



Legislation Text

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Staff Report for an Update on the Community Care Initiative and City Council Approval of a Resolution Appropriating \$1,000,000 from General Fund Economic Uncertainty Reserve to Fund Community Care Costs beginning in Fiscal Year 2016-17

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff Recommends that the City Council provide feedback on the proposed Community Care program and approve a Resolution appropriating \$1,000,000 from General Fund Uncertainty Reserves to fund costs beginning in the 2016-17 fiscal year.

BACKGROUND

At its annual planning session held on January 28, 2017, the City Council expressed a desire to devote \$1 million in one-time funding for a “Community Care” initiative. Community Care refers to a broad array of programs that collectively address aesthetic issues and community standards throughout the City. This effort reflects a desire to rebuild some City functions that were reduced in past years and increase levels of service in other areas.

Since the January planning session, a multi-departmental team of City staff has worked to devise a proposed strategy for the rollout and implementation of Community Care. This plan would entail expenditure of the \$1 million allocation over the 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years. In order to initiate effective operations as close as possible to the July 1, 2017 start date, staff is requesting startup costs in the current fiscal year.

This report provides an overview of the proposed Community Care initiative and funding requirements. Staff anticipates providing updates and holding additional discussions with the City Council and Council Committees as the program progresses.

Analysis

As noted above, Community Care is a broad initiative covering aesthetics and community standards. Community Care includes the following City functions (with the lead department noted in parentheses).

- Animal Control (Police)
- Abandoned Vehicles (Police)
- Community Standards Code Compliance (see discussion below)
- Building Code Compliance (Community Development)
- Illegal Dumping and Debris in the Public Right-of-Way (Public Works)
- Graffiti Abatement (Public Works)

- Review of City Policies and Practices (City Manager’s Office)
- Ongoing Results Tracking and Analysis (City Manager’s Office)

The proposed Community Care initiative will enhance the City’s ability to provide these services, improve efficiencies where possible, and better track results in order to identify opportunities for future improvements.

MySL Mobile 311 App

An important component of Community Care was initiated through the launch of the “MySL” mobile application and website. This digital interface offers residents and visitors an easy way to report issues such as potholes, illegal dumping, and weed violations with a smart phone application or through a website. The system was designed for easy use, and it allows for streamlined routing and tracking of requests once they are received by City staff. Residents that prefer to report issues by phone can continue to do so. Staff enters the reports into the MySL system so that they can be addressed and track with all others.

The overall goal of MySL is to make it easier for community members to report issues and more efficient for City staff to track and address those issues, while ensuring that the community can access timely updates on the status of the work. Although some refinement is always needed when launching a new system, the rollout of MySL has been successful so far and this system will be a key factor in the success of Community Care going forward.

Although it is too early to provide a conclusive assessment of the impact of the MySL app at this time, the initial metrics do provide a sense of the types of issues that residents are reporting and the volume of reports the City will receive. So far, 1,427 requests have been submitted through the system and 79% have been deemed by City staff to be complete or resolved. The five most common work types are as follows:

Top Work Types

Debris in Public Right of Way	283
Street Light Out	193
Asphalt Repair/Pothole	173
Abandoned Shopping Cart	157
Parked on Street	103

So far, 74% of the requests have been assigned to the Public Works Department and 22% were assigned to the Police Department.

Community Compliance

The Community Compliance Section of the San Leandro Police Department currently oversees a wide variety of community standards issues including enforcement of the City’s Community Preservation Ordinance. This ordinance was adopted to preserve the quality and appearance of the City’s residential, commercial and industrial areas. The ordinance prohibits the storage of items such as boxes, garbage bags and cans, discarded household items and furniture, packing containers, machine or vehicle parts, camper shells and miscellaneous other items in areas of the property that

are visible from the street. Community Compliance also enforces violations of the City's Weed Ordinance, Building Code, and Zoning Code, among other issues.

Historically, Code Compliance had between three and five dedicated staff people. In recent years, a restructuring in the Police Department shifted Code Compliance functions to Police Service Technicians (PST's). PST's perform a variety of functions for the Department, so it is not possible to state exactly what level of staffing is devoted to Code Compliance at this time.

Under the Community Care program, most of the Code Compliance functions will be transferred to the Community Development Department. This change will enable the Police Department to devote greater attention to its top priority: public safety. Moreover, the Community Development is already responsible for Building Code Enforcement and implementation of the City's Zoning Code, so locating these functions in the same department will result in organizational efficiencies and improved communication.

As noted in the funding proposal detailed later in this report, staffing for the new Code Compliance Division in Community Development comprises the greatest share of requested funding for the Community Care program. As proposed, Code Compliance will have three, dedicated full-time positions. Funding for one position will be transferred from the Police Department. The Community Care proposal also includes funding for one new Community Services Specialist position and one new Community Services Specialist (temporary, two years). Staff is confident that this arrangement will substantially increase the City's capacity to address Code Compliance issues.

Some components of Code Compliance are proposed to remain in the Police Department because they are most effectively addressed by law enforcement personnel. This includes abandoned vehicles, animal control, and some parking violations, such as parking on lawns. Police officers will also continue to assist with enforcement of code issues whenever the presence of a law enforcement officer is warranted.

Abatement of Issues in the Public Right-of-Way and Illegal Dumping

The City's Public Works Department will continue to handle issues in the public right-of way, such as potholes, illegal dumping, and graffiti abatement (which is also addressed by City staff on private property in many instances). Thus far, a significant majority of issues reported through the MySL app has been assigned to Public Works. The launch of the app and a related work order system has already resulted in some efficiencies for the Department. The Community Care proposal includes funding for one additional Street Maintenance Worker position for a period of two years to enhance the Department's ability to respond to these issues. Additionally, the proposal includes funding to add a second citywide recycling event each year. These events provide a free opportunity for residents to dispose of items that are otherwise difficult to get rid of. The recycling events, therefore, result in a reduction in illegal dumping throughout the community.

Policy Review and Ongoing Tracking

Another component of Community Care will be a review of the City's existing policies and expanded tracking of the effectiveness of our efforts. Both of these functions will be managed by the City Manager's Office with active participation by a number of City departments. The MySL app has already enhanced the City's ability to track requests and resolutions.

A portion of the start-up funding requested for 2016-17 will be used to support a review of existing policies and practices related to Community Care programs. Working with the City Council Rules Committee, staff will seek to identify opportunities to improve organizational efficiency and ensure that the greatest attention is devoted to issues that reflect the community's top priorities.

Once Community Care is underway, staff will provide regular updates to the City Council on the program's effectiveness.

Proposed Budget by Year

Community Care is designed as a two-year effort, covering the 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years. Staffing and funding beyond this period will be considered as part of the next biennial budget process and will be guided by the results of this initiative as well as the availability of future funding. To ensure that the program is launched successfully, as close as possible to the July 1 start of 2017-18, staff is requesting some funding for startup costs in 2016-17 via the attached resolution.

Startup costs in 2016-17 will include acquisition and outfitting of vehicles for new staff, preparation of office space, activation and configuration of new code compliance software, and consulting costs associated with the initial review of City policies and practices. The total requested funding for 2016-17 is \$160,000.

Funding for the subsequent two years will primarily reflect staffing costs for Code Compliance and the addition of a Street Maintenance Worker in Public Works.

The budgets will also include an increase in funding for abatement of code violations. Ultimately, abatement costs are charged to the owner of a property that is in violation. An enhanced budget, however, gives staff the flexibility to address serious issues quickly, without waiting for receipt of fines or the result of property liens.

The total anticipated funding for Community Care is estimated as follows:

2016-17 Startup Costs	\$160,000
2017-18 Program Budget	\$415,000
2018-19 Program Budget	<u>\$425,000</u>
Total	<u>\$1,000,000</u>

Community Care Funding

The budget for the Community Care initiative represents a one-time allocation of funds from the City's General Fund Economic Uncertainty Reserve. Approximately, \$12.5 million in carry over funds from 2015-16 were deposited into this reserve upon completion of the last fiscal year. Consistent with City Council direction, \$1 million from that amount will be allocated to Community Care. The

remainder will be split equally between the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the Prioritizing Unfunded Liabilities Liquidation (PULL) Program.

Next Steps

Staff Recommends that the City Council provide feedback on the proposed Community Care program and approve a Resolution appropriating \$1,000,000 from General Fund Economic Uncertainty Reserves to fund necessary startup costs in the 2016-17 fiscal year, and ongoing costs in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Subsequently, staff will prepare for the launch of the Community Care program on July 1, 2017. Specifically, staff will begin a review of existing policies and practices with the City Council Rules Committee so that new Code Compliance staff will be able to start work with a firm regulatory foundation. Staff will also begin preparations for hiring recruitments so that the most critical positions will be in place as soon as possible after the start of the next fiscal year.

Fiscal Impacts

This General Fund program will cost approximately \$1,000,000 through the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year, which includes \$160,000 for startup costs in 2016-17. The overall funding for Community Care reflects \$1,000,000 of the total carryover funds from the 2015-16 fiscal year as directed by the City Council.

<u>Proposed 2016-17 Community Care Funding</u>		
690-16-002-7510	Purchase of Vehicles	\$77,000
687-18-007-5242	Buildout of Office Space	\$7,000
010-21-001-5120	Community Care Consulting	\$10,000
010-41-007-7401	Vehicle Equipment	\$3,000
010-41-007-5120	Software Setup/Configuration	\$50,000
010-41-007-6190	Misc. Supplies	\$3,000
010-41-007-7401	Office Space Setup	<u>\$10,000</u>
Total 2016-17 Funding		\$160,000
Total 2017-18 Funding		\$415,000
Total 2018-19 Funding		<u>\$425,000</u>
Grand Total Community Care Funding		<u>\$1,000,000</u>

ATTACHMENT(S)

None

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