



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

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

ITEM TITLE: Resolution authorizing an agreement with People for People for the City of Yakima Community Diversion Court through December 2029

SUBMITTED BY: Cynthia Martinez, Senior Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY EXPLANATION:

Fully implemented in 2016, the Community Diversion Program has utilized a collaborative, problem solving approach, to crime designed to address recurring low-level offenses that are of concern to the community. Through partnerships with government, community, and treatment organizations, the Community Diversion Program endeavored to hold defendants accountable, address factors leading to criminal behavior, improve the participant's and the community's quality of life, address victim needs, and increase public confidence in the local criminal justice system.

The Yakima Municipal Court will implement a Community Diversion Court in January 2025. A court lead diversion program will open doors to potential grant funding opportunities and smooth the transition from prosecution to program, which we believe may increase participation and the graduation rate. Increasing use of Court diversion programs is one of the opioid abatement and case reduction strategies proposed by the City of Yakima criminal justice community. The Yakima City Council has approved the use of Opioid Settlement money to support the Community Diversion Court by providing case management services and return to work educational programming. The use of these funds is authorized in the settlement money acceptance agreement for the following relevant strategies:

- B6, supporting people in treatment and recovery; by providing employment training or educational services for persons in treatment for or recovery from OUD and any co-occurring SUD/MH conditions, co-usage, and/or co-addiction. The Community Court Diversion Programming includes return to work training.
- D3, addressing the needs of criminal justice involved persons; support treatment and recovery courts for persons with OUD and any co-occurring SUD/MH conditions, co-usage, and/or co-addiction, but only if these courts provide referrals to evidence-informed treatment, including MAT. The Community Diversion Court programming refers participants to state certified treatment programs including MAT. The Community Diversion Court will rely upon a case manager to make treatment referrals, support, and monitor participant progress.

For the past several years, all participant substance use issues have been centered on Opioid Use Disorders or poly drug use including opioids. The large number of overdose deaths in our community demonstrates the critical need for the program and the importance of having resources to support a participant who decides they are ready to embrace a lifestyle change.

The Professional Services Agreement submitted for your approval will secure case management and return to work programming services provided by People for People. Cassandra Withers with People for People is our current program case manager. The case manager guides enrollment, makes treatment referrals, and monitors participation, attends and reports to court, provides life skills programming including maintaining a schedule, resume development, interview skills, and skills to succeed in the workplace. Ms. Withers and the rest of the Community Court Team regularly coordinate with Comprehensive Healthcare, licensed treatment providers such as Triumph, and DSHS to meet the participant's needs.

The Agreement under consideration is needed to secure People for People service through 2029.

ITEM BUDGETED: Yes

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 24-25: A Safe and Healthy Yakima

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution.

ATTACHMENTS:

[Res-City & People for People_Comm Div Court_2025-29 Prof Srvs Agmt.docx](#)

[People for People Community Diversion Program Service Proposal 2025-29.doc](#)

[City & People for People_PSA 2025-2029.docx](#)