



Memorandum

TO: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES AND
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

FROM: Jon Cicirelli

SUBJECT: PROJECT HOPE UPDATE

DATE: February 25, 2019

Approved

Date

3-5-2019

Council Districts: 1, 2, & 8

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Project Hope Program Annual Report and recommend this item for full Council consideration at the April 23, 2019 City Council meeting.

OUTCOME

The Neighborhood Services and Education Committee will be informed about Project Hope and the progress it has made within neighborhoods in the designated council districts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2018-2019, the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (Department) expanded Project Hope from one neighborhood in Council District 1 to two additional neighborhoods in Council District 2 and Council District 8. Using a community empowerment and mobilization strategy, Project Hope works with these neighborhoods to address crime and blight by developing community leaders. Both neighborhoods are in the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force's "hot spots." Even though these three neighborhoods are in different phases of the Community Empowerment Model, the Department learned key lessons and strategies that create positive impacts in the neighborhoods served. These lessons prepare the Department to effectively expand the program to additional neighborhoods as resources allow and Council approves.

BACKGROUND

In 2016-2017, the Department launched Project Hope in the Cadillac/Winchester neighborhood in Council District 1 as a pilot, using one-time funding. In the 2018-2019 Adopted Operating Budget, the program received ongoing funding and staffing to continue efforts in the Cadillac/Winchester neighborhood and to expand the program to the Roundtable neighborhood in Council District 2. Additionally, the 2018-2019 Adopted Operating Budget included one-time

funding to establish a one-year Project Hope site in the Welch Park neighborhood in Council District 8.

Project Hope is a community action initiative like the City's Project Crackdown Program of the 1990s and the broader Strong Neighborhoods Initiative of the 2000s.¹ Project Hope uses principles of community partnership, community development, neighborhood empowerment, and coordination of a broad range of City services to address challenging neighborhood issues such as crime and blight. The program's goal is to develop sustainable neighborhood associations that can best advocate for the community.

The Department oversees and delivers Project Hope through its Neighborhood Services Unit. The Neighborhood Services Unit also manages the City's Youth Intervention Services program, the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, and the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs. Aligning Project Hope with Youth Intervention Services and the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force allows the Department to leverage the City's continuum of youth violence prevention, intervention, and suppression services in way that more efficiently accomplishes common strategic goals.

This memorandum provides an overview of:

- The Project Hope Community Empowerment Model;
- Accomplishments in the three current Project Hope neighborhoods (Cadillac/Winchester, Roundtable, and Welch Park); and
- Lessons learned.

ANALYSIS

In fiscal year 2018-2019, Project Hope transitioned from a pilot program to an ongoing program. In 2018-2019, the Department has ongoing funding and staffing to provide services for two neighborhoods, Cadillac/Winchester and Roundtable, and one-time funding for services at Welch Park. *Table 1* (below) shows the current staffing model. These neighborhoods, located in Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force hot spots, experience issues related to high-density housing, crime, blight, and language barriers that hinder engagement with supportive services.

¹ During the late 2000s, following the state's dissolution of Redevelopment, the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative was eliminated, leaving a void in the City's ability to coordinate and organize key neighborhood services.

Table 1: Project Hope Program Organizational Chart



The Project Hope strategy focuses on four key deliverables:

1. Develop a sustainable, organized group of community leaders (developing a neighborhood association);
2. Develop a safer and cleaner environment (addressing ongoing safety and blight issues);
3. Develop informed residents who can access City services (educating residents on how to utilize City services effectively); and,
4. Develop community partnerships that can assist in sustaining efforts in the project area.

To accomplish these deliverables, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services is advancing Project Hope in close collaboration with other key City Departments, including Housing; Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; and, the San José Police Department. Each Project Hope neighborhood has an Implementation Team comprised of key managers from multiple departments and programs that assist with implementing a neighborhood-specific work plan; supporting program activities; coordinating services; and, providing community education and guidance. The Implementation Team continues to be critical to the overall success of Project Hope. Representatives from each of the partner departments contribute unique skills, resources, and insights that affect the quality of life and livability within the Project Hope neighborhoods.

Table 2: Project Hope Implementation Team Departments

Department	Team Members
City Council Office	Council Staff
San José Police Department	Crime Prevention Program; Captain and Lieutenant for neighborhood
Housing Department	Homelessness Response Team; Housing Rights Program
Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services	Project Hope Staff
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement	Code Enforcement Program
Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office	Community Prosecution Unit
Mayor's Office	Mayor's Public Safety Team

Project Work Plan

The Project Hope Community Engagement Model (work plan) has five phases to ensure the project can meet the established deliverables in each neighborhood. To best implement this model, staff recommends that a new neighborhood site be developed over a two-year period. As a community's capacity increases and its dependency on staff coordination lessens, a project area will transition into a "maintenance" mode.

The phases of the work plan implementation include:

Table 3: Project Hope – Community Empowerment Model

Work Plan Phase	Action Items
Staff Planning	Hire staff; develop the Executive Steering Committee and Implementation Team; establish project boundaries; and, develop the staff work plan.
Community Mobilization	Launch the project officially; hold large community events and resource fairs; establish outreach efforts with residents; secure office space; host town hall meetings, business meetings, and property-owner meetings; and, begin the process to develop the neighborhood-improvement plan.
Community Capacity Building	Host the Neighborhood Academy* to train resident leaders, and begin neighborhood leader trainings.
Implementation	Establish monthly community action team/neighborhood association meetings; facilitate the nomination and election of new board members; implement neighborhood-improvement plan; and, coordinate community events.
Maintenance Planning	Transition project area to a maintenance mode with staff support; continue to link community with key community stakeholders, businesses, and City/County resources; and, maintain staff presence that provides support to residents and neighborhood association.

*The Neighborhood Academy is a five-week hands on academy that develops neighborhood leaders so that they can form and lead neighborhood associations, act as neighborhood liaisons, and address neighborhood issues.

Project Hope Neighborhoods

The Project Hope Cadillac/Winchester and Roundtable areas are comprised of high-density residential housing that has historically supported transitional communities that face high rates of crime and blight. At project launch, these communities were not well connected with City resources and had not seen ongoing City engagement since the elimination of the City's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative. The Project Hope Welch Park neighborhood is comprised mainly of single-family homes, both owner-occupied and rentals. Many homes are occupied by multiple family members/residents. While the three neighborhoods are in different areas of the City, residents experience similar neighborhood issues, including:

- Crime and violence;
- Ongoing issues with blight including, litter, trash, illegal dumping, and graffiti;
- Lack of knowledge of City resources;
- Inability to access City services due to language barriers;
- Lack of neighborhood associations or the presence of fledgling associations;
- Issues with rented property (Code Enforcement issues);
- Street-parking issues; and,
- Issues related to homelessness.

Project Hope – Cadillac/Winchester (Council District 1)

Project Hope – Cadillac/Winchester, a designated Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force hot spot, is the most mature of the three Project Hope neighborhood sites (see Attachment A for a map of this area). Project Hope implementation began in 2016-2017. At present, it is operating in the Maintenance Planning phase of the Community Empowerment Model. This neighborhood is located in Council District 1 and borders the City of Campbell. The project area is comprised of approximately 7,000 residents in high-density housing. Many in the community have lived in the Cadillac/Winchester area for over ten years. The community is mainly monolingual Spanish speaking and had no recent neighborhood association or organized community action team prior to the launch of Project Hope. The area has historically dealt with gang issues, vandalism, graffiti, and illegal dumping. Through Project Hope efforts, residents and staff have made a positive impact in the neighborhood.

Accomplishments include:

- Staff developed a multi-department Implementation Team that meets monthly.
- The community established a multicultural, bilingual Neighborhood Association Board.
- The Cadillac/Winchester Neighborhood Association successfully rallied residents to seek road maintenance repairs, including replacement of missing and neglected street signs.
- The Cadillac/Winchester Neighborhood Association successfully applied for and received two BeautifySJ Grant awards: \$4,700 in 2017-2018 and \$4,900 for 2018-2019.

- Project Hope staff have maintained office space at Rosemary Elementary School to ensure residents have easy access to program staff.
- Code Enforcement proactively inspected over 750 apartment units in the area, which allowed critical maintenance to be addressed.
- Community members built stronger relationships with San José Police Department officers assigned to the neighborhood.
- The Cadillac/Winchester Neighborhood Association held their first National Night Out event.
- The Cadillac/Winchester Neighborhood Association ran an election to replace board members in a successful effort to maintain its board and continue their progress.
- Project Hope staff continues to connect the community with City, County, and non-profit resources.
- Project Hope staff continues to coordinate a series of presentations for community residents on multiple subjects, organizations, and City departments.

Project Hope – Roundtable (Council District 2)

Beginning 2018-2019, Project Hope Roundtable was introduced to the Roundtable/Edenvale area (see Attachment B for a map of this area). This neighborhood is in a long-standing Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force hot spot that has had ongoing issues of crime and blight. The project area is comprised of approximately 7,500 residents who reside in high-density housing. The community includes residents who speak English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and many have lived in the community for over a decade. Staff has had early success in the neighborhood with residents, property managers, the elementary school, churches, and key businesses all supporting the efforts of Project Hope. Currently, the Roundtable neighborhood is entering the Community Capacity Building phase of the Community Empowerment Model.

Accomplishments include:

- Developed a multi-department Implementation Team that meets monthly.
- Launched the Project Hope Roundtable Program in September 2018 with 370 residents in attendance at a community resource fair.
- Held a town hall meeting in October 2018 with a cross-section of residents attending.
- Proactive Code Enforcement apartment inspections began in December 2018.
- Launched the Project Hope Neighborhood Beautification strategy, which includes:
 - Monthly litter pickups (led by a community member).
 - *Tidy Tuesdays*, where staff and residents use the *mySanJose* app to report blight-related issues.
- Winter social held with Project Hope and the Police Department at Edenvale Elementary School with over 300 students, parents, teachers, and staff in attendance.
- One-on-one meetings held with key community stakeholders (residents, business owners, property owners, and property managers) to assess ongoing community issues.

- Neighborhood Academy launched in January 2019, with 20 resident leaders in attendance to learn about the process for developing their neighborhood association.
- Currently in Community Capacity Building Phase of this model.
 - Will begin to transition into the Implementation Phase over the next two months.

Project Hope – Welch Park (Council District 8)

Beginning 2018-2019, Project Hope Welch Park was launched in a community comprised mainly of single-family homes, with residents who speak English, Spanish, or Vietnamese as their primary languages (see Attachment C for a map of this area). Unlike the other sites, the Welch Park area had an existing neighborhood association when Project Hope was launched. Consequently, it was determined that the existing community engagement structure needed to be strengthened, rather than re-created. To this end, staff is working with the association to seek ways of more effectively addressing community issues by engaging more residents who reside in the project area. Specifically, a key Project Hope goal for this neighborhood is to engage a multi-cultural cross-section of residents who can serve on the neighborhood association board. To date, the residents in the community are engaged and have brought forth neighborhood issues that include homelessness, parking issues, and better access to the park. Currently, the Welch Park neighborhood is entering the Community Capacity Building phase of the Community Empowerment Model.

Accomplishments include:

- Developed a multi-department Implementation Team that meets monthly.
- Launched Project Hope Welch Park in October 2018 with 350 residents in attendance.
- Held the town hall meeting in November 2018 with a cross-section of residents in attendance.
- Winter social held with Project Hope and the Police Department at K.R. Smith Elementary School with over 300 students, parents, teachers, and staff in attendance.
- Held meetings with businesses and other potential community partners who can bring resources to the community.
- Secured office space at K.R. Smith Elementary School to ensure community access to staff and program services.
- Neighborhood Academy will launch in March 2019 to train potential board members and resident leaders.
- Welch Park is one-time funded, with funding due to expire and end of current fiscal year.
- Over the next three months, staff will focus on working with the neighborhood association to develop strategies that support sustainability.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Lesson Learned	Recommendations
1. Resources are limited and needs are greatest in designated hot spot areas.	When launching future Project Hope sites, the City should do so in designated hot spot areas to ensure that available resources are deployed in a way that most efficiently serves communities with the greatest needs and greatest potential impact.
2. Building relationships and community takes time and sustained effort.	The City should invest multiple years to implement a Project Hope effort in a new community. This ensures adequate time to learn the nuances of each neighborhood, build community leadership and capacity, and develop a work plan to that community's needs.
3. Neighborhood needs may be greater than initial assessments and new needs may emerge.	If Project Hope expands to additional neighborhoods, both Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services and partner City departments will need to identify what appropriate resources are needed to meet community demands.
4. Without ongoing maintenance and a transition strategy, the Project Hope work can quickly become undone as residents transition.	After the formal program initiation period, staff should develop a maintenance plan for the community. This will ensure that the community has staff to call on when issues arise or when there is a need for hands-on support.

CONCLUSION

As the Project Hope program moves forward, there are opportunities to scale and potentially expand the program to other Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force-designated hot spot neighborhoods. The Department continues to grow in its understanding of the demand and need for an ongoing community empowerment strategy in neighborhoods that confront crime and blight on a regular basis. The Department is finding that these communities are very resilient when provided with the training and resources needed to develop well-informed residents and community leaders.

To assess the impacts of this program, staff will continue to collect and present outcome data in future reports, such as: pre- and post-community perception survey data; calls for services from the San José Police Department; data related to proactive Code Enforcement inspections; and, community use of the mySanJose app in reporting issues related to blight. To support such evaluation and prepare for potential future expansion of Project Hope into additional hot spots (Attachment D), the Department plans to advance a budget proposal in the 2019-2020 budget development process for consideration.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

This memorandum provides program performance information for January 2018 – December 2018. Staff will return to the Committee with the 2019 update in spring 2020.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's website for the March 14, 2019 Neighborhood Services and Education Committee meeting.

COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Manager's Budget Office and the City Attorney's Office.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

This memorandum was presented at the Parks and recreation Commission on March 6, 2019.

CEQA

Not a Project, Public Project number PP17-009, Annual Report.

/s/

JON CICIRELLI

Acting Director of Parks, Recreation
and Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Neil Rufino, Deputy Director, at (408) 535-3576.

Attachment A: Project Hope – Cadillac/Winchester Map
Attachment B: Project Hope – Roundtable Map
Attachment C: Project Hope – Welch Park Map
Attachment D: Map of Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Hot Spots