



Community Services Department

TO: Human Relations Commission

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Community Services Department

DATE: November 10, 2016

SUBJECT: Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP)
2016 Human Services Needs Assessment & Draft FY2018-19
Priority of Needs
Agenda Item #3

Executive Summary:

This report transmits to the Human Relations Commission (HRC) the results of a recent Human Services Needs Assessment, updated demographic information and a draft Priority of Needs for Fiscal Years 2018 – 2019 for the Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP.)

Action at this meeting:

Based upon a review of the survey and demographic information, the HRC will be asked to provide a recommendation as to the HSRAP Priority of Needs for FY2018-2019.

Background:

A Request for Proposal (RFP) or application for HSRAP funding occurs every two years. The next RFP will be issued in December 2017, with proposals due in January 2018. Funding for this cycle is July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018. Included in this RFP is a listing of the Priority of Needs, or allowable funding categories, for the current cycle. As part of the process of updating the Priority of Needs, an assessment of the human service needs in the community is conducted. This has included a large scale review - as was conducted in 2012, a supplemental needs assessment - as was conducted in 2014 and consisted of interviews with staff of each of the HSRAP grantees, and the 2016 needs assessment which included the following:

- 2016 Human Services Needs Assessment Survey Results - (Attachment A.) This survey was sent out to 42 recipients including current HSRAP & Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grantees, Avenidas, Palo Alto Community Child Care, Palo Alto Mediation Program, in addition to other local nonprofits and the City's Early Care & Education Committee. 27 responses were received.
- Demographic Information – (Attachment B)
- 2012 Human Services Needs Assessment -Executive Summary (Attachment C)

This staff report is not intended to be a thorough analysis of the 2016 Human Services Needs Assessment, but includes questions and staff observations to assist the HRC in making a recommendation in regards the 2018-19 Priority of Needs.

Discussion:

HSRAP has historically had a wide scope of allowable funding categories and some agencies have been receiving funding for numerous years. Research from the 2012 Human Services Needs Assessment indicated that, viewed broadly, the list of needs changes little over time as seen through the eyes of support providers and recipients of assistance. However, during recent years, the following gaps in funding categories have been identified and added based on HRC analysis of current community human service needs: tutoring, youth wellbeing, elder abuse and social service coordination.

The survey results received reflect the needs, gaps, barriers and trends from the service lens of the human service agency representatives surveyed and that is reflected in the diversity of responses received. In order to assist the HRC in their analysis, staff has reviewed the results in order to identify the top/most repeated needs for each survey question in addition to categorizing the individual responses received. Commissioners are strongly encouraged to carefully review the survey results and demographic information provided and consider the following questions:

- What are gateway needs (i.e. If they are met, person is more successful in addressing their other service needs?)
- What is the extent to which problems are interconnected, e.g., homelessness and mental health or hunger and economic dependency?
- What services are not included in the current Priority of Needs and can HSRAP play a role?
- How does the uncertainty related to a possible increase to the HSRAP budget affect any changes to the Priority of Needs?

In reviewing the results, it is clearly apparent that the area cost of living, especially the need for affordable housing, is the top issue affecting both clients and employees of local human services agencies. This is an enormous problem which staff believes is beyond the capacity of HSRAP to address.

Staff also cautions the HRC during its review of the survey results not to assume that if a service ranked low or did not appear as a need that the service is not needed. It could indicate that current service levels provided are adequate, but if financial assistance was

removed or a current human services agency was no longer able to provide that service, that the particular need may increase again.

Staff also acknowledges that this survey serves mainly as a “window” into the needs, gaps, barriers and trends identified by the survey respondents. The HRC may be interested in “digging deeper” into some of the issues raised as part of its annual work plan.

The demographic information provided includes the graphs included in the 2012 Human Services Needs Assessment and when possible, an update for 2014/2015, depending on the data source available.

Draft Priority of Need (Fiscal Years 2018-19:)

Upon review of the 2016 Human Services Needs Assessment and the demographic information provided, staff believes that the funding categories listed in the proposed Priority of Needs are broad enough to address the types of service need raised. Therefore, staff is recommending the following minor changes to the current Priority of Needs - (Attachment D:)

- Combining Children/Youth categories
- Moving of all basic needs services to the “Basic Needs” category instead of under individual “demographic” categories. (i.e. Food assistance will be under basic needs only, not under homelessness, seniors and basic needs. Funding would still be open to all these categories.)