



Sunnyvale Community Services

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To: Tim Kirby, City Manager, City of Sunnyvale
Connie Verceles, Deputy City Manager, City of Sunnyvale

From: Marie Bernard, Executive Director, Sunnyvale Community Services

Re: Request for supplemental funding for TBRA Program in support of the City Council's priority to "Support the unhoused community."

Date: September 8, 2024

We have prepared this request for \$500,000 (\$250,000/year) in supplemental funding for the Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) contract for FY2024-25 and 2025-26.

TBRA is a "Rapid Rehousing" (RRH) program, an intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again in the near term.

The supplemental funds for two years will permit SCS to continue supporting up to 40 formerly unhoused families (~80 individuals) to obtain safe housing and sustain market-rate rents after completing the 24 month program. With this funding, SCS will also have the administrative and data reporting capacity to inform the City Council's priority to "Support the unhoused community."

SCS has over a decade of experience in supportive services for unhoused Sunnyvale residents. Our holistic approach is a proven solution to help Sunnyvale families move into housing and remain housed.

Background:

In January 2022, SCS was encouraged to bid on a new two-year competitive contract for the Sunnyvale TBRA program. The RFP specified that bidders expand the number of households served and add supplemental services to improve program success, with set funding of \$1,350,000 per year including HOME funds (\$1M), LMH Low Moderate Housing Funds (\$250K) and HMF Housing Mitigation Funds (\$100K).

SCS won the competitive bid with goals to grow the program's scale to 40 enrolled households and add supportive services.

The TBRA program expansion for the last two years was a pilot, reflected in the contract that stated "Data requirements and outcome measurements are under development and may be modified during the course of the program." Our initial TBRA contract had only one main goal: To enroll up to 40 households at any time in TBRA by June 2024.

During the first contract year, SCS focused on rebuilding the program, engaging current and new landlords, and stabilizing the currently enrolled households, all of whom needed intensive case management. The City approved all elements of program staffing and supportive services. As the program expanded, SCS worked with partner agencies including Helping Hands, Downtown Streets, HomeFirst, Our Daily Bread, and our own caseworkers for new program referrals.

SCS met the two-year goal to enroll 40 households by February 2024, four months early. Having reached program capacity, SCS now has a TBRA wait list.

In January 2024, the City posted a new two-year RFP for the TBRA program with flat funding of \$1,350,000/year. SCS was the sole bidder and was awarded the contract. In the contract, \$1,000,000 is for “pass through” rental assistance, with \$350,000 for all program expenses. SCS voiced concerns about the challenges of managing a robust program with the flat budget from the City, especially given the rigorous administrative and reporting requirements.

In the application in January, SCS showed that the total needed in matching funds was \$1,192,152 over two years (\$596,000/year). These matching funds included \$290,538 forecasted per year from Corporate and Foundation funding. Unfortunately, safety net agencies like SCS and other Silicon Valley nonprofits have seen dramatic cuts in corporate and foundation funding, while the overall need for all services has increased. These new funding cuts impacted all SCS programs, including TBRA.

In summary, SCS is asking the City of Sunnyvale to fund \$250,000 per year for two years, for a total of \$500,000, to help fill in the matching funding gap to successfully operate the TBRA program.

SCS has already proven our ability to Rapidly Rehouse homeless residents, as shown by our exceeding the program goals to have 40 households enrolled by June 2024.

Since this was a 24-month pilot, we are just beginning to see the long-term impact of the initial SCS TBRA contract. Our case management has an even greater impact when clients have these supportive services from the day they enroll in the program. More data will come in the next two years.

In summary, SCS is requesting a total of \$500,000 (\$250,000/year) in City funding to continue the successful TBRA pilot, helping 40 unhoused Sunnyvale families at any time to become stably housed.

Thank you for considering this request. We are grateful for the ongoing support and partnership with the City of Sunnyvale as we work together to prevent and address homelessness and hunger in our local community.