

Agenda Report

November 9, 2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department
SUBJECT: Participation in Great Plates Delivered Program

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that this action is exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption);
2. Appropriate \$430,865 to Account 10518001-811400-56901, Parks and Recreation Contracted Services, and authorize staff to make necessary adjustments to the budget should 100 percent reimbursement not occur with utilization of Unassigned fund balance if available or the General Fund Operating Reserve if necessary. This appropriation will cover the Great Plates Delivered expenses from October 10, 2020 - November 8, 2020;
3. Determine if Pasadena should continue participation in the State's Great Plates Delivered program and if so, consider a maximum of three additional months until February 7, 2021; and
4. Grant the proposed expenditure an exemption from the Competitive Selection process pursuant to P.M.C. Section 4.08.049(B), contracts for which the City's best interests are served.

BACKGROUND:

On April 24, 2020 Governor Gavin Newsom announced the launch of the Great Plates Delivered program, a meal delivery service for older adults who are at high risk and unable to access meals during the Safer At Home pandemic emergency order period. Another major goal of the program is to provide an economic stimulus to restaurants which also suffered significantly due to the COVID-19 related economic shutdown.

Great Plates Delivered is administered by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and requires the local agency to fund the program. Program costs are eligible for reimbursement at the following rates: 75% from FEMA and 18.75% from Cal OES. If full reimbursement is received, the City's share of the costs will be 6.25%. FEMA authorizes funding for the program on a month-to-month basis and has announced reauthorizations at or on the expiration date (generally around the 9th of the month). For this reason it is impossible for local agencies to determine how long the program will operate.

Great Plates Delivered provides three meals per day to each participant. The State allows a maximum cost per day per participant of \$66, inclusive of the delivery cost. Pasadena currently has 235 older adults receiving meals from 21 local restaurants. Please see Attachment A for a list of current and former program restaurants, the number of meals they've provided and the total purchase order amount for each restaurant through November 8, 2020.

On May 18, 2020 the City Council approved Pasadena's participation in Great Plates and appropriated \$600,000 to fund the program. On July 27, Council appropriated an additional \$361,000 to fund the program through August 9 and approved the City's continued participation in the program at a cost of approximately \$466,000 per month. On October 5, 2020 Council again affirmed Pasadena's participation in Great Plates and appropriated \$905,200 to cover the program costs for the period August 10 through October 9. Appropriations to date total nearly \$1.87 million, and with the approval of the recommendation in this report would total nearly \$2.3 million.

Great Plates Appropriations

Date of Council Approval	Amount
May 18	\$600,000
July 27	\$361,000
October 5	\$905,200
November 8 (pending)	\$430,865
Total	\$2,297,065

Feeding Program Options for Older Adults

Should Pasadena conclude or modify its Great Plates Delivered program, there are other options participants would have for securing meals.

1. Los Angeles County's Great Plates Delivered Program

Representatives from the Los Angeles County Great Plates Delivered program indicate they can enroll Pasadena seniors in their program, if our program ends. Pasadena seniors would need to apply to the County program and once the County determines their eligibility, they would become enrolled. There will be no

cost to the City for this as LA County will seek the FEMA and Cal OES reimbursements.

The County also indicated that Pasadena restaurants can apply to be food providers, but will be placed on a waitlist, as their program has a sufficient number of restaurants to serve the additional seniors from Pasadena.

2. San Gabriel Valley YWCA Frozen Meal Delivery Program

Currently, the San Gabriel Valley YWCA delivers seven frozen meals per week to approximate 300 Pasadena seniors. The SGV YWCA indicates they would be able to serve the 235 seniors in Pasadena's Great Plates Delivered Program at a cost of \$17,500 for three months of service.

3. CDBG-CV Funding to Support Pasadena Food Banks and Pantries

On September 11, 2020, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced to the City a special allocation in the amount of \$1,220,949 in CDBG funds under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CDBG-CV funds). With this special allocation, HUD has provided a total of \$2,453,511 in CARES Act funding to the City to support programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CDBG-CV funds may be used for any activity to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19. Currently, CDBG-CV funds are utilized on the City's Emergency Rental Assistance program which provides a total of \$1 million in back rent assistance to low income tenants. Staff is recommending in a separate agenda report that this most recent allocation of \$1.22 million be prioritized by the City to increase the capacity of local food banks/food pantries to alleviate food insecurity experienced by Pasadena residents as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDBG-CV funding will become available in mid-January.

Once the food banks and pantries receive this funding, February 7 could be an opportune time to discontinue Pasadena's participation in Great Plates Delivered and the seniors transition to one of food options discussed above.

Potential Reduction in Great Plates Delivered Service Level

Pasadena could chose to reduce the current Great Plates Delivered service level and monthly costs. Great Plates Delivered guidelines allow agencies to provide two meals per day, instead of the three the City currently provides. This would reduce the daily cost by \$22 per senior, and the monthly costs of the program from \$466,000 to \$310,200. This could have an adverse effect on the restaurants as it would decrease the number of meals provided and revenue generated. The result could force restaurants to make the decision of continuing the program or cutting staff.

Another service reduction possible would be to decrease the number of days the Pasadena program makes deliveries. The program could eliminate weekend service. This could decrease the monthly expenses to approximately \$341,220, depending on

the number of weekends in the given time period. This will reduce the number of days each restaurant is scheduled to make deliveries by approximately 1 day each month. This option would require seniors to identify food options two days a week, which could pose difficulties for most of the registered seniors.

Impact of Great Plates on Local Restaurants

Restaurant owners have expressed their gratitude for Pasadena operating a Great Plates Delivered program and allowing local restaurants to provide the food. Our program has utilized 22 restaurants since operations began on May 21, 2020 (one restaurant has since dropped out and we currently have 21). Collectively, these restaurants directly attribute the employment of 110 staff to the Great Plates program. Prior to COVID, these restaurants employed 725. Once COVID restaurant restrictions were enacted, staff levels collectively dropped to 276 employees. Due to Great Plates and the work it generated, the restaurants reported staffing levels increasing to 386 employees.

Three of the aforementioned restaurants, reported they had completely shut down and the program allowed them to reopen and rehire 15 employees. Several restaurants note that their participation helps them not only keep employees, but also to pay rent. Three other restaurants reported that they would have closed if it had not been for their involvement in this program.

As discussed recently with the Finance Committee, the City has exhausted the General Fund unassigned fund balance and is projected to draw down its 5% General Fund Operating Reserve from \$13.8 million to \$1.7 million by the end of the current fiscal year. As part of that presentation, based on current economic uncertainties and risks faced by the City, staff recommended that any further draws on reserves be only for the most critical needs as determined by the Council.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

This action is consistent with the City Council's goal to support and promote the quality of life and the local economy.

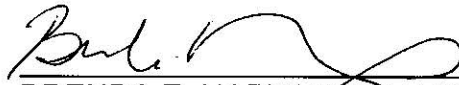
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA and is exempt per Section 15061(b)(3). The project is covered by the general rule that CEQA only applies to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Funding needed for this action is expected to come from FEMA for 75% - \$323,149, Cal OES for 18.75% - \$72,170 and the General Fund for 6.25% - \$35,546 and be charged to the budget account 10518001-811400-56901. The General Fund portion will be appropriated from Unassigned fund balance or the General Fund Operating Reserve if necessary. Staff will return to Council to appropriate additional funding needed for continued participation in the program.

Respectfully submitted,



BRENDA E. HARVEY-WILLIAMS, Director
Parks, Recreation and Community Services

Prepared by:



LaWayne Williams, Supervisor
Parks, Recreation and Community Services

Approved by:



STEVE MERMELL
City Manager