



AGENDA REPORT

Library and Community Services

DATE:	July 11, 2023
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	LaShonda White, Deputy City Manager of Community Services Patrick Seals, Project Manager
Subject:	Community Crisis Response Program Update
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	<p>The City Council allocated \$1 million to support the implementation of a Community Crisis Response Program in Richmond (01204022 400201 RI200). A contract with Urban Strategies Council was approved on July 26, 2022, to conduct research and analysis of various Community Crisis Response Program options, for a total amount not to exceed \$112,844, with a term beginning August 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2024.</p> <p>Depending on the final program model, the cost to implement a CCRP program (if the program is to operate 24 hours per day and 7 days per week) could range from approximately \$1.87M to \$2.37M annually. These costs are estimates and do not include overhead charges for non-profit organization or government agency. A model with less operational hours or smaller team could result in a lower annual costs.</p>
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	July 26, 2022 and February 28, 2023

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	On July 26, 2022, the City Council approved a contract with Urban Strategies Council (USC) to conduct research and analysis of various Community Crisis Response Program (CCRP) options and set forth recommendations. Consistent with the agreement with USC, City Staff and the consultants would like to provide a program update and present a draft report outlining potential program components and options for CCRP implementation.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	RECEIVE a draft report and presentation from Urban Strategies Council regarding Community Crisis Response Program model options; and PROVIDE DIRECTION to City staff – Community Services Department (LaShonda White 510-620-6828/ Patrick Seals 510-307-8016).

DISCUSSION:

Background

The Community Crisis Program (CCRP) began taking root in November 2020 amidst conversations within the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force (Task Force). Following a host of Task Force Round Table and Sub-committee meetings, the City Council approved an allocation of \$1 million as part of the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget. Various City staff worked closely with Task Force members to research and discuss components of a CCRP program, as well as draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) to help guide the further development and implementation of an alternative crisis response program in Richmond. The RFP was released in April 2022, and in July 2022, City Council approved a contract with Urban Strategies Council (USC) to assist with this effort.

USC was contracted by the City of Richmond to assess program model options and develop a pilot initiative for a non-police response to low-level 911 calls serving Richmond residents. USC engaged Richmond residents and community stakeholders in a community survey, focus groups, community meetings, organization presentations, and direct interviews to better understand their experiences with the 911 system, crisis resources, and aspirations for new response strategies.

USC’s report is intended as a comprehensive presentation of the program options. Based on research, promising practices, and community needs, the report is drafted to hopefully provide the information needed for the City Council to make an informed decision regarding how best to move forward with the implementation of the program.

Additional information regarding CCRP can be found at <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4451/Community-Crisis-Response-Program>.

Urban Strategies Council

Founded in 1987, the Urban Strategies Council (USC) is a regional research, collective action, program innovation and policy advocacy anchor organization dedicated to advancing economic, racial, and social equity in the Bay Area. USC's most recent work includes: conducting community-based participatory research for the newly created Department of Violence Prevention (DVP); developing the MACRO pilot program in Oakland, CA and Antioch Care Team pilot program (alternative non-police responses for 911 non-violent calls); assisting a community coalition in Cambridge, MA working to design an 911-call nonpolice alternative response system; and convening/facilitating development of the Justice Reinvestment Coalition of Alameda County. USC works with public-sector jurisdictions in the United States and Canada developing alternative emergency response program models and policy recommendations.

USC participates in convenings, both formal and informal, of jurisdictions and practitioners sharing models and learning. As more communities have implemented models, USC engages in more discussions about the experiences, challenges, and needed modifications to programs. USC has deep familiarity with the various models and the initial experiences of jurisdictions with those models, the evaluation approaches, community oversight and engagement strategies and experiences. Although USC brings those experiences to the discussion, USC remains focused on understanding the specific local needs, resources, and goals of a municipality.

What is Community or Alternative Crisis Response?

CCRP provides a diversion model to reduce reliance on police and criminal justice responses by offering a public health response. A proposed CCRP program would provide an opportunity to improve access to mental health and other community services in Richmond and would also navigate people to the right services at the right time by utilizing community responders with strong ties and connections to Richmond that can respond in a respectful and non-stigmatizing manner.

Some of the desired impacts of CCRP are to reduce the engagement of frequent utilizers of emergency services with Richmond Police Department (RPD) and Richmond Fire Department (RFD); reduce the number of behavioral health and lower acuity calls traditionally responded to by the RPD and RFD; and provide communities with a supportive response option that enables connection to services. CCRP is an opportunity to provide community-focused, trauma-informed, and healing-centered call responses by well-trained non-police personnel who can increase impacted individuals' access and connection to timely, appropriate and safe community-based services and resources.

The specific types of calls will be developed by the key stakeholders (CCRP staff, RPD, RFD and 911 dispatchers). Situations that are commonly and successfully responded to by an alternative response program may include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trespasser/unwanted person • Loitering • Public urination/indecent exposure (without criminal intent) • Wellness check • Subject down (often resident asleep in public) • Found syringe • Person screaming • Person needing referral to services • People in vehicles/camping in public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person drunk in public • Panhandling/Aggressive Panhandling • Disorderly juveniles - group • Auto Disturbance - noise, revving engine • Loud music - Noise complaint • Incurable juvenile • Confused/senile person • Family dispute • Neighbor disputes • Incomplete 911 call
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Proposed Program Options

USC has identified five (5) potential structural options for the City to consider:

- 1. Non-profit** - The City issues an RFP for an independent non-profit agency (vendor) to run the program. Lessons learned from Antioch’s non-profit program implementation can inform the pros and cons for Richmond’s decision-making.
- 2. Existing City Office** – The City can choose to institute the CCRP within an existing municipal department. Potential candidates include the Richmond Fire Department, the Community Services Department, and the Office of Neighborhood Safety. Based on resident feedback, the CCRP should not be implemented under the Richmond Police Department.
- 3. New City Department** – Another option, using the City’s infrastructure as a foundation for the program, is to create a new City department that includes the CCRP and potentially other current initiatives (e.g., social service needs).
- 4. Nonprofit Hybrid Model** – This option combines starting the CCRP in a non-profit (to implement the pilot) with the intention of the CCRP then being brought into the City.
- 5. Richmond Partnership with Contra Costa County** - The City could negotiate with Contra Costa to provide the services the City of Richmond identifies.

Proposed Program Essential Components

Regardless of the option selected, USC has outlined a number of program components that are essential to developing and implementing a successful community or alternative crisis response program. The major components are listed below and described in more detail in the report.

- Coverage
- Accessibility

- Community Engagement/Presentations
- Response and Communications
- Staffing (recruitment, positions, etc.)
- Training (Dispatch, staff, collaborative relationships)
- Team Safety
- Support Networks & Referrals
- Coordination & Collaboration
- Evaluation & Reporting
- Community Advisory Board

Criteria

Considering the above-mentioned program components, each of the program design options can be evaluated against the following selected criteria:

- Speed of implementation
- Cost
- Sustainability
- Community support

Proposed Pilot Timeline and Cost

Pilot program rollout timeline depends on the implementation decisions, as do the estimated pilot costs. The CCRP pilot should run for 18 months to two years. Depending on the final program model, the cost to implement a CCRP program (if the program is to operate 24 hours per day and 7 days per week) could range from approximately \$1.87 million to \$2.37 million annually. These costs are estimates and do not include overhead charges for a non-profit organization or government agency. A model with less operational hours or smaller team could result in a lower annual cost. A more detailed breakdown of the costs is included in the report.

Next Steps

Based on direction from City Council, City staff plan to work closely with USC, Contra Costa County (CCC), RPD, RFD, the Task Force, City staff, and other stakeholders, to refine the selected program model and/or engage in additional conversations and research before returning to City Council after Council returns from recess in September 2023. A partial list of the work City staff may begin after receiving direction on July 11, 2023, includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Work with Human Resources to refine and release a job announcement for a program manager position to lead the CCRP work, and other job classifications, based on the selected program model
- Work with USC on a RFP (if a decision is made to contract with a non-profit)
- Discuss dispatch and training with RPD
- Discuss hiring and placement of EMTs with CCC EMS and RFD

- Continue coordination with CCC A3 program to discuss program integration, training, outreach, etc. is in place for A3 in Richmond
- Work with Richmond's Fleet Division to purchase one or more vehicles (depending on program option)
- Develop specially designed protocols for CCRP service call referrals and follow up
- Begin to create a community outreach and engagement plan
- Establish and strengthen referral relationships with community-based service providers
- Begin to discuss a strong data collection, monitoring, and evaluation system
- Engage with City legal staff and risk management regarding liability

Prior to the implementation of the pilot, the planning team will create initial administrative and clinical methods, identify logistical needs and considerations, and begin to build resource and referral networks. Overall, there are extensive questions, protocols, procedural issues, and structural components that need to be addressed (e.g., program evaluation, oversight, training, department coordination, staffing requirements, inter-agency agreements, etc.) before the initiation of any program implementation within the community. It is the intent of City staff to be prudent and deliberative in its approach to ensure that any alternative program the City offers is well suited to serve the health and well-being of the community and cause no harm. Under the contract with the City, USC will continue to provide support to City staff and is expected to participate in further discussions to provide support for deeper conversations for Councilmembers to make the necessary program decisions.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – DRAFT Implementation of the Community Crisis Response Program Report