

May 4, 2023

To: Yi-An Huang

City Manager

From: Liz Speakman

Interim Director, Community Safety Department

Re: Update on the development of the City of Cambridge Community Safety Department (CSD)

This memo serves as an update on the development of the City of Cambridge Community Safety Department (CSD). On January 9, 2023, the City Manager asked me to assess the development of the CSD and work with the appropriate City departments to ensure a contract for \$300,000 of ARPA funding was sent to HEART. This document provides an overview of the work that has been done and some of the plans for the coming months. You will find a staffing overview (p1), infrastructure (p2), program evaluation (p3), operational readiness (p3), training plans (p4), community engagement (p4), HEART (p5) and technical assistance (p5).

### **Staffing**

The current staffing of the CSD includes Liz Speakman, LICSW, Interim Director, Michele Scott, Program Coordinator and Marie Mathieu, Clinical Consultant.

Liz has over 20 years of experience in the fields of Domestic Violence and Trauma. She received her MSW from Salem State University in 2005 and has held independent clinical licensure since 2007. She worked at Mass General Hospital for nine years as the Director of the HAVEN Program (the in-house DV program providing advocacy, training and policy for MGH). Liz has been with the City since October 2014 as the Coordinator of the [Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Initiative](#) where she had led the effort to create the first of its kind [Trauma Informed Law Enforcement Initiative](#), co-created a local men's engagement group, trained thousands of city staff and community providers and provided consultation to a variety of city departments on DV policies and procedures.

Michele Scott began as the Program Coordinator on February 13, 2023. Michele's career has been serving the people of Cambridge as a Co-Director of the Cambridge Sisters Program, Teen Youth Center Director, Family Support Specialist at Bridges Homeward (formally Cambridge Family and Children's Service) and as the Case Manager of the Cambridge Works Program. These varying positions and being a Cambridge resident have enabled Michele to get very familiar with the citizens and resources here in Cambridge. This knowledge will be helpful to help establish CSD and bridge connections with the community and all the resources. The possibility of what this new department can create is exciting to Michele because she cares deeply about the community, of which she is also a member.

Marie Mathieu is the CSD Clinical Consultant providing support around clinical issues. Marie brings over a decade of experience working with individuals experiencing mental health crises. She is also well-versed with the available resources in the City as the library social worker. Marie has been working to

create a comprehensive resource guide for incoming Responders and provide Mental Health First Aid training. She has also been assisting with the recruitment and interview process.

The CSD's staffing model for FY 24 includes a Director, Program Coordinator, two Clinical Coordinators, Administrative Coordinator, four Crisis Responders and a Data Analyst. As of today, we have an Interim Director and Program Coordinator in place as well as a Clinical Consultant. [We have posted the Crisis Responder positions.](#) We will post the Clinical Coordinators and Administrative Coordinator positions by the end of May. We plan to post the Data Analyst position by the end of June. We have also contracted with three Harvard Kennedy School students for part time internships over the summer.

### **Infrastructure**

In order to develop the infrastructure for the successful implementation of a new department, I identified the following items to be completed: creation of job descriptions, development of policies and procedures, conducting site visits, confirm the call codes to be responded to and CSD staff to ride along with local providers.

Since January, we have created all the job descriptions and posted some of the jobs. We are aiming to be fully staffed by this summer. We have collected sample policies and procedures from Durham, NC, Chicago, IL and Oakland, CA. The HKS students will be assisting in the development and drafting of policies and procedures for the CSD. Michele and I have a trip planned to Durham, NC to visit their CSD called, [HEART](#), from May 21-24 for a site visit. Their team has agreed to schedule ride alongs as well as meetings with their Director, Responders, Data Analysts and Evaluation team. Michele and Marie Mathieu will also be attending the [National Co-Responder Conference June 11-14](#)

Michele and I have gone on several ride alongs with the CPD Outreach Officers, First Step Team out of CASPAR and the Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT). We plan to continue doing ride alongs with those listed as well as trying to schedule a ride along with the Mobile Crisis Team from Cambridge Health Alliance.

Christina Giacobbe has been working to get call codes approved for an alternative response. The codes that we are poised to respond to once our team is up and running are as follows:

- Check person – Report of welfare checks when no crimes are reported or suspected (i.e. Loved one calls that they have been unable to reach the resident or when a provider calls because the person missed their appointment)
- Drinking in Public - Reports of intoxicated individuals/homeless in public places when there is no scene safety report
- Notify Citizen - Delivering emergency/death notification messages
- Psych/Mental Health – Non-suicidal and alert (with first party verification) OMEGA/Referral for mental health resources (Psych/Mental Health Conditions/Suicide Attempt/Abnormal Behavior 2501) These calls are already being referred to 988/BHHL or CHA CBHC
- Psych/Mental Health – Suicide ideation and alert (with first party verification) OMEGA/Referral for mental health resources (Psych/Mental Health Conditions/Suicide Attempt/Abnormal Behavior 2501) These calls are already being referred to 988/BHHL or CHA CBHC
- Psych/Mental Health - Non-suicidal and alert (without first party verification) has not made a suicide attempt (Psych/Mental Health Conditions/Suicide Attempt/Abnormal Behavior 25A1) – pending med control approval
- Psych/Mental Health – Suicide ideation and alert (without first party verification) has not made a suicide attempt (Psych/Mental Health Conditions/Suicide Attempt/Abnormal Behavior 25A2) – pending med control approval

- Sick Person - Call for someone feeling anxious or nervous but not suicidal (Sick Person 26019) – pending med control approval

### **Program Evaluation**

We have an agreement with the team at the [Center for Policing Equity](#) for Technical Assistance and they have agreed to assist in our program evaluation efforts. They will be providing assistance in developing an evaluation plan including facilitating a meeting with stakeholders on the development of purpose, goals and metrics for the CSD. We have also been attending the Community of Practice opportunities hosted by the HKS Government Performance Lab, which has featured best practices in metrics collection from other CSDs across the country.

### **Operational Readiness**

Through discussions with the CSD Steering Committee (described in more detail below), we have developed a new name, values and mission statements for the CSD Crisis Responder unit. The CSD will be called the CARE (Community Assistance, Response and Engagement) Team

#### *Mission:*

The Cambridge Community Safety Department's is to provide additional services to enhance the community's health and well-being. We value compassion in our prevention and intervention efforts.

#### *The Community Safety Department is guided by the following values:*

1. We are continuously learning, evolving and reimagining our approach in order to best meet the needs of the community we serve. We embrace a growth mindset and value curiosity, humility, and our shared humanity.
2. We commit to living restorative practices such as building empathy, compassion, trust and mutual respect in all we do.
3. We center relationships, partnerships, authentic collaboration and joy in our work. We are guided by the wisdom, insights, and experiences of those who came before us and those who are doing the work today to build solutions community-wide. We are intentionally laying groundwork for the future we envision.
4. We are consciously not reproducing systems of oppression. We aim to create equitable, non-racist, and non-discriminatory ways of serving our community.
5. We acknowledge the historical implications of the criminal legal system and the harm it has done to our communities. With this understanding, we value the dignity and humanity of all people.

#### *Other updates on operational readiness:*

- We have contracted with a graphic designer to assist in the development of a logo that will reflect the mission and values of the CARE team. Once we have a logo, we will purchase uniforms and other branding items.
- Our coverage plan currently includes a model for two teams of three staff which would include two Crisis Responders and one Clinical Coordinator per team. We are aiming to provide 911 coverage Monday through Friday 10 am-10 pm. We understand that our coverage model and staffing plan will change as we gain a better understanding of the needs and opportunities in the community for an alternative response.

- We will be moving into our new office space at 689 Mass Ave by June 2023.
- We are working with City IT to review software options to ensure we have the capacity and ability to collect data in a secure manner with appropriate separation from public safety. We are also eager to have a software option that will provide timely program evaluation data and the ability to publish a public dashboard.

### *Training Plan*

We have been spending some time thinking about what trainings will be beneficial for our responders once we hire them. We have spoken to programs that are up and running about training ideas, we have brainstormed ourselves, and received suggestions from community organizations. A few of the trainings we know that we need to have are: Mental Health First Aid, Introduction to Domestic Violence, Conflict Mediation Skills, 1<sup>st</sup> Aid and CPR, De-escalation among many others. We are continuing to build our training plan.

### **Community Engagement**

In March, we created the CSD Steering Committee (SC) consisting of community members, city staff and local service providers. The group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday every month and has developed the new name (CARE), mission statement and values statements for the CSD. The SC will continue to meet to work on community engagement, development of a plan to disseminate money in the community and providing general feedback on the creation of the CSD.

Members of the Steering Committee:

- Samuel Gebru, Managing Director, Black Lion Strategies, Professor at Tufts
- Christina Giacobbe, Director of Emergency Communications, City of Cambridge
- Kate Moore, Director of Emergency Services, North Suffolk Community Services
- Joan Taglieri, Senior Director, Psychiatry, Cambridge Health Alliance
- Shameka Gregory, Director of Equity and Justice, Transition House
- Deidre Travis Brown, Chief of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, City of Cambridge
- Lynne Tyree, Case Manager, City of Cambridge Multi-Service Center
- Michele Scott, CSD Program Coordinator
- Chandra Banks, Violence Prevention Specialist, Masters in Risk Prevention, Previous Conflict Management at the Cambridge Public School District
- Niko Emack Bazalais, Graduate Student at Harvard and Adjunct Professor at Emerson College
- Albert Pless, Director, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion for the Town of Andover and former Program Manager, Men's Health League, Cambridge Public Health Department
- Marie Mathieu, Social Worker, City of Cambridge Library and CSD Clinical Consultant with expert consultation from Crystal Rosa, City of Cambridge Language Access Manager

Over the past few months, Michele has been out in the community speaking to different organizations to discuss CSD and the work that we are planning to do, what the community would like to see us do and answering any questions about CSD. A sample of the groups that we have met with so far are: My Brothers Keeper, Cambridge Community Foundation, Cambridge YWCA, Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, Agenda for Children, MIT Job Connector, Leadership Team of the City of Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs, Community Engagement Team, Cambridge Women's Commission. There is an excitement about the possibilities that CSD brings to the Cambridge community and willingness to support and work alongside of CSD.

We have also launched a very basic webpage [www.cambridgesafety.org](http://www.cambridgesafety.org) that will be updated regularly to reflect the progress of the new department.

## **HEART**

- On January 17, I met with Dara Byer and Corinne Espinoza from HEART and we have met a total of 3 times virtually, with several phone calls and many emails back and forth.
- On March 20, the City sent over a draft ARPRA contract for \$300,000 for review by HEART. The scope of services includes crisis response, conflict resolution, mutual aid, aftercare, and community cohesion. The funding will cover a Licensed Social Worker position, partial funding of several responder salaries, partial funding of one Co-Director salary, and partially covering the fiscal sponsor fee.
- On April 13, I met with the HEART leadership team, upon their request, to go over their questions about the ARPA contract
- On April 14, I followed up with an offer to continue the conversation or schedule a meeting with the City Manager to address any remaining concerns they have.
- On April 21, HEART asked for a meeting with the City about their questions regarding the ARPA contract, on April 24, the City's Law Department responded with their availability. A meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 4
- Since our initial conversation on 1/17, we have talked several times about possible funding options from the City. I have offered to help them with thinking about a proposal and what metrics they could include in their reporting. Once we receive a proposal from the HEART team, I will ensure a timely response from the City.

## **Technical Assistance**

We have an agreement with the [Center for Policing Equity](#) (CPE) to provide technical assistance to us in our development of the CSD. We are in conversations with CPE around what parameters of technical assistance will be available to us in addition to program evaluation. The [Harvard Kennedy School's Government Performance Lab](#) is opening up applications to for local governments to receive technical assistance so we will be applying for that as well. Lastly, [Community Action Partners](#) has opened up their opportunity for consulting support so we are planning to apply for that as well.

Thank you in advance of your consideration of this memo.

Sincerely,

Liz Speakman LICSW

Interim Director, Community Safety Department