

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

*MAY, 2020*

SAN MATEO COUNTY  
JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION  
COMMISSION

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# Introduction

The Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJJPC) was formed in 2009 when the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors combined the Juvenile Justice and the Delinquency Prevention Commissions. For more than 10 years, the JJJPC has been the public conscience for all youth in the county. In recent years, the focus of the commission has been on improving the well-being of and creating future opportunities for youth within the juvenile justice system.

In the fall of 2019, the JJJPC began looking into the changing needs of youth and families in San Mateo County and decided to increase emphasis on the delinquency prevention aspects of our mission and to increase engagement with more JJJPC stakeholders and partners. In order to guide this effort and determine how the JJJPC could have the greatest impact over the next several years, we began a Strategic Planning Project in January 2020.

During the first quarter of 2020, the JJJPC strategic planning committee gathered input from a wide variety of stakeholders, reviewed numerous reports and research studies, analyzed material, and summarized results. In April, with a clearer understanding of why youth enter the justice system and the most effective means of prevention and rehabilitation, the JJJPC formally approved a new “Mission and Aspirations for our Community” document, which follows on the next page.

The Aspirations will focus our efforts over the next several years and have already inspired the creation of new JJJPC projects, the final product of this planning cycle. The projects approved in May will be executed over the next year, with specific milestones, deliverables, and timelines. We expect the JJJPC Strategic Plan to be a living document as conditions change, research is updated, projects are completed, and new needs arise.

What follows after the new Mission and Aspirations document below is the story of how the Commission came to draft and adopt its new direction and projects.

# **New Mission and Community Aspirations for The Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission**

## **Mission**

It is the mission of the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission to be a public conscience in the best interest of juveniles. The Commission advocates for programs and services that prevent youth entry into the juvenile justice system and promotes respect for the human dignity of all minors who do enter the system.

## **Aspirations for our Community**

1. The voices of communities most likely to be affected by the juvenile justice system are heard regularly by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and other elected officials in the county.
2. Every youth who comes into contact with the San Mateo County juvenile justice system has convenient, affordable access to appropriate transitional, mental health, and substance abuse programs.
3. All elementary school children in at-risk neighborhoods in San Mateo County have convenient, affordable access to programs that support and supervise them after school and provide services to address early childhood trauma as needed.

# What is Strategic Planning?

“Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy.”<sup>1</sup>

To elaborate, strategic planning is a collaborative process of gathering internal and external inputs, or information, to assess what opportunities and challenges an organization faces, what goals therefore it wants to set, and what activities it should take in order to achieve those goals. If the process of strategic planning is conducted in a collaborative way, involving as many of the internal and external stakeholders as possible, with feedback loops along the way, then the stakeholders should feel at the end that they had a part in constructing the strategic plan.

At the end of strategic planning then, ideally, the organization's stakeholders are all invested in the direction for the organization and are clear on what they each need to do to achieve its goals.

## Our Process

After approving the request to create the Strategic Plan, the Commission appointed three Commissioners to form a strategic planning committee for the purpose of running the planning process. The three Commissioners were our Co-Chairs, Toni Barrack and Debora Telleria, and Commissioner Monroe Labouisse. The committee drafted a three-month schedule to complete the Strategic Plan. The committee met once a week throughout the planning period.

### **Interviews**

The first task for gathering internal and external information was to conduct interviews of stakeholders. A set of common questions to be asked in all the interviews was drafted, with a focus on two areas: 1) how could the Commission conduct itself in a way to be more effective in achieving its goals, and 2) what were the significant issues that need to be addressed in our communities in order to improve the lives of youth who are

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic\\_planning](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_planning)

engaged with the juvenile justice system and to prevent youth from having contact with the system in the first place.

The default assumption for all interviews was that they would be confidential, so that all interviewees could speak their mind freely, both about the Commission and about the community's issues. The intention of gathering information through interviews was to aggregate points of view and find common observations, not to quote any particular interviewee and attribute ideas or opinions to any one individual.

First, all Commissioners were interviewed one on one by the planning committee members. After all Commissioners had had a chance to provide their input and ideas, the planning committee reached out to representatives of partner organizations, in the County government, at non-profit community based organizations, as well as representatives in city government, such as police departments. For a list of all interviewees, see Appendix A.

### **External Research**

After summarizing the input from interviews at the January Commission meeting, the committee moved on to gathering external research on the causes and conditions of youth interaction with the juvenile justice system. The research addressed juvenile justice in San Mateo County, California, and the United States. A complete list of sources used in this research can be found in Appendix B.

### **Mission and Aspirations**

The committee at this point had reached the halfway point of the three month project. The next step was to begin considering, and drafting, a new Mission Statement and new Goals, based on the information gathered to-date. The committee drafted these statements and circulated them to Commissioners for feedback. After receiving Commissioner feedback, the committee decided to rename Goals as Community Aspirations, and circulated the drafts to our partner organizations for feedback. The revised Mission Statement and Community Aspirations were presented and approved at the April Commission meeting.

### **Projects**

The final step of the process was to develop 2020 Projects that would move San Mateo County closer to fulfilling the new Community Aspirations. The committee brainstormed a draft list of projects based on its interviews and research.

In April, the committee drafted one paragraph descriptions of the proposed projects for the Commission and then circulated them for feedback. The committee also decided to use a rank choice voting system at the April Commission meeting in order to decide which projects to pursue first. At that meeting, two additional projects were added to the list. Rank choice voting at the meeting determined the priority of projects and who would be assigned to each.

### **Completion**

After the April meeting, the planning process was complete. The Commission has now moved on to execution of the projects.

# Interviews

Gathering input from our stakeholders was the first substantive step in strategic planning. Stakeholders included all Commissioners and external partners, such as leaders of County departments and local, non-profit, community-based organizations. A complete list of interviewees is in Appendix A.

There was a remarkable amount of consensus from stakeholders around some major themes. Finding that consensus made it easier to determine a path forward. Below are the highlights of where there was strong consensus.

## **Root causes of youth engagement with the justice system**

First, with regard to the issues related to juvenile justice and delinquency in the County, we asked stakeholders what they believed are the root causes of youth engagement with the justice system. Virtually everyone interviewed named economic stresses on families as the primary root cause. Struggles to pay rent and the strain of supporting families lead to less time spent with children and mental health issues for parents. The second common answer, related often to the first, was that untreated family trauma, mental health issues and substance abuse have negative effects on children. Some stakeholders, though not a majority, pointed to systemic racism as being a related cause, as was parent involvement in criminal activity. Finally, educators and parent advocates for education also stressed the negative impact of children not attending school and falling behind in reading and math levels at school. All of the above issues have significant negative consequences for the County's youth.

## **Programs most effective for prevention and rehabilitation**

Given those root causes, the committee asked interviewees, what are the most effective programs for delinquency prevention and youth rehabilitation. Many Commissioners and outside partners stressed the importance of starting early, i.e. in elementary school, to address underlying issues. Elementary school is a time when children are more impressionable and less influenced by peer pressure. So, they can more easily be guided in new directions and helped with intervention. Given economic stresses on working parents, affordable and preferably free after-school programs were named as important preventative programs. The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula were named as good examples. However, emotional support is not enough for at-risk youth, our interviewees told us. Youth need to be taught practical skills and given tools for



navigating the world as well, such as educational support, job skills training for high school students, and practical life skills at all ages. As just one example, the Big Lift supports very young children in achieving third-grade reading level by third grade, which is critical for all other learning beyond third grade.

In addition, especially our partners in County departments said, our at-risk youth need more help with mental health issues and substance abuse. External partners placed a stronger emphasis on this need than Commissioners did in their interviews. Partners in County departments pointed to their programs that they say are working: supervision by Probation, drug testing, teaching empathy through community service, and work by police departments in early intervention, parent education and diversion programs.

### **What is working well and not working well in the juvenile justice system**

Commissioners applauded the justice system in San Mateo County for using more progressive practices in arrests, prosecution and sentencing for youth who come into contact with the justice system. This starts with police interaction and police department diversion programs, as well as school suspensions and discipline, and continues with sentencing recommendations from the District Attorney, sentencing decisions by the Juvenile Court, and finally Probation Department practices in carrying out incarceration and/or probation for youth. In those interactions, Commissioners also cited greater awareness of mental health issues and trauma-informed practices by those who work in the justice system.

Commissioners and outside partners would all like to see more connection to services for youth and families who do come into contact with the system, both more access to existing services as well as an expansion of services. More progressive practices lead to fewer incarcerated youth and youth spending less time incarcerated, which there is strong consensus is a good thing. However, that also means that delivery of services for youth needs to shift more to communities. Delivery of services is easier when youth are a captive audience in an institution, but harder when youth live in their communities. Stakeholders said that in order to enable that shift, they need to reduce the caseload per County employee with more staffing.

### **What is working well and not working well with the Commission**

Many Commissioners, especially those who have served on the Commission for a number of years, praised the strong engagement and interest in the work by Commissioners. Interviewers were told that this is a change from recent years and a positive step. That said, Commissioners would like to see more focused and productive

monthly meetings and projects, more outreach to stakeholders and communities, and some funding for the Commission, so it can bring resources to bear on the issues it proposes to address.

Partners of the Commission applauded the engagement and interest as well, but asked that the Commissioners channel their passion more into advocating for resources for partners. The message from partners for ways to improve the Commission's effectiveness was to be more practical, with "concrete end-goals" in mind. They asked that the Commission work more collaboratively with stakeholders and not take an adversarial tone when dealing with them, in order to be more effective advocates for actual change.

Every stakeholder agreed that they are united with the others in the mission to be an advocate for youth. The value of hearing and compiling all of the stakeholder input was that it pointed to ways to put that advocacy into practice.

## External Research

After completing stakeholder interviews, the committee turned to third party sources to examine the causes and conditions of youth interaction with the juvenile justice system in San Mateo County, California, and the United States. The research was conducted between January and February 2020.

The following is a high-level summary of the committee's findings. For more detailed data and information, with references to sources, see Appendix B.

### **Arrest and Incarceration Trends**

The research indicated that nationwide, arrests of juveniles have declined significantly since the mid-1990s. California has experienced the same steep decline, with youth arrests for violent felonies dropping 68 percent — from 22,601 in 1994 to 7,291 in 2017. In San Mateo County youth arrest rates fell 72 percent — from 3,644 in 2010 to 1,024 in 2018. Correspondingly, the rates of youth on probation also fell sharply. Youth on probation reoffended an average of 15-20 percent from 2014-2018. Conversely, 0 percent of youth in diversion programs in 2018 re-offended. San Mateo County's felony arrest rates, confinement rates and out of home placements are well below the California state average. For the past few years, the Youth Services Center, which has 170 beds, has operated at less than 30% capacity. Most of the youth held in the Youth Services Center are Latinx and come from poorer neighborhoods in the county,

including parts of Redwood City, East Palo Alto, Daly City, South San Francisco, San Mateo and San Bruno.

### **Root Causes of Juvenile Delinquency**

The research identified economic hardship as one of the primary root causes of juvenile delinquency, including access to affordable housing, child care, healthcare and a living wage. San Mateo County ranks as one of the top ten counties in California for income inequality. This inequality leads to added stress on parents and less time spent with children as parents work several jobs to make ends meet. Truancy and lack of parental supervision increases the likelihood of juvenile delinquency.

Another root cause is generational hardship, defined as several generations of a family who have experienced poverty, little education, mental health issues, substance abuse and/or physical abuse. Generational hardship can lead to trauma, and mental health issues. Despite the wealth in San Mateo County, youth mental health needs in the county are higher than California's state average. Gang involvement, which is often generational also leads to juvenile delinquency. Four percent of San Mateo County high school students say they are members of a gang and three percent say they have carried a weapon at school.

### **Alternatives to Youth Incarceration**

Experts agree that youth incarceration is harmful to youth and is ineffective at lowering recidivism rates. Diversion programs tend to be more successful. As incarceration rates continue to decline, there is a need for increased community services to help youth overcome situations that lead to delinquency. Preventative programs should start early and focus on early childhood trauma, literacy and keeping children in school. After school supervision and pro-social activities are also important. To overcome generational hardship youth may need additional support in the areas of mental health, substance abuse recovery, tutoring, job training, life skills training and parenting classes.

# Mission Statement

After analyzing the input from our interviews and findings of relevant reports and research studies, the JJDPC approved several small changes to update our mission statement.

The original JJDPC Mission Statement was:

It is the mission of the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission to be a public conscience in the interest of juveniles. The Commission is dedicated to delinquency prevention and the promotion of respect for the human dignity of all minors who come under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court.

The new mission statement is intended to:

1. Confirm that the JJDPC is concerned with the interests of all youth in San Mateo County.
2. Signify a more proactive approach to issues. Instead of simply being “dedicated” to delinquency prevention, the Commission will “advocate” for programs to prevent entry into the justice system. The more active approach is exemplified by the projects the Commission will pursue over the next several years, including cataloguing programs and services that currently exist, pinpointing gaps, and advocating for the creation of additional needed programs.
3. Broaden the concept of youth who fall under the “jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court” to those who enter the juvenile justice “system.” The JJDPC is invested in the respectful treatment of all juveniles who are incarcerated, on probation, in diversion programs, or have encounters with public officials such as police or truancy officers.

So, with those new intentions in mind, the Commission approved the following new mission statement:

**It is the mission of the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission to be a public conscience in the best interest of juveniles. The Commission advocates for programs and services that prevent youth entry into the juvenile justice system and promotes respect for the human dignity of all minors who do enter the system.**

# Our New Aspirations

After drafting a new Mission Statement and circulating it with Commissioners, the strategic planning committee turned to goals, in order to guide the specific actions and projects the Commission intends to undertake. The committee's original intention was to write goals that are specific, measurable and have clear timelines, with approximately three to five year horizons.

However, after consideration and feedback, the committee decided that the goals should be expressed instead as "Aspirations." They describe conditions the Commission would like all youth and their families in San Mateo County to experience, but because it would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve them in a set timeframe, the Commission prefers not to express them as goals with measurable end dates. Instead, the Commission will write goals for each project, in line with these new Aspirations, and which are also specific, measurable and with set timelines.

Three Aspirations were drafted, one for each of our intentions from planning, in this order: 1) to make the Commission operate more effectively, 2) to support youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system, and 3) to prevent youth from coming into contact with the juvenile justice system in the first place.

With those intentions in mind, the committee drafted the following Aspirations, which were approved by the Commission at its April 2020 monthly meeting.

## **Aspirations for our Community**

1. The voices of communities most likely to be affected by the juvenile justice system are heard regularly by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and other elected officials in the county.
2. Every youth who comes into contact with the San Mateo County juvenile justice system has convenient, affordable access to appropriate transitional, mental health, and substance abuse programs.
3. All elementary school children in at-risk neighborhoods in San Mateo County have convenient, affordable access to programs that support and supervise them after school and provide services to address early childhood trauma as needed.

## **Meaning of certain terms in the Aspirations**

Below are definitions to clarify certain terms in the Aspirations.

### Aspiration #1

We define “communities most likely to be affected by the juvenile justice system”, also sometimes called ‘at-risk communities’, using the excellent work done in 2018 and 2019 by the Community Collaboration for Children’s Success initiative (CCCS) at Get Healthy San Mateo County, a “local collaborative of community-based organizations, County agencies, cities, schools, and hospitals”.<sup>2</sup>

CCCS looked at neighborhoods in San Mateo County that have, for example, high incidences of juvenile probation, use of San Mateo County Behavioral Health resources, and reports of child abuse and neglect. With that they created a “Youth Need Index” and identified ‘at-risk’ neighborhoods, such as in East Palo Alto, North Fair Oaks, eastern San Mateo, South San Francisco and Daly City.<sup>3</sup>

### Aspiration #2

Because the Mission of the Commission is to advocate for all youth in the County, and to prevent juvenile delinquency, we believe we should cast a wide net when we ask which youth our second Aspiration applies to. We define a “youth who comes into contact with the San Mateo County juvenile justice system” not just as a youth who formally enters the system by being arrested, having a case heard in Juvenile Court or by coming under the supervision of the San Mateo County Probation Department. “Coming into contact” also includes, in the Commission’s definition, interaction with police departments, school resource officers and other city and school district employees who intervene with at-risk youth by providing them counseling or requiring that they enter into diversion programs.

Finally, to be clear, “transitional programs” are those that a) support youth in transitioning from incarceration to returning to their community, their families and their schools and b) support youth in transitioning from probation to non-probation.

### Aspiration #3

Per above, “at-risk neighborhoods” are the same as “communities most likely to be affected by the juvenile justice system” as defined by the Community Collaboration for Children’s Success initiative (CCCS).

The term “after school” also requires some definition. Because working parents, and/or friends and neighbors, may be unavailable to support and supervise children at various times of day or during the week and year, then “after school” is not necessarily just weekday afternoons and early evenings during the school year. It may also include weekends, nights, and weeks and months of the year when school is not in session. Depending on the need for such programs, which the Commission will work to identify with one of its first projects in 2020, “after school” might be expanded to include those times as well.

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<sup>2</sup> Get Healthy San Mateo County -- About Us: <http://www.gethealthysmc.org/about>

<sup>3</sup> Youth Need Index: <http://www.gethealthysmc.org/youth-need-data>

## 2020 Projects

The final outcome of the Commission's strategic planning effort are projects intended to move San Mateo County towards the Aspirations. So, the projects described below are organized according to the Aspirations.

The planning committee brainstormed a list of projects which the Commission discussed and voted on in its April 2020 monthly meeting, held by videoconference. During that meeting two new projects were also added to the list. The following projects were approved at the April meeting and work has begun.

### **Bringing our Communities' Voices to Elected Officials**

#### *Communicate regularly with elected officials*

So that the voices of our community are heard by elected officials, the Commission will seek out opportunities to communicate directly with the Board of Supervisors and other elected officials. Giving our community opportunities to communicate directly, and Commissioners indirectly relaying their ideas, are both options. Getting familiar with legislative priorities at city, county, state and even national levels, learning how things get done in city and county governments, and identifying key players are likely activities. Potential questions might include which elected officials to target, what steps should be taken and in what order, how to use both private and public meetings effectively, and what community advocates to partner with and how. The expectation is to provide a legislative priorities report each month and by May 2021 to have made contacts with at least 6 elected officials. *Project co-leads will be Monroe Labouisse and Paul Bocanegra.*

#### *Recruit more youth commissioners*

Recruit youth commissioners, especially those who have interacted with the juvenile justice system, to better understand their experiences and needs. This project includes partnering with community-based organizations ("CBOs") and others who regularly interact with this population to identify and recruit youth commissioners. It should consider changing the Commission's Operating Policies to allow 2-year terms for youth to provide more flexibility for high school youth who may be moving out of the area for college or work once they have completed high school. Another consideration is to ask existing youth commissioners to find their own replacement when they move on. The Commission should have at least one youth commissioner with experience in the justice system by the end of 2020. *Project co-leads will be Melissa Wilson and Debora Telleria.*

## **Providing Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Transitional Services**

### *Describe existing substance abuse, mental health and transitional programs*

Identify and catalog programs that are currently in place in the county for youth who are incarcerated, on probation, or on diversion programs. Research and understand barriers to their full utilization and gaps where they exist. Consider cost, location, transportation, time commitment, peer and community pressure, family issues, etc. Interview and establish relationships with service providers. The expectation is to produce a written report and to present it to the JJDPC for discussion at the August 2020 meeting. *Project co-leads will be Monroe Labouisse and Debora Telleria.*

## **Providing After-School Care in At-Risk Communities**

### *Describe current after-school programs for elementary-age children*

Review CCCS research results, and research other information as needed. Identify and catalog programs that are currently in place. Research and understand barriers to their full utilization and gaps where they exist. Consider location, transportation, limited services, costs, family needs, etc. Interview and establish relationships with the CCCS coordinator and some service providers. The expectation is to produce a written report and to present it to the JJDPC for discussion at the July 2020 meeting. *Project co-leads will be Sathvik Nori and Rebecca Flores.*

### *Develop and recommend a better truancy strategy for county public schools*

Truancy is a leading indicator of juvenile delinquency, and puts youth at a disadvantage for succeeding in school and life. Neighboring counties, such as Alameda, have made recent successful changes to the policies of their School Attendance Review Boards. This project will investigate San Mateo County truancy trends and policies across multiple school districts, study the strategies of other counties, and make recommendations as to whether and how to effect positive change in our county. *Project co-leads will be Susan Swope and Valerie Gibbs.*

## **Projects to Develop Foundational Capabilities**

### *Develop strategy for reducing the digital divide*

The challenges that the coronavirus outbreak and subsequent shelter in place order have presented for distance learning in at-risk communities in San Mateo County have brought the inequities of the digital divide into stark contrast. Given the pressure the digital divide puts on learning for at-risk youth, the negative impact of falling behind in school, and the possibility of future outbreaks and shelter at home orders, the Commission sees the current situation as an opportunity to recommend changes. This



project will seek to understand the pre-existing digital divide, the consequences of the divide given the recent changes to learning, and to recommend solutions going forward. *Project co-leads will be Sonoo Thadaney and Doug Winter.*

*Develop marketing & communications strategy*

Develop a strategy to broaden awareness of the JJDPC in San Mateo County. Develop the overall messaging and tone for JJDPC marketing and communication with the community. Research how other JJDPC and local commissions are marketing themselves and identify the most effective communication vehicles to achieve the desired outcomes. Additional aspects could include the feasibility of moving the JJDPC website to an independent platform (not associated with Probation); working with partners to spread awareness; and identifying revenue sources for ongoing marketing efforts. Once a strategy has been developed, a commissioner will be assigned to oversee ongoing marketing projects. The expectation is to present a marketing strategy to the Commission, and assign a commissioner to oversee marketing, by the end of 2020. *Project co-leads will be Toni Barrack and Michele Gustafson.*

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The following projects were proposed and discussed at the April 2020 Commission meeting, and the Commission decided to delay them until a later date:

**Bringing our Communities' Voices to Elected Officials**

*Hold Commission meetings in community locations*

In an effort to make more direct contact with community members, JJDPC Commission meetings - whether regular monthly meetings or special meetings - would be held at various community locations. Communication with community partners, some consultation from County officials on compliance, and coordination of logistics would be required. Potential questions might include whether and with whom to publicize meetings, who to invite, and whether and how the agenda would be different. The expectation would be to hold three community meetings a year, and the first one within two months of the appropriate county public health order. *This project was delayed based on the understanding that public meetings may not be able to take place for some time due to the coronavirus outbreak.*

**Providing Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Transitional Services**

*Identify additional substance abuse, mental health, and transitional services*

Identify services that are needed but not available to youth who have come into contact with the San Mateo County juvenile justice system. Determine the reasons for the gap

in services and propose solutions. Consider staffing, real estate, budget and marketing/awareness needs, etc. Partner with CBOs and County officials to develop solutions. A full, 'ready to fund' project plan for each solution, i.e. budget, staffing, location, etc., is not expected, just a realistic description of a solution. The expectation is to produce a written report and to present it to the JJDPC for discussion at the November 2020 meeting. *This project cannot begin until the project to describe such existing services is completed. Project co-leads will be the same as for that current project: Monroe Labouisse and Debora Telleria.*

Serve on the county task force investigating alternatives to youth incarceration

At the request of the JJDPC in 2019, and because of similar efforts in neighboring counties to close their youth detention centers, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors was planning to convene a task force to discuss alternatives to youth incarceration. *Due to the coronavirus outbreak, it is unclear when or if the task force for investigating alternatives to the YSC and other youth incarceration will begin.* However, if it does, then the Commission will need at least one representative on the task force. The representative will draw on all of the work of the Commission and its various projects to inform discussion on the task force.

**Providing After-School Care in At-Risk Communities**

Identify additional afterschool programs or capacity needed

Describe where the needs are, and the reason for the gaps in program capacity or availability. Consider budgetary constraints, staffing, costs, available space, lack of providers in neighborhoods, etc. Partner with CBOs and County officials to develop solutions. A full, 'ready to fund' project plan for each solution, i.e. budget, staffing, location, etc., is not expected, just a realistic description of a solution. The expectation is to produce a written report and to present it to the JJDPC for discussion at the October 2020 meeting. *This project cannot begin until the project to describe such existing programs is completed. Project co-leads will be the same as for that current project: Sathvik Nori and Rebecca Flores.*

# Appendix A: Interviews

The strategic planning committee would like to thank all of the Commissioners and partners listed below who took the time to share their thoughts for the development of this Strategic Plan. Their input was invaluable.

## **Commissioners who were interviewed**

- Antoinette Barrack
- Paul Bocanegra
- Rebecca Flores
- Valerie Gibbs
- Michele Gustafson
- Monroe Labouisse
- Susan Swope
- Debora Telleria
- Sonoo Thadaney
- Melissa Wilson
- Douglas Winter

## **Partners and stakeholders who were interviewed**

### San Mateo County Departments

- Juvenile Court:
  - Judge Susan Etezadi
  - Judge Susan Jakubowski
- Probation Department:
  - Chief John Keene
- Attorneys
  - Rebecca Baum, District Attorney's Office, Deputy in Charge, Juvenile Div
  - Bonnie Miller, Attorney, Juvenile Branch Private Defender Program
  - Ron Rayes, Managing Attorney, Juvenile Branch Private Defender Program
- Human Services Agency:
  - John Fong, Director of Children and Family Services
- Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
  - Regina Moreno, Manager
  - Aurora Pena, Supervising Mental Health Clinician

### County Office of Education, and School Districts

- Nancy Magee, Superintendent of Schools, County Office of Education
- Jenee Littrell, Deputy Superintendent, County Office of Education
- Rod Hsiao, Trustee, San Mateo County Board of Education
- Carrie DuBois, Trustee, Sequoia Union High School District
- Alisa MacAvoy, Trustee, Redwood City School District
- Keiko Smith, VP Advocacy & Community Services, San Mateo County PTA

### City Police Departments

- Monica De La Cerda, Juvenile Detective, RWC Police Department
- Lt. Ryan Johansen, San Bruno Police Department
- Lt. Jay Kiely, Burlingame Police Department
- Lt. Matthew Lethin, San Mateo Police Department
- Victoria Trask, SRO, Menlo Park Police Department
- Manuel Velarde, Juvenile Specialist, RWC Police Department

### Community Based Organizations

- Harold Atkins, Program Manager, Success Center
- Peter Ehrhorn, Department Director Youth Empowerment Services, Star Vista
- Kate Hiester, Associate Director of Programs & Partnerships, FLY
- Mike Jones, Senior Director, Boys and Girls Club in North Fair Oaks, Redwood City

# Appendix B: External Research

## External Research Sources

- [Annie E. Casey Foundation \(AECF\): Kids Count Data Center](#)
- [Annie E. Casey Foundation: \*Transforming Justice\*, Dec. 9, 2019](#)
- [Board of State and Community Corrections \(BSCC\): Juvenile Detention Profile Survey Database](#)
- [California Budget and Policy Center](#)
- [Cal Matters: California Divide](#)
- [Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice \(CJCJ\)](#)
- [Community Collaboration for Children's Success initiative \(CCCS\)](#)
- [Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health: Kidsdata](#)
- [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\): \*LGBTQ Youths in the Juvenile Justice System\*, 2014](#)
- [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\): \*Trends and characteristics of arrests involving juveniles\*, 2018](#)
- [San Francisco Chronicle: \*Facing rising costs per youth, San Mateo County considers future of juvenile hall\*, July 25, 2019](#)
- [San Francisco Chronicle: \*Vanishing Violence Series\*, 2019](#)
- [San Mateo County Probation Annual Reports](#)
- [San Mateo Probation: \*Annual JJCPA & JPCF Evaluation Report 2017-2018\*](#)
- [San Mateo Union High School District: Healthy Kids Survey](#)

## Global Findings

- Treat juvenile crime as a (mental) health issue, not a criminal issue
- Important to develop strategic alliance with agencies that have similar goals (i.e. CCCS and JJCC)
- As use of detention declines, not enough services in the community to replace that method of handling kids who are delinquent or have tendency to be
- Need to identify funding sources for programs, in addition to JJCPA and JPCF

## Root Causes of Juvenile Delinquency

Our allies pointed us towards the following causes of juvenile delinquency, which research backs up.

- **Economic Hardship (affordable housing, living wage, health care)**
  - 2018 bottom quintile SMC avg income \$25k ([California Budget and Policy Center](#))
  - Rent ^ 16% 2006-2017 in CA, while wages down 0.5% ([Cal Divide](#))
  - In 2017, 37% of SMC households had a high affordability burden, i.e. spent >30% of income on housing; vs. 42% CA, 31% US ([KidsData](#), Lucile Packard Foundation)
  - San Mateo County: ([KidsData](#), Lucile Packard Foundation)
    - ✓ Children living in poverty 21% (2014-16)
    - ✓ Children in low income working families 18% (2016)
    - ✓ Children in Food Insecure Households 13% (2017)
  - 11% residents <18 yr old in households below the poverty line. CA=21%
  - San Mateo County has the lowest use of CalWORKs of any county in the state (9 kids per 1000 vs 82 statewide) ([KidsData](#), Lucile Packard Foundation), but also top ten amongst CA counties for income inequality, as measured by Gini coefficient ([KidsData](#), Lucile Packard Foundation)
  - SMC: No space available in child care for 74% children ([KidsData](#), Lucile Packard Foundation)
  - Above leads to lack of time to spend with children and stress on parents
- **Generational Hardship (Education, mental health, crime, and substance abuse in families and parents)**
  - Leads to stress on children and children's mental health issues
  - Youth mental health need in SMC higher than average of CA as a whole, despite wealth (interview with CCCS director)
  - 14% children have had parents report 2+ adverse experiences ([KidsData](#), Lucile Packard Foundation)
  - Above leads to substance abuse and falling behind in / trouble at school
  - 1/3rd of kids in SMC are Latino; 50% of them are reading at grade level in 3rd grade ([AECF Data Center](#)), vs. 85% for Whites (who are also 1/3rd of kids in SMC). 75% of Latinos are not at State Standards in Math in 8th grade, vs. 34% of Whites
  - In SMC, performance of African Americans on average very similar to Latinos; African Americans represent only 1.5% of youth population of SMC ([AECF Data Center](#))

- In SMC, 20-25% of Latinos and African Americans are not graduating high school on time, vs. <10% of Caucasians. Whites ([AECF Data Center](#))

- **Organized Crime**

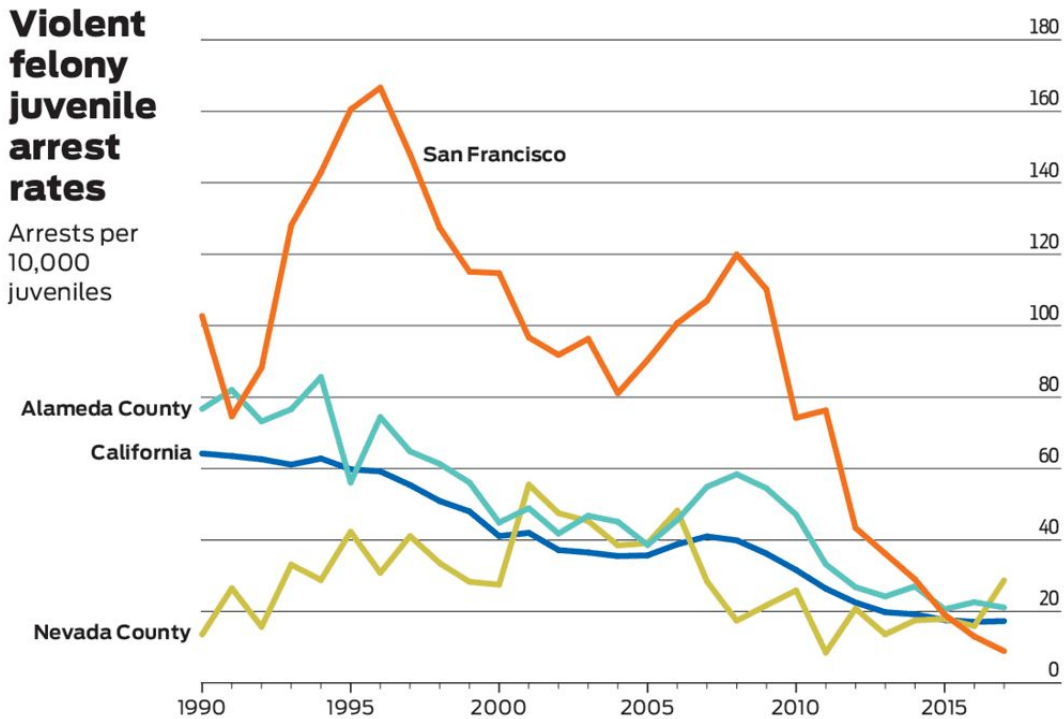
- ~4% of high school kids in SMUHD say they are members of gangs = ~80 per class or >300 total ([Healthy Kids Survey](#), 2017-2018)
- 3% of high school students say they have carried a weapon at school (~250 kids total), 1% a gun. Between 2-4% say they have been threatened with a weapon ([Healthy Kids Survey](#), 2017-2018)

## **Community Concerns**

- CCCS Daly City Neighborhood Plan ([CCCS Report](#))
  - Lack of affordability (low wages, high housing costs), which makes parenting hard
  - Police need more trauma-informed responses
  - Structural racism in criminal justice, education
  - Not enough affordable preschool, or public school staffing
  - Youth mental health, and substance abuse
  - Not enough safe after-school spaces for kids (inc. weekend and summer)

## **Effects of Juvenile Delinquency**

- Suspensions, offenses, probation, incarceration
- Generally, the Annie E. Casey Foundation concludes, youth incarceration is harmful to youth and ineffective. ([Transforming Justice](#), December 9, 2019)
- Nationwide, arrests of juveniles have declined significantly since the mid-1990s ([OJJDP](#)), and California is the same.
- In California, homicides of juveniles dropped 83 percent — from 382 in 1995 to 63 in 2017, the latest state data show. Youth arrests for violent felonies in the state dropped 68 percent — from 22,601 in 1994 to 7,291 in 2017. ([SF Chronicle: Vanishing Violence 2019](#))



- San Mateo County is no different
  - Youth (<18 yrs old) Arrest Rates by County, 2010-2018 ([CJ CJ](#), Mike Males)

Arrests/100K population	2010	2014	2018
SMC	3,644	2,137	1,024 (-72%)
CA	4,445	2,112	1,113 (-75%)

- In San Mateo County, the number of kids on probation has declined over time:
  - ([SMC Probation Annual Reports](#))
    - ✓ June 2015: 559
    - ✓ June 2016: 521
    - ✓ June 2017: 306
    - ✓ June 2018: 286
  - Of kids on probation, 15-20% from 2014-2018 re-offended
  - Of kids in diversion programs in 2018, 0% re-offended
  - ([SMC Probation Annual Reports](#))



- # of youth in supervision; half or less in intensive programs ([SMC Probation Annual Reports](#))

Year	General	Intensive
June 2016	115 (50%)	116 (50%)
June 2017	112 (56%)	88 (44%)
June 2018	101 (55%)	83 (45%)

- Relative to the rest of the state, SMC is doing well (2016 figures, CA Sentencing Institute, [CJCJ](#)):
  - ✓ Felony Arrest Rates: SMC = 369/100K ages 10-17. CA avg = 478
  - ✓ Confinement Rates: SMC = 12/1000 juvenile felony arrests. CA avg = 34
  - ✓ Out-of-home Placements: 207/100K youth were in foster or group home care. CA = 666/100K
- On June 19, 2019, the YSC held only 40 youth. ([SMC Probation, report to JJDPC](#))
  - ✓ 33 male
  - ✓ 70% Latinx
  - ✓ 46% from RWC or EPA (28% and 18% respectively)
  - ✓ 26 had committed felonies
  - ✓ 7 were being held during pre-disposition for potential felony charges
  - ✓ % LGBTQ?
  - ✓ *Note: Nationwide, LGBTQ over-represented in detention ([OJJDP](#))*
- [BSCC](#) confirms that the snapshot above is representative (re: population, gender mix, felony mix, pre-disposition mix) for most of 2018-2019
- At the YSC, “115 of 170 cell beds were empty on an average day in 2018.” ([SF Chronicle, July 25, 2019](#))
- “Counts [in 2018] showed that between 47% and 74% of the youths in San Mateo County’s juvenile hall were there for felonies or technical violations related to serious crimes, according to Board of State and Community Corrections data.” ([SF Chronicle, July 25, 2019](#))
- In San Mateo County, 53% of youth clients in Probation and 43% in Behavioral Health and Recovery Services come from 4 zip codes ([CCCS](#))
  - ✓ Daly City (10% Probation, 11% BHRS)
  - ✓ EPA

- ✓ North Fair Oaks/Redwood City
- ✓ South San Francisco
- These four were not the only hot spots, but they also measured high on “Youth Planning Readiness”, so were targeted by CCCS. Other hot spots were:
  - ✓ East San Mateo (east of downtown, west of 101)
  - ✓ San Bruno

## Delinquency Prevention

- Commissioner and stakeholder interviews listed the following as effective delinquency prevention measures
  - For prevention, it’s programs that start early, i.e. elementary school
  - For both prevention and rehabilitation: it’s affordable after school programs like Boys & Girls Clubs and practical programs for education support, job skill training, life skills
  - Stakeholders also put emphasis on mental health treatment and added that many system programs do work:
    - ✓ Supervision by Probation
    - ✓ Drug testing
    - ✓ Teaching empathy through community service
    - ✓ PDs: Early intervention, parent education and diversion programs
  - Recommendation from AECF: Impose Statutory Limits on Detention and Commitment ([AECF: Transforming Justice](#), December 9, 2019)

## Existing Programs

The JJCC and Probation allocate funds from JJCPA and JPCF to programs that assist youth that come into contact with the juvenile justice system. ([Probation: JJCPA & JPCF Evaluation 2017-2018.](#))

- **JJCPA Programs**
  - **Acknowledge Alliance:** Provides counseling for youth attending community and court schools
  - **Juvenile Assessment Center:** Provides case management and supervision of youth with significant mental health and family issues in partnership with other county agencies such as Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) and the Human Services Agency (HSA)

- **Family Preservation Program:** Provides multidisciplinary team risk/needs assessments to youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system
- **Fresh Lifelines for Youth:** Provides mentoring and case management for youth on probation
- **StarVista Insights:** Provides substance use treatment and family counseling for youth on probation
- **JPCF Programs**
  - **Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto:** Provides legal consultation/representation for youth and families
  - **Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula:** Provides mentoring services and enrichment activities to at-risk youth
  - **StarVista Strengthen Our Youth:** Provides group and individual counseling to at-risk middle and high school students and parenting workshops
  - **YMCA of San Francisco School Safety Advocates:** Provides school safety advocates to create safe environments on schools campuses
  - **Probation Parent Programs:** Provides parenting education to parents of youth on probation
- Several of these providers indicate that these funds are insufficient to run the programs
- **Programs in the Youth Services Center**
  - Fresh Lifelines for Youth (education about law and constitutional rights, re-entry, leadership and gang programs)
  - Church services and bible study
  - Staff led life skills programming (resume writing, anger management)
  - The Beat Within (writing program)
  - Each One Reach One (tutoring, playwriting)
  - Mind Body Awareness (meditation)
  - The Art of Yoga
  - Pyramid (anger management, drug and alcohol prevention)
  - Brighter Day (career readiness, leading to jobs at Safeway)
  - Book club
  - Omega (staff led monthly program including speakers on relevant topics)

- Adding Success Centers as a partner in 2020

### **Alternative Programs**

- “San Francisco supervisors, with support from 10 of 11 members, voted in early June [2019] to close the city’s juvenile hall by the end of 2021. The legislation requires the creation of a committee to create community-based and rehabilitative alternatives, including a secure setting for those who pose a safety risk.” ([SF Chronicle, July 25, 2019](#))
- SMC BoS recommends forming a task force to study closing YSC
- In 2016, a civil grand jury recommended that San Mateo County examine whether the cost of detaining youths at juvenile hall could be trimmed and the empty space repurposed.” SMC Board of Supervisors recommends in 2019-2020 to study closing YSC, just as SF Board of Supervisors has recommended the same. ([SF Chronicle, July 25, 2019](#))
- Chief Keene not in favor of full closure. “Keene acknowledged the need to address the vacancy rate in juvenile hall and said he would support repurposing parts of the facility, creating space for after-school programs or community organizations. ... But, he added, state and federal restrictions limit what he can do — red tape that won’t allow him to knock down walls.” ([SF Chronicle, July 25, 2019](#))