

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC**

Update on Community Crisis Assistance Team

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*Police Department*

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****INFORMATION  
ONLY**

The Community Crisis Assistance Team (CCAT) launched five units composed of a Mental Health Professional (MHP) and a police officer on September 1, 2023. CCAT provides a sustainable, coordinated community response for aiding individuals in behavioral crisis. CCAT units are specialized, multidisciplinary teams responding to individuals experiencing behavioral health crisis and/or needing other social support. CCAT's goals are to connect individuals to resources and support services and to reduce arrests, the use of force, and unnecessary ER visits. Following eight months of program operation, department leadership will present data collected from interactions between community members in crisis and CCAT.

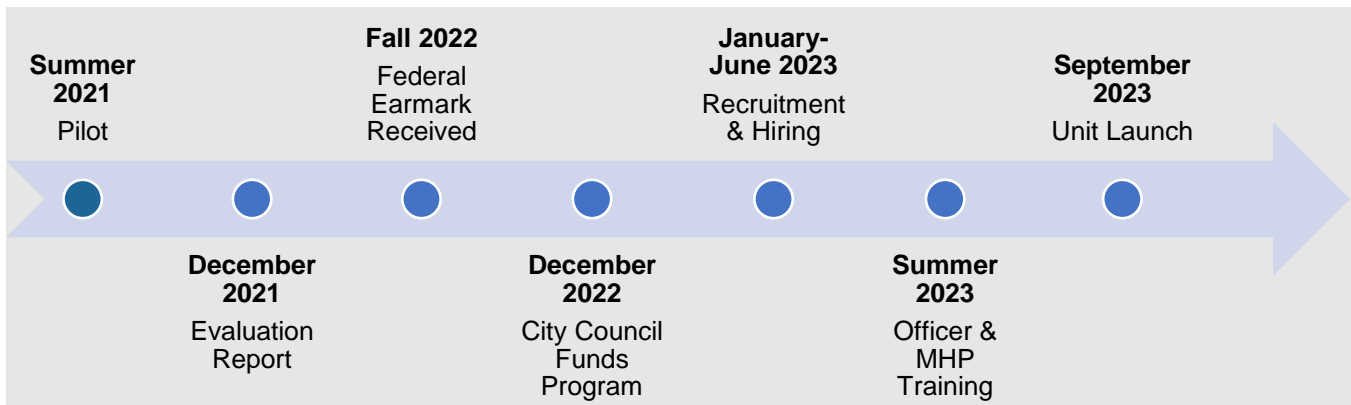
**RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

The Community Crisis Assistance Team (CCAT) was funded by Bellevue City Council in 2023, with the defined purpose of providing a sustainable, coordinated community response for aiding individuals in behavioral crisis. The program's outlined goals were to form a specialized, multidisciplinary team to respond to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis and/or requiring other social support. This team was entrusted with achieving the following outcomes:

- Connections to resources and support services that minimize or resolve current and/or prevent future crises.
- Reduction in arrests.
- Reduction in use of force.
- Reduction in unnecessary Hospital Emergency Department visits.



CCAT launched five units on September 1, 2023. Following eight months of program operation, department leadership will present data collected from interactions between community members in crisis and the CCAT team. CCAT responded to 2,580 incidents from inception on September 1, 2023, through April 29, 2024 (average 323 incidents a month). CCAT primarily supported call types such as suicide, behavioral health, assists to patrol, follow-ups, suspicious events, and disturbances.

From September 1, 2023, through April 29, 2024, CCAT handled a total of 479 behavioral health calls. There were a total of 1216 behavioral health calls for this period. CCAT responded to 39% of these calls (479 of 1216). CCAT also responded to 54% of all suicide calls (124 of 229). The average time CCAT units spent on behavioral health calls was 1 hour 10 mins and 35 secs. Suicide calls involved an average of 1 hour and 19 mins and 47 secs of CCAT unit time spent.

There were several significant successes experienced by the CCAT program. One such success was in the CCAT team’s transfer of cases to the Bellevue Fire CARES case management team. In the first eight months over 100 cases were supported by CARES advocates and professional social workers, allowing community members to access vital resources and support services.

A central goal of the program is to divert individuals from the criminal justice system and unnecessary hospital visits. CCAT police officers are required to assess whether each engagement resulted in a diversion from any of the following: criminal charge, arrest, incarceration, emergency room visit, or the use of force. Officers make their assessment based on what they believe would have occurred had they been a patrol officer responding to that engagement/call without the resources and MHP partner available to them on a co-responder team. In total, CCAT’s initial engagement of 880 individuals led to a total of 102 diversions. These included 27 diversions from criminal charges, 25 diversions from arrest, 8 diversions from incarceration, 24 diversions from use of force, and 25 diversions from unnecessary emergency room visits.

Some operational observations of what has been working with the program include fully integrating the CCAT and CARES101 teams which allows for spontaneous collaboration and sharing of information to support clients CCAT teams train together which has provided the opportunity for officers and MHPs to understand and respect each other’s roles and perspectives even more. The community demand for CCAT presence has been greater than expected. CCAT regularly receives invitations to events, to make presentations and to meet with community partners and teams.

Looking ahead, CCAT sees the value of training firefighters and police officers with basic skills to respond to lower acuity behavioral health calls, leaving CCAT available to respond to higher acuity calls. Funded by Opioid Settlement Funds, the CCAT/CARES MHP team will be adding a dedicated Opioid Response Social Worker to the team to provide outreach, case management and connection to resources to individuals in opioid crisis and their families. The CCAT team greatly benefited from the basic crisis negotiation training and use these skills regularly. Bellevue will be hosting an advanced level course in November.

The CCAT team continues to collect data, monitor process improvement opportunities, and observe successes. Program leadership will continue to provide updates to the Council on these metrics in the coming months.

## **POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS**

### **Policy Impact**

This program supports the council's target areas of community safety and health and thriving people and communities by ensuring that city services are brought to vulnerable individuals and others in crisis.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with implementing these changes.

## **OPTIONS**

N/A

## **ATTACHMENTS**

N/A

## **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

N/A