

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: April 23, 2019

To: Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair
Budget and Finance Committee

Attn: Erika Pulst, Legislative Assistant II
Office of the City Clerk

From: Laura Trejo, General Manager
Department of Aging

Subject: **LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF AGING RESPONSE TO
PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 BUDGET**

The Mayor's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 for the Los Angeles Department of Aging (LADOA) is responsive to the needs of older adults and operation of the Department in assuring the continued funding for important service programs. The Department is appreciative of the proposed budget's continued baseline funding for senior services that includes nutrition programs; the Echo Park Mini-MPC; the Estelle Van Meter Mini-MPC; and the Evidence Based Health Promotion Programs. In addition, the Department thanks the Mayor for the continued funding and position supports (Management Analyst and a Senior Management Analyst II positions for the Purposeful Aging Los Angeles Initiative).

The Department acknowledges the City Council's long standing support through the allocation of General City Purpose (GCP) funding for ensuring the Department's nutrition Congregate (C-1) and Home Delivered Meals Programs (C-2) as well as other Department older adult services. In particular, the Department wishes to thank the Committee's continued support of adding GCP funding in the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 budget to cover increased meal costs for the C-1 and C-2 nutrition programs. The Department was able to avoid use of the funds in the Unappropriated Balance as a result of increase in Older American Act (OAA) Funds received as a result of ongoing advocacy at the federal level and in part due to the rapid ongoing growth of the population (OAA funds use population based formulas).

Older Workers Employment Program Serving Those Who Are Homeless

The Department is thankful for Mayor and Council support in continuing the Older Workers Employment Program (OWEP) that assists older adults in the City who are

homeless or at risk of becoming homeless by providing funding for participant wages for on-the-job training. During last year's budget presentation, Council approved a budget request that included three staff positions and one upgrade to an existing position. Regrettably, the FY 2018-19 budget failed to include authority for the positions requested, and to-date we still lack staff to run the program. The current budget provides for only two of the staff support positions that were approved by Council last year (Management Analyst, Social Worker I).

The department once again requests that:

- (1) Council supports the department's request for the additional Administrative Clerk and upgrade of a Senior Management Analyst I to a II position. At this time, the lack of staff support is showing a negative impact on our grant funded Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Given the great need of homeless older adults, we are now seeing that the divided efforts of existing SCSEP staff to ensure the success of OWEP participants has resulted in a drop in the number of unsubsidized placements from 25% to 10%; and
- (2) OWEP funding be classified as continuing baseline funding instead of one-time only to ensure the stability of our work with a very vulnerable client group. The difficulties one-time funding presents is the fact that due to the uncertainty of one-time funding, the department has to shut down the program in the mid-to-late part of the fiscal year and place the program participants on a waiting list. The department has learned that once funding is renewed, the homeless older adults on the waiting list have moved on (consistent with the nature of a transient population) and cannot be contacted. Staff must then re-start the entire enrollment process. This start and stop process undermines confidence of the participant population in the program and is disruptive to program administration.

While, the LADOA continues to find ways to leverage and maximize current resources as well as explore how to enhance resources to grow older adult and family caregiver services with greater efficiencies, and reduce barriers and create a seamless "no-wrong door" service delivery model, we must also be cautious not to over extend our capacity to meet our grant obligations. One of the main drivers for the LADOA's work is the fact that the senior population has now entered its most rapid growth phase that is challenging an already taxed services network. Our client base is and will continue to grow, within the next few years, one-in-five Californians will be 60 years and older, and one third of them will live in the greater Los Angeles County region. The City's 2018 older adult population is 767,967 of which 31% (235,130) are 75+ and 19% (144,170) of older adults who live alone who are a significant concern given the growing body of evidence that social isolation represents in decreasing life expectancy.

Page 3
Budget and Finance Committee
April 23, 2019

Not considered in the proposed budget was a request for service funds to establish a new Mini-Multipurpose Senior Center at the recently opened Anita May Rosenstein Campus of the Los Angeles LGBT Center. As the population grows, we become aware of emerging groups that have been historically underserved as is the case with the LGBT community where seniors continue to face challenges in access to services and supports.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (213) 202-5645.

LT:JD:mn:z/Budget memo to B&FC