

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Downtown Public Safety Strategy

Meeting Date: September 25, 2013
Department: Eugene Police Department
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: A
Staff Contact: Pete Kerns
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5102

ISSUE STATEMENT

A City-chartered committee developed recommendations for a path to end the Downtown Public Safety Zone. The committee's recommendations have been evaluated by staff. They are summarized below and in many cases incorporated into an action plan. The Downtown Public Safety Zone will sunset November 30, 2013, barring any additional council action.

BACKGROUND

In January, the City chartered a committee to recommend a path to end the Downtown Public Safety Zone. The committee met six times including a public forum with the Police Commission and Human Rights Commission, and forwarded recommendations to the City Manager's Office on July 1, 2013. According to the original charter, the committee's recommendations were intended to meet the following objectives:

- a. Reduce illegal behavior and improve public safety in the downtown core;
- b. Improve police and community relationships;
- c. Be constitutionally valid;
- d. Fiscally feasible, and aligned with council goals.

A staff team including Presiding Judge Wayne Allen, Police Captain Karl Durr, Library, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Renee Grube, Central Services Executive Director Kristie Hammitt, Police Chief Kerns, City Attorney Glenn Klein, Assistant City Manager and Planning and Development Director Sarah Medary, and Court Administrator Cheryl Stone met to review the committee's recommendations and to develop a strategy. Attachment A is a memo from Police Chief Pete Kerns to City Manager Jon Ruiz outlining the initiatives, which are summarized below.

1. Continue to increase positive activity downtown.
2. Evaluate opportunity to establish a community court, in partnership with the Center for Court Innovations. This would address several of the committee's recommendations which focused on alternative sentencing, and better identifying the high-utilizers of public services.

3. Complete a triple bottom line analysis to determine need for restroom facilities in the downtown core.
4. Explore possibility of adopting certain State drug offenses into City Code, enabling jurisdiction in the Municipal Court. This would increase the City's authority and ability to hold offenders accountable.

The committee's recommendations are included as Attachment B. All of the committee's high priorities are encompassed in the strategy outlined by staff.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

These strategies address the following City Council goals:

A community where all people are safe, valued and welcome.

- Decreased property crime
- Greater sense of safety (especially downtown)
- Better police/community relations

A community that meets its present environmental, economic and social needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- Increased downtown development

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Memo from Police Chief Pete Kerns to Jon Ruiz, City Manager
- B. Memo from Beverlee Hughes, Chair of Downtown Public Safety Committee to Jon Ruiz, City Manager

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Carter Hawley
Telephone: 541-682-5852
Staff E-Mail: carter.r.hawley@ci.eugene.or.us