

COVID-19 *Berkeley's Response to Residents Experiencing Homelessness*

October 26, 2020



Policy Committee: Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community

Agenda



- ❖ Getting people housed:
 - ❖ Safer Ground Hotels
 - ❖ Safer Ground Voucher Program
 - ❖ Berkeley Respite Program
 - ❖ Permanent Housing Solutions
- ❖ Serving people who are unhoused:
 - ❖ COVID-19 Prevention in Shelter
 - ❖ Outreach

Getting People Housed



Safer Ground Hotel Program

- › Quality Inn (41 units) and Roadway Inn (29 units)
 - Provides non-congregate temporary housing to eligible unhoused households
 - Households must be 65 or older or have a CDC qualifying documented underlying medical condition
 - Both hotels are at 100% capacity



Safer Ground

Voucher Program

- Allows eligible households and their service provider(s) to apply for financial resources to pay for stays in non-congregate housing (typically a hotel)
- Stays can last up to 90 days



Berkeley Respite Program

- › Safe housing for homeless individuals who meet CDC criteria:
 - 65 years and older, or
 - Qualified and documented underlying medical condition
- › Participants are identified by outreach teams in Berkeley
- › Three locations:
 - 701 Harrison Street – 10 RVs
 - 1281 University Avenue – 8 RVs
 - 1654 5th Street – 4-bedroom house
- › BFHP is the operator and provides:
 - 3 meals per day, wellness checks, and housing navigation (linkage to health care and support with collecting documents for housing)
- › Additional resources include nursing services and mental health supports
- › The contract has been extended through December 31, 2021 and to add rapid rehousing resources to support exits to permanent housing.



Bridge from Safer Ground and Respite to Permanent Housing

Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 Funding (ESG-CV) – Rapid Rehousing Assistance

- › \$2.1 million for Rapid Re-housing for up to 88 Berkeley clients in the North County Safer Ground Hotels
 - Abode to provide landlord liaison services and rental assistance
 - County will pay for housing navigation and housing retention services

- › \$491,095 for Rapid Rehousing for households in the Berkeley Respite Program
 - BFHP will provide housing search and retention services.



Getting folks housed:

- ❖ Safer Ground and Respite Program
 - ❖ 97 households, 111 people
 - ❖ 3% families
- ❖ Seven households have utilized the voucher program.
- ❖ Two households have exited to permanent housing destinations.
- ❖ 12 Households have been matched to permanent supportive housing and are searching for housing.
- ❖ 18 households have been matched to Rapid Rehousing.

Serving People Who Are Unhoused



Prevention in Emergency Shelter

- › Berkeley shelters now open 24 hours per day
 - Providing three meals a day to limit exposure
 - Distributing Personal Protective Equipment
 - Increased cleaning and disinfection schedule
 - Allowing hazard pay for staff
- › The Public Health Officer has:
 - Toured shelters to determine new reduced census to comply with 6' distancing requirements
 - Established a COVID response plan for shelter to report presumed or positive cases.

Coordinated Outreach in Berkeley



Community Partners:

- ❖ Homeless Outreach and Treatment Team (HOTT)
- ❖ City of Berkeley Neighborhood Services
- ❖ Life Long Medical Care Street Medicine Team (LLMC)
- ❖ Bay Area Community Services (BACS)
- ❖ University of California, Berkeley (Cal)
- ❖ Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA)
- ❖ Berkeley Community Resource Center (BCRC)
- ❖ Berkeley Outreach Coalition



Outreach Services Provided

- ❖ *Between April and October 23rd more than*
 - › *7,800 bags of food*
 - › *9,900 warm meals*
 - › *8,000 bottles of water*

- ❖ COVID education and more than 4,400 individual hand sanitizer and 7,000 face coverings

- ❖ Approximately 85 Tents, 15 Solar Chargers; and first aid kits

- ❖ More than 100 referrals to Safer Ground and Berkeley Respite Sites



Outreach Services Provided

- ❖ More than 150 Coordinated Entry System Assessments
- ❖ HOTT was accompanied by a COB Public Health Nurse who provided 40 COVID tests in the field.
- ❖ Housing Navigation to support housing referrals
- ❖ Linkage to Service Providers and benefits



City Services Provided

- ❖ Increased the # of porta-potties by 20 and handwashing stations by 22
- ❖ Expanded shower and laundry program
- ❖ Activated a Clean Air Center and a Cooling Center at Old City Hall

Thank you.

Josh Jacobs, Homeless Services Coordinator
jjacobs@cityofberkeley.info

Questions / Committee Discussion

