



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON
AGENDA STATEMENT**

Item No. 9.D.
For Meeting of: December 10, 2024

ITEM TITLE: Resolution rescinding resolution R-2024-193, passed on October 15, 2024, and authorizing the dedication of opioid settlement money to support the Community Diversion Court for five years, to be used for opioid abatement approved strategies, with an option to extend another five years

SUBMITTED BY: Cynthia Martinez, Senior Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY EXPLANATION:

On October 15, 2024, Council unanimously approved the dedication of opioid settlement money to support the Community Diversion Court for the next five years, with the option to renew for another five years. However, the previous resolution did not include the amount to be dedicated and the specific Opioid Abatement Strategies. These items are included in this updated resolution for auditing purposes. This updated resolution will rescind and replace the previously passed resolution. The next item on the Council's Agenda is the 5-year Agreement to secure the Community Diversion Court support services.

The City of Yakima Community Diversion Program (CDP) is a therapeutic diversion program designed to help criminal justice system participants overcome barriers to success and to thereby reduce recidivism within the criminal justice system. CDP engages non-violent offenders who are committing non-violent crimes that affects the quality of life in the City of Yakima by connecting willing participants to treatment and recovery, work opportunities, and life skills programming to address the underlying issues that are driving criminal behavior. Using a combination of needs assessment, wrap around social services, and intensive case monitoring, the CDP operates with the goal of assisting the offenders with getting the services they need to put their lives back on track and break the cycle of constant recidivism.

The Community Diversion Program was established in 2016, when a private donor funded a matching grant through the Yakima Community Foundation. There was a recognition that while diversion programs existed at the felony level, there was a lack of a diversion program options at the Municipal Court level. The goal was to create a diversion program that would address an individual's criminal behavior before it reaches the felony level.

To date, CDP has been a prosecutor-led diversion program. The Municipal Court is poised to implement a Yakima Municipal Community Diversion Court. Implementing a Community Diversion Court will open doors to potential grant funding opportunities, allows opioid settlement funds to be used to support the treatment and recovery court. The use of the opioid settlement funds is appropriate because in the last several years, opioid use disorder or poly substance use disorder (including opioids) is present in all participants. The Community Diversion Court may increase participation and the graduation rate.

The Community Diversion Program has been a six-month supervised program and includes frequent appearances before the Community Diversion Program Team, return to work education, life skills classes, community service, mental health and substance abuse treatment, if indicated, and other requirements depending on the underlying charge. Participants benefit from a supportive environment, life skills and tools for crime free living, chemical dependency treatment, mental health treatment, return to work educational programming, job training, and the dismissal of pending charges if they are successful. The details of the Community Diversion Court are still being worked out by all of the parties and partners.

The community benefits from community service hours performed by participants, breaking the cycle of criminal recidivism, a working and contributing individual, and a healthy family environment for the next generation. We typically have a rolling 10-15-person group, but it could handle more (up to 25 and we are always willing to serve more) in CDP. The program has served more than 204 participants, 52 have graduated, 432 community service hours have been completed, and 80% of graduates remain crime free.¹ Three graduates are now substance abuse counselors, two are currently in college, and numerous other graduates have gone on to gainful employment.

1 Excluding DWLS 3 and NVOL 1 charges.

ITEM BUDGETED: N/A

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 24-25: A Safe and Healthy Yakima

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution.

ATTACHMENTS:

[Res-CDP_Opiod Settlement Funds_Rescind R-2024-193.docx](#)