

Title

Authorizing the Community Development Division to transfer the weather emergency respite hotel program contract from Friends of State Street Family to Catalyst for Change and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to enter into a contract with Catalyst for Change to administer the program.

Body

BACKGROUND

Friends of State Street Family (FSSF) is a volunteer organization committed to providing essential support for unhoused individuals and families in Madison/Dane County. Historically, FSSF has raised private funds to help pay for short-term hotel stays for those unable to access emergency shelter facilities during extreme weather conditions. In the 2021 City of Madison Homeless Services funding application process, FSSF secured \$45,000 to expand this service, beginning in 2022, with the understanding that the annual contract, like all of those authorized through that process, would be renewed annually until a new Request for Proposal (RFP) process was undertaken, which is planned for 2025.

However, the demands of operating a larger-scale respite hotel program strained FSSF's volunteer resources. The agency notified the City of Madison that it was unable to administer the funds for 2024. Community Development Division staff has identified an alternative agency, Catalyst for Change (CFC), to operate the hotel program in place of FSSF. CFC is an experienced street outreach provider that has supported FSSF's work in the past, and has also, in 2023 and now in 2024, been contracting with Dane County Human Services to administer a cold weather hotel program focused on serving families. That experience positions CFC to be able to take responsibility for the use of City funds to support short-term hotel stays for unsheltered homeless singles and for families with children. Given the circumstances of FSSF's unexpected departure, this will be a non-competitive selection. It involves a contract of less than \$50,000.

ACTION

WHEREAS, the City's 2024 Adopted Operating Budget, approved by the Common Council on November 14, 2023 (Legistar #79918) contains \$45,000 in City General Purpose Revenue (GPR) funds to continue to support a contract with Friends of State Street Family to operate a weather emergency respite hotel program; and,

WHEREAS, Friends of State Street Family recently informed the City that it could no longer operate the program in 2024 due to insufficient volunteer capacity; and,

WHEREAS, Catalyst for Change, a local non-profit service provider which currently contracts with the City to provide street outreach services for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and also contracts with Dane County to operate a similar program for families, and is, therefore, a logical choice to operate the city's weather emergency respite hotel program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council authorizes the Community Development Division to transfer responsibility for administering the weather emergency respite hotel program from Friends of State Street Family to Catalyst for Change until a new funding application process is undertaken; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a contract with Catalyst for Change in the amount of \$45,000 a year to administer the program.