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SARAH BREEN  
Clerk of the Court

**DATE:** August 27, 2024

**TO:** Randi Bowers-Payne, Human Resources Director

**FROM:** Tanya Todd, Court Administrator  
61st District Court

**SUBJECT:** **Request to Add Budget Substitutions and Ordinance Language to Future City Commission Meeting Regarding Alternative Sentencing Related Positions.**

The 61st District Court is committed to serving the citizens of Grand Rapids through effective and efficient use of resources while upholding principles of justice and equality. As a critical component in ensuring access to justice and the law in our community, we are dedicated to contributing to the City's goals of maintaining and increasing public safety. As such, the 61st District Court is undergoing a significant transition in its approach to alternative sentencing, moving from a Work Crew program to a more diverse and individualized community service model that prioritizes rehabilitation, community contribution, and alignment with each defendant's needs. These efforts benefit the community by enhancing public trust in the judiciary, increasing victim satisfaction, addressing root causes of criminal behavior, and performing services that often positively impact public spaces, non-profit agencies and community organizations in all three wards.

This transition aligns with modern principles of restorative justice and upholds human dignity.

As part of this restructuring, we propose the creation of two new roles and the utilization of one existing role, substituting those formerly identified as Work Crew Supervisors:

- The new Alternative Sentencing Community Service (ASCS) position will collaborate with the Alternative Sentencing team to enhance community engagement and partner with city agencies across all three wards. They will provide support and resources to defendants to help them successfully reintegrate into society, fostering a more supportive and rehabilitative environment within the community.

- The new ASCS/Problem-Solving Court Coordinator (ASCS/PSCC) role is part of the Alternative Sentencing team as well as a key member of the Problem-Solving Court (PSC) team (Drug, Sobriety, Outreach, Domestic Violence). The ASCS/PSCC plays a crucial role in supporting the program's success by providing essential coordination, contributing to data-driven decision-making, and fostering strong community partnerships.
- The third position will utilize the existing Deputy Court Clerk (DCC) classification in creating a new position titled Deputy Court Administrator (DCA). The DCA will play a crucial role in the successful transition and ongoing management of the Court's Alternative Sentencing program, providing leadership, overseeing program development, and ensuring alignment with rehabilitation and community contribution goals. In addition the DCA will support the Court Administrator in managing Problem-Solving Courts, financial operations, community outreach, and other administrative functions.

While this document focuses on these position changes, it's important to note that they are part of a broader restructuring effort within the 61st District Court. This comprehensive initiative, which includes the transition from the Work Crew program to our new Alternative Sentencing model, is projected to result in substantial cost savings.

Our financial analysis of the overall restructuring, which has been reviewed and approved by the budget office and the city's CFO, reveals both immediate and long-term benefits:

- In fiscal year 2024, we realized an immediate reduction of \$133,026.25 in work crew-related expenses, including building lease, utilities, equipment, supplies, and vehicles.
- Our projections show a cost reduction of \$141,018 in FY25 under the proposed reclassification model.
- Over the initial 5-year period (FY25-FY29), we project cumulative cost reductions exceeding \$650,000.

These savings from the overall restructuring will offset the salary the two new positions and one existing position proposed here. This approach achieves cost savings and represents a more efficient, effective, and financially sustainable court system.

This restructuring initiative was discussed at the recent Court/Liaison meeting on August 5, 2024, as part of our ongoing commitment to transparency and collaboration with city leadership.

We appreciate working with you to identify the correct Class Titles and Ranges for these positions. Please place your final recommended ordinance language on an upcoming City Commission agenda for the Commission's consideration for approval.