it employs this staff role and methodology.

### **Program Description**

The Shelter is designed to provide safe housing, basic needs, and access in support of moving individuals out of homelessness and into permanent housing opportunities.

#### Operations

The Shelter will accommodate indoor, overnight sleeping for up to 65 individuals per evening. Operations at the Shelter are provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year. To decrease the impact to the surrounding neighborhood, access to bed availability will be handled through a reservation-based system. No walk-ins for the Shelter, or services, will be permitted. The Shelter Operator will provide on-site staff to track daily bed inventory and communicate daily bed vacancies to City staff, City Net outreach staff and the Chula Vista HOT. Only the HOT and City Net outreach can refer individuals to open beds at the Shelter. The Shelter will offer priority to Chula Vista homeless residents who have long-term ties to the community, including other relevant criteria such as level of vulnerability, frequency of service use, and seniors 60 and older.

#### Clients

To ensure that the Shelter will meet the needs of the community in serving chronic and vulnerable homeless people, clients will be admitted with minimal, “low- threshold” requirements, so that chronic and vulnerable homeless people can easily enter and remain in shelter until they can find permanent housing. Each client will be screened for sex offender, arsonist and active felony warrant status before admission. As part of the bed reservation system, client screening will take place prior to arrival at the facility.

The Program’s target population will be flexible in nature and the shelter may serve more than one sub-population at a time. The number of beds considered “available” may differ slightly at any given time depending on the population or sub-populations being served. Based on current need, the initial clients

accessing the Shelter will include homeless single men and single women, 18 years of age and older. Special, alternate accommodations will be made for families who are experiencing homelessness.

### Services

The Program will provide clients with access to a range of programs and supportive services provided by the City and City Net on-site at the Shelter. Case management services will be coordinated with partner agencies.

### Program Components

The Program is housing-focused, which aims to resolve participants' homelessness as quickly as possible while also meeting client's basic needs. This includes appropriate 24-hour residential services and staffing which will conduct intakes, screenings, assessments, case conferencing, and includes the following basic elements and/or services:

- A maximum of 65 beds for persons experiencing homelessness
- At least two meals per day
- Showers, wash stations, restrooms, laundry, and belongings storage for participants, in an environment compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA")
- Routine operating supplies, including but not limited to hygiene products
- Janitorial and routine maintenance services
- Waste removal and disposal services
- Regularly laundered linens
- Access to testing for communicable diseases provided directly by the City or County of San Diego (including but not limited to Hepatitis A).

### General Standards

Other key operating elements, as more fully defined in the agreement in Attachment 1, include but are not limited to:

- Adequate staffing and peer support with appropriate ongoing training for service delivery and data analysis.
- 24-hour security and site control to ensure a safe environment at the Shelter for participants, volunteers, and others who may come in contact with the Shelter, including secure entry/exit for participants monitored by staff.
- A designated point-of-contact who is available at all times to address issues that may arise at the Shelter and coordinate security issues with the Chula Vista Police Department.
- Appropriate policies and procedures for Shelter operations, including intake and guidelines for community living, which will be displayed on-site at all times, and various means for participants to provide feedback to and input into the Shelter.
- A written drug- and alcohol-free policy that is posted/displayed at the Shelter at all times, which will include and describe the disciplinary action to result from the illegal use, consumption, distribution, and/or possession of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Required data entry, analysis and reporting in the Regional Task Force on Homelessness ("RTFH")-approved Homeless Management Information System, ("HMIS") of Program activities as required by RTFH.

### Conclusion

Execution of an Agreement with City Net as the Shelter Operator would be for up to three (3) years with a total budget of \$5.7 million and meet one of the highest priority goals for the City to address homelessness.

By providing a year-round bridge housing program, the City is filling a large gap for those attempting to transition into a more stable living situation. The initial year of the Agreement would run from April 26, 2022 through April 26, 2023 with a combination of Emergency Solutions Grant (“ESG”) and Permanent Local Housing Agency (“PLHA”) funds as previously appropriated.

| FUNDING SOURCE                        | YEAR 1 AMOUNT      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Emergency Solutions Grant             | \$1,000,000        |
| Permanent Local Housing Agency (PLHA) | \$949,992          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                          | <b>\$1,949,992</b> |

The item is scheduled to be heard by City Council on April 26<sup>th</sup> and it is anticipated that the Shelter will open in Summer 2022.

#### **DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT**

Staff has reviewed the property holdings of the Housing Advisory Commission members and has found no property holdings within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the property which is the subject of this action. Consequently, this item does not present a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under California Code of Regulations Title 2, section 18702.2(a)(7) or (8), for purposes of the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov’t Code §87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any Housing Advisory Commission member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

*Staff Contact: Angélica Davis, Senior Management Analyst*