

Law and Legislation Committee Report

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File ID: 2020-01070

September 15, 2020

Discussion Item 03

Title: Resolution to Redefine Public Safety

Location: Citywide

Recommendation: 1) Review a Resolution redefining public safety; and 2) pass a Motion forwarding the Resolution to City Council for consideration.

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Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-Resolution

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: Currently, City Code does not provide an explicit definition for “public safety.” The *de facto* definition stems from the City’s annual operating budget whereby throughout the document expenses related to “public safety” are those proposed by the Police and Fire Departments including emergency medical services. Therefore, the assumption has and continues to be that the City of Sacramento defines public safety primarily as services provided by police, fire safety, and emergency medical. The City ensures the comprehensive delivery of such services through direct jurisdictional oversight and funding.

As discussed at the July 1, 2020 Council meeting, Police and Fire Department staff are increasingly called upon as first responders for requests such as homelessness, mental health, and domestic disputes. Efforts to address this issue are underway through the allocation of \$5 million to create a new Office of Community Response and the hiring of an interim director to develop the initial operational framework to support an alternative response model to 911 calls that do not require a police officer response.

At the same time, the City recognizes the important role of preventative programs to create a sense of public safety among residents and communities. Consequently, the City allocates resources to such preventative programs. In addition, when considering impacts on our City policies that affect young people, the three departments focused on coordination of prevention services for youth are the Police, Fire, and Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment Departments – often working hand-in-hand.

Research shows that programs - including but not limited to stable and affordable housing, early childhood supports, quality education, the arts, healthy and accessible food, economic security, and community spaces - can directly prevent youth-related violence, and prevention activities that uplift children, families and elders will lead to safer and healthier communities overall. Moreover, these types of resources can reduce service calls and requests for police and fire as a result of the preventive and proactive nature of these programs.

Finally, in December 2017, the City of Sacramento, in recognizing that youth need particular conditions in place to feel safe, passed a Citywide Youth Development Campaign Plan (Youth Plan) that strives to “create a safe environment, both physically and emotionally, in all settings, honoring culture and community and to “promote equity, justice, and accountability with a concerted application of resources.”

The Youth Plan also states that youth voice and engagement is one of the City’s core values (“Nothing about us without us.”). As such, upon solicitation for direct feedback last month, Sacramento’s young people described today’s environment – created by the pandemic, ongoing protests, police brutality, and racism – as chaotic, traumatic, isolating, lonely, painful, stressful, depressing, frustrating, and life-changing. They also shared that they rarely feel safe.

The proposed resolution more formally defines and broadens the delivery of “public safety” services to include emergency response and operations as well as community partners and youth-focused prevention services. Furthermore, the resolution calls for a comprehensive set

of community protections through various policies and investment of resources.

This expanded definition aligns how the City maintains public safety services with applicable research as well as with the definition provided by Sacramento's youth: having the freedom to live and thrive in a community environment that has the capacity and structure to protect and support their well-being socially, physically, mentally and economically. The resolution also acknowledges that generations of genocide, structural racism, and oppression have created the conditions young people face that perpetuate violence, crime and other risks to public safety and seeks to remedy this fact.

Policy Considerations: The Citywide Youth Development Campaign Plan ("Youth Plan") was adopted by the City Council in December 2017. The Youth Plan's vision is that all Sacramento children and youth are valued and reach their fullest potential. Ensuring public safety in all communities across the City, particularly those that are the most in need, is essential to reaching this vision. The proposed comprehensive set of policies and investments will enhance the City's efforts to achieve the Youth Plan's vision.

Economic Impacts: Unknown.

Environmental Considerations: This action is not subject to CEQA because it is an administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment, and it relates to government fiscal activities that do not involve any commitment to any specific project that may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines § 15378(a), (b)(2), (b)(4) and (b)(5)).

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: Not applicable.

Rationale for Recommendation: By broadening the delivery of public safety resources, the City is adding to its capacity in maintaining public safety through the addition of prevention programs and services for youth. This upstream investment in young people will also result in future savings for the City within the "traditional" public safety services. By adopting an explicit definition, the City's public safety services will align under a stated understanding of what these services include and a holistic approach to public safety rather than an assumption.

Financial Considerations: None.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

_____, 2020

**DEFINING THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO’S PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES TO
INCLUDE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND OPERATIONS AS WELL AS YOUTH-
FOCUSED PREVENTION SERVICES**

BACKGROUND:

The City Council finds and declares the following:

- A. The City of Sacramento (“City”) defines public safety services primarily as police, fire safety, and emergency medical services and ensures the comprehensive delivery of such services through direct jurisdictional oversight and funding.
- B. City police, fire, and emergency medical staff are increasingly called upon as first responders for requests such as homelessness, mental health, and domestic disputes which often instead require a trauma-informed response and connection to ongoing services.
- C. The City recognizes the importance of preventive programs and activities by funding entities and providing internal and external supports and programs focusing on workforce development, leadership, and enrichment activities focused on youth.
- D. Research shows that providing prevention activities and spaces that uplift children and their families, such as but not limited to: stable and affordable housing, early childhood supports, quality education, the arts, healthy and accessible food, economic security, and community spaces, will lead to safer communities.
- E. These types of resources can help promote public safety and general welfare while reducing factors leading to service requests from police and fire to respond which may be better served by various preventive and proactive services.
- F. In December 2017, the City of Sacramento, in recognizing that youth need particular conditions in place to feel safe, passed a Citywide Youth Development

Campaign Plan (Youth Plan) that strives to “create a safe environment, both physically and emotionally, in all settings, honoring culture and community and ”to “promote equity, justice, and accountability with a concerted application of resources.”

- G. Sacramento’s young people describe today’s environment created by the pandemic, ongoing protests, police brutality, and racism as chaotic, traumatic, isolating, lonely, painful, stressful, depressing, frustrating, and life-changing.
- H. Many of Sacramento’s young people rarely feel safe.
- I. Youth would define safety as having the freedom to live and thrive in a community environment that has the capacity and structure to protect and support their well-being socially, physically, mentally, and economically.
- J. The City of Sacramento acknowledges that generations of genocide, structural racism, and oppression -- embedded in policies and practices such as segregation, intentional economic exclusion, restrictive housing covenants, discriminatory employment, community suppression tactics, criminalization, mass incarceration -- have created the conditions young people face that perpetuate violence, crime and other risks to public safety.
- K. This Resolution affirms that the City establishes the definition of “public safety” to encompass the delivery of police, fire, and emergency medical services and expand that definition to include emergency management and operations services and youth-focused prevention services offered by the City and in partnership with community-based organizations.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1. Definition of Public Safety. The City of Sacramento henceforth broadens the delivery of ‘public safety’ services to include emergency response and operations as well as youth-focused prevention services offered by the City and in partnership with community-based organizations. These prevention services can proactively result in a state of wellbeing where young people are at a lower risk of both causing and experiencing injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation due to crime, violence, community trauma, natural or man-made disasters, or other harmful incidents.

Section 2. Affirmed Commitment to Youth. To this end, the City of Sacramento fully commits to the mission defined in its Youth Plan to “provide systemic and sustainable investments and opportunities, harnessing collective assets to champion intentional and equitable pathways for young people to succeed” by striving to ensure public safety and general welfare through a strategic and comprehensive set of community protections that:

- a) Identify and redress root causes of unsafe conditions and violence to prevent harmful events;
- b) Provide timely trauma-informed and culturally responsive interventions to promote community safety and healing when harmful events/emergencies occur;
- c) Include investments in community well-being, such as health, education, economic and income opportunity, safe and affordable housing, recreational activities and spaces, transportation infrastructure, environmental protections, and creative, cultural and community-building activities that promote love, respect, trust, and restorative justice in addition to emergency response; and
- d) Establish policies that result in clear accountability to the public thus strengthening safety for youth and community.

Section 3. Adherence to Data-Driven Decision-Making with Focus on Positive Outcomes. The City of Sacramento will use this integrated strategic approach and follow the direction of youth and community to:

- a) Identify a set of policies and actions, focused on young people, that can improve public safety (through prevention) by addressing the policy, systems, and environmental risk factors for the most common threats to public safety;
- b) Design and implement policies and programs intended to improve, leverage, and enhance existing public safety and youth development investments;

- c) Implement strategies and interventions for police, fire, and emergency responders that result in positive relationships with the community, particularly young people;
- d) Evaluate the impact and added value of city investments, allocation of resources, and actions toward addressing the root causes of crime, violence, and other risks to the development of our youth as it may affect overall public safety;
- e) Respect the lived expertise of youth by integrating diverse youth voices into youth development and public safety decisions to follow the edict articulated in the Youth Plan, “Nothing about us without us.”;
- f) Track short-term and long-term progress of youth development investments as they influence public safety outcomes, including collection and analysis of health, social service, and economic data - disaggregated by characteristics such as race, gender, income, age, and sexual orientation/gender identity; and
- g) Evaluate improvements in overall public safety outcomes as well as disparities between neighborhoods and between populations.