



City Council

Approval to Allocate Council Goal Funds to Support the Reimagining Public Safety Public Engagement Process

Agenda Date: 7/13/2021
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Title

Approval to Allocate Council Goal Funds to Support the Reimagining Public Safety Public Engagement Process

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

N/A

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve the allocation of \$70,000 of Council Goal funds to provide consultant support for the Reimagining Public Safety engagement process.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve the allocation of \$70,000 of Council Goal funds to provide consultant support for the Reimagining Public Safety engagement process.

Staff Contact:

Stacey Ray, Strategic Planning and Performance Manager, Office of Performance and Innovation, 360.753.8406

Presenter(s):

None. Consent Calendar item.

Background and Analysis:

The City Council has heard from the community the need to reduce inequities and bias in Olympia's public safety system, and to create a criminal justice system that works for everyone. In January, the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Safety approved a process to reimagine public safety using a community-led approach called Participatory Leadership.

This approach to engage the public is led by a Community Work Group made of ten community members, who will learn about Olympia's criminal justice system and host a series of community

conversations, focus groups, and community surveys to hear from community members about their experiences and perspectives. The Work Group will use what they hear and learn throughout the approximate 6-7-month process to deliver to Council a definition for what public safety means to Olympians, and goals and recommendations for reimagining a criminal justice system that works for all.

Since January, preparations have been underway to ready for the launch of this process, including forming the Community Work Group, meeting with City staff who work in the criminal justice system, conducting community stakeholder interviews, and developing and sharing educational presentations on Olympia's criminal justice system with the Council Ad Hoc Committee on Public Safety.

Preparations also included conducting a Request for Proposals to select a consultant to support this work. After a competitive process in which both City staff from the criminal justice system and a community representative were involved, the City has chosen to enter into a contract with Communications Resources Northwest (CRNW).

CRNW has recently been our partner in reimagining how Strategic Communications is implemented in the City, and through that contract, they learned a great deal about the City's priorities and challenges. For Reimagining Public Safety, CRNW has teamed with long-time partner BRIC (Building Relationships and Inspiring Communities). BRIC is a northwest leader in facilitating community conversations around public space through a lens of diversity, equity, and social justice. Both firms understand and have demonstrated experience in engaging diverse community members in public process, including virtually, that is in inclusive, robust, and purpose driven.

The purpose of this agenda item is to request an additional \$70,000 in funding to support this process. Preparations over the past few months and learnings from the process to establish a Social Justice & Equity Commission have helped to clarify the approach and specific areas that need additional attention, including a more extensive employee engagement and communication strategy and more tailored outreach and engagement for a diversity of community stakeholders.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

There is broad community member interest in the City hosting a community-wide engagement process on reimagining public safety in Olympia. In addition to informing possible recommendations for the budget process, reimagining public safety contributes to the City's Public Health & Safety Comprehensive Plan focus area, and can inform other City efforts aimed at addressing social justice and equity issues.

Options:

1. Approve the use of \$70,000 in Council Goal funds to support the Reimagining Public Safety process.
2. Do not approve the use of \$70,000 in Council Goal funds to support the Reimagining Public Safety process.

Financial Impact:

Staff is requesting \$70,000 in Council goal funds to support the Reimagining Public Safety public engagement process. The funds will supplement \$100,000 in operating budget funds and will be used to enter into a consulting contract with Communications Resources Northwest to provide

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support in meeting design and facilitation, and community input analysis and organization. If this request is approved, Council will have a balance of approximately \$61,000 in Council goal funds.

Attachments:

Project Overview