DATE: April 22, 2021

TO: Reimagining Community Safety Advisory Group
FR: Poncho Guevara, Member
RE: Process Recommendations

Background

Eleven months ago, Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin murdered George Floyd in a vicious and public act of violence that stirred a massive public uprising against the intolerable and persistent legacy of racist oppression committed by law enforcement in communities across this country. This includes a legacy of racially motivated police misconduct in our own community. In response, local leaders called on the City of San José to commit meaningful resources to establish an Office of Racial Equity and to direct that office to:

> "Develop a process to redirect resources away from policing toward other community-based solutions. This effort needs to incorporate and center the voices of individuals traditionally left out of our decision making, in partnership with diverse community- based organizations that have long served and represented the voices of those community members harmed by systemic racism."

> > -June 15, 2020, letter to the Mayor Liccardo and City Council entitled, ***This Budget Fails to Measure up to this Moment***, signed by over 75 community-based organizations.

Advisory Group

In 2021, the San José City Manager appointed a diverse and knowledgeable group of community leaders to participate in the Reimagining Community Safety Advisory Group for a six-month process to make recommendations that can advance a new vision for community safety. Members were told they were selected, in part, because of their direct relationships with grassroots constituencies.

As with any large group of stakeholders, there are a range of visions of community safety and priorities for reform that have been articulated in the first few meetings. The majority of these can be grouped in three areas:

1. Redirecting resources toward community-based programs and interventions that will significantly change, reduce, or eliminate the role of law enforcement in addressing social challenges.
2. Implementing better systems of accountability, oversight, recruitment and training of law enforcement.
3. Improving police-community relationships.

These may be divergent, but each can be explored.

Several members have articulated a strong desire to elevate the voices of residents who have been targeted and harmed by racist policing tactics, particularly youth. Some have asked for the current context of disproportionate targeting of Black, brown, and indigenous communities, those experiencing homelessness, and the history of racist practices by law enforcement locally. Some have referenced the opportunity to learn and build on the recent experience of other communities across the country.

Process Recommendations
Acknowledging the complexity and unique perspectives of the leaders serving on this panel and the constituencies we represent, and the limited time frame to accomplish our goals, the Advisory Group should consider the following process recommendations:

1. *Use Advisory Group meetings to develop a shared context and language for the work.* Sessions can be organized with presentations on the following topics:
   a. History of systemic racism in policing and by the City of San José. (guest speaker/panel)
   b. Recommendations from similar reform processes in other communities. (guest speaker/panel)
   c. Data on disproportionate enforcement practices targeting communities of color, including City data and grassroots research findings. (staff/community members)
   d. Background on budget allocations for law enforcement vs. investments in prevention and social service interventions. (staff)
   e. Changing the role of law enforcement/abolition. (guest speaker/panel)
   f. Police oversight, accountability systems and policies. (guest speaker/panel)
   g. Police-community relations. (guest speaker/panel)

2. *Organize subcommittees* (with City/Consultant staff support and language interpretation as necessary) to accomplish the following objectives:
   a. Incorporate and center the voices of individuals traditionally left out of our decision making processes, especially those that have been harmed by traditional policing practices.
   b. Identify, develop, and prioritize recommendations for action using a results-based accountability framework with a focus on eliminating racial disparities.
   c. Propose a narrative shift to community stakeholders and policymakers for how recommendations can achieve a new vision of community safety.

   Potential subcommittees could include: Youth, Women/gender-based violence, Black community, Asian American Pacific Islander community, Indigenous community, Latinx community, LGBTQIA+, Unhoused/Homeless, Mental Health Response, Disabled, Immigrants/Undocumented, Faith Communities, Formerly Incarcerated, Public Spaces/transportation, Police Accountability, Education System (school-to-prison pipline), Juvenile Justice System involved youth (up to age 25), and others as identified.

3. *Provide materials for Advisory Group members*:
    a. Background summaries on upcoming meeting topics and explanations of the process for discussion, which may include the use of guiding questions.
    b. Clear expectations, direction, and support in soliciting feedback from their constituents to inform the process.
    c. Notes from previous meetings that are accessible to their constituents.
    d. Materials are provided at least a week in advance of meetings.

4. *Create short term wins* (i.e., make space for committee members to identify and advance proposals that can be implemented in the near term, including consideration in the FY 2021-22 budget cycle).

5. *Establish a Steering Committee to support the following:*
    a. Developing Advisory Group meeting agendas/presentations.
    b. Ensure communication/collaboration between subcommittees.
    c. Incorporating member feedback on values, charter, decision-making protocols, member expectations, and final recommendations.

Summary
The original impetus of the Reimagining Community Safety process provides guidance and urgency for our work. Given a large and diverse membership, Advisory Group members have divergent sets of priorities, and are charged with ensuring the perspectives of the larger community are represented.

It is recommended that Advisory Group meetings are organized into topical presentations to inform a shared context and language for our work. The Group should establish subcommittees that are working concurrently to center the voice of community members, develop recommendations, and shift the narratives. Members should be provided background materials in advance of committee meetings. The Advisory Group should be given the opportunity to propose some short term wins and to help support the process.