



Memorandum

TO: RULES AND
OPEN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Darryl Von Raesfeld

SUBJECT: HEART SAFE CITY

DATE: August 7, 2007

Approved

Date

8/7/07

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend approval to add the Heart Safe City report to the September 20, 2007 Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee agenda.

BACKGROUND

Heart disease kills approximately 400,000 people per year and is this country's leading cause of death. Assuring the City of San Jose continues to be one of the nation's safest large cities will mean applying resources toward a wide range of cardiac care issues: prevention, education, and intervention. A Heart Safe City designation signifies a commitment by the community to promote CPR and first aid training, place automated external defibrillators (AEDs) where large numbers of people gather, and support introduction of new technologies for professional rescuers. Becoming a "Heart Safe City" will optimize limited public safety resources to achieve two important Public Safety CSA outcomes: The public feels safe anywhere, anytime in San Jose; and Residents share the responsibility for public safety.

ANALYSIS

The first line of defense against cardiac emergencies is prevention; and the first principle of prevention is to raise public awareness of the health threat posed by heart disease. The primary goal of becoming a Heart Safe City is to assure prompt action by bystanders, family, and friends, as well as emergency responders to minimize morbidity and mortality associated with heart disease.

Although no clear standard exists to define a Heart Safe City, examination of Heart Safe City programs in Seattle and San Diego indicate San Jose already possesses several program elements found in those cities, including comparable service levels, citizen training, and self-help programs. The San Jose Heart Safe City program can pursue parallel paths: prevention and response. Prevention activities will focus on the distribution of electronic and printed media to targeted audiences. Response activities will focus on utilization of the latest technology by professional responders and expansion of training and educational activities for the general public.

DARRYL VON RAESFELD
Fire Chief