

AGENDA



Thursday, September 23, 2010

**Health and Human Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 30**

Subject: Authorize negotiation and execution of a 12-month contract with FRONT STEPS, INC., Austin, TX, for the provision of homeless social services at the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH) in an amount not to exceed \$2,333,783 for the period October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011, with one 12-month renewal option in an amount not to exceed \$2,333,783, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$4,667,566.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding in the amount of \$1,933,494 is available in the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Operating Budget of the Health and Human Services Department; funding in the amount of \$261,689 is available in the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Operating Budget of the Health and Human Services Department Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Special Revenue Fund; and funding in the amount of \$138,600 is available in the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Operating Budget of the Health and Human Services Department Special Revenue Fund, Texas Homeless Housing and Services Program (HHSP) Grant. Funding for the balance of the contracts is contingent on available funding in future budgets.

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Vince Cobalis, Asst. Director, Human Services, 972-5011; Charles Kemp, Agenda Coordinator, 972-5023; Susan Gehring, Community Based Resources Manager, 972-5026.

Prior Council Action: On July 29, 2010 Austin City Council approved Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office 2010-11 Action Plan which includes the 2010-11 award of \$261,689 for Emergency Shelter Grants for Operations and Maintenance of the ARCH.

HHSD published a "Notice of Interest" on July 27, 2009 for the provision of homeless social services at the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH). Two applicants responded to the Notice of Interest and as a result HHSD released a Request for Applications. Front Steps, Inc. was the only applicant for the Request for Application and is recommended to receive the contract award for Fiscal Year 2010 – 2011. The City of Austin has contracted with Front Steps Inc. for the operation and management of this facility since 2004. Although one (1) 12-month renewal option is requested, funding for this program is included in the Social Services competitive process that will be conducted next fiscal year. The results of that competition may affect the planned renewal.

ARCH offers clients a menu of services from which to select, depending on their individual needs. There is an increased focus on flexible case management to help move more clients into safe and stable housing. Collaboration with co-located and mainstream agencies is a key component of ARCH enabling it to serve as an entry point to homeless services. The Community Care Clinic is located at the ARCH to provide primary health care for homeless adults, medical case management, and coordination with other providers for dental and vision services. Austin/Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC) has increased staff at the ARCH specifically to expand mental health and substance abuse services to ARCH clients.

Under the contract with Front Steps, Inc., services at the ARCH consist of three major program components:

Day Resource Center (DRC). This component serves homeless men, women, and families with centralized intake, information and referral, and basic services including: showers, telephones, voice mail boxes, mailing address, laundry facilities, clothing, and lockers. Front Steps collaborates with eight co-located community agencies that help homeless persons reach self-sufficiency by providing mental health outreach and counseling, legal aid, benefits eligibility, employment services, housing assistance, case management and access to substance abuse treatment. The case management program includes assessments of clients in the Day Resource Center, walk-in access to low level case management, and classes covering topics such as Housing Options and Self-Care Resources. As a result of additional case management funding through the new State HHSP grant, the garage area is now open and staffed to provide expanded space for the DRC. This has been a well-received addition of space for clients.

Day Sleeping. This component serves homeless men and women daily by providing 50 beds for daytime sleeping. It serves people who have night-time jobs and those who require rest for medical reasons. Case management is available for those who choose to participate.

Overnight Shelter. This component serves homeless single adult men seven (7) nights week with 100 beds and 115 mats for overnight sleeping. Services for overnight shelter clients include on-site breakfast, dinner (for clients in beds), showers and lockers, and case management. Clients obtain a reserved bed through participation in case management, or if they are receiving case management from a co-located agency or a service provider that is coordinating with Front Steps staff.

As operator of the ARCH, Front Steps is responsible for overall operations, maintenance, and oversight of the facility and the activities located therein.