

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Nella McOsker  
**Date Submitted:** 10/24/2023 12:05 PM  
**Council File No:** 23-0600-S33  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached letter.



October 24, 2023

Councilmember Monica Rodriguez  
Chair, Public Safety Committee  
Los Angeles City Council  
200 North Spring Street, Room 455  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: SUPPORT – Expansion of CIRCLE and Alternative Unarmed Crisis Response Programs**  
**CF: 22-0979-S1, 23-0956, 23-1160**

Dear Councilmember Rodriguez,

Established in 1924, Central City Association (CCA) represents approximately 300 member organizations committed to advancing policies and projects that enhance the vibrancy of Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA) and increase opportunities across the region. We envision a safe, welcoming DTLA and support strategies that improve community well-being and public safety. We applaud the City Council’s efforts to advance unarmed crisis response programs as they are pivotal in reshaping emergency services in urban areas like Los Angeles. ***Given that DTLA has the highest concentration of individuals experiencing homelessness, we recommend the expansion of the Crisis and Incident Response through Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE) program and other similar, successful programs to cover every corner of our city center.***

Alternative unarmed crisis response programs help alleviate the immense burden and responsibility placed on traditional law enforcement agencies/emergency services and prove especially beneficial for individuals experiencing homelessness. They offer a supportive and trauma-informed approach to addressing the complex needs of this vulnerable population. By connecting those in crisis with appropriate services, shelter, and social support networks, these programs aim to help individuals break the cycle of homelessness, substance abuse, or mental health challenges, ultimately working towards sustainable solutions rather than punitive measures. Furthermore, it ensures that mental health experts and social workers are the first responders to non-violent, social, and mental health-related crises, reducing the likelihood of escalation and unnecessary use of force by armed officers. From July 2022 to January 2023, 3,485 911 calls were diverted from LAPD to CIRCLE, allowing law enforcement to focus on their core public safety functions and providing desperately-needed services and support to those experiencing homelessness.

Since 2022, CIRCLE has operated pilot programs in the Civic Center, Chinatown, Little Tokyo and Historic Core communities. However, the sheer number and unique nature of homelessness in our city center necessitates the expansion of this program in both breadth and depth to cover all communities of DTLA and to fully ensure the effectiveness of this program. There are far too many residents, business owners and stakeholders who fall outside these limited CIRCLE boundaries. Moreover, LAPD Central Division has the highest intake of 911 calls across all divisions – many of which could be diverted to appropriate professionals. Expansion will not only enhance public safety and reduce the likelihood of escalations, but also foster a humane, community-driven response to challenges specific to DTLA.

CCA commends the City Council for its commitment to expanding alternative unarmed crisis response programs, and we stand ready to support a more effective and community-driven public safety system in Los Angeles.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nella McOsker".

Nella McOsker  
President & CEO  
Central City Association

Cc: Council President Paul Krekorian  
Councilmember John Lee  
Councilmember Tim McOsker  
Councilmember Traci Park  
Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martinez