



# CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

Date: October 15, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Linda Lowry, City Manager

Submitted by: Benita DeFrank, Neighborhood Services Director

Subject: **Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of Thirty U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers in the amount of \$278,098 to Operate the Pomona VASH Voucher Program, Effective December 1, 2018**

## OVERVIEW

**Recommendations** - That the City Council adopt the attached resolution:

1. Authorizing the acceptance of thirty (30) VASH Vouchers, worth \$278,098 in annual funding from HUD to operate a tenant-based HUD-VASH Voucher Program (Fund 205-1791-XXXXX-59008);
2. Amending the FY 2018-2019 Operating Budget by receiving and appropriating \$244,978 for rental assistance to homeless veterans and approximately \$33,120 for administrative costs; and
3. Authorizing the City Manager, as Executive Director of the Pomona Housing Authority, to execute the appropriate contracts and other documentation requested for acceptance of the award and operation of the above listed program to HUD, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney.

**Fiscal Impact-** Adoption of the attached resolution will bring \$278,098 in grant funding from the VASH program. The start date of the program is December 1, 2018, thus the new funding award will amend the FY 2018-2019 Operating Budget by receiving and appropriating \$244,978 for rental assistance and approximately \$33,120 for administrative costs (Fund 205-1791-XXXXX-59008).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless veterans, with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The VA provides these services to participating veterans at VA medical centers (VAMCs) and community-based outreach clinics. The City of Pomona's Housing Authority (PHA) was awarded thirty VASH vouchers to provide permanent housing assistance to qualified veterans and their families.

## **DISCUSSION**

Since FY 2008, HCV program funding has provided rental assistance under a supportive housing program for homeless veterans authorized by section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (1937 Act) (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)). The initiative, known as the HUD-VASH program, was initially authorized by Division K, Title II, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (Pub. L. 110–161, approved December 26, 2007). Each annual HUD appropriation since FY 2008 has continued to authorize this program. The HUD-VASH program combines HCV rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the VA through its community medical centers. Since implementation of the program, ongoing VA case management, health, and other supportive services have been made available to homeless veterans at more than 300 VA Medical Center (VAMC) supportive services sites and Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) across the nation. The HUD VASH program is a key component of reducing homelessness among veterans outlined in the Administration’s Federal Strategy to Prevent and End Homelessness.

According to HUD, approximately 11% of the homeless adult population nationally is veterans and about 1.4 million other veterans are considered at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support networks, and dismal living conditions in overcrowded or substandard housing. California is home to nearly 2 million veterans, of which an estimated 19,000 are homeless. Within the City of Pomona, veterans make up 6% of homeless adults. In 2008, a national campaign to end veterans’ homelessness was launched. The City hopes to help in this goal by aligning resources that support these efforts. With that end in mind, the PHA applied for and received VASH vouchers. These vouchers are dedicated to help provide rental assistance to homeless veterans in need.

The VASH program is made possible through a collaboration that includes HUD, the VA and local housing authorities. Within this collaboration, HUD provides program funds, the VA provides support services and the housing authority provides the rental assistance with operational capacity. The VASH program is a referral only program where case managers at the local VAMC are responsible for referring eligible homeless veterans. The VASH program provides permanent housing assistance for eligible homeless veterans who are single or with families.

Veterans who are appropriate candidates for this program must meet the criteria for case management services in order to obtain and sustain independent community housing. This means that those referred must be able to complete activities of daily living and live independently in the community with case management and supportive services. Most veterans referred to this program are not only homeless, but have serious mental illness, a substance use disorder history, and/or physical disability. Veterans with the most vulnerability are excellent candidates for this program. Case management is the heart of the VASH program and is a requirement for participation in the program. Eligible candidates are expected to utilize the supportive services, treatment recommendations and assistance needed to successfully maintain recovery and sustain housing.

For the City of Pomona’s VASH program, the Los Angeles VA will determine clinical eligibility and refer eligible homeless veterans to the Pomona Housing Authority (PHA). Once referred, the PHA will determine if the referral meets HUD’s regulations to receive assistance. If approved, the participant will pay 30% of their income towards the rent and the program will pay the difference.

Attachment: Resolution

Prepared by: George Montano