

August 4, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Public Safety and Human Services Committee
From: Lise Kaye, Analyst
Subject: Council Bill 120148 – Transferring Positions from the Seattle Police Department to the Community Safety and Communications Center

On August 10, 2021, the Public Safety and Human Services Committee will discuss and possibly vote on [Council Bill \(CB\) 120148](#), which would transfer parking enforcement officer (PEO) positions from the Seattle Police Department (SPD) to the Community Safety and Communications Center (CSCC). This memo summarizes the legislative history related to the CSCC, describes the positions that would be transferred by the bill and identifies Council options.

Background

On November 23, 2020, the City Council passed [Ordinance 126233](#), establishing a new CSCC within the Executive Department. Ordinance 126233 provided that the CSCC would initially provide two functions: police 9-1-1 dispatch and parking enforcement services. Moving these functions to the CSCC was intended to help reframe how the City provides for community safety and respond to the Council's interest in exploring expanded duties for the PEOs. Ordinance 126233 provided that the CSCC would begin performing the 9-1-1 call center functions by June 1, 2021 and that the CSCC would begin performing parking enforcement functions on June 1, 2021.¹ The Executive [appointed](#) Seattle Fire Department (SFD) Deputy Chief Chris Lombard as CSCC Interim Director on March 8, 2021.

Ordinance 126233 differed from the approach included in the Mayor's 2021 Proposed Budget, which would have moved the PEOs to the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and moved the police 9-1-1 call center to a new Seattle Emergency Communications Center beginning January 1, 2021.² The Executive's advocacy for transferring the PEOs to SDOT cited the PEOs and SDOT's Curbside Management Team history of collaboration; the absence of other municipalities having separated parking enforcement from a public works, transportation, or police reporting structure; and alignment of an expanded PEO role in traffic safety with SDOT's mission and existing operations.

¹ The CSCC would begin providing dispatch functions on the earlier of (a) June 1, 2021, or (b) 30 days after the Executive received a required federal Originating Agency Identifier (ORI). The City received the new the ORI on April 26, 2021.

² The Mayor also issued [Executive Order 2020-10](#) on September 30, 2020, creating a Community Safety Work Group and a SPD Functional Analysis Interdepartmental Team (IDT) charged with making recommendations by March 31, 2021 on multiple topics, including "the feasibility, timeline, and costs associated with pursuing a long-term vision of a creating a unified emergency communications, dispatch, and information/ service referral center."

During Council’s consideration of the Mayor’s 2021 Proposed Budget, the Executive identified the need for additional lead time to start up the new CSCC. The Council included a [proviso \(SPD-500-B-003\)](#) in the 2021 Adopted Budget, allowing the Executive to charge parking enforcement and 9-1-1 expenses against the SPD budget until June 1, 2021.³ The budget proviso also requested that the Executive provide a detailed estimate by March 31, 2021 of additional staff and budget that would be required to support the potential expansion of the PEOs’ responsibilities.⁴ Council has not yet received that estimate. The Council also approved two related Statements of Legislative Intent (SLIs), requesting reports by the end of March 2021 on the cost of using PEOs for traffic control during special events and on merging or co-locating the SPD and SFD 9-1-1 call centers. The Executive provided these responses to Council on August 2, 2021.⁵

On May 24, 2021, the Council passed [Ordinance 126353](#), which transferred 140 positions from the SPD 9-1-1 call center from SPD to the CSCC. The Council passed an amendment postponing a decision about whether to transfer the PEOs from SPD, with members noting an unresolved difference of opinion between the PEOs’ two bargaining units as to whether to move to the CSCC or to SDOT.⁶ Also on May 24, 2021, the Council passed [Ordinance 126350](#), which extended the proviso on the 2021 budget, effectively giving the City until September 1, 2021 to resolve whether and where to transfer the PEOs. The Executive completed the 9-1-1 call center transfer on July 7, 2021.

Proposed Council Bill (CB) 120148 and Amendment 1

CB 120148 would transfer the following 120 parking enforcement positions from SPD to the CSCC:

- 106 Parking Enforcement Officers;
- 12 Parking Enforcement Officer Supervisors;
- One Administrative Specialist; and
- One Manager 3 position.

³ [Ordinance 126237](#) adopted the City’s 2021 budget and included the proviso. Ordinance 126233 did not transfer existing personnel to the CSCC because the new agency could not become fully operational until the City received the necessary federal Originating Agency Identifier (ORI). Council anticipated that the Executive would send separate legislation to make the personnel transfers and add any additional positions by June 1, 2021.

⁴ The range of potentially expanded duties included managing traffic at lighted intersections, red light camera and school zone enforcement, response to non-injury collisions, response to and reporting on minor thefts and car break-ins, and traffic control. The proviso also requested a report as to the feasibility of granting the PEOs access to SDOT’s car charging stations.

⁵ CBO’s response to [SPD-005-B-002](#) provided a very high-level analysis comparing the average pay of a police officer and a parking enforcement officer and noted that a more sophisticated model would need to consider staffing levels and scope of work, key elements of which would be affected by bargaining with the four affected labor unions. CBO’s response to [SPD-503-A-003](#) provided a high-level description of four “considerations” relative to the future of the City’s 911 dispatch centers and concluded that a “true feasibility study” of potential consolidation would require outside consultants, funding and an extended timeline.

⁶ [CB 120088](#), which would have transferred the PEOs to SDOT, was referred to Council on the May 24, 2021 Introduction and Referral Calendar. The Council has not discussed or voted on CB 120088.

CB 120148 includes a “ratify and confirm” clause allowing the Executive to implement acts consistent with the authority of the legislation prior to its effective date, which would be after the September 1, 2021, deadline in the budget proviso.

Amendment 1 to CB 120148 would transfer the parking enforcement positions from SPD to SDOT, instead of to the CSCC.

Committee Action

Council’s approval of Ordinance 126353 in May 2021 postponed a decision about whether and where to transfer the PEOs out of SPD. Both CB 120148 and Amendment 1 would continue reframing how the City provides for community safety. Passage of CB 120148 would also respond to the Council’s interest in exploring expanded duties for the PEOs as part of the Community Safety and Communications Center. Alternately, passage of Amendment 1 to CB 120148, transferring the PEOs to SDOT, would align a potentially expanded PEO role in traffic safety with SDOT’s mission and existing operations.

Options for Council action are as follows:

1. Pass CB 120148 to transfer the PEO positions to the CSCC; or
2. Pass Amendment 1 to CB 120148 to transfer the PEO positions to SDOT; or
3. Take no action.

cc: Dan Eder, Interim Director
Aly Pennucci, Policy and Budget Manager