



COUNCIL AGENDA: 04/28/2020
FILE: 20-484
ITEM: 4.1

Memorandum

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember Sylvia Arenas

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: April 28, 2020

Approved

Date

Sylvia Arenas

4/28/20

SUBJECT: San José Police Department Sexual Assault Workplan and Associated Priority Appropriation Amendment

RECOMMENDATION

Approve staff's recommendation and add the following recommendations to:

1. Pursue the completion of the previously approved Sexual Assault Response and Strategy Workplan, despite challenges from COVID-19, including consultation of education and outreach plan with County and sexual assault service providers
2. Work with stakeholders, including key community service providers, to explore additional system improvements that elevate the Sexual Assault Workplan items
3. Explore collaborations with the County to leverage our efforts and maximize efficiency to create a regional response including aligning the Sexual Assault Workplan with the County's Child Advocacy Center.
4. Continue robust outreach for the Data-Informed Response RFP, as we always do, to ensure the application of multiple highly qualified applicants.
5. Seek consultation with our service provider partners and incorporate their suggestions into: 1) the implementation of the data informed response's RFP, 2.) the training program's curriculum, and 3) best practices for sexual assault outreach and education.

BACKGROUND

Thank you to the staff for their hard work to ensure effective and efficient strategies to address the rise of sexual assaults in San José and move forward with the Council approved Sexual Assault Response and Strategy Workplan. Since the beginning of this public health emergency, I have brought the Council's attention to recognize the country-wide research-based phenomenon that stress and social isolation may increase risk of domestic violence which includes sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and child/sexual abuse.

The shelter-in-place order has created barriers to reporting but we must move forward and aggressively pursue the continuation of the workplan to address the rise in sexual assaults. The

workplan was created and approved before the COVID-19 pandemic and may require revision and innovation to reach our most vulnerable communities as we reevaluate what our new normal will be moving forward. These system improvements that go beyond the workplan must be made in coordination with stakeholders, including key community service providers, to ensure that we continue to work towards the same goals. For example, expanding the Sexual Assault Workplan to align with the SART Committee Workplan.

The San José Police Department is only one piece in the sexual assault response for survivors and we understand that in order to effectively and efficiently address the rise in sexual assaults we must work in coordination with a regional response. Therefore, I urge the San José Police Department to leverage our preexisting strengths and partnerships with the County to avoid duplicated efforts in alignment with a coordinated regional response.

A coordinated regional response paired with an intersectional education and outreach strategy will further raise awareness and address sexual assault from a prevention standpoint. Using data-driven responses from academic and service research institutions, we can determine best practices to expand current work, such as the sexual assault education prevention program in middle school and high schools, and future work to create the strongest regional response and strategy we can put forth for our survivors.