

## Request for Board Action Details

**File #:** 2020-609

**Type:** Administrative Item      **Status:** Passed

**In control:** Board of Commissioners

**On agenda:** 12/22/2020      **Final action:** 12/22/2020

**Title:** Amendments to Agreements with Best Western Como Park and Best Western Capitol Ridge in Response to COVID-19 Homelessness

**Sponsors:** Economic Growth and Community Investment

**Indexes:**

**Code sections:**

**Attachments:** 1. Best Western Como Park Agreement, 2. Best Western Como Park First Amendment to Agreement, 3. Best Western Capitol Ridge Agreement, 4. Best Western Capitol Ridge First Amendment to Agreement, 5. Best Western Capitol Ridge Second Amendment to Agreement, 6. Resolution

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
12/22/2020	1	Board of Commissioners	approved	Pass

**Sponsor:** Economic Growth and Community Investment

**Title**

Amendments to Agreements with Best Western Como Park and Best Western Capitol Ridge in Response to COVID-19 Homelessness

**Recommendation**

1. Approve the First Amendment to the Agreement with the Best Western Como Park, 1010 Bandana Boulevard West, Saint Paul, MN 55108, to provide hotel rooms through May 31, 2021 at an amount not to exceed \$1,690,000 for residents experiencing homelessness.
2. Approve the Second Amendment to the Agreement with Best Western Capitol Ridge, 161 Saint Anthony Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55103, to provide hotel rooms and meals through May 31, 2021 at an amount not to exceed \$3,493,721 for residents experiencing homelessness.
3. Authorize the County Manager to execute the Amendments to the Agreements.
4. Authorize \$5,183,721 in 2021 from funding that will come from the Homelessness Project funds for these agreements.
5. Authorize the County Manager to execute amendments to the agreements in accordance with the County's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of available funding.

**Background and Rationale**

On March 17, 2020, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved a temporary declaration of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners also approved the use of up to \$1.8 million from the General Contingency Account for temporary quarantine and isolation facilities for residents experiencing homelessness. Ramsey County subsequently opened a COVID-19 Respite for isolation/quarantine and leased protective housing units at area hotels, including Best Western Como Park and Best Western Capitol Ridge.

On June 16, 2020, the County Board approved \$4.1M in CARES Act funding from the \$40 million for 130

unclassified limited duration full-time equivalents for Ramsey County's COVID-19 Respite and Hotel operations. Since COVID-19 began, Ramsey County has responded to the needs of residents experiencing homelessness by establishing Mary Hall, utilizing the former Boys Totem Town (BTT), establishing lease agreements for shelter at Bethesda Hospital and Luther Seminary, and securing hotel space at various locations. In addition to rooms and beds, meals, staffing, janitorial services, security, supplies, personal protective equipment and other needed items were included.

For the first amendment to the agreement with Best Western Como Park, which is designated for single women and couples experiencing homelessness, up to 80 rooms are on contract through May 31, 2021. Laundry services are available for use. The total cost of the agreement is now \$1,690,000. For the second amendment to the agreement with Best Western Capitol Ridge, which is designated for elders experiencing homelessness, the original 92 rooms are included plus an additional 33 rooms on reserve, which includes a minimum of 46 meals daily, including meals for all 125 rooms through May 31, 2021. Total cost for this agreement is now \$3,493,721.

The total cost of both agreements is up to \$5,183,721. All current services will end on December 30, 2020 if the contracts are not extended.

**County Goals** (Check those advanced by Action)

- Well-being       Prosperity       Opportunity       Accountability

**Racial Equity Impact**

COVID-19 has emphasized the racial disparities among the County's residents. There has been a disproportionate impact on African American, American Indian and other underrepresented racially and ethnically diverse communities. Through focused and targeted engagement efforts, trusted messengers, data collection, and continued engagement with community members that can guide program alterations in real-time, Ramsey County will continue to ensure that the processes it employs align with the outcomes the community is seeking.

Large racial disparities also exist in the homeless service system. In 2019, 45% of residents in the adult shelter system were Black/African American compared to be presenting 13% of the total population of the county and 47% of residents in the hotel programs in 2020. By strategically investing in the homeless service system and pathways to permanent housing Ramsey County aims to reduce racial disparities in housing. The Homelessness Planning and Operations Teams track the number of residents by race/ethnicity weekly to make sure referral and exit processes do not contribute to ongoing racial disparities. This emphasizes the importance of the ongoing efforts to engage with community and learn more about how to ensure an equitable response that confronts these longstanding racial disparities in access and outcomes in Ramsey County.

**Community Participation Level and Impact**

Ramsey County continues to meet weekly with dozens of partners in the homeless service network and in the broader community to learn and enhance the housing system. This includes residents, non-profits, other government agencies, service providers and internal staff. We gain insight from and share information with outreach and shelter providers, partner agencies and residents.

- Inform       Consult       Involve       Collaborate       Empower

**Fiscal Impact**

The 2021 COVID-19 homelessness response in Ramsey County will be funded through the Homelessness project, which will come before the County Board in January as well as additional state funding from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

It is projected that up to \$3,493,721 will be spent on the extension of the Best Western Capitol Ridge and up to \$1,690,000 on the extension of Best Western Como Park contracts. This totals to \$5,183,721 for the extension of both contracts through May 31, 2021.

### County Manager Comments

Residents can learn more about how the County invested \$72 million of federal funding to serve our neighbors through the [Ramsey County Investment and Support Efforts \(RISE <https://www.ramseycounty.us/covid-19-info/county-services-initiatives/investment-support-efforts-cares-funding>\)](https://www.ramseycounty.us/covid-19-info/county-services-initiatives/investment-support-efforts-cares-funding).

Additional information on the demographics of those that Ramsey County served through its Housing and Homelessness Operations during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found [here. <https://data.ramseycounty.us/stories/s/Respite-and-Temporary-Shelters-Weekly-Dashboard-CO/vvx2-n5tk/>](https://data.ramseycounty.us/stories/s/Respite-and-Temporary-Shelters-Weekly-Dashboard-CO/vvx2-n5tk/)

### Last Previous Action

On June 16, 2020, the County Board approved up to 130 unclassified limited duration full-time equivalents through December 30, 2020 for Ramsey County's COVID-19 Respite and Hotel operations in accordance with Minn. Stat. 383A.286, subd.2(l), and authorized related funding of \$4,140,000 (Resolution B2020-133).

On May 26, 2020, the County Board authorized the County Manager to use up to \$14 million of the CARES Act funding for emergency response costs associated with operating the county during the emergency period, and to accept \$522,871 to support homeless shelters and supplies from the Minnesota Department of Human Services Homelessness Fund (Resolution B2020-114).

On March 17, 2020, the County Board authorized the County Manager to use up to \$1.8 million from the General Contingency Account and other general fund balances for temporary quarantine and isolation facilities for residents experiencing homelessness (Resolution B2020-065).

On March 17, 2020, the County Board declared Ramsey County to be in a Local State of Emergency effective the 14th day of March 2020 due to the current, ongoing and potential impacts from COVID-19 (Resolution B2020-060).

### Attachments

1. Best Western Como Park Agreement
2. Best Western Como Park First Amendment to Agreement
3. Best Western Capitol Ridge Agreement
4. Best Western Capitol Ridge First Amendment to Agreement
5. Best Western Capitol Ridge Second Amendment to Agreement