



City of Alameda • California

January 4, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Sarah Lewis, President
Social Service Human Relations Board

Subject: Social Service Human Relations Board
FY 2022-2023 CDBG Public Services Needs Statement

As an advisor to the City Council, the Social Service Human Relations Board (SSHRB) assesses the community's social and human service needs and establishes strategies to address those needs. In 1997, the City Council tasked SSHRB with participating in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) process by reviewing and commenting on residents' public service needs and forwarding recommendations to Council on the CDBG Non-Housing Public Services funding. This letter represents SSHRB's recommendations for priority needs for social and community service support in the city of Alameda.

At the SSHRB meeting on December 9, 2021, staff presented the priorities that were identified in the CDBG Five-Year Strategic Plan, including: affordable housing, fair housing, food security, homelessness services, mental health support, safety and anti-crime programs, tenant rights and housing support, and transportation and pedestrian safety. At the meeting, service providers and members of the public were given the opportunity to reflect on the community's current needs, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Speakers commented that the pandemic has magnified the issues of domestic violence, gender and racial inequities, and the need for affordable housing. SSHRB members, after consideration of input from service providers, recommend the following priority areas:

- Housing and homeless services, including:
 - Providing emergency services such as shelters, showers, storage, day center, restrooms, mental health, and housing navigation services
 - Developing housing options that include rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, independent housing, and more
 - Increasing the supply of affordable housing
 - Promoting fair housing
- Domestic violence, including:
 - Addressing economic insecurity, which often leads to increased risk for homelessness and legal problems
 - Providing shelter and prevent homelessness for individuals fleeing sexual violence
- Information and referral services
- Legal information services
- Mental health and crisis intervention
- Disaster related cash grants
- Food pantries and food security
- COVID-19 diagnostic tests

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The impacts of COVID-19, rising rents, and the high cost of living continue to challenge many of our residents in Alameda. The needs of our citizens are outpacing the resources available to meet the basic necessities of Bay Area living. The CDBG Non-Housing Public Services funding provides an important safety net that supports Alameda's most vulnerable populations, but it is modest. Prioritizing the needs identified by Alameda stakeholders is therefore an imperative, and leveraging other sources must be explored.

Alameda's compassionate, strong, and resilient community is what makes our island city unique. SSRHB recommends that the City Council make policy and funding decisions that prioritize the needs of the people that have been identified in this needs statement letter. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Sarah Lewis, President
Social Services Human Relations Board