



AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

Meeting Date: November 30, 2021

Subject: Adoption of a Suicide Prevention Policy

Prepared by: Irene Barragan-Silipin, Human Resources Manager

Approved by: Gabriel Engeland, City Manager

Attachment(s):
Resolution No. 2021-58

Initiated by:
Mayor Fligor

Previous Council Consideration
None

Fiscal Impact:
No fiscal impact is anticipated as part of this resolution and policy adoption.

Environmental Review:
This policy is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) CEQA Guidelines.

Policy Question for Consideration:
Shall the City of Los Altos adopt and implement a suicide prevention policy through Resolution?

Summary:

- The City of Los Altos recognizes suicide as a public health issue
- A suicide prevention policy will allow for community education on suicide risk factors, warning signs, and how to report threats of suicide or those showing signs of becoming at risk
- The policy will also seek to remove the stigma around mental health treatment, recovery, and resiliency

Recommendation:
Staff recommends the adoption of Resolution 2021-58

Purpose
This resolution reflects an ongoing commitment to increase awareness of suicide as a public health problem. The framework in this policy promotes the planning, implementation, and evaluation of strategies for suicide prevention and intervention, as well as encouraging mental health care.



Subject: Restrictions on the City Owned Property Commonly Known as the Los Altos Community Center Site

Background

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Suicide is a serious public health problem that affects people of all ages. This policy shall advance current strategies and best practices of the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services, National Council for Behavioral Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the World Health Organization.

Discussion

The City of Los Altos is committed to supporting mental health of Los Altos residents and City Employees. This policy shall call for the collaboration between the City of Los Altos and local and regional organizations, to educate residents and employees to gain a better understanding of the causes of suicide, learning the appropriate methods for identifying those at risk, and how to report threats of suicide or those showing signs of becoming at risk to the appropriate parental, familial, and/or professional authorities.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the adoption of Resolution No. 2021-58

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-58

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS
ESTABLISHING A SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY**

WHEREAS, the City of Los Altos recognizes suicide as a public health issue, evidenced by Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services data which shows that after a three-year decline in the suicide rate in the County, suicide rates increased in 2018 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Suicide Prevention Policy seeks to support the strategies recommended by the Santa Clara County Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, suicide prevention is a component of mental wellness, and by implementing this Suicide Prevention Policy, the city aims to help citizens be more informed about healthy behaviors, coping skills, parenting skills, health of the whole child and skills for healthy families, which align with the culture and interests of Los Altos.; and

WHEREAS, educating the community on suicide risk factors, warning signs, how to report threats of suicide or those showing signs of becoming at risk, and removing the stigma about mental health treatment, recovery, and resiliency, is good public policy; and

WHEREAS, the Suicide Prevention Policy formalizes a process by which general resources are shared and safe messaging best practices are followed when communicating with employees and the community; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Los Altos adopts and approves the attached Suicide Prevention Policy, as the official suicide prevention policy of the City of Los Altos.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Los Altos this 30th day of November 2021, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Neysa Fligor, MAYOR

Attest:

Angel Rodriguez, Deputy City Clerk

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy reflects an ongoing commitment to increase awareness of suicide as a public health problem. The framework in this policy promotes the planning, implementation, and evaluation of strategies for suicide prevention and intervention, as well as encouraging mental health care.

POLICY SCOPE

This policy shall advance current strategies and best practices of the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services, National Council for Behavioral Health, National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the World Health Organization.

This policy shall call for the collaboration between the City of Los Altos and local and regional organizations, to educate employees and residents to gain a better understanding of the causes of suicide, learning the appropriate methods for identifying those at risk, and how to report threats of suicide or those showing signs of becoming at risk to the appropriate parental, familial, and/or professional authorities.

The City will promote strategies and resources provided by the County as well as the SuicidePrevention Resource Center under the following guiding framework:

CITY EMPLOYEES

Annually, the Human Resources Manager or his/her designee will share with its current employees and retirees information that helps staff and retirees gain a better understanding of the causes of suicide and learn the appropriate methods for identifying and preventing the loss of life. The Human Resources division will work with the County's Behavioral Health Services Suicide Prevention Program to ensure that information shared reflects current research.

CITY FACILITIES

The Human Resources Manager will ensure that the City's public safety protocols governing a response to a suicide attempt on City facilities is reviewed regularly. This review of protocols will seek to update internal procedures and address any needed support for employees that may witness such events. The Human Resources Manager will further ensure an appropriate communications strategy is in place if a suicide attempt occurs in a City facility. The communication strategy will reflect best practices for reporting on suicide, as shared by the County.

CITY RESIDENTS

The City will link to the County's Behavioral Health Services webpage and actively

collaborate with the County to disseminate information including event information and resources as they become available. The City Council will also raise awareness by recognizing National Suicide Prevention Month (September) via a proclamation annually and supporting state and/or federal legislation aimed at increasing awareness and reducing deaths by suicide.

GENERAL RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this policy will occur through communication with the County's Behavioral Health Services. Employees will be provided the following resources to learn more about suicide prevention:

- Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services - Suicide Prevention & Crisis www.sccbhd.org/suicideprevention
- Santa Clara County Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/Services/SP/Documents/2018/sp-strategic-plan-rev-03-2011-final.pdf>
- California Mental Health Services Authority <https://calmhsa.org/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Violence Prevention - Suicide <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services - Office of the Surgeon General <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/suicide-prevention/index.html>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center <https://www.sprc.org/>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <https://afsp.org/>
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255 (800-273-TALK)
- Suicide Prevention Chat Services (www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org)
- Veterans Crisis Line 800-273-8255, 1, Text: 838255