

From: Tanis Crosby
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 2:17 PM
To: 'citycouncil@sanjoseca.gov'
Subject: Agenda Item 4.1 / 4/28 Meeting
Importance: High

Dear Councilmembers:

Thank you for continuing to prioritize the client-centered, trauma-informed response and prevention to sexual assault, human trafficking, and violence.

YWCA is your local Rape Crisis Center. We are the only state mandated agency, or 'Rape Crisis' Center for San Jose. And given that significant intersection of forms of violence and racism, your YWCA delivers a range of crisis response, prevention and intervention for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking.

We are proud to partner with the City of San Jose, and in particular, with the San Jose Police Department. In particular, during this pandemic we have seen the Chief Garcia and additional leaders within the San Jose Police Department strive to find new ways to reach and serve survivors, and we are grateful for this collaboration.

Hearing the proceedings of the Council meeting today, I was struck by the wisdom of our Council in understanding how the ripple effects of this pandemic will stretch far beyond 'Shelter in Place', and how we must not fail to ensure that we are designing and deploying effective approaches for the prevention and response of violence that optimizes scarce public dollars. The YWCA is committed to partnering with the City to deliver on those solutions.

We are supportive of the overall direction of the Workplan as presented by the Police Department and additional recommendations circulated by Councilmember Arenas.

For your consideration, some approaches that would service to optimize the impact of public investment:

1. Best practices in Response Framework

New models in response approaches are emerging in response to the COVID pandemic. For example, in Utah there is a move toward the scheduling of Sexual Assault Forensic Exams as a means of ensuring social distancing. This evolution may have implications for more client-centered response in addition to the benefit of reducing on-call rotations required for law enforcement response. We would like to partner with the City to identify and examine emerging best practices for consideration.

2. Data-Informed Strategy & Research

The YWCA would like to partner with the City and SJPd to collaborate on the participation of research that can identify solutions to challenges that leverage the capacity from community. Additionally, as an organization that has contracted both academic work for hire research with Santa Clara University, Purdue University, and University of Notre Dame in addition to contracting private research firms, we would like to offer partnership and support for the design and implementation of the research project to optimize impact.

3. Sexual Assault Educational Outreach

We encourage the Council to consider the continuation of sexual assault prevention and education efforts in partnership and collaboration with community partners. Human Trafficking awareness that include billboards and PSAs will be a worthy endeavor, and we also need to ensure that there is intentional, specific, and resourced outreach for those impacted by sexual assault. For example, school-based sexual assault prevention efforts have been demonstrated to be an effective approach.

4. Trauma-Informed Training

In addition to the great work being already being undertaken, the YWCA is a resource to provide additional support and training for officers, and we would be pleased to assist.

5. Collaboration

We encourage the development and linkage of the Workplan to the County Sexual Assault Response Team Committee – a Committee comprising of almost 24 county agencies and stakeholders that form the continuum of response for those impacted by sexual assault. This Committee includes representatives from the Office of the DA, Rape Crisis Centers, the Sexual Assault Forensic Examination Program, and the forensics lab. Linking the SJPd Workplan to this continuum will ensure a coordinated response.

Thank you again for your partnership and great work in moving solutions forward. We appreciate your partnership and are committed to working with you to drive innovation, results, and optimization of resources.