



January 20, 2022

Dear Chair Veronica Lewis and CFCI Advisory Committee members:

We are writing in response to agenda item 8 and 9, and the \$1.5 million allocated to “Physical and Online Resource Hubs for Youth” and to ask that the Advisory Committee keep these dollars for their intended purpose—a purpose the CEO’s office has misrepresented or misunderstood. To ensure the \$1.5 million is effectively allocated to youth development, we recommend using a Third Party Administrator (TPA) to distribute these funds directly to community-based organizations already acting as youth resource hubs, using the guidelines passed by the Youth Development and Education Access Subcommittee. Because funding to this recommendation was so significantly reduced in the CFCI spending plan, this feels like the only option to meaningfully use these funds while honoring the spirit of the original recommendation.

In March 2021, the Youth Development and Education Access Subcommittee approved a recommendation for Physical and Online Resource Hubs for Youth. The Measure J Advisory Committee then recommended \$5.25 million for these hubs to be administered through a TPA. In the Year One spending plan, the CEO’s office only approved \$1.5 million for Physical and Online Resource Hubs for Youth and recommended it be administered through the Service Integration Branch to create an online tool.

The CEO’s office completely missed the point in directing the \$1.5 million away from physical spaces for youth. The spirit of this recommendation (*text below*) is for physical resource hubs and youth centers, with the aim of them to be open 24 hours to support emergency housing. Online referral resources were a supplement to this, not the main recommendation. Rather than fulfill this recommendation as intended, the CEO’s office undercut this funding by 70% and erroneously directed dollars towards an inaccessible online resource. In reading the recommendation passed by the subcommittee, it’s clear that physical resource hubs were the priority:

FREE OUR FUTURE.



Youth Development and Education Access Community Subcommittee

Recommendation #3: Fund the following Priorities for 2021-2022 Physical and Online Resource Hubs (Passed 3/9/21)

Create Physical Resource Hubs and 24-Hour Online Resource Hub for all youth to access programs, services, resources and referrals for housing, mental health, substance abuse, individual and family counseling, food assistance, employment, education support, legal services, clothing assistance. Following are five guidelines for Resource Hubs:

1. Resource hubs should be located in geographical spaces that are accessible and rooted within communities such as community centers, recreational parks, housing centers, etc.
2. Hubs should be located in communities and neighborhoods that have been disproportionately impacted by youth incarceration, violence, as well as racial and economic disparities.
3. Funding should also be allocated towards temporary shelters and emergency housing assistance for youth.
4. Resource hubs should leverage existing resources and repurposing existing assets in underserved and marginalized communities, such as utilizing vacant lots and buildings, unused county buildings, as well as spaces formerly used by probation and law enforcement.
5. Resource hubs should provide holistic support to systems-impacted youth through mentorship, peer navigators, counselors, as well as community advocates in order to support youth and help them acclimate productively back into the community.

In reading the full text of the recommendation and the guidelines, it is clear that the spirit of this recommendation is to create accessible, physical spaces for young people in the communities of highest need, with a myriad of services.

The Measure J Advisory Committee and the Youth Development and Education Access Subcommittee also recommended these funds go through a TPA. The Subcommittee passed the following guidelines for the TPA:

- 50% of funds will be directed to eligible CBOs with an annual budget of less than \$1.5 million.
- CBOs in SPAs and zip codes of specific economic disadvantage and disproportionately impacted by LA County's carceral system must be prioritized
- Third Party Administrator must be accountable to an advisory board of impacted community members which includes young people as members of this advisory board

The CFCI Advisory Committee should stand by the Measure J Advisory Committee recommendation and ensure that these funds get to organizations who work everyday to make sure youth have access to resources. Youth and community have been asking for 24-hour youth centers for decades, and they are a cornerstone of Youth Justice Reimagined. It is up to the CFCI Advisory Group to do the right thing, listen to the needs of youth and community, and direct the \$1.5 million to CBO's who can use the dollars to *productively* further youth development.

There are dozens of organizations in LA County already working as important resource hubs for youth who should get this funding, and it should go through a third-party administrator using the guiding principles that were passed. We are in full support of the development of 24-hour youth centers through YDD; however, \$1.5 million—70% less than what was recommended—is not a sufficient investment to do something meaningful. We recommend the CFCI Advisory Committee robustly fund youth centers for FY 2022-23. For this year, we urge the CFCI Advisory Committee to honor the original recommendation of the Youth Development and Education Access Community Subcommittee and ensure the funding goes to supporting community-based organizations through a Third Party Administrator.

Lastly, we want to note that only about 11 percent of the total CFCI investment for FY 2021-22 went to youth development and education access, and we hope the Advisory Committee will make a more meaningful investment in youth, and our future, in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Los Angeles Youth Uprising
Anti-Recidivism Coalition
Arts for Healing and Justice Network
Children's Defense Fund-California
Urban Peace Institute
Youth Justice Coalition