



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 15

Agenda Date: May 16, 2024

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Department of Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Acceptance of reimbursement funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Shelter and Services Program (SSP) for local costs to assist migrants traveling through San Antonio.

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes the acceptance of reimbursement funding from the FEMA SSP in an amount up to \$3,000,000.00, and the application and acceptance of funds upon award in an amount up to \$18,798,474.00, for a total amount up to \$21,798,474.00 for local costs to assist migrants traveling through San Antonio in coordination with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The reimbursement requests are anticipated to be submitted to FEMA for the period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2026.

This ordinance also authorizes the City Manager or designee to initiate, negotiate, and execute all necessary documents, including grant contracts and contract amendments, to i) authorize line-item budget revisions and no cost extensions, modify performance measures so long as the terms of the amendment stay within the general parameters of the intent of the grant, and make changes due to mandated regulations; ii) enter into contracts and leases, extensions and amendments for facilities, operations, and support services to provide assistance and shelter to migrants legally traveling

through San Antonio; and iii) accept carryover or additional grant funding, if awarded, in an amount up to 20% of the total amount authorized.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of San Antonio and local nonprofit partners have assisted more than 603,000 asylum seekers since January 2021. The Migrant Resource Center/Centro de Bienvenida (MRC) opened in July 2022, in collaboration with Catholic Charities Diocese of San Antonio, to provide humanitarian services for migrants traveling through San Antonio.

The MRC receives migrants transported from non-profit partners in border cities (Eagle Pass, Del Rio, Laredo, and Brownsville) after they are released from U.S. Customs and Border Protection or Immigrations and Customs Enforcement custody. San Antonio is the nearest major transportation hub to these communities. The MRC provides navigation and case management services; local transportation; food and commodities; phones and internet access to connect with host families.

The Airport Transfer Center (ATC), operated by Human Services in coordination with Aviation, the San Antonio Fire Department, and San Antonio Police Department, opened in May 2023 due to continued high arrivals of asylum seekers. The ATC and welcoming and navigation services at the San Antonio International Airport closed on May 1, 2024, due to an overall decline in arrivals in San Antonio that began on January 1, 2024.

The City of San Antonio maintains a public-facing migrant dashboard to transparently share information with non-profit partners and the public on the number of asylum seeker arrivals along with overnight shelter counts.

To date, services provided by the City of San Antonio and local nonprofit partners have been 100% reimbursed by the FEMA through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) and the SSP.

ISSUE:

On April 12, 2024, The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a distribution process for the \$650 million in FY 2024 appropriations for the SSP. \$275 million in direct awards were allocated to communities providing services to migrants, with \$25 million kept in reserve for distribution later in the year. Of these awards, \$17,828,596.00 was awarded to the San Antonio community, including \$3,000,000.00 allocated to the City of San Antonio, specifically. The Department of Human Services applied for these funds by the grant deadline of April 26, 2024.

Additionally, DHS opened a competitive grant process to allocate an additional \$340.9 million. The competitive opportunity is open to local governments, nonprofit organizations, Indian Tribes, and states, with the goal of providing funding to entities serving migrants released from DHS custody. Eligible uses include temporary shelter, food, transportation, acute medical care, personal hygiene supplies, the labor necessary to provide these services, and renovations and modifications to increase temporary shelter capacity. Competitive applications are due by June 13, 2024. The Department of Human Services will apply for an additional \$18,798,474.00 to fund migrant program operations through the duration of the grant term ending September 30, 2026.

ALTERNATIVES:

There are currently no other grants available to cover the expenses associated with this program. Should this ordinance not be approved, the City of San Antonio will forego reimbursement of local costs incurred to assist migrants traveling through San Antonio.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes the acceptance of reimbursement funding from the FEMA SSP in an amount up to \$3,000,000.00, and the application and acceptance of funds upon award in an amount up to \$18,798,474.00, for a total amount up to \$21,798,474.00 for local costs to assist migrants traveling through San Antonio for the period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2026.

This item also authorizes an associated budget. There is no fiscal impact to the City's General Fund in the form of a cash match.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval.