



City of Cambridge

VICE MAYOR MALLON
MAYOR SIDDIQUI
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR SOBRINHO-WHEELER
COUNCILLOR CARLONE
COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN
COUNCILLOR NOLAN
COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

WHEREAS: The Cambridge City Council recently declared racism as a Public Health crisis; and

WHEREAS: The recent murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others have elevated the conversation around where traditional Public Safety and policing intersects with social services, and there has been a national call for alternative emergency responses for non-emergency related situations; and

WHEREAS: Currently the definition of Public Safety only includes Police, Fire and EMTs, and said definition must be redefined to include Public Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Police Department is the only response option when non-violent calls are received by Emergency Communications Department, calls that involve mental health, housing and homelessness issues, grief and trauma response, suicide prevention assessment and intervention and others that could be better served by an unarmed Public Health and Human Services response; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Police Department has made tremendous efforts in the last decade to intentionally reconceptualize public safety, which currently includes programs performed by non-sworn employees such as; social workers who specialize in mental health and addiction recovery, domestic violence advocates, an on-staff Child Psychologist, and more, and this model would not be intended to replace those program, but to enhance and create a co-response alternative model that includes the Public Health and Human Services departments; and

WHEREAS: Unarmed alternative emergency response programs exist across the country that can serve as a model for Cambridge to develop a program that works for our community; and

WHEREAS: Programs like [CAHOOTS](#) (Crisis Assisting Help on the Streets), in Oregon work in tandem with Emergency Communications to triage whether traditional Public Safety is dispatched, or an unarmed team that is better prepared to perform Health and Human Service functions; and

WHEREAS: The CAHOOTS model consists of a medic (either a nurse or an EMT), and a crisis worker (who has at least several years experience in the mental health field). CAHOOTS provides immediate stabilization in case of urgent medical need or psychological crisis, assessment, information, referral, advocacy, and (in some cases) transportation to the next step in treatment; and

WHEREAS: CAHOOTS offers a broad range of services, including but not limited to:

- Crisis Counseling
- Suicide Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention
- Conflict Resolution and Mediation
- Grief and loss
- Substance Abuse
- Housing Crisis
- First Aid and Non-Emergency Medical Care
- Resource Connection and Referrals
- Transportation to Services; and

WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge should consider and evaluate an effective, unarmed, Public Health and Human service response mechanism, like in Oregon, Miami, Dallas, Nashville and others to redefine what Public Safety looks like, and develop an alternative public health response with the ultimate goal of decreasing arrests, increasing connections to critical housing, addiction and other services, and ensuring that *Public Safety feels safe for all residents*; therefore now be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager confer with the Cambridge Police Department, Emergency Communications Department, Department of Public Health, Department of Human Services and other relevant departments to determine the feasibility of an alternative Public Safety Crisis Response System, which department would be responsible for it, and how it would be funded and implemented in FY2022, and report back to the Council by September 14th; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager discuss such any alternative with community members.

In City Council June 29, 2020.

Order Adopted as Amended by a yea and nay vote:-

Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.

Attest:- Anthony I. Wilson, City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-



Anthony I. Wilson, City Clerk