



COMMISSION FOR WOMEN RECOMMENDATION

Commission for Women

Recommendation Number 20240306-004: Fiscal Year 2024-25 Funding for Collective Sex Crimes Response Model (CSCRM) Actions

WHEREAS, the Commission for Women (“Commission”) of the City of Austin (“City”) serves as an advisory body that advocates for and inspires the City Council (“Council”) and City Manager to prioritize women’s quality of life, so that Austin becomes the most equitable city in the nation for women and girls; and

WHEREAS, in September 2019, the City Manager’s Office contracted the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), in conjunction with the Women’s Law Project and the Wellesley Centers for Women, to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the way sexual assaults reported to the Austin Police Department (APD) are investigated and processed; and

WHEREAS, sexual assault lawsuits were filed and settlements were approved for Smith et. al. vs City of Austin and Senko et. al. vs City of Austin; and

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2022, the final PERF report was released, [*Austin Police Department \(APD\) Review, Reported Sexual Assault Comprehensive Evaluation*](#), and included comprehensive findings and over one hundred recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department worked with the Austin/Travis County Sexual Assault Response and Resource Team (SARRT) to address the PERF recommendations and take actions, including revisions to APD policies and procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Collective Sex Crimes Response Model (CSCRM) was established in early 2023 to coordinate the full response to the PERF report, and includes representatives from APD, SARRT, nonprofit and community organizations, survivors and survivor advocates; and

WHEREAS, the Commission for Women and Public Safety Commission formed a joint working group in 2023 to support and track the work of the CSCRM and report progress to their respective commissions; and

WHEREAS, the work of the CSCRM is significant in scope, spanning multiple working groups, and has identified serious unmet funding requirements and additional needs for fiscal year 2024-2025; and

WHEREAS, funding has been allocated to support APD comprehensive sexual assault/trauma curriculum development and delivery, additional detective hours on misdemeanor and cold

cases, the hiring of a CSCRM project manager, the implementation of a survivor survey and a stipend for volunteer project members, among others; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement staffing shortages and hiring challenges are impacting support for survivors of sexual assault, and training and increased financial support and innovative approaches are needed to overcome these shortfalls; and

WHEREAS, the SAFE Alliance forensic nursing program is critically short-staffed due to underfunding and below market compensation, not all sexual assault victims are able to have evidence collected and preserved and receive the medical help they need, and in 2023, 144 victims were turned away and 56 were scheduled for a time later than their dispatch due to a lack of availability of nurses and advocates; and

WHEREAS, survivors of domestic violence are often survivors of sexual assault, there are intersections between Sex Crimes and Domestic Violence (DV) offenses and responses, there is known under-resourcing in the APD DV Unit including staffing, vehicles, and equipment, and the DV Unit would benefit from similar support and improvements that the Sex Crimes Unit (SCU) is receiving via CSCRM project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commission for Women recommends that the City allocate investments in the FY2024-25 budget as follows, to ensure complete and timely implementation of the actions resulting from and recommended by the PERF report and CSCRM:

1. APD and City of Austin Unmet Needs Funding Requests:

Scope Source:	Scope Reference:	Request Summary:	FY 2025				Description:
			One-Time	Recurring	To be Funded by APD	Requested for Funding by CoA	
PERF Lawsuit	7.4, 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, 10.5, 10.6, 10.7, 10.8, 10.9, 10.10, 10.12, 10.13, 10.14, 10.16, 10.18, 10.19, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4, 13.18, 15.1, 15.2	Training Curriculum Development & Delivery	\$ 244,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 185,520	\$ 118,480	Comprehensive Sexual Assault/Trauma Informed Curriculum Development (One-Time) and Delivery (Recurring): -40 Hours Academy (Cadet, Patrol, FTO) -40 Hours SCU (SCU Detectives, Supervisors) -8 Hours SCU Management -16 Hours Simulations (Cadet, Patrol, FTO, SCU Detectives) -16 Hour Annual Recurring (SCU Detectives, SCU Supervisor) -8 Hour Annual Recurring (Patrol, FTO, SCU Management)
PERF	11.1	Detective Staffing		\$ 156,000		\$ 156,000	Hourly wage for Retired Detectives focused on misdemeanor and cold cases. -\$140,400 for 3 new retired detectives (\$30/hr; 30 hrs/wk, 52 wks/yr) -\$15,600 for wage increase for 2 existing retired detectives (\$5 per hr increase (from \$25/hr to \$30/hr), 30 hrs/wk, 52 wks/yr)
PERF	14.1	Project Management	\$ 144,000			\$ 144,000	CSCRM Contract Project Manager/Consultant -Senior, PMP Certified -Leads/oversees establishment, maintenance, and governance of project framework -Co-chair of Project Management Workgroup -Leads steering committee meetings -Leads quarterly status updates -Leads communications with Commissioners/Council Members -Serves as neutral bridge between advocates and agencies -Protects and prioritizes the project
PERF Lawsuit	12.4, 15.13	Survivor Survey		\$ 100,000	\$ 79,384	\$ 20,616	Survivor Survey technical solution/tools and survey expertise to deliver anonymous survey to survivors who report to APD. The requirements for this scope have not been fully vetted, and it is anticipated that a bid for contract will need to occur. APD IT is additionally engaged.

Scope Source:	Scope Reference:	Request Summary:	FY 2025				Description:
			One-Time	Recurring	To be Funded by APD	Requested for Funding by CoA	
PERF	12.1	Volunteer Compensation	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	CSCRM Stipend for Volunteer Project Members : -2 current project members are serving in a volunteer manner -Additional volunteers are anticipated (ex: engaging survivors on the survivor survey initiative)
PERF	14.1	Project Team Training	\$ 5,000			\$ 5,000	Project team training and leadership development to strengthen relationships across agencies resulting in an effective and well operating project team.
PERF	4.12	Challenge Coins	\$ 2,000	*See Note		\$ 2,000	A challenge coin has been developed by the SCU team that will be used to award personnel when their decisions and/or actions deserve recognition. Initial one-time funding will allow for the creation of 500 coins. *\$500 requested as annual recurring funding beginning FY2026.
PERF	4.11	Survivor Pamphlets		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000		An additional supplement listing all support services available to victims/survivors of sexual assault is being added to the existing 'pink pamphlet'. These materials will need to be updated regularly to ensure resources remain accurate and comprehensive.
PERF Lawsuit	7.2, 12.2, 15.12	Website		\$ 408	\$ 408		Annual Domain and web service fees to maintain a website for sexual assault survivors to find and connect with resources.
CSCRM Recommendation	NA	Educational Resources		\$ 200	\$ 200		Hardcopy and electronic library of resources for on-going education for the Sex Crimes Unit.
Total			\$ 405,000	\$ 317,608	\$ 266,512	\$ 456,096	

2. APD Academy and Recruitment

- a. 56 hours of Academy/Cadet level training for Sexual Assault (40 hr. classroom,

- 16 hr. simulations).
- b. Cadet training classes need to be extended to incorporate Kroll recommendations and CSCRM requests.
 - c. Financial incentives and wages need to be drastically increased to recruit and retain new Cadets. New approaches such as housing stipends need to be considered given the current housing market in Austin. Investments in the Academy do not make sense if we cannot recruit and keep quality Cadets.
 - d. An increase in Civilian roles need to be considered whenever and wherever possible, keeping Sworn personnel filling their vital positions.
3. SAFE Alliance Forensic Nursing Program
Fund \$328,000 via Austin Public Health for forensic nursing compensation, to support additional positions and fund all forensic nursing staff at competitive market rates per the CSCRM recommendations. In addition to funding forensic nursing positions, ensure funding is sufficient to support wrap-around services for sexual assault survivors, such as advocacy, counseling, and administrative support for scheduling, follow up and billing. Funding for these initiatives should not detract from other city-funded services at SAFE.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commission for Women recommends establishing a joint project between the APD DV Unit and the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) at Austin Public Health (APH), to establish a Domestic Violence Response Model (similar to the CSCRM) to review and refine APD Domestic Violence Policy, Training, Supervision, and Review.

- Project would identify appropriate staffing and resource levels for the DVU.
- Project members would determine how to integrate DVU most effectively within APD's Special Victims Division to optimize the use of APD and Victim Services personnel and unit resources.
- Project work would include alternate reporting to reduce under-reporting, best response to physical violence committed by individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's, voluntary surrender of firearms of suspect convicted of family violence offenses, review of current high risk and fatality DV protocols and response, and formalizing a response to "Flip Cases" that involve abused persons charged with Domestic Violence.

Date of Approval: March 06, 2024

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 6-0 vote, Commissioners Bissereth, Bullard, Rattan, Salas and Serrata, were absent from the meeting.

Attest: _____


Saff Liaison