



Legislation Text

File #: HCC-106-FY24, **Version:** 1

Submitted by: Shakira Louimarre
Submitting Department: Administration
Agenda Section: Consent

Item Title:

ARPA - Award of Contract for Community Engagement and Outreach Services for Unhoused Populations

Suggested Action:

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the City Administrator to enter into a contract with The h3 Project for a data-based analysis of homelessness in the City. An expenditure not to exceed \$15,000 for this contract is authorized to be funded with ARPA funds, and the Treasurer is authorized to make the required budget amendments to facilitate this expenditure. The contract is subject to approval by the City Attorney for legal sufficiency.

Summary Background:

Since 2021, increased quality of life issues such as homelessness, loitering, trespassing, public intoxication, and related challenges have become increasingly problematic in the City of Hyattsville, including but not limited to the University Town Center and the Queens Chapel Rd/Ager Rd./Hamilton St. vicinity in West Hyattsville. The City of Hyattsville is committed to addressing these quality-of-life issues through a just, collaborative, and comprehensive approach.

To gather the appropriate data and provide a solutions-oriented analysis, the City conducted a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking a consultant to do community engagement to gain a deeper understanding of the root causes of homelessness in the area and to develop a final report of those findings, including analysis that will inform a coordinated plan from the City for unhoused persons outreach and response. The RFP received one response from The h3 Project. The response was evaluated and determined to be a good fit for the City's needs.

The h3 Project is a non-profit organization in Washington, D.C. that has been created with the express purpose of addressing homelessness and human trafficking within the Washington District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia areas. In the last three years, The h3 Project has conducted over 400 individual surveys of individuals experiencing homelessness for several DC Business Improvement Districts (BID)- including Downtown BID, NoMa BID, MVT CID, Capitol Hill BID, and Dupont Circle BID as well as Union Station, Georgetown University and Philadelphia's 30th Street Station.

The h3 Project team includes individuals with extensive experience in social work, clinical psychology, multilingual outreach, experience in addressing addiction and mental health diagnosis, crisis intervention, case management, and both lived and professional experience in homelessness. All h3 Project team members are required to keep current certifications in a number of areas including CPR/First Aid, Suicide Awareness and Prevention, Opioids and Naloxone Administration, Active Violence Emergency Response Training (AVERT), Human Trafficking Awareness and Response, Anti-Racism Training, and Intersectional Identities and Inclusive Practice.

The h3 Project's proposed survey methodology includes a combination of structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews to ensure a holistic approach in capturing the diverse experiences and perspectives of individuals facing homelessness. As standard practice, h3 also plans to collaborate with local shelters and organizations to ensure the

survey reaches a wide range of participants and represents the diversity within this population. A typical survey can take anywhere from 20 - 90 minutes, depending on the individual surveyed. The end intent is to provide insight into what would be most beneficial and life-changing for the population assessed, so that 'better' avenues can best be accessed. Upon the completion of The h3 Project survey, the City will receive a final report with recommendations. The report will include the identification of root causes and outreach solutions to this issue. Depending on the results of the survey/community engagement, The h3 Project organization may enter into an agreement with the City of Hyattsville to undertake proactive street outreach efforts aimed at connecting with individuals experiencing homelessness within our community. This would be a separate contract with a new scope of work aimed at providing immediate aid, facilitating connections to shelters, housing programs, medical services, mental health resources, and collaboration with local law enforcement and social service agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to outreach efforts.

Next Steps:

Staff to proceed with contract.

Fiscal Impact:

NTE \$15,000 ARPA Funds

City Administrator Comments:

Recommends approval.

Community Engagement:

h3 will engage directly with those experiencing homelessness in the City.

Strategic Goals:

Goal 1 - Ensure Transparent and Accessible Governance

Legal Review Required?

Pending