



Staff Report

File #: 22-448

Version: 1

Date: 9/26/2022

Item #: 5. a.

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Councilor Vanessa Nordyke, Ward 7

SUBJECT:

Motion from Councilor Vanessa Nordyke concerning a Request for Proposals for a Mobile Crisis Unit.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

MOTION:

I move to direct staff to identify funding sources for City Council's consideration, and once that source has been budgeted, issue a Request for Proposals for a Mobile Crisis Unit to serve the city of Salem.

DISCUSSION:

Mobile crisis units save lives and save money. Cities across the country are adopting their own mobile crisis units. With an epidemic of persons experiencing mental health crises exacerbated by the pandemic, evictions, addiction, rising homelessness and more, the need for a mobile crisis unit is urgent. MCSs can address people struggling with homelessness, mental illness, addiction and other conditions. MCSs free up police officers and firefighters for higher acuity calls. As we know from prior testimony on the subject of mobile crisis units, MCUs reach vulnerable persons who do not feel comfortable requesting traditional public safety services.

The City Council has already received letters of support for the creation of a mobile crisis unit from downtown business owners, the CEO of Salem Health, the head of the Salem Area Lodging Association, mental health advocates, medical and mental health providers, and homelessness advocates from around the city. The community support for this project is strong. This MCU will complement services handled by police and fire. It will complete our public safety spectrum.

This motion is the next steep in identifying funding sources and bringing about a request for proposals for a community partner with the expertise and experience to run the MCU.

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Attachments:
None.