



Legislation Text

File #: 21-2485, Version: 1

To: Harris County Commissioners Court
Through: David Berry, Executive Director, Budget Management Department
Prepared By: Janet Gonzalez, Sr. Manager, Budget Management Department
Subject: COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program Administrator Contract Amendment
Project ID (If applicable):

Purpose and Request:

Request by Budget Management to amend the Emergency Rental Assistance Program agreement with BakerRipley to (1) increase the Program Fund and Contractor’s Fee and (2) provide additional program services.

Background and Discussion:

In January 2021, the US Treasury department launched the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), designed to support low-income families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Harris County applied for and received \$73.8M in ERAP funding.

To date, Harris County has executed agreements with ERAP program administrators, navigator agencies, and compliance services totaling \$71.7M. Both program administrators - BakerRipley and Catholic Charities - have been extremely responsive to the housing stability needs of renter households financially impacted by the pandemic and more than \$40M in rental assistance has been paid to date for Harris County. BakerRipley is on track to expend the \$26.5M Program Fund allocated for rental assistance in the current agreement (approved by Commissioners Court and executed in February 2021) by the end of May 2021. The requested amendment will allocate the remaining ERAP grant funds of \$2M for rental assistance and the associated administrative fee to BakerRipley. In addition, the amendment will provide funding in the amount of \$20k for BakerRipley to manage the duplication detection process for tenant applications across companion rental assistance programs, such as the statewide program operated by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

Fiscal Impact: Funding for this contract amendment will be fully provided by the US Treasury ERAP grant.

Fiscal Summary			
Expenditures	FY 20-21	FY 21-22 Projected	Future Years Projected [3 additional years]
Service Impacted: <i>Emergency Program</i>			
Existing Budget		\$2,047,729	
Additional Appropriation F			
Total Expenditures		\$2,047,729	

Funding Sources			
Existing Program Budget		\$2,047,729	
Please Identify Funding S Special Revenue, Grant, I			
[US Treasury ERAP Gran			
Total Sources		\$2,047,729	

Alternatives:

While contracting with alternative agencies is possible, it is not recommended due to the experience of BakerRipley with the Houston-Harris County Emergency Rental Assistance Program and their current oversight of the program's technology platform and data processing.

Alignment with Strategic Objective:

This activity is aligned with the strategic objective of securing and deploying emergency funding to support Harris County residents in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Attachments:

Contract Amendment to follow.