



Legislation Text

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Agenda Information Sheet

DEPARTMENT: Community Development

CM/ ACM: John Cabrales

Date: February 21, 2017

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion and give staff direction regarding a possible funding allocation for the Employ-2-Empower Program to assist the homeless in gaining the skills, experience and confidence needed to find living-wage jobs.

BACKGROUND

Employment empowers people experiencing homelessness. Meaningful and sustainable employment is a key component to creating and maintaining housing stability. However, individuals experiencing homelessness face obstacles to finding and maintaining employment. Connecting them with job training and placement programs is critical to ensure they have the tools needed to exit homelessness for long-term stability.

Denton City Council members expressed interest in pursuing a similar program to Albuquerque's program called "There's a Better Way". City staff was asked for ideas regarding how to implement a program that creates employment opportunities for the homeless in Denton. In November, 2016, a planning group of City staff and local nonprofits was assigned the task of drafting a project proposal and identifying the level of interest for implementation from other community partners.

The planning group met regularly through February 2017. The group reviewed similar projects offered in Albuquerque, Amarillo, and Denver. As a result, the group has drafted a proposal for a pilot project called Employ-2-Empower.

This program will help the literally homeless gain the skills, experience and confidence needed to find living-wage jobs through assistance such as the following:

1. Help people develop a job history.
2. Provide training and experience to develop soft skills.
3. Connect people to long-term employment opportunities.

The group is making a recommendation to the City Council to provide \$42,000 in funding to be leveraged with cost sharing options provided by multiple community partner agencies through in-kind service delivery. In addition, the project will require City departments to identify work projects that are suitable for workers enrolled in the program.

The project is based on collaboration of many organizations including cost-sharing with local nonprofit agencies with each one bringing an important level of expertise and resource that complements the project. In order to identify the level of interest in support from local agencies, the group distributed a Letter of Intent (LOI) to identify potential partners for the program. The LOI was broadcast to community organizations. As a result of the LOI submissions, there was sufficient support for the project through multiple community partners in the identified areas of expertise and resources available.

Please see Exhibit 2 Employ-2-Empower Project proposal for a description of key elements of the project as well as the projects recommended collaborations.

Should Council decide to proceed with this pilot project, staff will begin the request for proposal process in order to determine who would be the lead non-profit to contract with the City.

OPTIONS

Staff recommends moving forward.

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to go forward with the Employ-2-Empower pilot project, provide \$42,000 in funding and direct City departments to identify and coordinate with the Employ-2-Empower project manager for work projects.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROJECT

May 1, 2017 to April 30, 2019.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

The activities of the planning group are described above. There has been no other actions taken.

FISCAL INFORMATION

\$42,000 in current FY 2016-17 Budget

BID INFORMATION

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN RELATIONSHIP

The City of Denton's Strategic Plan is an action-oriented road map that will help the City achieve its vision. The foundation for the plan is the five long-term Key Focus Areas (KFA): Organizational Excellence; Public Infrastructure; Economic Development; Safe, Livable, and Family-Friendly Community; and Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship. While individual items may support multiple KFAs, this specific City Council agenda item contributes most directly to the following KFA and goal:

Related Key Focus Area: Safe, Liveable & Family-Friendly Community

Related Goal: 4.5 Provide support to citizens in need through social service agencies and programs

In the 2016-17 Strategic Plan, this relates to Goal 5 of Strategic Outcome #3- By 2020, reduce Denton's homeless population by 20%.

EXHIBITS

1. E2E-Project Presentation

2. E2E-Project Proposal

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