

**REPORT TO THE
CITY COUNCIL**
City of Salinas, California

DATE: July 12, 2016

FROM: Kelly J. McMillin,
Chief of Police

THROUGH: Jose A. Arreola,
Community Safety Administrator

By: Julia D. Nix,
Community Safety Assistant

SUBJECT: **ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDING FROM BOARD OF STATE AND
COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS STRENGTHENING LAW ENFORCEMENT AND
COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve a resolution authorizing the acceptance of grant funding from the Board of State and Community Corrections Strengthening Law Enforcement and Community Relations to build trust and legitimacy and expand the efforts of community engagement in the amount of \$850,000 (with match requirement of \$170,225) for the time period of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2018.

DISCUSSION:

The Strengthening Law Enforcement and Community Relations Grant will provide training to increase trust between law enforcement agencies and the community with effective two-way communication in an effort to reduce conflict.

The Salinas Police Department (SPD) began 2015 with a functional sworn staff of 133 officers, down from 188 prior to the 2008 recession. It has one of the lowest officer-to-resident ratios in California, which has the lowest rates in the country. In mid-2015, all special assignments (including Community Policing) were eliminated in order to put more officers on patrol. Minimum daily staffing could only be met by ordering officers to work extended shifts and on their days off – professional service delivery and staff morale suffered.

SPD has been making definite strides forward in recent years in gaining the trust and cooperation of the community, including assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office's Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance was requested and received. The COPS Office examined the department's use of force policies, practices, training, investigations, and related processes; examined community trust and engagement; assessed internal and

external communication; and analyzed resource allocations, all geared to improve the SPD's responsiveness and accountability to the community. Two significant findings of the final COPS report, released on March 22, 2016, that are significant to this project is SPD's use of force and community engagement. In addition, an evaluation of SPD's community collaboration was conducted resulting in the following findings: (1) SPD has been ineffective in its community engagement and tends to operate reactively following negative events, (2) SPD is lacking in its transparency with the public and is perceived as trying to protect itself, (3) SPD personnel are not proactively engaging with the community, although the Chief's efforts in this area were noted, and (4) some members of the Hispanic community feel they are not treated with respect and fairness, although the place-based community police officers were reported to have had a positive impact on community-police partnerships, trust, and problem-solving.

The SPD and Monterey County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) have a long and productive working relationship. While much of the time their collaborations are focused on suppression activities, often in partnership with state and federal law enforcement agencies, they also work together on community relations, policing strategies, and prevention and intervention activities. Both agencies are active members of the Community Alliance for Peace (CASP) and were integral in development of the Strategic Work Plan developed in 2010 with extensive community involvement. The Strategic Work Plan was updated in 2013 and six critical focus points emerged related to one overarching goal for the community and law enforcement to partner to create safe and thriving neighborhoods.

The activities to be funded by this grant meet the needs expressed by the community during the development of the grant and CASP's Strategic Work Plan, in protests and social media following the officer-involved shootings, and told to the COPS assessment team. The training and efforts to increase police-community collaboration and trust are responsive to a number of the recommendations in the COPS report and the CASP Strategic Plan. The primary goals of the project are to increase community trust, satisfaction, and cooperation with law enforcement, increase positive two-way interactions and engagement between the community and police, and to reduce acts of violence between the public and police.

SPD and MCSO will bring in "Why'd You Stop Me?" (WYSM), a nationally recognized educational nonprofit launched in 2014 to Salinas and Monterey County. The basic strategy was developed by founder/Executive Director Jason Lehman, a Long Beach Police officer who was inspired to develop an educational platform for law enforcement and the community after learning of threats of violence made by gang members against cops in the Long Beach Police Department. The premise of the WYSM training programs is that lack of education on both sides of police-community interactions can be a trigger for the incidents to turn ugly, and sometimes deadly. The focused mission of WYSM training programs is to decrease acts of violence between police and the public. They aim to teach both police and the community similar concepts and encourage effective two-way communication to enable both sides to see the other's point-of-view. WYSM training teaches police officers how to de-escalate situations, be transparent in their actions, provide meaningful information to the community at the end of an incident or arrest to reduce misunderstanding and/or community unrest, and gain the trust and support of the community. WYSM teaches the community why police officers do what they do.

"WYSM: The Real Reason" is a 4-hour training workshop for community members that empowers them to successfully and safely cooperate with law enforcement during contact, and to understand much of the police perspective. "WYSM: A Communities Perspective" is an 8-hour training workshop that educates law enforcement in positive community policing principles to humanize their role within a community, trains them to use de-escalation techniques, and educates and trains them on additional principles and

requirements of 21st Century Policing. In these workshops, police officers get a feel for what it is like to be in the shoes of someone being questioned by an officer and community members get a sense of what's in the mind of an officer when he or she initiates a stop. The emphasis in both workshops is to achieve effective, two-way communication. Each training program is customized to the needs of the participants. The community training program, has been presented to youth 13 to 25 years old in schools, after school programs, athletic teams, churches, and on probation. Community training for 14-year-old 9th graders is a more dynamic, audience engaging, attention grabbing program, while training for 21-25 year olds is an advanced version of the same program. The programs aim to provide youth with decision-making and leadership skills, teach them how to deal effectively with authority figures, and add youth voice to police-community engagement strategies. Similarly, police academy recruits receive a more basic version of the police training, while experienced officers receive a more advanced program. Programs for community adults, youth, and peace officers will be brought to the Salinas area, tailored to the needs of the community.

WYSM trainers and guest speakers include WYSM's founder, a police officer and motivational speaker; a young woman whose negative views of the police have turned around; a community leader who once was a Crip gang member and drug abuser; and a recovered meth addict with a horrific experience with kidnapping and gang rape who now speaks to the importance of reporting crimes and having trust in the system. All community speakers tell law enforcement officials and the community that "compassion is key" to trustful and productive police-community relations.

To date, WYSM seminars have been conducted in twenty cities in six states reaching over 5,000 community members and law enforcement officials. It has been used in several jurisdictions with problems and populations similar to Salinas and Monterey County, including Santa Ana and Long Beach. California Attorney General Kamala Harris has endorsed the program, saying "WYSM training is a *best practice* for reducing acts of violence between police and the community." WYSM is a practical strategy for achieving the principles of legitimacy and procedural justice, which have been shown to be effective in increasing community satisfaction in police encounters, building trust, and increasing community collaboration.

Funding from this grant, supporting the WYSM programs has two direct links to the Pillars in the 21st Century Policing report. This project directly connects to *Pillar 1: Building Trust & Legitimacy*. WYSM training and legitimacy and procedural justice training rest squarely on the principles that understanding, trust, and legitimacy on both sides of the police-community divide are critical to improving and maintaining positive, collaborative relationships between the community and the police. WYSM training will provide officers the practical skills they need to implement the theories and knowledge they will receive in the legitimacy and procedural justice training. Efforts to implement a comprehensive program for fair and impartial policing and continue/expand communication and collaboration with the community also directly address the need for building trust and legitimacy.

The second pillar is *Pillar 4: Community Policing and Crime Reduction*. Through expanded efforts of community engagement, continued work with grassroots community-based organizations, community policing, and the training both law enforcement and the community will receive there will be a strong emphasis on the co-production of public safety. Community-police partnerships based on mutual trust and respect and focused on the solving of problems of most concern to the community are at the heart of community policing. The training will provide both sides with the knowledge and skills that foster collaborative efforts to identify problems and implement solutions that produce meaningful results for the community.

The SPD, has been strong supporters of community policing, particularly working in partnerships with individuals, community organizations, and local agencies to solve problems and prevent violence. It was clear from the COPS Office's assessment, the expertise of the CSD staff, and the discussions with community organizations this funding is key to responding to the need for practical strategies for achieving legitimacy and building community trust. WYSM, along with enhanced community engagement, will provide the basic building blocks for reaching these goals.

The City of Salinas Community Safety Division (CSD) has a long history of capably managing state and federal grant funding will provide administrative support and will be responsible for day-to-day technical management, financial management, overseeing the evaluator and community partners, and liaison with the SPD, MCSO, other regional partners, and BSCC. They will work with SPD and MCSO to bring in the training needed and facilitate community engagement through CASP. CSD will serve as liaisons to the WYSM and other partnering organizations. They will provide oversight to the community partners charged with recruiting community members to participate in the WYSM training, as well as use CASP and other existing networks to bring in additional members.

Community based organizations, Partners for Peace and Sun Street Centers were selected as partners based on their long history of community service; focus on at-risk, delinquent, gang-involved, and drug-involved youth and their families; and their solid relationships with CSD, CASP, and the law enforcement community. Partners for Peace is a well-known and respected organizational advocate for peace. Its mission is to build strong families for a peaceful community. It is well-known throughout the county and receives referrals from schools, law enforcement and probation officers, service providers, community organizations, and parents in Salinas, on the Monterey Peninsula, and in south county cities. Partners for Peace is a long-time member of CASP.

Sun Street Centers provides comprehensive and effective services for the prevention of alcohol and drug addiction by offering education, prevention, treatment, and recovery to individuals and families regardless of income level. It is part of a strong network of agencies treating drug abuse and violence as a public health problem, including Hartnell College, Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital, and a variety of public agencies and private organizations. Sun Street Centers programs include the Alcohol Awareness program, outpatient and residential counseling and treatment Centers, a Family Empowerment Program, and the Safe Teens Empowerment Project. Prevention programs include community outreach and neighborhood events support, and community services include providing meeting space for community groups and advocacy for prevention and community policies. It has six service centers serving all of Monterey County, in Salinas, Seaside and Marina (on the Monterey Peninsula), and Greenfield, Soledad, and King City (south county).

CSD, SPD, MCSO, and the community partners have an extensive history of working together on problems of violence, gangs, drug abuse, and delinquent and at-risk youth. The place-based community police officers in the Hebborn neighborhood became trainers for the Strengthening Families program, and SPD continues to support their efforts even though the full-time community policing program is currently on hold and the officers are back in patrol. Law enforcement and probation officials use both organizations as a resource for troubled youth and their families and, in turn, the community partners benefit from the support and assistance provided by law enforcement and probation. All are involved in CASP's mission to reduce and prevent violence.

A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted to determine whether the activities and strategies of WYSM have been implemented as intended and whether the goals and objectives of the project have been achieved. A Local Evaluation Plan will be completed which will include a detailed description of the

process and outcome evaluations to be conducted, tie the goals and objectives identified in the Work Plan to the evaluation tasks, and describe the evaluation's design, methods, data collection plans, and analyses. The evaluation will be conducted by the experts at the METALab at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS), also a partner in CASP.

Performance measures will include positive changes in attitudes, knowledge, and skills of community members and law enforcement officers; increased community trust and collaboration with the police; increased community recognition of police legitimacy, changes in police attitudes toward residents; increases in community engagement; and decreases in citizen complaints, out-of-policy use of force, and officer-involved shootings. Performance measures will be concentrated on the Salinas community and police department.

ISSUE:

Shall the City Council approve a resolution authorizing the acceptance of grant funding from the Board of State and Community Corrections Strengthening Law Enforcement and Community Relations to build trust and legitimacy and expand the efforts of community engagement in the amount of \$850,000 (with match requirement of \$170,225) for the time period of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2018?

FISCAL IMPACT:

There will be direct fiscal impact to the City's General Fund. The City of Salinas Police Department will provide the match in the amount of \$170,225 during the period of July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2018. Match funds are already included in the FY 2016-2017 budget. During the same periods, the City will receive \$118,212 in grant funding, which includes \$47,411 for the Salinas Police Department, \$66,801 for the Community Safety Division and \$4,000 to cover audit expenses.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS:

A resolution should be adopted by July 12, 2016, to facilitate immediate planning, outreach and scheduling of trainings funded by this grant.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS:

The attached resolution approving the acceptance of funding from the Strengthening Law Enforcement and Community Relations grant for The City of Salinas, Monterey County Sheriff's Office, Sun Street Centers, Partners for Peace, and the META Lab at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies will allow the City to provide training to law enforcement and community members and is consistent with the City Council's goals for a safe, livable community and quality of life.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council elect not to approve the proposed resolution.

CONCLUSION:

The City must continue to serve as a leader in local peace and youth violence intervention and prevention efforts. The services provided by WYSM, Sun Street Centers, Partners for Peace, Monterey County Sheriff's Office and the City of Salinas Community Safety Division Police Department funded by this

grant are consistent with the City Council's goals for a safe, livable community and quality of life.

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