



**Legislative Department  
Seattle City Council  
Memorandum**

Date: April 1, 2013  
To: Public Safety, Civil Rights and Technology Committee  
From: Patricia Lee, Peter Harris, Ben Noble Council Central Staff

**Subject: Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative**

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There are two questions before the Council:

- Should the Council approve the City Auditor's (Auditor) proposed next steps in developing an evaluation plan for the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI)? and
- Should the Council expand the enrollment of the SYVPI at this time?

This memo provides some context for these questions and suggests some options for Council consideration.

**Evaluation Strategy**

The Mayor's 2013-2014 proposed budget included \$1.6 million in 2013 and \$1.9 million in 2014 to expand the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI) to serve an additional 450 youth. 1000 youth are currently enrolled in the SYPVI.

Consistent with Council's intent that new or expanded city funded programs demonstrate their effectiveness, as outlined in Resolutions 31404 and 31425, Council held expansion of the program until they had a better understanding of the SYPVI's effectiveness in reducing youth violence.

Council requested the Auditor to submit a logic model and an evaluation strategy for the SYPVI as a whole and at least two of the SYPVI programs. Council also requested a letter from the University of Washington researchers who helped develop the risk assessment tool. This request is in Attachment 1, Council Green Sheet 74-2-A-1. Funding for 2014 was not affected by this green sheet and will be addressed in Council's review of the 2014 budget.

The Auditor was unable to submit an evaluation strategy for the SYVPI as a whole and their attempt to develop a SYVPI logic model raised fundamental questions about the relationship between SYVPI goals, strategies and programs. Attachment 2 is the Auditor's January 31, memo to the Council that raises thirteen questions about the current structure of the SYVPI.

In response, the SYVPI staff developed a logic model with the assistance of a researcher from the UW school of social work. The Auditor reviewed the SYVPI logic model and met with the UW researcher. The City Auditor's conclusion was that "the questions and issues that we raise

in our January 31 memo about the SYVPI logic model still remain to be answered". Attachment 3 is the Auditor's March 22, 2013 memo to the Council.

At this point, the Auditor suggests that they proceed by:

- Conducting a Phase One of the Evaluation – to address the 13 questions raised in the Auditor's January 31, memo and to help determine what will be needed in order to do an evaluation of the SYVPI's overall effectiveness, and
- Evaluating two of the SYVPI programs - the Street Outreach and School Emphasis Officer Components

Central Staff recommends Council approve the Auditor's proposed next steps in evaluating the SYVPI. Central staff also recommends the SYVPI evaluation process remain with the Auditor.

### **Background on Proposed Expansion**

SYVPI's 2012 budget was \$3.3 million. The City also funds school emphasis officers and emphasis patrols in the Seattle Police Department budget at an annual cost of \$573,000. Therefore, the total City investment in SYVPI services in 2012 was \$3.9 million. The total City investment in the SYVPI since its implementation in 2009 to 2012 has been \$14.3 million.

During last fall's budget process, Council did *not* reduce SYVPI's existing budget and in fact added \$361,000 to the SYVPI base budget for 2013. As requested by the Mayor, funding was added to SYVPI's 2013 budget to provide 3 more intake/referral specialists in the networks, 1 senior grants and contract specialist, funding for professional development, administrative costs and the risk assessment validation.

The cost of the proposed expansion to add 450 youth is \$1,020,181. SYVPI's current budget of \$3.3 million serves 1000 youth.

Based on the information SYVPI provided during Council's budget review SYVPI would expand the program to serve 450 more youth by adding the services identified below:

<b>Program Element</b>	<b>Funding</b>
3 Program coordinators	\$210,00
Network Programs	\$150,000
Youth Employment	\$340,000
Case Management	\$ 94,000
Mentoring	\$ 75,000
Street Outreach	\$144,000
Parks Extended hrs. Programming	\$ 60,000
Community Matching Grants & Service Learning Projects	\$97,500
<b>Sub Total:</b>	<b>\$1,170,500</b>
Redirected to Auditor for evaluation work	<b>(\$150,000)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,020,181</b>

### **Effectiveness and Evaluating Program Performance**

The SYVPI has two main goals:

- A 50% reduction in court referrals for juvenile crimes against persons committed by youth residing in the Central Area, Southeast Area, and Southwest Area Networks, and
- A 50% reduction in the number of suspensions/expulsions due to violence-related incidents at Denny, Aki Kurose, Madrona K-8, Madison, Mercer, and Washington Middle Schools.

To help determine whether SYVPI should be expanded Council looked at the data provided by the SYVPI in meeting their two main goals from the baseline year of 2008 to 2011. While there has been a 19% reduction in court referrals in the SYVPI network neighborhoods, there was also a 17% reduction in non-network neighborhoods. Middle school suspensions went up more in the SYVPI network neighborhoods, 12% compared to 3% in the non-network neighborhoods.

There has been discussion as to whether these are the appropriate goals and what the data means. However, this is the data that was and still is available on which Council can base their decision. This data led Council to request assistance from the Auditor regarding program evaluation.

The Executive has argued that they and the Auditor have provided the information requested in the green sheet and therefore, the proviso should be lifted and the funding allocated to expand the SYVPI. However, when the Council imposed the budget proviso in fall 2012 they anticipated the Auditor would provide a logic model and evaluation strategy to determine the overall effectiveness of the SYVPI.

As discussed above, the Auditor has been unable to do so to date. The work now proposed by the Auditor's as Phase One will only provide the basis for completing a specific evaluation

strategy later this year. In particular, the Auditor and SYVPI have agreed on the logic model they will use in Phase I to address the Auditor's 13 questions. This will allow them to develop the requested evaluation approach. Thus, the original conditions imposed by the proviso have not yet been fully met. Therefore, the same question remains for Council:

Does the City know enough about the effectiveness of the SYVPI to expand the program at this time? If the Auditor's work determines that course corrections should be made, will it be easier to make course corrections before or after we add additional youth and programs?

### **Potential Next Steps**

Council has set aside \$1,020,181 in finance general. As requested by Council, staff have identified two options on how this funding can be appropriated.

#### ***Option1: Expand the SYVPI***

Accept the Auditor's evaluation plan as sufficient information to expand the SYVPI at this time. Approve the Executive's proposed ordinance to lift the budget proviso and provide an additional \$1,020,181 to SYVPI's base budget. Funds would be used as outlined above.

***Option 2 Do not expand the SYVPI at this time. Reappropriate some or all of the funding to expand youth employment programs in the Parks Department, Human Services Department (HSD) and through the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs (OACA) and expand mentoring programs administered by HSD.***

Accept the Auditor's evaluation plan as good next steps to evaluating the SYVPI but insufficient information on which to base an expansion of the SYVPI at this time.

Council has expressed an interest in providing additional youth employment, and mentoring opportunities for youth. Central staff have identified a number of existing, expanded or proposed programs that could offer such opportunities:

- Both the City's Parks and HSD provide youth employment programs. Mentoring is a component of the programs offered by both departments, and HSD also has standing contracts for mentoring services. These programs all have some track record of success.
- In addition, Parks is also proposing a pilot Youth Career Training Program that will begin in the summer of 2012 that will target youth of color and immigrant refugee youth 14-19 years of age. Central Staff has had an opportunity to review this newly proposed program and are convinced that it has a significant probability of success when measured against the simple goals of providing immediate employment and building the job skills and work experience needed to support longer-term employment opportunities (see attached memo to the Parks and Neighborhoods Committee).
- At the same, the OACA has been working with HSD and the SYVPI to develop a program that would provide youth a stipend for work and skill development in the arts. They have been working with a number of arts non-profits to expand the opportunities available to targeted youth this summer. Whether or not enrollment in the SYVPI is increased

immediately, it appears that these opportunities could be made available to existing SYVPI participants, individuals more generally recruited through HSD's Seattle Youth Employment Program, or youth directly indentified by the non-profit arts agencies themselves.

If Council was interested in pursuing one or more of these options, they can direct Central Staff to develop an ordinance reappropriating some or all of this funding to youth employment and mentoring programs operated or funded by the Parks Department, HSD and OACA. Given that it is already April, Council could designate any appropriated funds to automatically carryforward if the funding for youth employment and mentoring could not all be spent in 2013.

#### Attachments

- 1 Green Sheet 74-1-A-1
- 2 January 31, 2013 memo from the City Auditor to Council's Public Safety Committee
- 3 March 22, 2013 memo from the City Auditor to Council's Public Safety Committee
- 4 January 31, 2013 letter from the UW on SYVPI Risk Assessment Tool Validation Study
- 5 April 1 memo from Central Staff to the Council's Parks and Neighborhood Committee