



Camarillo City Council

AGENDA REPORT

Date: August 14, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

From: Greg Ramirez, City Manager

Submitted by: Carmen Nichols, Assistant City Manager

Subject: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) CC 2024-167 between the City of Camarillo, Camarillo Health Care District, and Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District for Healthy Camarillo

BACKGROUND

What is now known as the “Healthy Camarillo” initiative, was initially introduced at the Fiscal Year 2020/21 Strategic Planning session by Councilmembers Tony Trembley and Charlotte Craven, as a City Council objective to “Explore the feasibility of a community wellness initiative through possible establishment of the Camarillo region as a Blue Zone Project area”, to promote a community-wide approach to health and wellness and longevity of life. The concept originated from a study conducted by Dan Buettner, a National Geographic Explorer, following his expeditions in 2000 of different regions with reportedly high longevity and high quality of life. Five original blue zones were identified, Loma Linda, California is named as one of them.

Mr. Trembley and Mrs. Craven for an extended period had a series of informal group meetings consisting of staff from Camarillo Health Care District, Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District and several health professionals. The districts were asked about their interest and participation, since both districts were already providing health and wellness resources. It was also discussed that several potential partnerships exist in the Camarillo Community including health care and medical groups and providers, hospitals, nutrition and food-based nonprofits, for-profit organizations, and health and fitness providers among others.

At the FY 2021/22 Strategic Planning Session, Mr. Trembley suggested that the City Council change the concept to “Healthy Camarillo”, and that staff investigate Healthy RC (Rancho Cucamonga), a successfully proven city-led model, that encourages a community-wide approach to healthy living. The City Council agreed and adopted the Objective to “Explore the establishment of a public/private community wellness initiative (“Healthy Camarillo”) focusing on prevalent community health issues”.

The informal working group thereafter discussed pursuing a Blue Zones designation and other options in lieu of a specific Blue Zones designation. However, these options (including a Blue Zones designation) were determined to have a significant cost and need for substantial resource commitments, and therefore those involved in early discussions concluded that community well-being could be achieved differently under similar principles.

In mid-2022, the informal working group began discussing the potential for a “Healthy Camarillo” project to focus upon the top community health priorities outlined in the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) developed by the Ventura County Community Health Improvement Collaborative (VCCHIC).

DISCUSSION

On February 8, 2023, the City Council established the formation of a Healthy Camarillo Ad Hoc Committee to assist in the development of the wellness initiative. City Staff, under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Committee explored similar program models, potential community partners and stakeholders, and identified possible resource requirements. PVRPD and CHCD were invited to participate by also electing an ad hoc committee of their elected officials.

As a part of their research, City Staff met with staff from the City of Rancho Cucamonga and learned about the Healthy RC initiative, which was established in 2011 as a comprehensive city-wide effort to promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles among residents.

Staff also connected with members of the VCCHIC to learn about the Ventura County Community Health Needs Assessment, a comprehensive evaluation conducted every three years to identify and address the most pressing health needs of the county's residents. Conducted by VCCHIC and other local healthcare organizations, the assessment utilized both primary data, such as surveys and focus groups, and secondary data, including statistics and healthcare records, to analyze various health indicators.

The health needs and priorities of Camarillo residents, as identified in the 2022 CHNA, focus on several key areas. Mental health and substance use are significant concerns, with emphasis on addressing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), substance use, adolescent health, and housing issues. There is also a strong focus on health and wellness for older adults, prevention of chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, as well as promoting healthy lifestyles through nutrition, physical activity, and maintaining a healthy weight. Mental health problems, particularly trauma, depression, and bipolar disorder, are among the top health issues, with mental health being identified as the most critical problem by 73% of survey respondents. Access to healthcare surfaced as another primary concern, with a need to draw more physicians to the community and control healthcare costs.

As a first step towards addressing these health needs, the Healthy Camarillo Ad Hoc Committee reconvened the Camarillo Health Care District, and Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District to explore partnership opportunities. The collaboration between the three entities to create the Healthy Camarillo initiative brings significant benefits to the community. This partnership leverages the strengths and resources of each organization to address the diverse health needs of residents more effectively. By combining efforts, they can promote healthier lifestyles, provide better access to healthcare services, and amplify existing opportunities for physical activity and wellness programs as well as create new ones.

The MOU for the Healthy Camarillo community health initiative outlines this collaborative effort and formalizes the Parties' commitment to improve the overall health and well-being of the Camarillo community.

Sections 1-6 of the MOU detail the terms of this partnership.

- Section 1 identifies key community health priorities: mental health and substance abuse, chronic health condition prevention through healthy lifestyles, and equitable access to healthcare for underserved populations.
- Section 2 commits the Parties to identify potential resources to support this community health initiative, including the pursuit of grants, partnerships, and sponsorships.
- Section 3 focuses on the collaborative development and implementation of health programs and initiatives.
- Section 4 addresses the identification of program costs.
- Section 5 emphasizes the coordination of marketing activities to promote health initiatives through various channels.
- Section 6 outlines the establishment of governance structures, including exploring collaboration models, decision-making processes, and stakeholder engagement mechanisms to ensure effective oversight and coordination.

This collaboration is crucial as it combines the expertise of each organization, fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility, enhances public health infrastructure, and ensures a coordinated effort in tackling pressing health issues in the City. Ultimately, this initiative aims to improve the overall well-being and quality of life for all Camarillo residents.

Should all parties agree to enter into the proposed MOU, next steps include convening a core working group consisting of representatives from each agency, establishing goals and objectives for the initiative, exploring options for staffing, developing ideas for branding, marketing and a possible kick-off event, and connecting with other health partners in the City.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no budget impact as a result of this action.

CEQA DETERMINATIONS

City staff has determined, in accordance with Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, that the Healthy Camarillo MOU is not subject to CEQA review because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the MOU may have a significant effect on the environment.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Mayor to sign CC 2024-167 Memorandum of Understanding – Healthy Camarillo between the City of Camarillo, Camarillo Health Care District, and Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CC 2024-167 Memorandum of Understanding – Healthy Camarillo
2. Ventura County Community Health Needs Assessment 2022

REFERENCE MATERIALS – AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT CITY HALL

None