



**SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

**Department: Police Department**

**Prepared by: D.C. Spiller, Police Chief**

**City Manager Approval:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JS', written over a horizontal line.

**TOPIC: SAN RAFAEL PUBLIC SAFETY ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE TEAM**

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AND ENTER INTO A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PETALUMA PEOPLE SERVICES CENTER, FOR A 3-YEAR PILOT ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE PROGRAM, NOT TO EXCEED \$775,000 PER YEAR WITH AN ADDITIONAL \$100,000 IN START UP COSTS IN THE FIRST YEAR**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Petaluma People Services Center, for a 3-Year Pilot Alternative Response Program, Not to Exceed \$775,000 Per Year with an Additional \$100,000 in Start Up Costs in the First Year.

**BACKGROUND:**

Over the past several years, there has been an emerging practice of replacing traditional law enforcement responders to 911 calls involving people in crisis with social workers, mental health counselors, or medical staff. The model for this type of response has been in existence in some jurisdictions for decades. A gold standard example of such a model is a program called Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS), which has been nationally recognized as the model for an alternative public safety response. This program, originating in municipalities in Oregon, was developed by the White Bird Clinic to send a crisis counselor and emergency medical technician on the streets to engage in the support of vulnerable community members, specifically those with mental health history and those individuals experiencing homelessness.

Individuals in these circumstances often are involved in public safety calls for service and represent a growing number of calls for service impacting both police and fire services. The growing impact of such calls for service limits the “available time” for police and fire units, subsequently impacting response times and other service delivery throughout the community.

The Police Department annually responds to an average of nearly 4,000 calls for service (CFS) involving community members in crisis related to mental health, substance abuse, or homelessness. Combined, these represent roughly 8% of all calls for service that the Police Department responds to annually. Operationally, these types of calls for service are repetitive and generally require two police officers and, in many cases, Fire Department or medical support services for an extended period.

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**FOR CITY CLERK ONLY**

**Council Meeting:**

**Disposition:**

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In many cases, these calls result in a peaceful resolution with the transport of or placement option for the individual. While a vast majority of these interactions have positive outcomes, some instances result in negative outcomes including required use of force by police that can result in injury to community members or first responders. Staff recognizes that there are individuals and entities that are better trained, suited, and equipped to navigate and deliver services related to mental health, substance abuse, and unsheltered and housing services available to individuals in need.

Alternative Response Teams have the capability to deal with a wide range of mental health-related crises, including conflict resolution, welfare checks, substance abuse and potential suicide threats. Relying on trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction techniques, Alternative Response Teams are designed to respond to the following:

- Individuals who are intoxicated or under the influence of controlled substances.
- Transports for mental health services.
- Counseling, support, and intervention for depressed or suicidal individuals.
- Assisting the public with emergency shelter resources.
- Transportation to detox services for intoxicated people.
- Welfare checks (when no crime is suspected).
- Reports of intoxicated subjects in public places.
- Reports of disoriented subjects.
- Non-emergency medical evaluations.
- Transports for non-emergency medical care.
- Delivering emergency/death messages.

### **ANALYSIS:**

In the Spring of 2022, “Crisis Consulting” and its principal consultant, Ben Adam Climer, conducted a study and recommended the implementation of an Alternative Response Team (ART), based on an analysis of Police and Fire Department calls for service. An examination of the calls for service determined an Alternative Response Team would alleviate the need for public safety responses and support the need to utilize paraprofessionals as an alternative to public safety staff employed by the City of San Rafael.

These paraprofessionals serve as “Integrated Health First Responders.” These responders will have quality knowledge of our local homeless services and will be skilled in engaging with people experiencing homelessness and grasp the unique challenges faced by people in those circumstances. In cases where a community member is experiencing regular crises secondary to their homelessness, the team will serve to bridge and connect that individual to the best supportive services available without impact on other on-duty public safety resources.

In July 2022, the City Council directed staff to release a Request for Proposals for implementation of an Alternative Response Team (ART) to meet the needs and provide support to those in our community that need additional services. As evidenced with similar successful Alternative Response models, such services and support will further serve to mitigate complaints and calls for service made by San Rafael residents and business operators who are impacted by quality-of-life issues. In October 2022, a Request for Proposal was disseminated, and outreach was conducted to interested community based organizations.

While there were several community-based organizations interested in the program, ultimately, the City of San Rafael received only one proposal from Petaluma People Services Center (PPSC) to operate an Alternative Response Team in San Rafael. Staff convened a committee comprised of representatives from a local community-based organization, Marin County’s Behavioral Health

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and Recovery Services, the City's Homeless Services Director, the Fire Department and the Police Department to review the proposal.

The proposal detailed the work that PPSC is currently doing in Petaluma, Rohnert Park and Cotati through their Specialized Assistance For Everyone (SAFE) teams. PPSC is part of a larger collaborative that connects them to other Crisis Intervention Teams throughout the State of California. They have implemented best practices used throughout the State by these teams. PPSC SAFE teams have become a Best Practice Model, leading the way in their program model, which allows the team to respond independently of law enforcement or the fire department, at the direction of dispatch. The Alternative Response Team works because the goal is to de-escalate the situation and make voluntary transfers, if requested, to emergency rooms, physician's office, shelter and/or other community-based organizations that can provide support as needed, as part of the person in crisis safety-plan. In addition, the team also addresses those with acute emotional distress from drug use and/or drug withdrawal in ways that therapy is not designed for.

PPSC is recommending replicating their existing model for the City of San Rafael based on the successes they have seen in Petaluma, which has a comparable size population, demographics and annual calls for service. PPSC's SAFE team is comprised of a Crisis Counselor and an Emergency Medical Technician or individuals licensed as nurses. Utilizing a team of two members allows the team to not only treat mental health crisis, but also allows the EMT to treat co-occurring physical health issues that can manifest when someone is in crisis. EMT's are also able to take many of the calls that San Rafael Fire Department would consider low need and/or repeat calls, freeing up the Fire Department to respond to more urgent calls.

In addition to the Crisis Counselor and EMT, PPSC also employs a SAFE Bilingual Navigator. The SAFE Bilingual Navigator serves as the bridge between the immediate response for de-escalation to accessing the community resources. The SAFE Team refers clients to the Navigator, who then assists in finding resources with local community partners to support the client in making long term changes.

PPSC recommended staffing for the SAFE Team to operate 12 hours a day/7 days per week/365 days per year as follows:

- 3 Full Time Employees (FTE) Crisis Intervention Workers
- 3 FTE Emergency Medical Technicians/Nurses
- 1 FTE Program Navigator
- .25 FTE Program Director
- .5 FTE Program Manager
- .25 Licensed Clinical Support for the Team Members

Annual staffing costs for the project are estimated at \$604,464, including benefits, with additional non-personnel, indirect, and city administrative costs of \$167,536 for a total annual program cost of \$775,000. Staff estimate an additional one-time program start-up cost of \$100,000.

PPSC would be responsible for the hiring, training, equipping, and scheduling of the SAFE Teams. We would work collaboratively on incorporating the SAFE Team into the emergency response system by conducting training with our dispatchers, officers and fire department personnel. Additionally, we would work with our partners from Marin County's Mobile Crisis Teams, CARE Teams and the County's Communications Center to advise them of the team's availability and capabilities. PPSC would also partner with the city on outreach, education and engagement. PPSC recognizes that communication would be key to the partnership and would address working together, outcomes and data tracking. Because they do not have an existing footprint in Marin County, PPSC recognizes the need to participate in regularly scheduled Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, Marin Alliance to Solve Homelessness (MASH) meetings or

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other similar type meetings to share information, trends and to address the needs of the community.

After a full year of PPSC operating their SAFE Team in Petaluma and the fall of 2021's launch of programming in Rohnert Park and Cotati, the SAFE Team responded to over 4,125 calls for service, far exceeding the 10% initial estimates. Of those 4,125 calls, 119 were Emergency Department diversions, 69 jail diversions, 75 calls were for suicidal subjects and over 1,053 calls were for welfare checks. If approved to move forward with a Professional Services Agreement, based on the City of San Rafael's call volume, we anticipate comparable results.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The fiscal impact of this project, if approved, is estimated to be \$775,000 annually, with an additional start-up cost of approximately \$80,000 - \$100,000 depending on the cost of fuel and the purchase of a used vehicle. Using funds from various sources including funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Cannabis Tax revenues, previously allocated funding from the Marin County Major Crimes Task Force as well as other potential funding sources, staff is confident in the funding sources for the three-year pilot of these services. Additionally, PPSC is aware there may be additional federal and state funding opportunities for the City of San Rafael to help fund this program and would assist with the application process for that funding in the future.

As grants are awarded and received for this program, the revenues and corresponding appropriations will be booked to Fund #218. Funds will be utilized in the following order: grant funds, special revenue funds (including cannabis revenues), and American Rescue Plan Act funds. Staff are confident that there are sufficient existing appropriations in the FY 2022-23 budget for the program. Should additional appropriations be required, they will be included in the year-end update to Council based on actual program expenses incurred during FY 2022-23. Future appropriations for this pilot program will be included in the annual budget process.

### **OPTIONS:**

1. Adopt resolution.
2. Direct staff to return with more information.
3. Do not accept report and provide alternative direction to Staff.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Adopt Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate and Enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Petaluma People Services Center, for a 3-Year Pilot Alternative Response Program, Not to Exceed \$775,000 Per Year with an Additional \$100,000 in Start Up Costs in the First Year.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. PPSC's Response to Request for Proposal

**RESOLUTION NO.**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN RAFAEL AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AND ENTER INTO A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PETALUMA PEOPLE SERVICES CENTER, FOR A 3-YEAR PILOT ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE PROGRAM, NOT TO EXCEED \$775,000 PER YEAR WITH AN ADDITIONAL \$100,000 IN START UP COSTS IN THE FIRST YEAR**

**WHEREAS**, the City recognizes that there are individuals and entities that are better trained, suited, and equipped to navigate and deliver services related to mental health, substance abuse, and unsheltered and housing services available to individuals in need; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has a need for an Alternative Response Team to respond to a wide range of mental health related crises, including conflict resolution, welfare checks, substance abuse and suicide threats; and

**WHEREAS**, community members will be diverted from the criminal justice system, emergency departments and crisis stabilization units by providing a more specialized response; and

**WHEREAS**, Petaluma People Services Center (PPSC) has a proven track record of providing wrap-around services to clients as a trusted community partner; and

**WHEREAS**, PPSC has the capabilities, staff, and experience to implement an Alternative Response Team in San Rafael; and

**WHEREAS**, PPSC will provide a two-person mobile team of Crisis Counselors and Emergency Medical Technicians 12 hours per day / 7 days per week / 365 days per year.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the City Council of the City of San Rafael hereby authorizes the City Manager to negotiate and enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Petaluma People Services Center, for a 3-year pilot Alternative Response Program, not to exceed \$775,000 per year with an additional \$100,000 in start-up costs, in the first year, subject to final approval as to form by the City Attorney.

**I, Lindsay Lara**, Clerk of the City of San Rafael, hereby certify foregoing resolution was duly and regularly introduced and adopted at a regular meeting on the City Council of said City held on Tuesday, the 17<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023, by the following vote to wit:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS:

NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS:

ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS:

Lindsay Lara, City Clerk



Petaluma People Services Center  
1500 Petaluma Blvd. South  
Petaluma, CA 94952  
www.PetalumaPeople.org  
707-765-8488

November 11, 2022

Lieutenant Todd Berringer  
City of San Rafael, Police Department  
1375 Fifth Ave.  
San Rafael, CA 94901  
Submitted via Email

Lieutenant Berringer:

Petaluma People Services Center (PPSC) is excited to submit a response to the RFP issued by the City of San Rafael for an Alternative Response Team. I am proud of the work that PPSC's SAFE (Specialized Assistance For Everyone) Team is currently doing in Petaluma, Rohnert Park and Cotati. We also know from this work that each city is different and has different needs. I would hope that our proposal is moved forward, and we have an opportunity to work with the Police Department, City and other Public Safety members to create a program that meets the needs of San Rafael. We also just recently signed an MOU to also provide programming on the campus of Sonoma State University co-responding with the Public Safety teams of Rohnert Park and Cotati, making the SAFE Team the first outside program on a State University Campus.

Our program is already being recognized by other Crisis Intervention programs throughout California as Best Practices. I will be honest our team works very hard to do the work, but it is the true partnerships that we have with our partners that have led to much of success. If awarded this pilot contract, we would work hard to have that kind of relationship that is necessary to support the residents of San Rafael.

In order to get the RFP response under 12 pages, we took out the benefits section in two of the job descriptions but please note all of our employees have the same benefits.

I am sure there will be questions, but please feel free to reach out to me.

It is all about community,

*Elece Hempel*

Elece Hempel  
Executive Director  
elece@petalumapeople.org

/attachments





**City of San Rafael Request for Proposal**  
ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE TEAM  
Petaluma People Services Center

**1. Describe agency background and experience with public health preparedness, response and recovery work in the last 2-3 years.**

Petaluma People Services Center's (PPSC) mission is to improve the social and economic health of our community by providing programs that strengthen the dignity and self-sufficiency of the individual; aging-in-place, family support, family preservation, nutrition, and youth programs are key components of our service array and mission. PPSC is a community based, multi-service non-profit agency founded in 1974 to provide wrap-around services to clients, as a trusted community partner. The agency is a primary access point for community members to receive services, and the number of clients we serve each year continues to grow throughout Sonoma and Marin Counties. PPSC core pillars include: Youth Services, Seniors Services, Counseling Prevention & Intervention, Housing & Homelessness Prevention, Economic Sustainability and Food Security.

PPSC is a leader in collaboration and partnership in community resources and support. We have been a partner with the Petaluma Police Department, Petaluma City Schools and Sonoma County Probation in a variety of capacities. Our programming is evidence-informed, and we are skilled at navigating the needs of our community members, while working with community partners, including elected officials. An example of our existing work around preparedness, response and recovery, is our Prevention, Diversion and Success Team (PDS). This is an evidenced-informed program with the goal of disrupting the school to prison pipeline and ensuring high school completion for our community's most vulnerable youth. Many of these youth are affected by structural racism and the highest percentage of youth currently served in the program are Black, Indigenous and Latinx, which is a blatant reminder of how embedded structural racism is in our society and our education system. The program uses a restorative-based approach, and also ensures that probation/diversion programs are completed. Youth are directly referred into the program from the PPD or PCS staff and we are recognizing the value of this alternative to policing on school campuses.

PPSC also has contracts with Sonoma County to provide evidence-based behavioral programming, including Functional Family Therapy and Positive Parenting programs. Along with 65 additional evidenced-informed programs, PPSC is integrated in the community and is the trusted source for programming.

**2. Provide information detailing the applicant's experience in conducting the same or similar work as described in the RFP.**

Because of our existing partnership with the City of Petaluma, and an evaluation done by Critical Responses In Supportive Integrated Services Consulting (CRISIS), it was recommended that PPSC would be a perfect partner to launch the SAFE Team (Specialized Assistance For Everyone) in Petaluma. In four months, we were able to work in partnership with the City, Police and Fire and launch the program in July of 2020. This mobile crisis response team is modeled after the successful Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) in Eugene, Oregon.

Key to our programming is alleviating the burden placed on police, fire, emergency medical services and hospital emergency departments to manage crises that derive from emotional and physical distress, substance use, and homelessness. Initial analysis estimate that 10% of calls for service currently received by the Petaluma Police Department would be directed to the SAFE Mobile Crisis Intervention Team. Our team responds to and proactively addresses calls for service that have traditionally (and

unnecessarily) burdened law enforcement, emergency medical services and health care providers. In July of this year, after a full year of services in Petaluma, and the fall of 2021 launch of programming in Rohnert Park and Cotati, the team responded to over 4,125 calls for services, far expediting the 10% estimate. Of those 4,125 calls, 119 were Emergency Room Diversions, 69 Jail Diversion, 75 of the calls were for suicidal subjects, and over 1,053 were welfare checks.

PPSC will be able to leverage existing behavioral health programs in San Rafael and Marin County as post de-escalation referrals. It is also important to note that some of the residents who need counseling services may also qualify for PPSC's Mental Health Counseling services through our existing contracts with BEACON (managed MediCal) and our ability to bill Kaiser for mental health services. The current crisis intervention practice achieves not only harm reduction, but it also helps local governments and economies by diverting people from the criminal justice system and avoiding the societal costs of incarceration.

Our proposed model for the ART program would be in alignment with the programming we are already providing in southern Sonoma County. The model would partner with the City of San Rafael to respond to mental health calls for service that SRPD and SRFD currently respond to. These calls would run through dispatch and focus on calls for service involving mental health. Utilizing our existing model, when not responding to calls the SAFE Team is also able to establish relationships with those who are unhoused and build a level trust with those who have traditionally been resistant to services, to encourage them to seek help. The mental health related calls for service generally require two (2) police officers for a protracted period, and often, there is a peaceful resolution and/or treatment or placement options for the individual. While the majority of these police interactions have positive outcomes, it is recognized that there are individuals and entities throughout San Rafael and Marin County that are better trained, better suited, and better equipped to navigate the patchwork of mental health care and crisis response options available to individuals in need. An existing model already in place would be replicated as the ART model and would respond to appropriate mental and physical health related calls for service by PPSC's mobile crisis response team which has the tools, resources, and knowledge to address the unique needs of individual clients effectively.

**3. Describe approach to and experience with working collaboratively with other agencies (e.g. non-profits, health care agencies, school districts, faith-based organizations, etc.), including coordination of work, division of labor and decision making process.**

PPSC and all our programs, including the SAFE Team, work collaboratively with public safety, municipalities, community-based non-profits, health care providers, elected officials and our entire community. If funded by the City of San Rafael, we will continue to use a model of providing services in the community that we have used for 48 years. PPSC is also able to provide a variety of programming through our PPSC SAFE Team Navigator to connect the clients they are working with to services in Marin County and San Rafael that are available.

Because this would be a new program for San Rafael, training would include working directly with dispatch for incoming calls. As with the SAFE Team model, the ART Team would have weekly team meetings, and information shared in those meetings would be communicated to Police and Fire liaisons weekly through our program director or manager. PPSC would also partner with the city on outreach, education and engagement. Because this would be a pilot, communication would be key to the partnership, addressing working together, outcomes and data tracking. PPSC understands there may be additional federal and state funding opportunities for the City of San Rafael to help fund this program and would be part of the application process for that funding.

**4. Describe how the agency is staffed (number of staff, volunteers, outreach workers) and how staff will be utilized to provide the services identified in your proposal.**



PPSC is part of a larger collaborative that connects us to other Crisis Intervention Teams throughout the state of California. We are able to implement best practices used throughout the State by these teams. It is important to note that the SAFE Team currently in Petaluma, Rohnert Park and Cotati has become a Best Practice Model, leading the way in our program model, which allows the team to respond independently of law enforcement, at the direction of dispatch. The ART emergency response team works because the goal of the CIS staff is to de-escalate the situation and make voluntary transfers, if requested, to emergency rooms, clinics, physicians' offices, shelter and/or other community-based organizations that can provide the support as needed, as part of the person in crisis safety-plan. Our team also addresses those with acute emotional distress from drug use and/or drug withdrawal in ways that therapy is not designed for. [Attachment A](#) is the current job description for our CIS staff. The second employee on the Crisis Response Team is a licensed Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or individuals licensed as nurses. Utilizing a team of two members allows the team to not only treat mental health crises, the EMT is also able to treat the often cooccurring physical health issues that can manifest when someone is in mental health crisis. The team is able to establish a rapport and provide support through a medical evaluation that can lead to better care for the individual, their families and others impacted by the crisis. [Attachment B](#) is the EMT current job description. The EMTs are also able to take many of the calls that San Rafael Fire Department would consider low need and/or repeat calls, freeing up the Fire Department to respond to more urgent calls. The SAFE Bilingual Navigator serves as the bridge between the immediate response for de-escalation to accessing community resources. The SAFE Team refers clients to the Navigator, who then assists in finding resources with local community partners to support the client in making long-term changes. [Attachment C](#) is the SAFE Navigator's current job description.

The recommend staffing for the response team required for an ART to operate 12 hours a day/7 day per week/e65 day per year includes:

- .25 FTE Program Director
- .5 FTE Program Manager
- .25 Licensed Clinical Support for the Team Members
- 1 FTE Program Navigator
- 5 FTE Crisis Intervention Worker
- 5 FTE EMT/Nurse

**5. Describe plan for recruitment with timelines for hiring staff not yet selected.**

PPSC currently manages and operates Crisis Intervention Teams in Petaluma (24 hours a day), Rohnert Park and Cotati (18 hours a day, moving to 24 hours a day in February). The model proposed would use our existing PPSC Program Director and Manager. Upon approval of the contract PPSC, would begin the hiring process; with the goal of having a team in place by mid-January 2023. The training of the team requires two weeks of classroom training and four weeks of in-field training that would be done in our Sonoma County locations initially.

One of the needed requirements, that PPSC would be happy to discuss, is that the teams should have office space available to use during shift change and when not responding to calls. PPSC would propose a model we currently have with our municipalities in Sonoma County. Because the vans are owned by the city, we would propose that the city of San Rafael provide an office for the team to use that is in a location near public safety, mostly because the ART van should be parked, when off duty, at a secure location owned by the City of San Rafael.

**6. Describe the mobile crisis response vehicle set-up that the ART will require, equipped with the necessary supplies to operate the program.**

PPSC's SAFE Team is currently using a Ford Transit van, however when the program was launched in July of 2021 with the City of Petaluma, we did utilize an older ambulance that was customized for our use

until funding was available to purchase a customized van. The van should provide a safe space to sit with, talk to, and provide care for clients. It must be able to transport individuals who voluntarily want to seek treatment at hospitals, health centers and other community partners who may be able to provide additional assistance to the individual. The van should have safety features that include a reinforced plexiglass barrier between the patient compartment and the crew. There should be storage that is available to keep medical supplies, water AED, blankets and other items used by the team responding to crisis.

**7. Provide references and contact information.**

Program references for PPSC current operations of the SAFE Team:

- Deputy Chief Miller, Petaluma Police Department 707-778-4968 [bmiller@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:bmiller@cityofpetaluma.org)
- Chief Mattos, Director of Public Safety, Rohnert Park 707-584-2654 [tmattos@rpcity.org](mailto:tmattos@rpcity.org)
- City Manager, Damien O’Bid, City of Cotati, 707-665-3622 [dobid@cotaticity.org](mailto:dobid@cotaticity.org)

**8. Provide cost proposal (see below and Exhibit A).**

Attached, however we view this as a pilot program and would work with the City of San Rafael to really understand what is needed to provide this programming with shared responsibility by both the City and PPSC to build a program, within your start up budget parameters and the best way to leverage shared costs.

**9. City of San Rafael Insurance Requirements.**

PPSC will be able to meet the City’s insurance requirements.