

Overview and Initial Issues Identification The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program and Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)

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Introduction:

The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program was established in 2011 as a means of diverting low-level drug and prostitution offenders to case-managed services rather than booking them into jail. The main goal of the program is to reduce criminal recidivism and reduce the cost – both in dollars and stresses on the criminal justice system – of dealing with repeat offenders. Additionally, the program aims to improve the physical and psychological well-being, housing situation, and quality-of-life of those included in LEAD. It was initially funded through a \$4 Million grant from the Ford Foundation and other granters – with an annual operating budget of about \$1 Million – to operate in the Belltown area. In 2014, the Council expanded LEAD to cover a larger portion of the Downtown area and contributed \$830,000 of City funds. A map of the expansion area is available in Appendix A. Council also placed \$300,000 in Finance General for potential additional funding for LEAD and for the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT).

LEAD was slated for evaluation in 2014. Data issues slowed the process. However, on September 30, 2014 the first, preliminary component of a multi-phased evaluation process was released.¹ The evaluation – comprised of a quantitative look at recidivism outcomes and a modest qualitative examination of participants' experiences – found that there were no significant short-term changes to recidivism outcomes. There were statistically significant long-term reductions to the average arrests, average charges, and average felony charges of LEAD participants. This shows a correlation between those in the program and reduced recidivism but is based on an evaluation that looks only at those in the program and not an evaluation that includes a control group. This does not mean that LEAD caused the change – just that participants recorded an average change in these recidivism outcomes. A future evaluation will attempt to establish causation between elements of the program and reductions in recidivism by including program participants and a control group.

The MDT is comprised of representatives of Human Services Department (HSD), Seattle Police Department (SPD), the City Attorney's Office, and the Metropolitan Improvement District (MID) outreach team. The goal is to identify individuals who cause a disproportionate amount of disorder and low level crime in the downtown area and actively seek to address their behavior through a coordinated law enforcement and social service effort. Individuals assisted by the MDT are provided access to case management services, shelter, and other social and case management services. The 2014 budget

¹ Collins, S.E., Lonczak, H.S., & Clifasefi, S. L. (2014, September 30). LEAD program evaluation: A preliminary report. Harm Reduction Research and Treatment Lab University of Washington – Harborview Medical Center.

provided \$208,000 in funding for the MDT. The MDT was also eligible to access the \$300,000 in Finance General in the event additional funding was warranted for this effort.

Identified Issues:

1. Continued funding for LEAD and MDT

Pending the results of the aforementioned evaluation, the Mayor’s proposed budget would:

- provide \$415,000 from the General Subfund to HSD to fund LEAD for the first six months of the year;
- provide \$344,059 from the General Subfund to the HSD budget for MDT;
- move \$415,000 in 2015 LEAD funding from the HSD budget to Finance General; and
- place an additional \$300,000 in potential funding for either LEAD or MDT in Finance General.

LEAD also anticipates having about \$750,000 to \$850,000 – and perhaps more – of grant funding in 2015. Additionally, this program shares the potential use of the previously mentioned \$300,000 set aside in Finance General in 2014. Table 1 presents the proposed City funding for each program. Both programs are funded based on service costs and the number of participants each is likely to enroll. The programs control entrance into each program – with the only true variable being the number and level of services each participant may need over a period of time.

Table 1: Seattle LEAD and MDT Funding Per Year and Source

	2014 ¹		2015		2016	
	HSD Budget	Finance General	HSD Budget	Finance General	HSD Budget	Finance General
LEAD	\$830,000	\$0	\$415,000	\$415,000	\$0	\$830,000
MDT	\$499,059	\$0	\$344,059	\$0	\$344,059	\$0
Extra ²	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000
Total	\$1,329,059	\$300,000	\$759,059	\$715,000	\$344,059	\$1,130,000
	\$1,629,059		\$1,474,059		\$1,474,059	

¹The MDT amount is comprised of \$155,000 of carryover from 2013 and \$344,059 of new funds in 2014.

²These funds are available to both programs
Source: City Budget Books

LEAD expansion was fully implemented in in May 2014. As of October 8, 2014 no City of Seattle funds have been expended on the program. Program staff report that there is invoicing against City LEAD funds beginning in May – ranging from \$50,000 to \$80,000 per month working its way through the reimbursement process. LEAD reports that 26 individuals are now in the program from the expanded area.

MDT did not get started until April 2014. Since that time, approximately 246 individuals have received services – the majority of whom were outreach contacts – and \$142,069 has been reimbursed on the MDT contract.

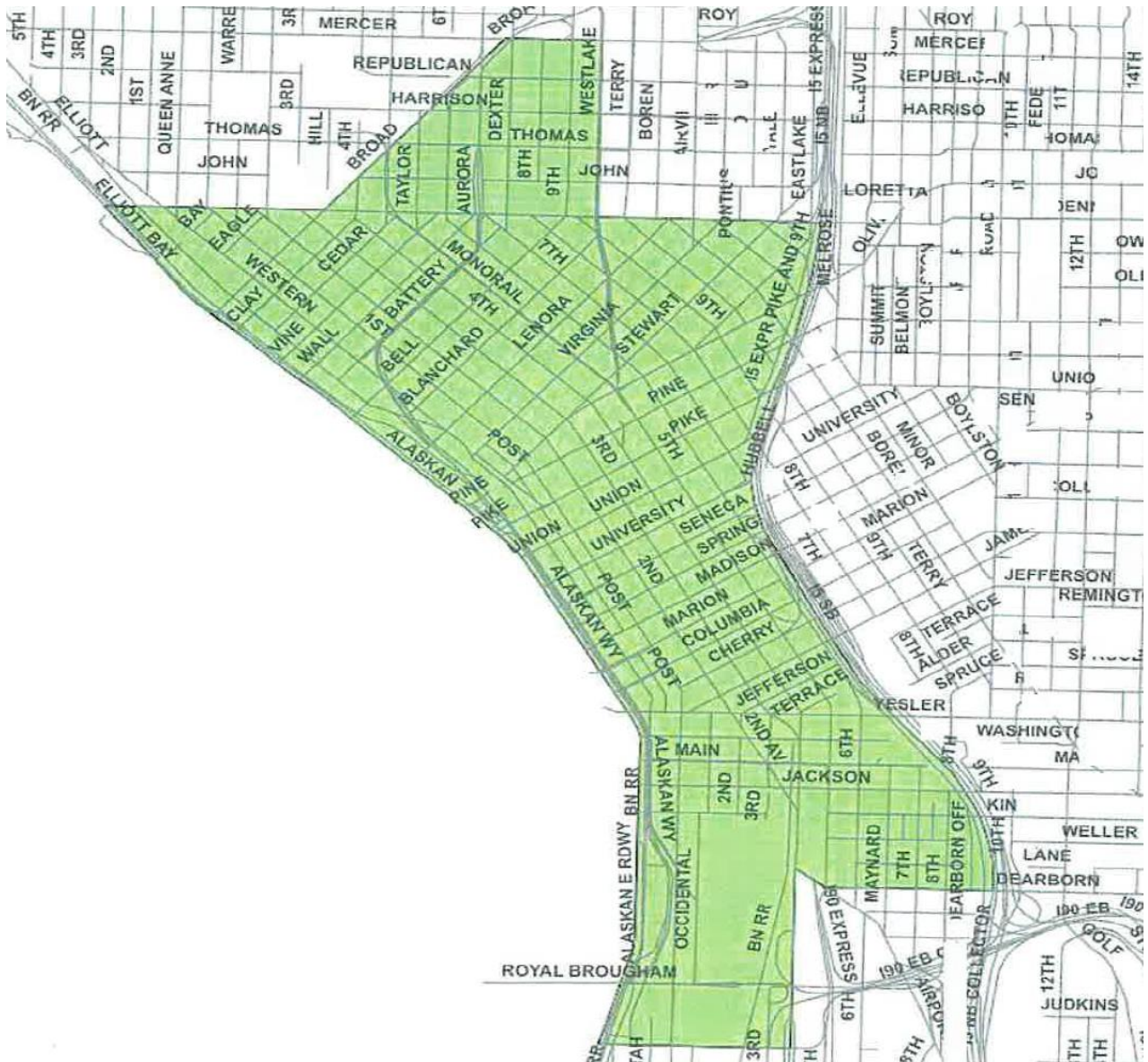
Neither program anticipates needing to access the \$300,000 in Finance General funds in 2014.

Options

- A. Decrease the amount in Finance General for LEAD and MDT by \$300,000 for 2014 as neither program indicates need to access this funding this year. Those funds could be used for other priorities in 2015.
- B. Adopt the Mayor's proposal with no changes.

Appendix A

LEAD Expansion Area



Source: Seattle Police Department Crime Analysis Unit