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Subject: SHARE/WHEEL

This memo is in response to inquiries about the structure of the contract with Catholic Community Services on behalf of the shelter program operated by SHARE/WHEEL. We are appreciative of the progress SHARE/WHEEL made in 2018 with respect to exits to permanent housing. That work is important. There remain some areas of concern, particularly around data quality. The structure of the contract, split between two six-month periods, is designed to incentivize further improvements in SHARE/WHEEL's performance, and in no way disregards the work they have done to date.

As you know, SHARE/WHEEL shelters were not awarded contracts through HSD's 2017 RFP due in large part to unacceptable performance. The 2017 RFP scored performance in the following categories: length of stay, entries from homelessness, rate of exit to permanent housing, utilization, and returns to homelessness. Of a possible 40 points, SHARE received 8 points, and showed zero exits to permanent housing; and the WHEEL shelter received 16 points, also showing zero exits to permanent housing. Thus, neither proposal was selected for funding in 2017. This decision is in alignment with [Ordinance 125474](#) passed by City Council in late 2017 mandating that the Human Services Department utilize a Results-Based Accountability framework for designing human services investments.

In 2018, to help transition clients from these shelters to the City's increased enhanced shelters, other service providers or housing, Mayor Durkan proposed bridge funding for SHARE/WHEEL for \$320,552. Council then proposed its own measure to provide \$455,000 from the sale of the Comm Shop (ORD 125534) for the second half of 2018.

In the Mayor's budget proposal, she included funding for basic shelter including SHARE/WHEEL through June 2019 to ensure the shelters would not close in winter. The Mayor's budget also proposed a significant increase in 2019 to the City's overall shelter capacity, which now has 88% more enhanced shelters than 2017. As you know, the Mayor has focused on increasing accountability and program exits to permanent housing, and our 2018 data shows that [enhanced shelters](#) report program exits to permanent housing at five times the rate of basic shelters. Through our partnership with the County, additional enhanced shelter space is coming online in the Spring and Summer of 2019.

Ultimately, Council proposed [an additional](#) \$378,000 for basic shelters in 2018 and \$756,000 in 2020, which passed the full City Council. While Councilmembers clearly expressed a preference for the funding for SHARE/WHEEL, the Human Services Department does have discretion on its contracts for basic shelters, and the Department will continue to articulate clear goals and accountability measures for all its providers, even the providers and programs who are not subject to performance pay.

Progress was made in 2018 by SHARE/WHEEL on exits to permanent housing and work is still needed, particularly with respect to entries to the shelter from homelessness and bed utilization. These directly impact the ability of the SHARE/WHEEL shelters to serve the most vulnerable population, the mission of their and all shelters in the homeless crisis response system. We understand that the rate of entries from homelessness is low due mainly to nearly 30% of the data entries are listed as “missing/unknown.” Related to this, SHARE/WHEEL needs to continue to improve its data completeness, which looks at the percentage of data fields that are completed compared to the percentage of “don’t know,” “data not collected,” and “refused” fields. SHARE/WHEEL’s completeness rate is 59% compared to the basic shelter average of 84%. Improvement in data quality is fully within the control of SHARE/WHEEL.

The second six months will be awarded assuming continued progress on meeting goals. HSD will monitor all performance indicators on a monthly basis, and regular communication with SHARE/WHEEL will ensure there are no surprises. To reiterate, our intention with this contract structure is to encourage full realization of their mission to serve the most vulnerable persons in our community and continue to help them achieve permanent housing, which is the method by which homelessness is ended.