



Proclamation Honoring Richmond's Successful Collaboration in the Reduction of Homicides

WHEREAS, violent crime has plagued Richmond in past decades hurting many families and the reputation of our city; and

WHEREAS, significant reduction in homicides has been achieved in the year 2023; and the number of homicides reported is the lowest in Richmond's recorded history dating back to 1971; and

WHEREAS, in 2023 Richmond only had eight (8) homicides (in addition to two vehicular manslaughter cases and one death from an officer-involved shooting); and

WHEREAS, this significant reduction has been the result of a multifaceted approach which includes prevention and intervention efforts to address crime at its root causes, and simultaneously seeking prompt and fair suppression of violent crime when it emerges; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond City Council established the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) in 2007 to facilitate, expand and coordinate multiple community interventions, and to have a front line of outreach workers (called Neighborhood Change Agents) on the streets acting for change and promoting peace and civility. ONS has recently expanded further and continues to do its extremely valuable work today; and

WHEREAS, City Departments have expanded many services including recreation programs, library and cultural programs, job training and placement programs like YouthWorks and RichmondBUILD, and have expanded development projects in the city's inner core and the maintenance of our community centers, parks and streets; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond's work on Health in All Policies, passed in 2014, has enhanced community safety by addressing public health approaches to violence prevention through local government decisions that shape a healthy physical and social environment; and its work through the Government Alliance of Race and Equity (GARE) is helping eliminate racial inequities in our communities and developing a "collective impact" approach firmly grounded in inclusion and equity; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 City Council established a Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force which made recommendations adopted by the 2021 City Council, who transferred funding from other budgetary areas to address alternative strategies of public safety, including: youth jobs through YouthWorks, additional hires for ONS, interventions for unhoused residents, and the creation of a Community Crisis Response Program; and

WHEREAS, Richmond has strengthened its Citizens Police Review Commission to advise the City Council, City Manager and Chief of Police on all matters pertaining to the administration of the Richmond Police Department; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Police Department and its officers have continued to perform their duties with efficiency, responsibility and increased awareness of the expectations that the residents have of them; and

WHEREAS, the West County Family Resource Center and the Reentry Success Center were established with the leadership of County Supervisor John Gioia and other County officers to address the needs of domestic violence victims and the needs of returning parolees; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond established a Department of Children and Youth and established the Richmond Promise Program to help our youth have more opportunities to thrive and succeed in life; and

WHEREAS, many Richmond faith-based organizations have worked both independently and collaboratively with City agencies to reach the hearts and minds of many individuals in areas of high incidence of violent crime; a current example being the recently reactivated Richmond Peace Walks led by Faith in Action East Bay; and

WHEREAS, many community-based organizations continue to play key roles in violence reduction and prevention, including the Richmond Crime Prevention Board, the Richmond Progressive Alliance, RYSE, Safe Return Project, Vision of Hope Outreach, Richmond Neighborhood Councils, the Richmond Police Activities League, sports organizations like Richmond SOL Soccer Club, Richmond United Soccer Club, Richmond Little League and Richmond Steelers, various unhoused service providers (such as SOS Richmond, Way2Love, HCEB, Collaborising, and Richmond Community Foundation), as well as all the partners involved with Richmond Our Power Coalition and Lift Up Richmond, and many others; and

WHEREAS, the recorded high of 61 homicides in year 1991 is a sad, but not forgotten, year in our history and our reductions in year 2023 represent a nearly 64% decrease in the number of homicides going back three years: year 2020 (n=22), year 2021(n=18), and year 2022 (n=18); and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Richmond City Council acknowledges and expresses its gratitude for this collective success achieved with the efforts of all of those who have played a role over the past decades and in recent years in particular; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the elected representatives of the City of Richmond, on behalf of the People of Richmond, recommit ourselves to continue fighting for the life and safety of all our residents and urge all City employees, all residents, all businesses, all neighborhood and community organizations, to continue to expand our common efforts against violent crime and all crime as we work together in all ways possible to further our shared values of peace and prosperity in Richmond; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the City Council Office will send certificates of appreciation to all the entities mentioned throughout this proclamation, thanking them for their role in helping us create a more empowered and peaceful Richmond.

Read and acknowledged at the January 16, 2023, City Council meeting:

Councilmember Gayle McLaughlin
Vice Mayor Claudia Jimenez
Mayor Eduardo Martinez