

MOTION

The Therapeutic Van Pilot Program partnership with LA County Department of Mental Health and the City of Los Angeles provides an unarmed model of response for mental health crises. The pilot program launched in January 2021 and will be studied for one year with a focus on sustaining and expanding the program into other cities within LA County. Now underway, the year-long pilot program will soon expand to a total of five Therapeutic Vans, each owned by the County of Los Angeles and staffed by a Department of Mental Health Psychiatric Mobile Response Team. The teams will be available 24 hours a day, deployed from Los Angeles Fire Department stations in Downtown, South Los Angeles, West Los Angeles, Southwest Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

This pilot program dispatches a Therapeutic Van staffed by trained mental health professionals to respond to patients and provide treatment for those experiencing a mental health crisis in a more thoughtful and effective way. The program goal is to provide a better experience and outcome for the patient by improving the speed and ease of access to specialized care, while freeing up first responders and vital hospital emergency room resources.

Through the FY 2022-2023 Budget, the pilot's funding was increased to \$8 million so that it can begin operating in other parts of the City. Early data from this pilot has shown the success and effectiveness of alternative response models that can lead towards more tailored care for mental health situations and therefore improve public safety. Similar to other challenges we have encountered during the pandemic, there is sufficient funding but staffing the Department of Mental Health vans remains as a hurdle towards potential expansion. Through identifying permanent funding sources and recommendations to fund the City's cost for the Program (CF 20-1178-S1), the Therapeutic Van Pilot can be more feasibly expanded.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the Los Angeles Fire Department and the City Administrative Officer to begin negotiations of extension of the memorandum of agreement between the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the City to continue funding models of therapeutic mental resources for citywide expansion.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council request that the City Administrative Officer to report back on a permanent source of funding to sustain the Therapeutic Van Pilot program in the City. The report should include recommendations and Controller instructions to fund the City's cost for the Therapeutic Van Pilot Program in order to implement the program citywide.

PRESENTED BY:

MONICA RODRIGUEZ

Councilwoman, 7th District

SECONDED BY:

AUG 10 2022

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