

## **Resources for Local Criminal Justice System**

1.) We recommend that the City Commission and City Manager task the GFPD, the City's legal Department, and the Municipal Court administration with providing an assessment of the additional personnel/resources they will require in order to most effectually address the current level of crime and civil/criminal cases in our local legal/court/law enforcement system. Some of the resources which some members of the Great Falls Crime Task Force have noted a need for include but are not limited to:

- More police officers (6 – 10 ?) and support staff for GFPD.
- Non-uniformed code enforcement officers (2 – 3?) to free up uniformed officers to deal with more serious violent, property, and drug crime.
- Increased personnel for the City Legal Department and Municipal Court in order to more thoroughly and expeditiously process cases and ensure fairness and consequences for 'low level' crime.

Once a resource assessment is made of the initial and ongoing costs for implementing the recommendations, then the City Commission and City Manager can determine whether or not to fund them and how to do so, whether through the regular budget process, a community safety levy or through grants.

The Task Force recommends that the proposals and funding options be presented to the City Commission and the public for deliberation by January 2022.

2.) We recommend that the GFPD deploy foot patrols, 'beat cops', in high crime areas and neighborhoods starting January 2022.

## **Communication and Education**

1. ) We recommend that the City Commission make public safety, as it relates to crime and the local criminal justice system, a top priority and agenda item for city commission meetings and business in order to regularly reinforce that the City of Great Falls considers public safety it's number one priority. We recommend the following actions in order to carry that out, starting January 2022.

- Once monthly crime/safety updates from GFPD or CCSO at City Commission meetings.
- Once a month designate at least a portion of City Commission work sessions to collaborating, communicating and planning coordinated crime prevention strategies with partners like NPOs, local legislators, judges, State and County LE, DEA etc.

2.) We recommend that the GFPD produce and present a report by January 2022, and provide regular updates, detailing policies and priorities considered in responding to calls from the public and public safety issues in general in order to foster greater support for local law enforcement, to have a clearer understanding of what public and LE expectations of each other are, and to gain greater citizen participation in local crime prevention measures.

Some of the citizen concerns and questions to be addressed would include but not be limited to:

- Why are some calls not responded to in the same way as others?
- Why is LE time spent with cell phone violations and speeding tickets etc. while other crimes don't get the same attention?

3.) We recommend that the City Manager task the GFPD and City Public Communications office with initiating an education, advocacy, communication program to help the public become more aware of and have better access to information and resources for personal crime prevention and personal safety measures.

Some of the related resources and information could include but are not limited to:

- Safety lighting
- Security cameras
- A revitalized, coordinated Great Falls Neighborhood Watch program

## **Consequences**

1.) We recommend that the City Manager task the GFPD and City Legal Department to conduct a review and assessment of Title 9 Public Peace, Morals and Welfare section of City Code and recommend revisions and/or amendments where necessary to strengthen enforcement and consequences for violations including but not limited to:

- Panhandling
- Loitering
- Public nuisance
- Drug paraphernalia

2.) We recommend that the City Manager task the City Legal Department with presenting the Municipal Court/Judges by January 2022 with the legal options for alternative sentencing for low risk criminals in order to free up resources for high risk criminals.

Alternative sentencing options could include but are not limited to:

- Work crews cleaning parks, graffiti, and empty lots around town, washing windows etc.
- One way bus tickets out of town.

3.) We recommend that the City Manager task the City Legal Department and City Public Communications office to release the sentencing and prosecution records of local prosecutors and judges on the City's website, social media, and newsletters starting January 2022 so that the public is fully informed as to how our local criminal justice system is being managed by those with the responsibility of ensuring public safety.

## **Partnerships and Collaboration**

1.) We recommend that the City Commission begin taking the necessary steps, starting before January 2022, through zoning, public referendum or other measures to prevent the coming proliferation of recreational marijuana shops in Great Falls. Preventing easy, widespread access pot products will help prevent further addiction and drug related crime in our community, especially among school age children.

2.) We recommend that the City Commission and City Manager identify and assign a City employee or department, by January 2022, to devise and implement an ongoing lobbying and communications strategy with State and Federal elected and other officials to coordinate state, local and federal crime prevention measures.

Some of the agencies/offices to lobby and coordinate with would include but not be limited to:

- Cascade County state legislators
- Cascade County Commission
- MT Governors and AG offices
- Senator Tester, Daines and Rep Rosendale offices
- Billings DEA office, Stacy Zinn

3.) We recommend that the new City grants coordinator begin immediately to continually monitor and regularly report to the City Manager and City Commission on all available grant opportunities for local law enforcement and criminal justice system resources.

4.) We recommend that the City Manager task the GFPD and City Legal Department with assessing and reporting to the City Commission on the details and options for implementing both the Pre Trial and the Safe Neighborhoods programs/partnerships.

5.) We recommend that the City Commission continue to pursue and work with local non-profits to form and expand on partnerships surrounding mental health, addiction, and homelessness projects to free up law enforcement and CJS resources for public safety.