



**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** November 19, 2024  
**TO:** City Council Members  
**FROM:** Courtney Welch, Mayor  
**SUBJECT:** **Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Emeryville Approving An Employment Agreement Between The City Of Emeryville And LaTanya Bellow As City Manager And Authorizing The Mayor To Execute Said Agreement On Behalf Of The City**

**RECOMMENDATION**

As Mayor, I recommend that the City Council review and adopt the attached resolution approving an Employment Agreement (“Agreement”) between the City of Emeryville and LaTanya Bellow as City Manager for a three-year period commencing January 6, 2025. The proposed Agreement is attached as Exhibit A.

**BACKGROUND**

Former City Manager Paul Buddenhagen resigned on September 5, 2024. Adam Politzer has served as Interim City Manager since September 9, 2024, and Bob Murray & Associates conducted an executive search to fill the City Manager position on a permanent basis. On September 15, 2024, the executive search ended with over 45 candidates applying for the City Manager position. Several candidates were selected to participate in an extensive interview process for the position. Finalists were identified and candidate LaTanya Bellow was selected to fill the City Manager position.

**DISCUSSION**

The proposed Employment Agreement, a copy of which is attached to the proposed resolution as Exhibit A, is the agreement staff recommends that the Council approve to appoint Mrs. Bellow as City Manager from January 6, 2025 through January 5, 2028.

The proposed agreement includes but is not limited to the following substantive provisions:

- Section 6, Salary: \$26,583 per month.
- Section 7, Expenses: A compensated expense allowance in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per month. A reimbursement for health and wellness expenses equivalent to One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per month.
- Section 8, Retirement Plans: Provides participation in the 457(b) deferred compensation retirement savings plan, and participation in the 401(a) defined contribution plan.
- Section 9, Paid Time Off: Provides accrual of four (4) weeks of vacation leave and three (3) weeks of sick leave per year; additionally, the City Manager shall be credited with two (2) weeks of administrative leave July 1<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year

with no carry-over provision. The City Manager will observe the holidays provided for other Unrepresented Department Head employees.

- Section 10, Public Employees Retirement System: Provides participation of the City Manager in the PERS 2% @ 60 (average highest compensation earnable over a continuous three-year period) retirement formula plan, provided the City Manager is a “classic member” as provided by the Public Employee Retirement Law (“PERL”). If the City Manager is determined to be a “new member” under the PERL, the City will provide for participation of the City Manager in the PERS 2% @ 62 (average highest compensation earnable over a continuous three-year period) retirement formula plan.
- Section 11, Business Expenses: Provides that the City Manager’s expenses for membership in and attendance at conferences of the International City/County Management Association and League of California Cities as well as other business expenses shall be budgeted.
- Section 12, Group Insurance Coverage: Provides that the City Manager shall be provided with medical, dental and other health care benefits provided to other Unrepresented Department Head employees.

Mrs. Bellow brings over two decades of experience as a senior-level executive, project manager, and financial strategist in municipal management. Most recently, she served as Interim City Manager for the City of Berkeley, as well as Interim Public Works Director, where she led the successful delivery of Berkeley’s 5-year paving plan. Her strategic leadership was key to Berkeley’s recent accomplishments, such as advancing critical affordable housing initiatives, adopting an encampment policy and implementing public safety reforms like the Specialized Care Unit (SCU) that prioritize equity and community well-being to members experiencing a crisis. Mrs. Bellow is the Deputy City Manager with oversight for all operational departments within the City of Berkeley, including Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Health, Housing and Community Services, and Neighborhood Services. Under her leadership Berkeley saw a decrease of 45% in people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, demonstrating her commitment to impactful community improvements. Her expertise in financial management and project oversight includes experience with land use development, capital improvement projects, and initiatives that foster vibrant and resilient communities. She has served as Berkeley’s chief negotiator for labor contracts with SEIU, police, fire, and other unions, highlighting her financial acumen and adeptness in complex negotiations. Mrs. Bellow holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from California State University, East Bay, and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Public Administration. She serves on the boards of the League of California Cities and California Public Employers Labor Relations Association. When she’s not working, Mrs. Bellow enjoys spending time with her close-knit family, traveling with her husband, three daughters and grandson. She also enjoys playing with her new grand-dog, Thor. Dedicated to public service beyond her professional roles, Mrs. Bellow volunteers with the San Francisco Safe House and actively supports youth in her church community.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The approved Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 includes funding for the City Manager's position.

## **STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC**

None.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

## **CONCLUSION**

I recommend that the City Council review and adopt the attached resolution approving an Employment Agreement ("Agreement") between the City of Emeryville and LaTanya Bellow as City Manager for a three-year period commencing January 6, 2025.

**PREPARED BY:** Lilybell Nakamura, Human Resources Director

## **APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EMERYVILLE**



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Courtney Welch, Mayor

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Resolution
  - Exhibit A – Employment Contract