



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

206-263-9600 Fax 206-296-0194

TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov

August 4, 2023

The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Upthegrove:

As called for by Ordinance 19546, Section 106, Proviso P1, I am pleased to transmit *Care and Closure: Progress Report on the Strategic Planning Process for the Future of Secure Juvenile Detention*, detailing the effort to close the youth detention facility at the Judge Patricia H. Clark Children and Family Justice Center (CCFJC) and expand community-based alternatives to secure youth detention. Also enclosed is a proposed Motion that, if enacted, would acknowledge receipt of the report.

The enclosed report updates the current and planned work on this project outlined in two previous Proviso response reports submitted to the Council on September 30, 2021 and June 30, 2022 respectively. Led by the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), the County continues to convene the Advisory Committee, a group comprised of community partners, systems partners, and impacted community members, to guide the project and co-create recommendations informed by community input. The Advisory Committee launched three subcommittees this year to deepen the project's development of its recommendations and broaden the perspectives informing the recommendations.

The report details key findings from the County's engagement with impacted community members, including youth in detention, on electronic home monitoring, and in the community; parents and family members; harmed community members; and community organizations serving youth with experience in the youth legal system. The County has heard from nearly 1,200 impacted community members who overwhelmingly believe the County needs expanded community-based responses to intervene when youth cause serious harm in their communities. They desire less reliance on secure youth detention, enhanced supports for youth and harmed community partners, and community-centered responses to when youth experience crises and cause serious harm in their communities.

The report also highlights a draft framework of recommendations that signals the direction of the final recommendations that I intend to submit to Council at the end of 2023. The framework, which integrates components developed by the Advisory Committee, includes

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values, guiding principles, and a draft continuum of care that highlights the different elements of community-based supports needed for youth healing, accountability, and community safety. The framework reflects feedback from impacted community members, insights from the Advisory Committee, and research showing that ending youth detention demands a wide range of supports that can be layered and individualized to the specific needs and risk levels of a youth.

The report recognizes that expanding community-based alternatives to secure youth detention for all youth and closing the youth detention center are likely to require state and local legislative changes; impact detention staff and operations; and require engagement and collaboration with the King County Council. The report identifies specific state laws that may need to be amended unless alternative secure physical spaces for youth that meet statutory requirements are available. Lastly, the report highlights how the Council's continued participation and future legislative and budgetary involvement will be important for the implementation of this initiative.

Determining the future of secure juvenile detention at the CCFJC requires ongoing, robust, and authentic community engagement that centers young people and families with lived experience in the criminal legal system and harmed community members. Importantly, we remain steadfast in our commitment to support detention staff through this planning process and to create pathways for them to continue providing exceptional care to youth and members of our King County community.

Together, we are moving forward the critical work needed to eliminate secure detention for young people in King County and create healthier and safe communities for everyone. This work aligns with and builds on ongoing work to redesign elements of the criminal legal system to center equity and build public trust. Ultimately, strong collaboration across County agencies and with the Council is critical to ending secure youth detention in King County and achieving better outcomes for this region's young people.

If your staff have questions, please contact Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services at 206-477-4384.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

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Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive
Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services