



# County of Santa Cruz

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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SUSAN MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

May 6, 2014

AGENDA: May 13, 2014

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

### PACIFIC GARDEN MALL PILOT PROGRAM

Dear Members of the Board:

On April 8, 2014, your Board approved the Pacific Garden Mall Pilot Program and directed the County Administrative Office to report back May 6<sup>th</sup> with any budget adjustments necessary to implement the program, including \$78,979 to cover Health Services Agency (HSA)/Encompass Community Services (Encompass) costs and a report on any actions taken by the Santa Cruz City Council to support the program. At the May 6, 2014 meeting, your Board approved deferral of the report to May 20, 2014, to allow sufficient time to provide your Board with information regarding related actions taken by the City of Santa Cruz at their May 13, 2014 City Council meeting. It has come to our attention that the City will not be considering this item until May 27<sup>th</sup>, therefore this item is being brought back to your Board on today's agenda.

Currently, HSA partners with the City of Santa Cruz (City) to fund and support a 1.0 FTE downtown outreach worker and a 0.5 FTE law enforcement liaison in support of downtown public safety. Your Board's request to contract with Encompass for provision of a 0.67 FTE counselor position in support of the pilot program can be funded by utilizing salary savings realized in HSA's Behavioral Health Division. Of the \$78,979 total cost, \$10,591 is proposed to fund the FY 2013-14 portion of the Encompass contract. Additionally, the Encompass contract will leverage federal and State revenues through scope of work provisions that help ensure eligible clients are enrolled into Medi-Cal and other benefits programs as appropriate. HSA will return to your Board with a Supplemental Budget report to provide for the remaining cost of \$68,388 requested funding for FY 2014-15.

Your Board considered the County's response to the Public Safety Task Force Report on February 11, 2014, and directed the County Administrative Office and appropriate departments to continue to work collaboratively with the City to enhance public safety in our community. In response, the County Administrative Office began assigning departments, as appropriate, to provide primary case management to each of the top repeat offenders known to the County. Since the Pacific Garden Mall Pilot Program is now addressing the needs of this group, our office will forgo our initial plans and continue to work with the City to advance the goals of the Pilot Program.

16

2

On February 25, 2014, the Santa Cruz City Council directed City staff to prioritize and report back regularly on progress of the Collaborative Chronic Offender Program, including appropriate commitment of City funds and resources, with the City's participation to be under the direction of the City Manager's Office and City Attorney's Office. City staff was also directed to develop a list of Task Force and City Council recommendations not addressed in the Public Safety Citizen Task Force report, including strategy and budget considerations, bring this information before the City Council's Public Safety Committee to consider, and report the Committee's recommendations to the entire Council for discussion and action by June 2014. It is anticipated that the City will consider this matter at their May 27, 2014 Council meeting.

The City has provided a 1.0 FTE Program Coordinator position to share primary oversight of the Pilot Program with the District Attorney's office. The Program Coordinator is developing the measurable outcomes for the Pilot Program in collaboration with City and County staff. It is anticipated that the District Attorney's Office will provide a status report, to include the recommended measurable outcomes, to your Board at budget hearings.

It is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that your Board take the following actions:

1. Accept and file this report; and
2. Authorize the Health Services Agency to amend the current fiscal year agreement with Encompass Community Services, contract number 0129, increasing the total contract amount by \$10,591, for provision of the fiscal year 2013-14 Pacific Garden Mall Pilot Program services, and authorize the Health Services Agency Director to sign; and
3. Direct staff to return to your Board with a Supplemental Budget report to provide \$68,388 for the fiscal year 2014-15 portion of funding for the Encompass Community Services contract costs in support of the Pacific Garden Mall Pilot Program; and
4. Direct staff to report back at budget hearings with a status report on the Pacific Garden Mall Pilot Program, any additional actions taken by the Santa Cruz City Council to support the program, and a set of recommended measurable outcomes to determine the success of the program.

Very truly yours,

  
 SUSAN A. MAURIELLO  
 County Administrative Officer

- cc District Attorney  
 Health Services Agency Director  
 Human Services Department Director  
 Probation Department Chief  
 City of Santa Cruz Council Members  
 City of Santa Cruz City Manager  
 City of Santa Cruz Assistant City Manager

Attachment: Santa Cruz City Council Agenda Report Re: Public Safety Citizen Task Force Follow-Up, Agenda Dated 2/25/2014 (*Agenda Report attachments not included*)

16



## CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: 2/20/2014

AGENDA OF: 2/25/2014  
DEPARTMENT: City Manager  
SUBJECT: Public Safety Citizen Task Force Follow-up (CM)

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RECOMMENDATION: Motion to receive the City's update on the Public Safety Citizen Task Force recommendations, and direct staff to:

- 1) develop a budget and accountability matrices for initiatives approved thus far by Council; and
  - 2) report back to Council on the Top 100 Chronic Offender program when planning is reportable and Council action is required. At that time, Council will be asked to consider funding options; and
  - 3) initiate a City of Santa Cruz-Santa Cruz City School Committee meeting to explore after-school programming opportunities; and
  - 4) develop a list of Task Force and Council priorities not addressed in this report; and
  - 5) assemble a strategy and budget request for implementation (or rejection) of such priorities; and
  - 6) bring the strategy and budget request before the City Council's Public Safety Committee to consider, amend or approve and report the Committee's recommendations to the City Council.
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BACKGROUND: The City Council formed the Public Safety Citizen Task Force in May of 2013 to explore public safety issues impacting the quality of life in Santa Cruz. The Task Force was directed to report back to the City Council with their findings and recommendations.

Over the course of six months, the group of fourteen residents analyzed issues of paramount concern to the public, including drug abuse and related crime, degradation of public spaces and increased calls for emergency service. The Task force used a data-driven approach to analyze the issues and leveraged expert testimony from partner agencies, non-profits and community organizations.

Overview of Task Force Recommendation Framework

The Task Force recommendations were intended to be customized to our community's needs and initiated collaboratively with City partners to maintain and improve the overall quality of life locally. With public safety being a key priority for the City, community expectation for a comprehensive and visible approach is high. As such, the City has used this opportunity to create new initiatives that support existing programs and operations in order to meet the Council's objectives. As a first order of business, staff analyzed the Task Force priority recommendation subgroups to develop a manageable and efficient work plan. A summary of that analysis follows.

The Task Force prioritized its recommendations into three thematic areas: prevention initiatives, strategic enforcement and collaborative accountability and funding.

Prevention initiatives are designed to combat the cycle of drugs, gangs, and crime among Santa Cruz youth before they engage in those activities. Prevention also includes environmental design of parks, beaches, open space and other public locations to discourage illegal activity. The Task Force recommended creating new opportunities for underserved youth populations, and focusing investment of resources in the San Lorenzo River Levee (now formally named Riverwalk) and Harvey West areas.

Understanding that not all crimes are preventable, the Task Force also prioritized strategic enforcement activities, with elevated attention on serial offenders. New approaches and partnerships must be created and fostered by local law enforcement and public health agencies to reduce the cycle of recidivism in the County. This is particularly important as the County contends with prison realignment (AB 109) that has shifted state prisoners down to local level. AB 109 has placed a considerable burden on Sheriffs across the State of California, as they have scrambled to effectively manage their jail space.

Santa Cruz is no exception to this statewide trend. With the Main County jail exceeding its capacity every day, few lower level offenders face jail time, and probation officers caseloads have expanded exponentially. These conditions have helped to create a cycle of recidivism for hundreds of individuals in the County. The City and County must partner to bring focus to this issue, finding alternative methods to carry out justice and ensure accountability. Further collaborative efforts are needed to reduce the cycle of crime related to illicit drug and alcohol addiction.

Finally, the success of these prevention and strategic enforcement activities requires adequate collaboration, staffing and funding levels. It is imperative for the City to identify how existing internal existing resources can be better utilized and seek opportunities to leverage countywide programs and funding.

The Task Force concluded its work in November 2013 and presented a comprehensive set of recommendations to the City Council for review and consideration. The City Council took immediate action on the Task Force recommendations at the December 3rd Special Study Session and directed staff to evaluate and report back on several specific priorities including:

Prevention Initiatives

- 1) Improve environmental design and protection of high crime areas and open spaces.
- 2) Partner with City Schools/County Office of Education, community non-profits, the youth violence prevention task force and Santa Cruz Public Libraries to expand youth programming.

Strategic Enforcement

- 1) Continue aggressive Santa Cruz Police Department recruitment efforts to fully staff the department, including the five officer positions authorized in FY 2013.
- 2) Explore partnerships with outside law enforcement agencies to enhance specific capabilities.
- 3) Take steps to integrate parks safety initiatives into the Santa Cruz Police Department Public Safety Mandate.
- 4) Take the lead in initiating a City-County-Court-Social Service Task Force. The goal is to reduce recidivism amongst the City's top chronic offenders, utilizing an approach which includes drug and alcohol rehabilitation, mental health services, long-term housing and criminal justice accountability.

Collaborative Accountability and Appropriate Funding

- 1) The City shall, within 30 days, notify the agencies named in report and request their written response to the pertinent Task Force recommendations.
- 2) Develop and return to Council within 60 days a staffing plan for the City Manager's office to manage public health & safety initiatives as well as the implementation of Council directed Task Force recommendations in conjunction with the Council's Public Safety Committee oversight.

The December 3rd Council motion encompasses many of the top priorities outlined in the final Task Force report from prevention programs, to enforcement activities, on through to the criminal justice system's management of repeat criminal offenders. City Council directed staff to focus work immediately on the identified priority items (attached) and return with an update and plan for implementation in early 2014.

**DISCUSSION:** Implementation of the Task Force recommendations will require a phased approach. Staff recognizes the need to balance quick action with careful analysis of data, coalition building with partner agencies, and developing a collaborative program that capitalizes on our collective resources. With that perspective, this first formal report back to the City Council includes information on initiatives already in progress, developing partnerships, and future opportunities that could be implemented this year.

**Prevention Initiatives**

Under the philosophy that problems averted via prevention mechanisms are worthy of investment and yield long-term social and financial benefits, the Task Force and the City Council prioritized the following two prevention initiatives: environmental design and youth programming. Both have been vetted during this initial analysis.

### Recent Initiatives in Environmental Design Improvements

The Parks and Recreation, Police and Public Works Departments have long held the view that creating a safe environment for all community members will encourage positive activity in the City's parks, beaches and open spaces. Recent investments include enhancements to the lighting in the San Lorenzo Park, facilitating the creation of a BMX bicycle pump track on the Westside, adding a disc golf course in the San Lorenzo River Benchlands, installing mile markers on West Cliff and the San Lorenzo Riverwalk (formerly known as the Levee), and developing a former empty lot into the Riverside Gardens Park.

Additionally, the City installed a 24-hour public access bathroom near the Riverwalk to reduce human waste in the area. Most recently, the City Council approved funding to repair and reopen the Depot Park field at the FY 2014 mid-year budget hearing.

Finally, the City recently received a \$500,000 grant from the State to install 40 lights along the Riverwalk (on the west side) from Highway 1 to the Kaiser Permanente Arena. To capitalize on this resource, the City Council also approved funding to assist property owners in the area to reduce loitering and other illegal activity around their properties by subsidizing investments in additional lighting, vegetation management and anti-graffiti protection.

### Preventative Youth Programming

The City analyzed existing preventative programs, those offered in other communities and the barriers to entry into City programs offered to at-risk youth. Research has demonstrated that early intervention programs provided by schools, cities and non-profits, to address at-risk populations yield positive results while reducing long-term public safety liabilities. According to one study commissioned by the YMCA, teens who do not participate in afterschool programs are nearly three times more likely to skip classes at school than teens who do participate.<sup>1</sup>

The City's experience with programs like Santa Cruz Police Department's gang prevention programs (PRIDE and BASTA) and Parks and Recreation Teen Center have demonstrated similar results. These programs, in conjunction with the \$25,000 in recreation program scholarships the City and community organizations provide to 200 Santa youth annually, have helped keep local at-risk youth in school and out of gangs.

While these recent improvements are beneficial, there are opportunities to expand the City's prevention efforts. Staff worked internally to identify practical steps to lower barriers to participation in existing youth programs and develop new City-led opportunities and partnerships to meet the City Council directive.

The Parks and Recreation Department created a list of potential programs to serve at-risk youth and new park elements (see attachment). Youth programming options include after-school programs, youth summer jobs programs, transportation and direct outreach to typically underserved neighborhoods. As staff learned in researching programming options, new resources should be invested specifically in youth currently participating in City programs, like PRIDE, in order to ensure those most at-risk receive ongoing support throughout their teen years. Parks staff identified further prevention options, such as making the bike park at Depot Park permanent and installing another bicycle pump track, potentially in the San Lorenzo Benchlands.

<sup>1</sup> YMCA of the USA. (2001, March) *After school for America's teens*.

These proposals are conceptual and include costs estimates for implementation. In order to begin processing these further, staff is seeking City Council direction within the context of the FY 2015 budget development. Staff also recommends that the City Council facilitate a City-Santa Cruz City School committee meeting to develop a collaborative work plan on after-school programming as priorities.

### **Strategic Enforcement**

The Santa Cruz Police Department responded to high volume of service calls in recent years, topping 100,000 in 2012 and 2013. This workload created significant stress on the Police Department, particularly as it has not been fully staffed for some time. Despite the best efforts of the Police Department and its allies in the community, crime levels have remained static or increased in some areas. Santa Cruz may be experiencing the effects of prison realignment, or it could simply be a function of the lagging national economy, or a combination of factors. Regardless, the impact is being felt by residents and visitors alike.

As noted in the Task Force report, the City experiences a high volume of repeat municipal and penal code offenders. According to the most recent statistics, nearly 300 individuals account for over 3,000 to 4,000 municipal code infraction citations that go unadjudicated annually.

Unadjudicated municipal cases are a major draw on City resources. In order to bring just one of these individuals to Superior Court, some of whom have 50 or more outstanding citations, Police staff and the City Attorney must expend significant administrative effort that might otherwise be applied to addressing violent crime or emergencies.

Accountability measures for repeat offenders must be grounded in data-driven techniques. Studies have shown that for many of these individuals, jail time alone does not break the cycle of crime. Many of these individuals suffer from one, if not multiple debilitating conditions such as drug and alcohol addiction and mental health issues. Rehabilitative services, while expensive, bear out a much higher success rate in reducing recidivism by comparison.

Well-funded alternatives to jail and municipal case reform are therefore necessary to reduce the burden on City and County resources as well as the community's quality of life. Better outcomes can only happen with consistent and meaningful collaboration with our partners.

### **Recent Initiatives**

The City and County's history of successful partnerships, including the Maintaining Ongoing Stability through Treatment and Serial Inebriate Programs (MOST and SIP), demonstrate that the jurisdictions can work together effectively to target key issues. MOST and SIP respectively focus on individuals whose mental health and alcohol dependency issues contribute to their illegal activity and disruptive behaviors. Despite some capacity issues, these programs have shown success in reducing recidivism, and can serve as models for future collaborative efforts.

The City Council authorized the Parks and Recreation Department to hire six additional temporary park rangers to assist the Police Department's Park Unit. This unit's primary purpose is to reduce illegal activity in the City parks and open spaces. The City Council further authorized the Police Department to overhire its sworn staff complement by five positions.

SCPD continues to hire laterals and recruit Academy graduates and hopes to achieve full staffing within the year. As of this writing, SCPD was down to three unfilled police officer positions, excluding the overfills, although injuries continue to lower the number of active officers.

#### Future opportunities and City Council Consideration

City staff is working with the County to develop a Top 100 Chronic Offender program to reduce recidivism of the highest risk offenders—those that generate the most calls for service, arrests and citations.

As noted above, addressing the root causes of offender crime is crucial, and for many on the list, conditions such as chronic homelessness, mental illness and substance abuse are co-occurring. The City, County and non-profit leaders are creating a program, with a multi-disciplinary team approach, to craft a rehabilitation and recidivism reduction plan for each individual. Treatment options include housing, addiction services, therapy and other individually tailored remedies.

Several existing Countywide programs address the top 100 offenders in some manner, including the aforementioned MOST and SIP programs, as well as the 180-180 and 100 Day Dash initiatives, which are designed to provide housing the County's most vulnerable homeless individuals. There is a great opportunity to coordinate these efforts to manage detrimental criminal behavior in the very near term. This coordination can also provide a blueprint as the City and County develop the Top 100 Chronic Offender Program.

A long-term sustainable program will utilize the successful attributes of the existing programs, such as those deployed in Minneapolis, Santa Barbara and New York City, but also build new strategic accountability measures through the Court system. The latter will be further developed in concert with County agencies, the Superior Court and social service providers. City staff will report back to City Council with a final plan and any funding requests that require Council consideration. The program will also work to address individuals who consistently fail to appear on municipal code infractions.

#### **Collaborative Accountability and Funding**

Collaboration, accountability, funding and staffing were the final areas of staff analysis and action since December. The County Board of Supervisors recently endorsed many of the key recommendations of the Task Force (see attachment) and directed their staff to collaborate closely with City staff to implement those priorities. Discussions between the jurisdictions have increased appreciably in the meantime, including the identification of outside resources to fund these efforts.

Staff recognizes the critical nature of this work and the need to define a specific role within the City Manager's Office to coordinate these initiatives on an ongoing basis. While this role is being evaluated, the Assistant to the City Manager will serve as the lead, particularly on the efforts that require coordination internally and externally. The City Manager's Office will also supplement from other resources within the current City organizational structure. While it is expected that this division of labor will prove sufficient for the time being, staff recommends that this resource requirement be evaluated with the context of the priority and budget review process already in progress.



### Future Opportunities for City Council Consideration

The City and County invest large portions of their budgets to pursue positive public safety and health outcomes. The City already provides significant funding, over \$1.2 million annually through Federal grants and the City General Fund, to local non-profits that provide safety net services to our most vulnerable populations (see attachments). A large portion of that funding is geared towards public safety and youth focused programming.

In the FY 2014 Budget process, City Council provided \$7,500 to Encompass to initiate a new substance abuse program and over \$20,000 in grants to new youth programs, like the Santa Cruz Youth City Council, which helps prepare the next generation of leaders locally.

Resource management and the ability to fund new and innovative programs will be a critical consideration for the City and its partner jurisdictions. Need for funding should be considered iteratively. First, it is imperative to evaluate current fiscal practices and develop new efficiencies to manage the most egregious repeat offenders. Special focus should be paid to the most critical safety initiative priorities, namely preventative programs and the Top 100 Chronic Offender program, based on the outcome of the Task Force and with City Council direction.

To ensure long-term success, and to evaluate the need for additional funding, the City should develop metrics to assure accountability for all new initiatives, with particular attention paid to recidivism and repeat offenders. Also, the City should develop metrics to assure accountability for the success of all new funding strategies.

Staff recommends that the City Council consider this iterative approach and direct staff to work with the County and other partners to leverage existing resources and identify new funding opportunities.

### **Long Term Strategy/Next Steps**

Due to the magnitude of the recommendations, several Task Force and Council priorities were not considered within the context of this report. As mentioned above, implementation of the Task Force recommendations will require a phased approach. The intent of this first staff analysis was three-fold: evaluate and define the existing City programs that match the intent of the Task Force and Council recommendations, develop a feasible list of new programming options that can be implemented in the short term within the scope of the City's current budget, and begin the critical task of assembling community law enforcement and social service leaders to develop the Top 100 Chronic Offender program.

This first phase ensures immediate action on prevention initiatives and allows staff to pursue a thoughtful and collaborative approach to manage repeat offenders. It is expected that the City, County and Court systems' combined effort in building the Top 100 Chronic Offender Program will reinforce our jurisdictional alliances and positively impact community public safety.

FISCAL IMPACT: Approval of this recommendation has no fiscal impact.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Scott Collins

Martin Bernal

Assistant to the City Manager

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. City Council Motion from December 3, 2013 Special City Council Meeting
2. List of Recent Public Safety Initiatives
3. Parks and Recreation Prevention Program Options
4. FY 2014 and 2015 Community Programs Funding
5. County Board of Supervisors Response to the Public Safety Citizen Task Force Recommendations