



# Agenda Report

December 16, 2019

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Department of Housing

**SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO APPROPRIATE FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$75,000 AND AMEND CONTRACT NO. 31272 WITH SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HOUSING RIGHTS CENTER TO EXPAND THE PROVISION OF LANDLORD/TENANT SERVICES**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council take the following actions:

- 1) Find that the recommended action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines per Section 15061 (b) (3), the General Rule that CEQA only applies to projects that may have an effect on the environment;
- 2) Approve a budget amendment transferring \$75,000 from the City General Fund unappropriated reserves to the Housing Department's Other Housing Fund 238 in the FY 2020 Operating Budget to fund an amended contract with the Southern California Housing Rights Center (SCHRC) (Contract No. 31272) to expand the provision of tenant/landlord services;
- 3) Authorize the City Manager to execute an amendment agreement to Contract No. 31272 for a two-year period with other key terms as described in this agenda report, without competitive bidding pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(F), contracts for professional or unique services, with SCHRC for an amount not to exceed \$75,000 per year; and
- 4) It is further recommended that the City Council grant the proposed contract an exemption from the Competitive Selection and Purchasing Ordinance, Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.049(B), contracts for which the City's best interests are served.

**BACKGROUND:**

In connection with the action taken by City Council on November 4, 2019 on the City ordinance adopting AB 1482 – the Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (Pasadena Ordinance No. 7352), staff was directed to assess the capacity of the Southern California Housing Rights Center (SCHRC) to adequately assist the community, and to determine if there is an opportunity to provide additional resources to support the work of SCHRC.

SCHRC is a non-profit organization established in 1968 to support and promote fair housing. The City contracts with the agency to provide a range of tenant/landlord related services to the Pasadena community including mediation of disputes, handling cases under the City's Tenant Protection Ordinance, and general counseling on tenant and landlord rights under state and federal law. SCHRC operates from a leased office within the Jackie Robinson Community Center with a staff of one (1) person who is supported by the agency's Los Angeles office.

Staff reviewed SCHRC's service delivery data in Pasadena covering the past five years and determines that the agency assists over 1,300 persons, conducts over 50 inquiries, and files over 20 cases per year. It was also reported to staff that between 4th Quarter FY 2019 and 1st Quarter FY 2020, SCHRC experienced greater demand for its services with increased incidents of eviction notices (21%) and rent hikes (7%). In addition, during the past quarter, staff have experienced a surge in public inquiries from tenants and landlords seeking information and assistance related to the City's Tenant Protection Ordinance and the new state law AB 1482. Many of these inquiries are from persons who were not able to receive immediate assistance from SCHRC.

It is the assessment of staff that SCHRC capacity needs to be increased in order to improve assistance to people seeking to navigate through the changes resulting from recent laws designed to offer greater protections for tenants. Approval of the proposed contract amendment and funding will support two (2) new positions and enable SCHRC to increase capacity and expand its level of tenant/landlord services.

The key terms of the proposed amended contract with SCHRC consist of the following:

1. City funding will not exceed \$75,000 for the first year of a two-year contract term which commences on the contract effective date. City funding for the second year of the contract term shall not exceed \$75,000, subject to City appropriation of funds.
2. SCHRC will provide tenant/landlord related services to the Pasadena community including, mediation of disputes, handling cases under the City's Tenant Protection Ordinance, and general counseling on tenant and landlord rights. These services will be provided through a combination of walk-in counseling and outreach to the community (e.g., workshops).

3. SCHRC will operate from two locations in Pasadena: a) its current office within the Jackie Robinson Center, staffed with one (1) full-time position; and b) a second office in the City-owned commercial building at 1015 N. Lake Avenue, staffed with two (2) full-time positions.
4. SCHRC will seek funding from other sources to continue providing the expanded level of services once the City funds have been expended.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The action proposed herein is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b)(3), the "General Rule" provision of CEQA which applies to projects which may have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. The approval of the subject contract with SCHRC to expand the provision of tenant/landlord services is excluded from the definition of "project" pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4). Furthermore, the action proposed herein will not have a significant effect on the environment and, hence, is not subject to CEQA.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

This proposed action supports the City Council Strategic Planning Three-Year Goals in the areas of promoting the quality of life and the local economy. The proposed action is also in accordance with the approved General Plan Housing Element, Five-Year Consolidated Plan, and Five-Year Public Housing Authority Plan.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**


The cost of this action is \$75,000 for the first year of the proposed two-year contract with SCHRC. Funding for this action will come from transferring an amount not to exceed \$75,000 from the City's General Fund to the Other Housing Fund 23816001-811400-51017 of the Housing Department's FY 2020 Operating Budget. The City's FY 2021 recommended budget will include additional funding in the amount not to exceed \$75,000 for the second year of the contract.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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