



## Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Councilmember Raul Peralez

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** March 25, 2022

Approved by:

Date: 3/25/2022

**SUBJECT: AGREEMENT WITH PEOPLE ASSISTING THE HOMELESS  
ESTABLISHING A DOWNTOWN CRISIS RESPONSE PROGRAM**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Accept staff recommendation and direct staff to return to the Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Services (PSFSS) committee in one year with an evaluation of the Downtown Crisis Response Program.

### **BACKGROUND**

There is no denying that mental health and homelessness are deeply intertwined with one another. For so long, our response to those suffering from mental illness have been to call law enforcement, creating a revolving door that criminalizes our unhoused community with no actual progress. I have long been a proponent of increasing mental health services in our community, beginning with creating the city's first suicide prevention policy, and successfully advocating for the county to implement Assisted Outpatient Treatment. We as a City are learning and have initiated successful programs, such as SJPd's Mobile Crisis Response Team, that recognize that the first point of contact when someone is in crisis should be a mental health provider and not exclusively law enforcement. The funding for PATH to facilitate the Downtown Crisis Response Initiative would continue the shift away from relying on law enforcement and move towards a more holistic and compassionate level of care.

I thank staff for recognizing this need in our Downtown Core and partnering with PATH on this initiative. After one year, I request that staff return with an evaluation to the PSFSS committee so that we can better understand the successes and address any improvements that need to be made. PATH has been a tremendous partner to Downtown since the opening of its office in 2015. Since then, PATH has housed and served hundreds of downtown's unhoused population. I am confident that staff will properly connect those in need with the correct mental health resources and this program will not only benefit the individual themselves, but the community as a whole.