

Council Information Items

November 4, 2021



Office of the City Manager

Date: November 4, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Maria V. Kachadoorian, City Manager *MVK*

Subject: City of Chula Vista's Support of Community Through Hope

In the last few years, the City of Chula Vista has seen a dramatic increase in the number of unsheltered individuals and families in our community. The City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan identified addressing homelessness as a top funding priority. By leveraging resources and partnering with local social service agencies, the City has worked to address the challenges facing unsheltered individuals. In 2016, the City established a Homeless Outreach Team (HOT team) to promote a positive and healthy quality of life in the City by balancing the needs of residents, businesses, and the unsheltered.

In support of the outreach efforts of the HOT team, the City has funded and partnered with several agencies including the County of San Diego's Health and Human Services Department, San Diego District Attorney's Office, and several local social service organizations whose mission and services align with the City's approach to meeting the needs of our unsheltered population. By partnering with agencies including SBCS, Interfaith Shelter Network, Chula Vista Community Collaborative and Community Through Hope, the City has been able to offer a variety of services including shelter, food, and emergency related items (i.e., clothes, hygiene kits).

Funding to support these local organizations, such as Community Through Hope, was made possible utilizing a combination of funds including General Funds, Federal and State grant funds (e.g., Community Development Block Grants). The amount of funding each year is determined by availability, program need and eligibility of the agency and activity. Unfortunately, over the past several months there have been a number of inaccurate public statements made by leaders of the Community Through Hope organization regarding City support for these programs. This information item is to provide a summary of facts for the public record and to discuss steps the City is taking to move forward in our efforts to support the mission of serving those in our community in need of shelter and food.

The following is an outline of funding and support the City has provided to Community Through Hope from 2018 to 2021.

- In 2018, the City of Chula Vista provided Community Through Hope (CTH) with start-up funding and in-kind services to launch their homeless outreach and food pantry program. The City assisted CTH with its move to the 465 C Street location (former Entenmann's building) in Chula Vista.

- The City agreed to provide start-up funding to CTH of \$30,000/year and entered into a one-year agreement with options for two, one-year extensions (for a total of three years). The scope of services for the \$30,000 annual payment included CTH staff working collaboratively with the HOT team, providing office and storage space for the HOT team, and providing case management and outreach services for unsheltered individuals.
- By the end of the first year, CTH collaboration with the HOT team had ended. CTH asked the HOT team to return their access key and changed the access code to the facility. The HOT team no longer had access to the building/storage and CTH staff were not providing case management or homeless outreach services. The City was informed the focus of CTH was shifting to food distribution and away from homeless outreach services.
- In 2019, CTH applied for and received \$15,000 in CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds from the City of Chula Vista. The City receives an annual allotment of CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The CTH application was submitted under the Homeless Services category. Shortly after the grant award, City staff were informed that CTH was not providing homeless services but rather food distribution to the general population. This changed the services scope of the agreement and required specific additional reporting to the City and HUD. Without proper data collection and reporting, the program implemented by CTH was no longer eligible for CDBG funding. Payments in the amount of \$3,750 were awarded for the first two quarters. CTH submitted the required reporting data for that time period and then chose to end the agreement related to the CDBG grant award due to the data collection and reporting requirements.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic shut down, the Chula Vista Police Department (CVPD) assisted with traffic control for food distribution events (occurring up to three times a week). In total during FY 2021 (July 2020 – June 2021), the City spent approximately \$279,143 in supporting food distribution traffic control efforts. Of this amount, \$135,843 was for the support provided to CTH alone. The distribution event operated by CTH was creating significant traffic issues during COVID. The Police Department was able to provide traffic support during those challenging times by reallocating School Resource Officers that were no longer needed at closed school campuses to the food distribution sites.
- In August of 2020, City Council adopted State and County Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) allocations. These allocations included \$30,000 to CTH to provide food distribution. This allocation was intended to serve as the City's final payment under its 3-year contract with CTH. The initial recommendation was to use the CARES funding in lieu of the General Fund for the final payment but this was causing some confusion for CTH. Therefore, in order to avoid confusion, the final payment to CTH was funded out of the General Fund. The \$30,000 allocation of CARES funds plus an additional \$105,843 for a total of \$135,843 was used to offset the cost of providing traffic control services to CTH as discussed in the previous bullet point.
- In April of 2021, the Chula Vista Fire Department (CVFD) provided resources to distribute COVID-19 vaccinations to the homeless community during Community Through Hope event dubbed Project ReFresh. CVFD donated CTH 10 cases (10,000) gloves to support various PPE needs as well as 720 bottles of hand

sanitizer. Additionally, in 2020, the City of Chula Vista coordinated with the County of San Diego to locate a portable restroom and hand washing station at CTH headquarters during the California Stay-at-Home Order.

Through these various funding mechanisms and arrangements, the City has paid CTH the full amount agreed to in its three-year contract with CTH. In fact, the City has gone above and beyond this original commitment with additional support as described in the table below. To be clear, no outstanding payments are due to CTH. The City informed CTH on several occasions that the \$30,000 in funding for three years was seed money for CTH to provide services to the Chula Vista and South Bay community with the goal to assist CTH in establishing itself as a self-supporting operation.

City of Chula Vista - Support to Community Through Hope

Fiscal Year	Funding Source	Description	Total Amount
2021	General Fund - Admin	Contract Pmt	\$ 2,500.00
2021	General Fund - Dev Svcs	Contract Pmt	\$ 27,500.00
2020	General Fund - Dev Svcs	Contract Pmt	\$ 30,000.00
2020	General Fund - Police	Contract Pmt	\$ 7,500.00
2019	General Fund - Police	Contract Pmt	\$ 22,500.00
		Total Contract Pmts	\$ 90,000.00
2020	General Fund - Admin	Assist with Shower Transport Cost	\$ 2,841.00
2019	General Fund - Police	Outreach Activities	\$ 2,000.00
2019	General Fund - Police	Outreach Activities	\$ 5,000.00
		Total Additional Support Pmts	\$ 9,841.00
2020	Federal - CDBG	*Homeless Support Svcs	\$ 3,750.00
2021	CARES Funds	Police Traffic Control Svcs.	\$ 135,843.00
2021	In-Kind - Face Value	Concert Tickets for Raffle	\$ 780.00
		Total City Support to Community Through Hope	\$ 240,214.00

* CDBG Funds granted for \$15,000. CTH chose not to continue with grant.

The City has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that all Federal, State and Local funds granted are utilized for their intended purposes and are administered in a manner that adheres to all applicable regulations and conditions of the grant. These requirements are passed on to all organizations that receive funding to provide services on behalf of the City. Failure to comply with programmatic or fiscal requirements, jeopardizes the City’s ability to continue receiving funds from granting agencies.

Community organizations play a vital role in every community and offer critical services to some of our most vulnerable populations. The City will continue to work with CTH and other non-profits to collaborate and provide in-kind services, such as vaccinations, and support for food distribution efforts when possible. The City continues to notify CTH and other non-profits of grant application opportunities. It is the responsibility of the individual agencies to seek the grants and if awarded, comply with the reporting and contractual requirements.

I would like to thank our various Departments who continue to work supporting the various agencies in our community. I would particularly like to thank our Housing staff, a small but mighty group, in managing the various programs that make a difference in people's lives every day. There is more work to be done and we are looking forward to taking the next step with the opening of the long-awaited bridge shelter.

Staff is also preparing to return to the City Council on November 16 with an item allocating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the San Diego Food Bank. On October 12, the Food Bank presented the significant need that exists in our community regarding food insecurities. The Food Bank works with over 35 non-profits in the City of Chula Vista. By working through the Food Bank, all the local non-profits who perform food distribution services in our community will be able to benefit from the allocation. We are looking forward to returning with this request in time for the Holiday season.

If you have any questions, please contact me at CityManager@chulavistaca.gov.