



DATE: January 22, 2021

TO: City Council  
Economic Development & Jobs Committee

FROM: Maria Lou Calanche, Chair  
David C. Turner, Vice Chair  
Executive Task Force on Youth Development

SUBJECT: **Executive Task Force on Youth Development Report – Framework for Youth Development in the City of Los Angeles**

On August 4, 2020, the City Council instructed the Executive Task Force on Youth Development to report on the development of a “City of Los Angeles Youth Development Strategy” in order to effectively serve the needs of youth; and related matters pursuant to Motion (Rodriguez – Price; C.F. 16-0596-S2).

In response to the City Council instruction, the Executive Task Force on Youth Development has prepared the attached Report - *Framework for Youth Development in the City of Los Angeles*. The Report includes recommendations to effectively serve the needs of youth, options for the provision of programs and services, including the creation of a department.

The Report is submitted to the City Council for its review and consideration. If you have any inquiries regarding the Report and its recommendations, please let us know.

CC: Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez, Council District 7  
Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr., Council District 9  
Council President Nury Martinez, Council District 6  
Councilmember John S. Lee, Council District 12  
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, Council District 3  
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Councilmember Nithya Raman, Council District 4  
Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Council District 8  
Eric Garcetti, Mayor  
Sharon M. Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst  
Richard H. Llewellyn, City Administrative Officer

Attachment: 1. Framework for Youth Development in the City of Los Angeles

**EXECUTIVE TASK FORCE ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF LOS  
ANGELES**

**RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

**January 14, 2020**



**Members of the Youth Development Task Force**

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## Table of Contents

I.	Task Force Background and Process.....	1
II.	Task Force Recommendations.....	3
III.	Funding Strategies.....	6
IV.	Implementation of Task Force Recommendations.....	9
V.	Youth Development Framework.....	9

## **I. Task Force Background and Process**

On December 11, 2019, the City Council approved the establishment of the Executive Task Force on Youth Development (Task Force) composed of nine members appointed by members of the City Council and the Mayor. The Task Force can seek to advise the City on increasing and improving collaboration between City departments, community-based organizations, and other agencies serving youth, establishing performance metrics to assess the effectiveness of youth programs, increasing the number of youths who are connected to services that address their underlying needs, and establishing a new department or commission/office within an existing department.

The Task Force has held virtual Brown Act compliant meetings since the first meeting on April 17, 2020. The Task Force established regular meetings on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month. The Task Force had several City departments and non-profit groups present at their meetings. Presenters from the City included: Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development, Housing and Community Investment Department, and Economic and Workforce Development Department. Other presenters included LA County's Youth Diversion and Divestment Initiative, LA County's Department of Public Health, and the Invest in Youth Coalition.

The Task Force held four listening sessions with targeted discussion on the following topics: youth programming priorities, parent engagement, youth empowerment, and funding youth development and equity. Hundreds of youth participated in these sessions.

### **Need for a New Vision and Strategy**

Youth development and youth development priorities in the City of Los Angeles must be embedded into all policies, actions, investments and activities that concern City government as well as the long-term planning for internal departments and offices. Investment in youth and a vision for youth should also be part of neighborhood planning, city infrastructure priorities and programming investment as part of a commitment to create safe and nurturing communities that help the most vulnerable youth reach their full potential. The City's investments are an indication of its values and vision for the future especially when it comes to its future leaders. Tracking the City's return on investment is especially important given the City's budget crisis.

Unfortunately, youth development has not been prioritized in City budgeting and policy initiatives despite its 800,000 youth ages 10-24. It offers youth programs haphazardly in many of its City's departments as part of a well-intentioned attempt to create opportunities for youth in the City. Most of these efforts are not strategic or based on metrics, but result from funding opportunities from the federal, state and county government with specific predetermined activities and outcomes. City departments utilize these funds to continue existing programs (whether or not there is adequate proof of their effectiveness) or eliminate one program to implement a new program to meet the requirements of the new funding source.

According to a 2019 report by the CAO during Fiscal Year 2017-2018 youth received services from 26 city departments. However, the analysis doesn't provide an examination of

the effectiveness of said programs and a differentiation between one-time services and long-term services. Similarly, these programs and services are provided in silos within each department, with distinct requirements for participation and outreach. The programs do not share metrics or outcomes and are not part of a citywide vision or strategy. Therefore, no mechanism exists to assess whether the City's investment is making an impact, whether funds are used efficiently and effectively, if investments are equitable, and if they meet the needs of youth. The lack of coordination between the departments is one of the reasons why the City needs a standalone youth development department.

Grant program design for the provision of youth programs and services lacks a deep connection to community needs. Programs are rigid in their design which prevent them from adapting to changing community and youth needs. Youth and communities have little to no input in program design, and the non-profit organizations that are the closest to the communities served are not provided opportunities to help to design programs. There needs to be a process for the community and non-profits to articulate their needs. City programs are designed internally and/or by institutions contracted to develop and design programs. While they may be innovative or effective when initially developed, the programs become systematized and inflexible so they sometimes do not meet the needs of youth yet continue to be funded and lauded by the city bureaucracies as effective. Similarly, non-profit contractors continue to apply for funding to implement programs and services utilizing models that may not work in their communities but apply because it allows them to sustain their organization and possibly allows them to advance other work that they feel is more meaningful or innovative. Also, rigidity in how programs are funded prevents the expansion of community-based programs that are working as well as the ability to leverage existing non-profit programs and funds. Contractors are sometimes required to implement and institute a new program that may or may not be a fit for their community. In summary, lack of partnership in the program design and inclusion of youth and community voices in defining program needs results in ineffective and costly programming. There is a clear need for a citywide comprehensive strategy that is innovative and inclusive of those accessing and providing services as well as the need to support existing efforts that are community-led and show effectiveness in meeting desired goals.

The City utilizes a substantial but also cumbersome Request for Proposal (RFP) process that requires vast financial investment by the non-profit contractor along with exorbitant service delivery outcome requirements. The effort to ensure accountability has also created a system where only a few large non-profit organizations become city contractors delivering youth services to the exclusion of smaller organizations that may be more connected to the target population and/or have smaller overhead costs. Additionally, this ecosystem of funded organizations rely heavily on the City grants for sustainability, create competitiveness and animosity between organizations, and doesn't allow smaller, leaner and innovative organizations the opportunity to enter the ecosystem. Dependency on the City funds also causes long term instability for the funded non-profit contractors. The substantial size of the grants lead organizations to focus primarily on this work, many times changing the original mission of their work to accommodate the grant requirements, reducing their ability to diversity their funding streams. These organizations will seek additional contracts covering more geography in the City leading to the vast majority of their organizational budget coming from one source, the City of Los Angeles.

The City of Los Angeles has been committed to investing resources in youth programs and in the past invested in the creation of a city commission focused on youth, children and families but has not fully committed to a large scale, comprehensive funding strategy for youth. Unlike other large cities such as New York, Boston, and San Francisco that have dedicated youth departments with substantial investments and dedicated funding streams, Los Angeles lacks a vision for youth development, partnerships and strategies to meet the needs of young Angelenos. Most of the general fund monies for youth are dedicated to gang prevention which is not a strengths-based approach to youth development. It is very top down in its programming model and engages youth for a short period of time (6-12 months). In 1995 the Commission for Children, Youth and Families (CCYF) was created to better coordinate programs for the city's children and youth, to develop youth benchmarks and goals, and to begin to build an infrastructure for youth within the City's policies and initiatives. During the Great Recession and the City's budget crisis, CCYF was eliminated and unable to complete its mission. Family services, while important, are initiatives led by LA County with more robust budgets. A Department that is focused on youth with programs and services to help young people reach their potential is one of the most important investments the City can make. It is only with the establishment of a City Department that the voices and interests of the City's young residents become institutionalized and valued as part of the day-to-day work of the City.

COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on youth, especially youth in under-resourced communities. Education has been disrupted, causing youth to fall behind in academic achievement. The ensuing economic crisis has also set up an uncertain job market for those just entering the workforce. There is no better time to invest in your young people to make sure they have all resources available to them for their success.

## **II. Task Force Recommendations**

The Executive Task Force on Youth Development recommends that the City of Los Angeles implement the following strategies:

### **A. Creation of a Youth Development Department**

The task force recommends the creation of the City's first Youth Development Department to craft and implement a citywide vision for youth across Los Angeles. We recommend the City Council create a department by ordinance. The department will elevate the needs of the City's most vulnerable youth in the City's policy making and budgets. The Department will also uplift the voice of young people in decision-making in our City so that policies and investments to support their development are guided by young people. The City of Los Angeles Youth Development Department will be responsible for developing systems and strategies to achieve the following:

#### **1. Provision of Youth Development Programs and Services**

The Youth Development Department will coordinate and oversee the provision of youth development programs and services in order to provide opportunities and resources that will help the city's youth reach their full potential. Funding will be provided in accordance with a youth development strategic plan that will solicit input from the city's youth. Programs and services will be accessible, culturally competent, trauma informed and use a social justice lens in its delivery. Programs, services and resources will be holistic and

comprehensive focusing on academic achievement, career readiness, leadership development, mental health and wellness, and arts and culture.

## **2. Single Point of Entry for Youth Services**

Create a single-entry portal for youth services. Develop an online platform that is also coordinated with LAUSD that will allow youth to enroll, manage and upload documents into one system. The portal will provide a menu of programs and services for youth to enroll without having to re-enroll and provide documents each time they request or participate in a city service. The portal can also be used to send out information to youth about upcoming programs and services available citywide or in their community.

## **3. Youth Development Strategic Plan**

Develop a citywide 3-year Youth Development Strategic Plan that is shaped and informed by outreach and engagement of youth, especially youth living in the city's most under-resourced communities. The strategic plan will identify programmatic goals, efforts, activities, outcomes, and metrics.

## **4. Youth Development Budget**

Develop a Youth Development Budget and funding plan to meet the 3-year strategic goals including leveraging City funding from Federal, State, County, LAUSD and philanthropic sources. Provide funding opportunities to community-based organizations to carry out strategic goals and work closely with government partners to ensure City funds are maximized and leveraged by reducing duplication of services. Similarly, work with philanthropy to utilize limited City funds in partnership with foundation funding to meet desired youth outcomes.

## **5. Equity Initiative**

Use equity as the standard for decision-making about the provision of youth development resources, services and policies that impact youth. The aim of the equity initiative is to center efforts on the most impacted youth in Los Angeles, considering items such as the number of systems-impacted youth to be served, race, and gender. The Department's strategic priorities and activities should consider the following indices to develop community equity indicators that will be used to determine resource and service allocation:

- a. Health
- b. Housing
- c. Education
- d. Economic
- e. Public Safety

Equity indicators could include public health measures, socioeconomic status, identity development, systems navigation and educational achievement such as:

- a. Enhanced Standard of Living
- b. Access to Knowledge & Education
- c. Longer & Healthier Lives
- d. Increased Physical Safety
- e. Youth Engagement In Civic Life

## **6. Creation of Youth Hubs**

Fund community youth centers to create a network of Youth Hubs across the City of Los Angeles. The Department will ensure Youth Hubs are staffed by caring adults providing safe and productive spaces for young people including at-risk and disconnected youth in their community. The Youth Development Department will provide support and funding to existing youth and community centers to leverage and expand their programs and hours of operation to stay open during the evening hours, mornings, and weekends. Youth hubs will include access to technology, employment training, the arts, and counseling and therapy services.

### **7. Youth Decision Making Power**

Young people will play a central role in both the strategic direction of the Youth Development Department and in its day-to-day management. The Youth Development Department shall create a Youth Advisory Board composed of young people from LA's most vulnerable communities to help guide strategic direction and department policies. The Board will have actual decision making power in decisions about the programming budget, programs and evaluation, and will be directly involved in the creation, implementation and oversight of the following key programs that will be funded and administered by the department:

- Youth Outreach Workers & Ambassadors. The Youth Development Department will have a budget line item for youth outreach workers & ambassadors who will be trained and paid to represent the department, conduct community outreach, engage youth in programs, lead community projects and conduct intakes. Youth workers should be reflective of the city's highest need populations.
- Participatory Budgeting. The Youth Development Department will work with the Youth Advisory Board and Youth Outreach Workers & Ambassadors to engage the City's youth in participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting will provide an opportunity for youth to have direct influence on the department's programmatic budget, share grant priorities, as well as guide the City's Community Development Block Grant funding priorities. Budget amounts will be commensurate with community need and equity indicators.

### **8. Peace Makers**

As part of an effort to reduce community violence as well as the criminalization of youth, institutionalizing community peace makers and youth advocates should be prioritized as part of community safety efforts. Peace Makers will work with gang-involved and justice-involved youth to refer them to city and county services and programs, work to develop peace pacts between neighborhoods that include a variety of community stakeholders, and participate in healing circles and restorative justice programs. Peace Makers will receive increased training, equipment and compensation in order to ensure that they have the support and capacity needed to promote peace and help to reduce violence. Ultimately, the goal will be to increase community-driven and community-run public safety programs via Peace Makers and other initiatives that can reduce over-policing of neighborhoods by law enforcement.

### **9. Community-Based Youth Advocates**

To reduce the victimization and criminalization of youth, community-based Youth Advocates will serve as a protective measure between youth and law enforcement. These trained adults will provide *Know Your Rights* workshops, and outreach to youth to advise them



about their rights when stopped by law enforcement and will help them navigate crises. Youth Advocates will be available 24/7, and will respond to assist youth who are stopped or arrested by law enforcement, have been victims of crime and/or sexual/domestic violence, are experiencing an immigration emergency, or are needing assistance navigating any other crisis situation. Youth Advocates will also work with the LAPD Community Relations, and Neighborhood Justice Program (NJP) to ensure that youth up to the age of 25 are provided access to a Youth Advocate when asked for by a youth that is stopped for questioning, pre-arrest or as part of the arrest process.

### **10. Strong Metrics and Accountability**

The Department will institute strong metrics and accountability systems utilizing one tracking and data system for all youth development programs. It will ensure that data collection and evaluation is connected to citywide youth development goals and outcomes by evaluating for the impact they have on the lives of youth. Analysis and evaluation will be reported to city stakeholders including youth. The creation of a universal entry portal for all youth development services will ensure that all youth and the services they receive are in one database that will allow for tracking all services provided. The Department shall adopt an evaluation framework that monitors participant outcomes, organizational partner impact, and departmental efficacy to optimize funding and program impact. Evaluation efforts will be coordinated with LAUSD and related government initiatives like the LA County Department of Public Health's Trauma Prevention Initiative. Evaluation methodologies will include tracking of quantitative metrics, gathering qualitative interviews, and hosting youth and community listening sessions and surveys.

### **11. Community Capacity Building**

The Department will provide capacity-building support and services to the youth-serving non-profit organizations that it contracts with to implement its strategic priorities. Capacity building programs and technical assistance will help to strengthen the infrastructure of non-profit organizations and help to scale-up their programs. The department will work with partners to provide coaching and workshops to assist non-profits in strengthening their administrative infrastructure, financial systems, evaluation, and other services as needed.

### **12. Interagency Coordination**

The Department will assess and identify potential points of coordination and partnership with other government entities such as the County and LAUSD in order to increase opportunities for the city's youth as well as to expand existing city programs and services.

## **III. Funding Strategies**

### **A. Initial City Investment**

Initial investment in a citywide youth development strategy requires the creation of a stand alone Youth Development Department with an investment of \$10 million. This initial investment will develop the infrastructure of the department with approximately \$1.7 million to fund an Executive Director, administration and program staff based on estimates from the City Administrative Officer. This initial department can coordinate existing youth services within the City as part of the youth services strategy, provide coordination with regional agencies and providers of youth services, and serve as a central source of information to

the public regarding these services. They can also provide program support staff for direct youth development programs.

An additional \$4.5 million to begin to identify and fund Youth Hubs across the City of Los Angeles and \$2.5 Million to fund Peace Makers and Youth Advocates to be located in the highest need areas across the City, and \$2 million to support community-based and community-led grants focused on academic achievement, wellness and healing, access to technology, and other issues that have been exacerbated as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic for youth living in the highest need areas of the City. Due to the nature of the responsibilities of PeaceMakers, additional consideration and commensurate funding should be allocated for increased life insurance limits, pensions and other benefits.

### **B. Consider Consolidating and Relocating Existing Youth Programs**

Upon the establishment of the Youth Development Department, the Executive Director will work with City staff to assess the City's current youth programs and look into consolidating and/or relocating key programs to the Youth Development Department. Currently, the youth programs are provided by various city offices and departments with very little structured coordination and/or goals. These programs provide youth with academic support and case management, prevention services for at-risk youth, diversion programs, youth employment and family anti-poverty resources. Each program utilizes its own tracking and database system, distinct or duplicated eligibility requirements, and utilizes their own procurement and finance systems and funding requirements. According to a City of Los Angeles Youth Programs program by the City Administrative Officer approximately \$178 million dollars were invested in either one-time or long-term programming for youth across city departments during the 2017-18 fiscal year. Consolidation of these programs should be considered. A minimum of \$50 million in program funding could be moved to be managed under the Youth Development Department by consolidation of the following programs: Youth Source and youth employment programs managed by the Economic and Workforce Development Department (\$23 million), youth academic support services and case management that are part of Family Source Center Program in the City's Housing and Community Investment Department (\$4.4 million), youth case management and youth gang prevention and diversion programs administered by the Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction (\$23 million). Consolidation and relocation of programs, city staff and funds under the City's Youth Development Department will provide for the implementation of a comprehensive youth development strategy that has a unified vision with goals that will facilitate the ability for the City to have a greater measurable impact benefitting the City's youth.

### **C. How a Department Can Increase Funding Opportunities**

It is imperative that the City invest its resources and efforts in the development of a comprehensive youth development strategy under a single entity so the City can serve and improve outcomes for at-risk and justice-involved youth as well as create the necessary infrastructure and strategies to leverage funding streams for youth. The County of Los Angeles has taken bold steps to reimagine how County Probation Department funds and services can be utilized by supporting strengths-based youth development programs and services, supporting capacity building of local non-profits and subsequent creation of a County of Los Angeles Department of Youth Development. Similarly, LA County residents passed Measure J in November 2020 that will create additional funds to support the County's most at-risk and justice-involved youth. With the establishment of a Youth Development Department, the City of Los Angeles will be better able to secure funding from

these sources if it has a unified vision with a department that is working closely with LA County. Similarly, LA County has workforce investment funds (WIOA) that the City can continue to access to support youth employment.

Los Angeles Unified School District currently provides a variety of afterschool and expanded learning opportunities through its Beyond the Bell Program that services elementary, middle and high school students. Through the 21st Century Learning Grants administered by the federal government through the States, funding is available to serve youth beyond the school day in their community. The community grants offer potential opportunities for the City to work with LAUSD to establish funding for community youth centers and programs or develop a mechanism to apply for funds directly from the State. Additionally, the City's Youth Development Department can establish an entity similar to LA's Best, which serves elementary age kids, to access funds to provide high school youth with expanded learning opportunities across the City. Alternatively, a Youth Development Department with clear goals and delineated outcomes can work in partnership with the Beyond the Bell contractors to support their efforts and leverage the services that are already taking place citywide and are not connected to any of the City's current work. Additionally, it makes sense to work closely with LAUSD to establish joint use agreements to create more safe youth spaces and hubs across the City of Los Angeles.

Despite the different roles and responsibilities of both the City and the Los Angeles Unified School District there is a need for support and collaboration in order to leverage resources effectively and support the City's youth in reaching their potential. Currently, some of LA's youth development programs have memorandums of understanding with LAUSD while others do not. This would be remedied if there was one department- a Youth Development Department to work with key government entities and partners to establish partnerships agreements including LAUSD, LA County Departments of Probation, Mental Health, Public Health and the new Youth Development Department.

The State of California has prioritized funds for youth and community investments from the voter initiative to legalize the use of marijuana for adults in 2016. As part of reinvestment efforts to address the needs of communities that were negatively impacted by "War on Drugs" policies the State is investing in programs and services for youth including access to health, mental health, employment pathways, and leadership development. The State has also increased investments to address community violence and programs to support offender re-entry services. The City has had some success in accessing funds from various programs but there isn't a coordinated effort to ensure that all available funding streams and State resources are accessed and or explored. The Youth Development Department will have the responsibilities for exploring all potential funding sources to support the City's youth initiatives and ensuring that the City's youths' needs are part of funding decisions in Sacramento, and similarly at the Federal Government level.

#### **D. Long-Term Investment Recommendation**

A significant general fund investment is required in order to invest in the future of young people living in the most under-resourced neighborhoods in the City of Los Angeles. It is recommended that a minimum of 2% of the City's unrestricted funds be invested in youth development programs managed by the Youth Development Department. Opportunities to raise revenue to support youth development can be earmarked from development projects

and or fees, tourism taxes, cannabis licensing fees, and the 2028 Olympics hosted by Los Angeles.

### **E. Additional Funding Options**

Options to increase funding for youth development include the creation of a non-profit fundraising arm that works in conjunction with the Youth Development Department to reach out to philanthropy to support the City's youth development outcomes and goals.

Philanthropy has not invested equitably across the city where we need it. Another option that has been successful in other cities are voter initiatives to secure a dedicated funding stream for youth development as well as the creation of a youth development fund to support programs and youth development priorities.

## **IV. Implementation of Task Force Recommendations**

### **A. Creation of Youth Development Department**

The City Council should establish a youth development department by ordinance and provide the funding to establish the necessary department infrastructure including an Executive Director/General Manager, administrative support and adequate staffing to ensure the successful implementation of a youth development strategy.

### **B. Hiring of an Executive Director**

An Executive Director should be hired first and should convene an internal City group to advise on the implementation of the task force recommendations and advance efforts to create a Youth Development Department, and establish the foundation for an initial youth development strategic plan. City staff will consult with task force members, youth, key stakeholders, and youth development experts. The Executive Director and the working group will provide a plan on the following items:

- Youth Development Strategic Plan
- Department Infrastructure
  - Current city staff administering youth development programs
  - Possible Consolidation of City Programs
  - Youth Decision Making Strategy and Plan
- Opportunities to leverage and coordinate with other government entities and philanthropy
- Identify potential funding sources and opportunities

## **V. Proposed Youth Development Framework**

The Executive Task Force on Youth Development engaged in outreach efforts and listening sessions that helped to shape the recommended vision and framework for the City of Los Angeles Youth Development Department. This framework also reflects that work and the input of many youth serving organizations and youth leaders from across the city that have been diligent in their efforts to create a department that serves the interest of youth. This framework is provided to help guide the establishment of the department and lay the foundation for its work.

### **A. Youth Development**

Youth development programs and services in the City of Los Angeles must utilize a holistic and cultural approach that encompasses and provides the resources and pathways for youth to develop and engage in their academic, economic, emotional, creative, physical, mental and spiritual wellness. Youth development must also provide a platform for youth to shape the systems that impact them (*Invest In Youth Coalition, "Definition of Youth Development"*).

Youth development in Los Angeles shall employ key transformative practices and methodologies to ensure that the City's youth have the support they need to reach their full potential as well as to provide youth with healing needed to address the impacts of trauma that result from growing up in under-resourced communities and the conditions that this creates. Therefore, youth development must be encompass and include these guiding principles and practices:

- Engage Youth as Community Assets
- Utilize Strengths-Based Approaches
- Employ a Social Justice Positive Youth Development Framework
- Provide Culturally Responsive & Community-Informed Services
- Prioritize Trauma-Informed Approaches
- Harm Reduction Strategies
- Uplift Transformative Justice
- Implement Restorative Principles and Practices
- Facilitate Healing Circles and Rehabilitation
- Center Indigenous/Non-Western Knowledge: Culture, Wisdom & History
- Address Collective Wellbeing: Emotional, Economic, Academic, Creative, Physical, Mental & Spiritual
- Support the Arts As Tools for Expression, Education & Healing

### **B. Mission Statement**

The City of Los Angeles Youth Development Department will foster a social ecosystem for positive youth development by investing in the collective well-being of youth across the City of Los Angeles. Through partnerships with youth leaders, peacebuilders, government officials and community-based organizations, the department will work to advance equity and healing generational trauma to ensure young Angelenos can reach their fullest potential by gaining the skills to chart their own life path.

### **C. Vision Statement**

The City of Los Angeles Youth Development Department envisions Los Angeles as a safe haven that ensures young people are well-equipped with the tools and resources needed to successfully transition into adulthood through investments in youth development, familial support, and community improvements. As a pillar for youth power, the Youth Development Department will amplify youth voices so that they are able to shape policies and systems that have long term impacts on their development and future.

### **D. Goals of the Youth Development Department**

Mission-Based Funding

- Promote evidence-based programs, incubate innovation and seek to address inequities in access and opportunity for community development, growth, stability and greater self-sufficiency in Los Angeles.

### Culturally Competent Services

- Lead the development and support of high-quality culturally relevant and responsive programs and invest in building strong youth-led community-based organizations that are culturally aligned with the populations they serve.

### Youth-Centered Engagement

- Prioritize children, youth, transitional age youth and their families' voices in setting funding priorities. Build an open exchange of communication to inform communities of opportunities across Los Angeles.

### Collaborative Partnerships

- Commit to working with City/County/State/Federal stakeholders to help set funding priorities, practices and policies that are based on an equity framework centering the needs of youth.

### Inclusivity

- Commit to developing a staff that mirrors Los Angeles itself, and encouraging and inspiring the organizations we support to provide quality services to all communities, in safe, accepting environments with staff who are supportive, trauma-informed and trustworthy.

### Holistic Approaches

- Prioritize serving the whole person or family either directly or through strategic collaborations to focus on root causes and long-term solutions.

## **E. Target Population**

The Youth Development Department will focus on programs and services focused on the development of youth ages 10-25 for direct service programs, and a comprehensive coordination strategy based on a cradle-to-career framework (ages 0-30). Using equity as a key indicator, programs and services will serve youth living in communities that have the highest need. While the goal is to serve all youth, priority will be given to the following populations:

- BIPOC Youth: Black, Indigenous, People of Color
- LGBTQ2S+ Youth
- Young/Teen Parents & Caregivers
- Youth with Differing Abilities
- Youth Experiencing Mental Health Challenges
- Youth Experiencing Substance Use Disorders
- Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Transitional-Aged Youth and Beyond
- Middle School Youth (10-14 Yrs. Old)
- "Youth in the Middle" (Outside of Target Population)
- Disconnected Youth: Out-of-School and Out-of-Work
- Immigrant Youth: Undocumented, Refugee, and Migrant
- Systems-Impacted Youth: Child & Welfare System and Criminal Justice System
- Early Childhood (0-5 Yrs. Old)
- Elementary School (5-10 Yrs. Old)
- Victims of Crime/Survivors

## **F. Youth Program Areas, Outcomes, and Metrics**

Over 200 youth and 60 community based organizations participated in four listening sessions hosted by the Task Force that focused on identifying and prioritizing program areas for the Youth Development Department. Similarly, the youth task force members along with the Youth Advisory Council led the creation and implementation of a youth survey to assess youth needs. Over 500 youth completed the youth survey. The following program areas reflect the recommendations from youth and stakeholder outreach and engagement.

### Academic Support

Provide community-based academic support including homework assistance and tutoring. Assist youth 8th grade and up with academic case management and mentoring that includes educational planning, A-G requirement guidance, SAT preparation, college and career exploration and readiness, as well as college and or vocational program pathways. Provide computer literacy, access to technology and internet connection.

#### Outcome:

Youth have an educational plan and are working to complete educational goals and programs.

#### Metrics:

- Improved school attendance
- Improved reading/math
- Completed A-G requirements
- Completed SAT/ACT
- Graduated high school
- Re-entered school system
- Maintained school enrollment
- Entered post-secondary education or vocational training
- Completed college course
- Obtained post-secondary education financial aid

### Career Readiness and Employment

Youth are provided with employment preparation and training opportunities that lead to real skills that will help youth obtain employment. Programs should include access to internship opportunities, certification programs, and employment counseling. Develop partnerships with local unions, community colleges and other educational institutions in order to connect youth to training, certification, and living wage careers.

#### Outcome:

Youth increase their earning potential and are in a position to obtain jobs of better quality and formality with employer-paid insurance.

#### Metrics:

- Training (soft skills and technical skills)
- Placement (Job, Internship, Educational Program)
- Employment (Employment status after 6 months/12 months)
- Income/Wages
- Satisfaction (with services provided or employment)

### Life Skills and Life Management

Programs to prepare youth with the skills to transition to successful adulthood including financial management, healthy sexuality, child development, health maintenance and accessing health, healthy cooking, exercise, and healthy relationships.

#### Outcome:

Youth create a life plan and are equipped with the skills to take steps toward achieving their goals.

#### Metrics:

- Self-confidence
- Interpersonal skills (empathy, compassion)
- Managing emotions
- Personal responsibility (including dependability, integrity, and work ethic)
- Positive attitude and self-motivation
- Conflict management
- Teamwork
- Communication (listening, verbal, and written)
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Decision making

### Wellness, Mental Health and Healthy Behavior

Opportunities for youth to participate and access programs that improve wellness and encourage healthy choices and behavior. Provide access to mental health services and therapists including mindfulness practices and individual therapy to help young people address the impacts of trauma and develop skills to help them overcome challenges and strengthen resilience. Prioritize services for victims of crime and victim survivors in order to address the trauma and mental health needs of individuals and families that have survived violence.

#### Outcome:

Youth better understand healthy personal behaviors, thus decreasing outcomes such as teen pregnancies, substance use disorder, and interpersonal violence.

#### Metrics:

- Mindfulness
- Stress reduction
- Healthy food choices
- Access to healthy foods
- Self-Esteem
- Self-Efficacy
- Resources and support services provided to victims survivors

### Youth Leadership Development and Empowerment

Provide youth with leadership development programs that use a social justice lens and framework to propel young people to lead community change efforts. Youth will have opportunities to make a difference, experience oneself as a leader contributing to community improvement, and develop a strong sense of self and purpose with the ability to have a strong voice and standing in their community. Youth leaders will also have the



opportunity to build connections with other youth and adults engaged in social, education, economic, food justice and environmental justice work, City Neighborhood Councils, as well as build a network of peers and caring adults working for change.

**Outcome:**

Youth develop a social justice lens and the skills to participate and lead change in their communities.

**Metrics:**

- Strong understanding of social justice principles
- Understanding of systems, policies and population-level change
- Understanding and practice of root cause analysis
- Community volunteering
- Lead project-based action
- Participate in community and government meetings

Art, Culture & Identity

Provide youth with opportunities to participate in arts and cross-cultural experiences that center expressive, educational, and healing approaches. Programs should include opportunities for youth to participate in programs that provide pathways to careers in the creative workforce including digital media, graphic design, television and theater production, event production, and entertainment industry trades. Through sponsored internships, youth should be placed with creative businesses, youth-serving organizations and other service organizations to gain marketable skills training.

**Outcome:**

Youth develop an informed cultural identity and knowledge of self by using tools for creative expression and exploration.

**Metrics:**

- Development of creative works and/or artist portfolio
- Ability to express ideas and emotions creatively
- Participation in creative economy/workforce
- Enhancement of cultural capital

Systems Navigation for Impacted Youth

The Department will work with Community-Based Youth Advocates to assist systems-impacted youth including youth involved in the justice system, foster care, and probation will be connected to services and mentors in their communities including comprehensive Re-entry Services. Programs will ensure that young people have the documents needed to access essential services and opportunities such as Housing, Public Assistance, Education, Employment and Health Care in order to help them obtain the needed resources and support to lead productive lives.

**Outcome:**

Systems-impacted youth have direct and immediate access to stabilization services such as employment opportunities, food stamps, and Medi-Cal upon re-entry.

**Metrics:**

- Social and financial independence
- Access to identity documentation (SSN, Birth Certificate, ID)
- Rate of employment for systems-impacted youth
- Rate of recidivism for systems-impacted youth

### Community-Based Organization Capacity Building

Work closely with youth serving organizations to build their capacity to effectively serve youth and communities by providing them with technical assistance including support with data and evaluation, fund development, financial systems, professional development, and strategic planning. Work with institutional partners to develop training institutes for youth serving organizations to support with training and capacity building.

#### Outcomes:

Youth-serving organizations have strong internal systems and the capacity to effectively sustain youth development programs.

#### Metrics:

- Organizations institute engaging and participatory youth development methodologies and tools
- Effective and comfortable learning environment is created for all participants
- Financial stability with mixed revenue sources
- Organization staff is trained in youth development principles
- Strong evaluation and data collection systems in place

### Parent and Family Support

Provide access and linkages to programs and services for families and caregivers of participating youth in order to help them support their children's healthy development. Parents, caregivers and families will be linked to city, county and non profit services as well as programs and services funded by the Youth Development Department.

#### Parent & Family Support Outcomes:

Parents and families have access to resources and programs needed to support their children's healthy development.

#### Metrics:

- Parents and families have opportunities out of poverty.
- Parents and families have access to programs and services in their native language.
- Parents and families are linked to health and mental health services.
- Parents and families have access to technology.
- Parents and caregivers develop competencies to facilitate positive dialogue and communication with youth.

### Community-Led Systems Change Initiatives

Encourage and support initiatives and campaigns led by youth, community residents and community-based organizations focused on changing systems and community conditions that are barriers to a youth's healthy development. Youth leadership development should focus on developing campaigns to address the root causes of community challenges and

work closely with government leaders and agencies to develop alternatives and systems changes to improve community conditions.

**Community Outcomes:**

Youth grow up in communities/neighborhoods that are safe, healthy and provide youth with the resources needed to help them reach their full potential.

**Metrics:**

- Reduced community access to alcohol and drugs
- Reduced alcohol and tobacco advertising
- Improved air quality
- Access to healthy and affordable fresh food
- Reduced community violence
- Reduced youth arrests
- Alternatives restorative justice programs
- Access to free internet connections and Wi-Fi
- Access to technology
- Elevates the voices of victim survivors

**G. Evaluation Metrics & Methodology**

Ensure that all youth development services and programs are evaluated for the impact they have on the lives of youth. The creation of a universal entry portal for all youth development services will ensure that all youth and the services they receive are in one database that will allow for tracking all services provided. The department should adopt an evaluation framework that monitors participant outcomes, organizational partner impact, and departmental efficacy. This three-pronged approach will help inform the department on optimization of funding and program impact. Furthermore, the Department should coordinate evaluation efforts with LAUSD and related government initiatives like the LA County Department of Public Health's Trauma Prevention Initiative.

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