File No. 251020 **Committee Item No.** 2
Board Item No. ____________

COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Board of Supervisors Meeting **Date** ____________

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Completed by: Brent Jalipa **Date** October 23, 2025
Completed by: Brent Jalipa **Date** ____________

Item 2 **File 25-1020**	**Departments:** Emergency Management (DEM), Human Services Agency (HSA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Legislative Objectives

- The proposed hearing would release $9.9 million from Budget & Finance Committee reserve in the Department of Emergency Management's FY 2025-26 General Fund budget. The funding was placed on reserve pending an update on DEM's long term plans for the street ambassador program.

Key Points

- The street ambassador program is overseen by DEM, with contract management provided by HSA. HSA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new street ambassador vendors on October 3, 2025, with a deadline for organizations to submit proposals on October 24, 2025. Contracts are expected to have an initial 2.5 year term, from January 1, 2026, through June 2028, with a possible 2.5 year extension through December 2030. The City plans to award one or more grants totaling no more than $25.77 million per year initially across twelve service areas. The new contracts will increase staffing within existing service areas and add two new service areas. Key duties would remain the same as existing ambassador services.

Fiscal Impact

- The requested release of $9.9 million in General Fund appropriations would contribute to the $25.77 million annual cost of the street ambassador contract/s that are being procured by HSA as of this writing. The total cost of the new street ambassador program contracts would be $67 million through the initial term of the agreements through FY 2027-28 and $142.8 million through December 2030 if all options to extend are exercised.

Policy Consideration

- The ongoing procurement process and contract structure indicated in the RFP incorporate our prior recommendations on the ambassador contracts, including increasing competition in the procurement process, shifting from a deliverable-based contract to a contract that reimburses actual costs with a clear staffing plan and operating budget, and adding objective outcome measures. Together, these changes are a significant improvement to the internal controls for the street ambassador program and, if executed effectively, have the potential to provide policy makers with greater assurance and clarity regarding the impact of these services.
- The pending procurement will result in DEM requiring approximately $3 million of additional funding in FY 2025-26 and $7.8 million in FY 2026-27. Given the City's structural budget deficit in the General Fund, the Board and Mayor should consider funding the street ambassador program within the existing funding levels approved for this program in the FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27 budget.

Recommendation

- Approve the requested release of reserves.

MANDATE STATEMENT

City Administrative Code Section 3.3(j) states that the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Supervisors has jurisdiction over the City's budget and may reserve proposed expenditures to be released at a later date subject to Board of Supervisors approval. The practice of the Board of Supervisors is for the Budget and Finance Committee to approve release of funds placed on reserve by the Committee, without further Board of Supervisors approval.

BACKGROUND

Community Ambassador Program History

In July 2021, the City began funding ambassadors to improve street conditions in the Mid-Market and Tenderloin areas. The original contract was procured and managed by the Office of Economic & Workforce Development (OEWD), which entered into a $4.5 million contract with the Mid-Market Foundation, a non-profit business league, for FY 2021-22. Separately, under the prior Mayor's Tenderloin Emergency Declaration, OEWD entered into a separate, sole-source $7.4 million agreement with the Mid-Market Foundation for the period January 2022 – June 2022 to further increase ambassador staffing in the Tenderloin. The contracts were consolidated and expanded in subsequent years and most recently had a value of $23.8 million in FY 2024-25. The Mid-Market Foundation subcontracted with other organizations for nearly all services, including Urban Place Consulting for administration, Urban Alchemy and Code Tenderloin for ambassadors. The contract with Mid-Market Foundation ended on June 30, 2025, the maximum term allowed under the 2021 solicitation. The City also funded other ambassador contracts with the Tenderloin Community Benefit District and Ahsing Solutions.

While programmatic management of the street ambassador program remains at the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), responsibility for contract management has been shifted from the Office of Economic and Workforce Development to the Human Services Agency (HSA). To prevent a disruption in services, the Human Services Agency entered into agreements with the existing ambassador providers for the period July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. The agreements were procured without a competitive solicitation, as allowed under Chapter 21B of the Administrative Code.[1] The purpose of short-term agreements was to allow HSA and DEM to undertake a competitive solicitation to identify a longer-term vendor/s for street ambassador services. The current street ambassador contractors are the North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit Corporation ($0.5 million), Ahsing Solutions ($0.5 million), and Urban Alchemy ($9.8 million).

[1] Administrative Code Chapter 21B waives competitive bidding requirements for contracts that address homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, and public safety hiring. This authority was originally provided by the Board of Supervisors in April 2019 for homeless services and expanded in February 2025 to include other services (File 25-0040).

The FY 2025-26 – FY 2026-27 budget included $20.7 million in FY 2025-26 and $18.6 million in FY 2026-27 in General Fund appropriations for the street ambassador contracts. The Board of Supervisors placed $9.9 million of the funding in FY 2025-26 on Budget & Finance Committee reserve, pending an update on the administration's long-term plans for the street ambassador program.

DETAILS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The proposed hearing would release $9.9 million from Budget & Finance reserve in the Department of Emergency Management's General Fund budget in FY 2025-26. The funding would be work ordered (transferred) to the Human Services Agency to pay for contracted street ambassador services.

Procurement of New Street Ambassador Contracts

HSA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new street ambassador vendors on October 3, 2025, with a deadline for organizations to submit proposals on October 24, 2025. Contracts are expected to have an initial 2.5 year term, from January 1, 2026 through June 2028, with a possible 2.5 year extension through December 2030. As detailed below, the initial annual cost of the program is expected to be $25.77 million.

RFP Evaluation Criteria

Proposals may be submitted by non-profit or for-profit organizations that meet minimum qualifications: (1) at least one year of experience providing similar services, (2) compliance with City contracting requirements, and (3) the capability to become a certified vendor with the City within 10 days of award.

Qualified proposals will then be evaluated by a panel based on project approach (45 points), organizational capacity (30 points), and fiscal capacity/budget (25 points), for a total possible score of 100 points.

Scope of Services

The City plans to award one or more grants totaling no more than $25.77 million per year across twelve service areas. The service areas are shown below in Exhibit 1. Proposers may apply for one or more service areas. The RFP also specifies staffing levels and hours for each service area.

The $25.77 million amount for the street ambassador program is more than the $21.6 million annualized cost of the existing ambassador contracts because the RFP contemplates additional staffing in existing service areas as well as two new service areas (in commercial corridors and afternoon/evening citywide deployments).

Key duties remain the same as existing ambassador contractors and include de-escalating conflicts, interrupting negative street behaviors (like public drug use or littering) using non-confrontational methods, conducting wellness checks, recognizing and reversing overdoses, providing safe passage escorts, light cleaning (including needle pickup), and supporting community events. Selected organizations will hire, train, and deploy teams of ambassadors with relevant lived experiences, such as previous homelessness, recovery from substance use, or involvement with the justice system, to provide a visible, non-law enforcement safety presence.

Exhibit 1: Street Ambassador Service Areas

Coverage Area	Budget
Commercial Corridor Ambassadors Teams	$1,500,000
Park Ambassadors Team	$1,500,000
Neighborhood Respite Sites	$2,150,000
AM Citywide Deployable Ambassador Teams	$2,770,000
PM Citywide Deployable Ambassador Team	$2,150,000
Mission District Ambassador Teams	$2,150,000
Tenderloin District Ambassador Teams	$2,700,000
South of Market District Ambassador Teams	$2,700,000
Civic Center District Ambassador Teams	$2,700,000
Polk Gulch and Lower Nob Hill District Ambassador Teams	$1,150,000
AM Mid-Market District Ambassador Teams	$2,150,000
PM Mid-Market District Ambassador Team	$2,150,000
Total	**$25,770,000**

Source: HSA Request For Proposals 1191

Performance Management

DEM will monitor performance quarterly using City data and field observations on the following service and outcome objectives.

Service Objectives

A. Successfully execute all programmatic requirements 90 percent of the time.

B. Maintain required staff levels 90 percent of the time.

C. Attend 90 percent of recurring City meetings

D. Participate in at least 80 percent of stakeholder meetings.

E. Complete 90 percent of daily data reports.

F. Submit monthly invoices and reports on time and complete 100 percent of the time.

G. Provide a written strategic ramp-down plan within 30 days of the City's request 90 percent of the time.

H. Track and report critical incidents to DEM within 24 hours using an agreed-upon form 90 percent of the time.

I. Manage staff grievances, conflicts, and personnel issues to the City's satisfaction 90 percent of the time.

Outcome Objectives

J. A 20 percent reduction in relevant 911 calls (e.g., disorderly conduct, public intoxication) in service areas over the initial term of the agreement.

K. A 20 percent reduction in relevant 311 service requests and a 30 percent improvement in response times over the initial term of the agreement.

L. 80 percent compliance with engagement protocols, staffing requirements, and public space cleanliness, verified by no-notice inspections by City staff.

M. A minimum of 70 percent of the staff employed have relevant lived experience.

In addition to the listed objectives, the providers must submit monthly reports to the City tracking staffing hours, blocks covered and their rates, daily deployment averages and totals, any unusual or significant incidents, and the number, nature, and outcomes of interventions, de-escalations, overdose reversals, needle disposals, and calls to 311 and 911.

FISCAL IMPACT

The requested $9.9 million in funding would contribute to the $25.77 million annual cost of the street ambassador contract/s that are being procured by HSA as of this writing. As shown below in Exhibit 2, based on the estimated annual $25.77 million program cost stated in the RFP, we estimate the total cost of the new street ambassador program contracts would be $67 million through the initial term of the agreements through FY 2027-28 and $142.8 million through December 2030 if all options to extend the agreements allowed under the RFP are exercised. These figures do not include the $10.8 million of spending in the first half of FY 2025-26 on the interim street ambassador contracts. Any contracts that exceed $10 million or ten years would require Board of Supervisors' approval.

Exhibit 2: Estimated Street Ambassador Contract Costs

Contract Year	Amount
Initial Term	
Year 1 (Jan 2026 - Dec 2026)	$25,770,000
Year 2 (Jan 2027 - Dec 2027)	$27,058,500
Year 3 (Jan 2028 - June 2028)	$14,205,713
Initial Term	**$67,034,213**
Extension Options	
Year 4 (July 2028 - June 2029)	$29,121,711
Year 5 (July 2029 - June 2030)	$30,577,796
Year 6 (July 2030 - Dec 2030)	$16,053,343
Extension Options	**$75,752,850**
Total Projected Spending	**$142,787,062**

Source: BLA

Funding Sources

As noted above, DEM's budget includes General Fund appropriations of $20.7 million in FY 2025-26 and $18.63 million in FY 2026-27 for street ambassador services (on top of the $2 million in DEM staffing to manage the program). This funding will not be sufficient to fund the street ambassador program at the $25.77 million funding level stated in the RFP. In FY 2025-26, the shortfall is approximately $3 million. DEM will rely on work orders from DPH ($0.4 million) and OEWD ($1.5 - $2 million) as well as projected savings from the interim ambassador contracts ($0.8 million) to fully fund the program. Certain ambassador services may also be carried out by Community Benefit Districts with non-City funding, which could slightly lower the overall cost of the program. In FY 2026-27, DEM will require $7.5 - $7.8 million of additional General Fund appropriations to fully fund the program.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

The ongoing procurement process and contract structure indicated in the RFP incorporate our prior recommendations on the ambassador contracts, including:

- Increasing competition by allowing a broader set of proposers to apply for funds
- Increasing competition by allowing proposers to apply for one or multiple service areas
- Extending the procurement timeline from two to three weeks
- Shifting from a deliverable-based contract to a contract that reimburses actual costs with a clear staffing plan and operating budget
- Including outcome objectives in the RFP and subsequent contracts, such as change in 911 and 311 calls
- Replacing surveys of community satisfaction with City staff conducting field observations to confirm compliance with program requirements

Together, these changes are a significant improvement to the internal controls for the street ambassador program and, if executed effectively, have the potential to provide policy makers with greater assurance and clarity regarding the impact of these services.

In addition, the RFP requires that street ambassador contractors maintain 70 percent of staff with certain lived experience (such as homelessness, recovery from substance use, and/or involvement with the justice system). This may favor certain program design and incumbent providers and limit the pool of potential proposers. The three current street ambassador contracts have a similar requirement for lived experience, which is either 60, 80, or 100 percent of staff, depending on the contract. According to DEM, the requirement for lived experience will improve program outcomes and was set at 70 percent to allow for a broad pool of applicants.

Finally, as noted above, the pending procurement will result in DEM requiring approximately $3 million of additional funding in FY 2025-26 and $7.8 million in FY 2026-27. Like other City contracts, the street ambassador contracts may be adjusted each year, depending on the budget decisions made by the Mayor and Board of Supervisors. However, given the City's structural budget deficit in the General Fund, the Board and Mayor should consider funding the street ambassador program within the existing funding levels approved for this program in the FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27 budget.

DEM has met the goal of reporting to the Board of Supervisors on its long-term plans for the ambassador program. We therefore recommend releasing the budget reserve.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the requested release of reserves.

Release of Reserved Funds: $9,900,000

Implementation of the Community Safety Ambassador Program

Presented by
Department of Emergency Management

Budget and Finance Committee
October 29, 2025

Community Safety Ambassador Programs

Past State
2020-June 2025

Disparate programs managed by multiple city agencies across multiple contracts + subcontractors

Current State
July 1-Dec 31, 2025

3 short-term grants to ensure no break in service with some increased flexibility and standardization of oversight

Future State
Jan 1, 2026

New RFP consolidates into a single program with greater flexibility of deployments

Current Program Scope

Tenderloin / Mid-Market

- 100 ambassadors / day, 7 days / week
- Shift times vary between 7am – 11:30pm
- Mix of fixed post and roving
- Engagements, interventions, drug deterrence, wellness checks, facilitate safe and clean environment

Grantee: Urban Alchemy
NTE Budget: $9,800,000

16th / Mission

- 6-8 ambassadors / day, 7 days / week
- Shift 11:30am – 8pm
- Roving posts
- Engagements, interventions, drug deterrence, wellness checks, facilitate safe and clean environment

Grantee: Ahsing Solutions
NTE Budget: $498,267

Tenderloin Parks

- 6-9 ambassadors / day, 7 days / week
- Shift 9am – 8pm during park operating hours
- Fixed posts
- Park stewardship, engagements, facilitate safe and clean environment

Grantee: Tenderloin CBD
NTE Budget: $500,000

Current Program Spending

Current Ambassador Contracts	Contract #	Last Invoiced Month	Invoiced to Date
Ahsing Solutions	1000036179	Aug-25	$ 154,957.65
Tenderloin Community Benefit District (TLCBD)	1000036172	Sept-25	$ 218,622.21
Urban Alchemy	1000036173	Sept-25	$ 4,495,355.62

Current Program Performance July -September

Tenderloin / Mid-Market

- 150+ block faces covered
- Daily average:
  - 154 de-escalations
  - 3,377 interventions in anti-social behavior and drug use
  - 5,398 positive engagements
- 460+ daily visitors to the TL and 6th Street Oasis
- 12,331 trash bags collected
- 15,084 syringes removed

16th / Mission

- 22 block faces covered
- 403 de-escalations
- 907 interventions
- 9,373 positive engagements
- 7 overdose reversals
- 912 resource connections
- 1,664 trash bags collected
- 912 syringes removed

Tenderloin Parks

- Monitor and clean within 3 parks and perimeters for every open hour / every day.
- Safely hosted 63,940 park visitors
- 19 de-escalations
- 355 interventions in anti-social behavior and drug use
- 673 trash bags collected
- 41 syringes removed

Identified Areas for Improvement

- Flexibility of deployment type, locations, times
- Standardization of management
- Coordination with other ambassador programs
- Integration with Neighborhood Street Teams and DMACC efforts
- Greater diversity of providers
- Ability for real-time proof of concept pilot projects

New Ambassador Program

- Ongoing deployment of a community safety ambassador program for commercial corridors, parks, neighborhoods, and other locations impacted by drug markets and unsafe/unsanitary street conditions across 12 service areas.

- RFP 1191

Proposal Phase	Tentative Date
Request for Proposals Issued	October 3, 2025
Pre-Proposal Conference (virtual)	October 8, 2025 at 3:00pm
Deadline for Written Questions	October 10, 2025 at 3:00pm
Deadline to Submit Proposals	October 24, 2025 at 3:00pm
Tentative Evaluation of Proposals	October 2025
Tentative Notice of Award	November 2025
Tentative Date Services Begin	January 1, 2026

New Program Scope

- Positive engagements
- Basic & de-escalation interventions
- Drug activity deterrence
- Ensuring a safe and clean environment
- Immediate aid and wellness checks
- Facilitation of space activation
- Safe passage

New Program Coverage

Service Area	# Ambassadors (# Supervisors)	Hours/ Day	Days/ Week	Existing Coverage?
Commercial Corridors	8 (4)	8	5	No
Parks	6 (1)	12	7	Yes but fixed
Neighborhood Respite Sites	4 per shift (1)	24	7	Yes
AM Citywide Deployable	15 (3)	8	7	Partial
PM Citywide Deployable	12 (2)	8	7	No
Mission	12 (2)	8	7	Partial
Tenderloin	12 (2)	10	7	Yes
South of Market	12 (2)	10	7	Partial
Civic Center	12 (2)	10	7	Yes
Polk Gulch and Lower Nob Hill	6 (1)	8	7	Yes
AM Mid-Market	12 (2)	8.5	7	Yes
PM Mid-Market	12 (2)	8.5	7	Yes

New Program Budget

Service Area	Max Annual Budget
Commercial Corridor	$1,500,000
Parks	$1,500,000
Neighborhood Respite Sites	$2,150,000
AM Citywide Deployable	$2,770,000
PM Citywide Deployable	$2,150,000
Mission	$2,150,000
Tenderloin	$2,700,000
South of Market	$2,700,000
Civic Center	$2,700,000
Polk Gulch and Lower Nob Hill	$1,150,000
AM Mid-Market	$2,150,000
PM Mid-Market	$2,150,000
Total	**$25,770,000**

Request to Committee

- $9.9M was placed on reserve in DEM’s FY25-26 budget pending substantial progress in the competitive procurement process for a long-term ambassador grant program.
- Request to release the funding on reserve to support the execution of grants under RFP 1191 and future ambassador program funding through DEM.

Department of Emergency Management
San Francisco City Hall, Room 344
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
Phone: (415) 558-3800

Daniel Lurie
Mayor

Mary Ellen Carroll
Executive Director

October 7, 2025

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

Connie Chan
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Release of $9,900,000 Reserve to the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management to Support the Community Safety Ambassador Program

Dear Madam Clerk and Chair Chan:

This letter serves as the request from the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) for the Budget and Finance Committee to calendar the release of $9,900,000 in budget reserves in order to implement the Community Safety Ambassador Program. DEM respectfully requests this item to be heard by the Committee as soon as possible, with preference during the meeting on October 29, if available.

The $9.9M in funding was appropriated in the FY 25-26 budget and placed on reserve pending substantial progress in the competitive procurement process for a long-term ambassador grant program. After careful planning and coordination, DEM, in partnership with the San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA), issued a Request for Proposals on October 3, 2025 to advance this process. Therefore, DEM is prepared to present to the Committee on our progress as well as long-term strategies for a more flexible and responsive citywide ambassador program.

San Francisco continues to confront a devastating fentanyl crisis, with more than 70% of accidental overdose deaths in 2024 linked to this synthetic opioid. Many neighborhoods have also experienced increased public disturbances associated with open-air drug markets. The Community Safety Ambassador Program will deploy specialized, highly trained ambassadors to provide community engagement, de-escalation, safety presence, street cleaning, overdose recognition and response, and connections to the City's systems of care. The revised program to be funded with the budget currently on reserve expands flexibility for the City and allows for more dynamic deployments than in the past.

This program is an essential component of broader City initiatives aimed at recovering from the pandemic and the fentanyl crisis by enhancing safety, cleanliness, and outreach. It will work in close coordination with the Drug Market Agency Coordination Center, Neighborhood Street Teams, and Community Benefit Districts to focus on neighborhoods affected by illegal drug markets, support residents and small businesses, activate public spaces, and strengthen local systems of care. Ambassador programs are also an essential component of the City's economic recovery strategy. By maintaining safe, clean, and welcoming neighborhoods, ambassadors help attract workers, support local businesses, and draw visitors to San Francisco.

DEM is committed to supporting thriving communities through the Community Safety Ambassador Program with the release of the requested funds. We look forward to providing a more thorough briefing on the topic when this item is scheduled at Committee.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Bechelli

Adrienne Bechelli
Deputy Director, Coordinated Street Response
San Francisco Department of Emergency Management

CC: Mary Ellen Carroll, DEM Executive Director
Greg Wagner, Controller
Adam Thongsavat, Liaison to the Board of Supervisors, Office of Mayor Daniel Lurie
Anna Garfink, Senior Analyst, Budget and Legislative Analyst's Office

Print Form

Introduction Form

By a Member of the Board of Supervisors or Mayor

Time stamp
or meeting date

I hereby submit the following item for introduction (select only one):

- [ ] 1. For reference to Committee. (An Ordinance, Resolution, Motion or Charter Amendment).
- [ ] 2. Request for next printed agenda Without Reference to Committee.
- [x] 3. Request for hearing on a subject matter at Committee.
- [ ] 4. Request for letter beginning :"Supervisor [ ] inquiries"
- [ ] 5. City Attorney Request.
- [ ] 6. Call File No. [ ] from Committee.
- [ ] 7. Budget Analyst request (attached written motion).
- [ ] 8. Substitute Legislation File No. [ ]
- [ ] 9. Reactivate File No. [ ]
- [ ] 10. Topic submitted for Mayoral Appearance before the BOS on [ ]

Please check the appropriate boxes. The proposed legislation should be forwarded to the following:

- [ ] Small Business Commission
- [ ] Youth Commission
- [ ] Ethics Commission
- [ ] Planning Commission
- [ ] Building Inspection Commission

Note: For the Imperative Agenda (a resolution not on the printed agenda), use the Imperative Form.

Sponsor(s):

Clerk of the Board

Subject:

Hearing - Release of Reserved Funds - Department of Emergency Management – Implementation of the Community Safety Ambassador Program - $9,900,000

The text is listed:

Hearing to consider the release of reserved funds to the Department of Emergency Management placed on Budget and Finance Committee reserve by the Ordinance No. 119-25 in the amount of $9,900,000 to fund the implementation of the Community Safety Ambassador Program.

Signature of Sponsoring Supervisor: for Alisa Somera

For Clerk's Use Only