

Comments Received During the Action Plan Comment Period

Comment Received:

Mental Health Specialist submitted the following: feels that it is critical to address the mental health issues in the city that have been compounded by the stress of dealing with a pandemic. The mental health crisis continues to negatively impact community safety, education, substance misuse, community relations, and the overall despair that is expressed by many that live in this city. This is something that needs to be looked at from the ground level up. Some suggestions that I would love to see for our city would include:

- Specialized training for police officers in conjunction with mental health professionals in a multitude of settings (school, DCF, inpatient psychiatric units, shelters) that would eventually work together to address mental health calls using trauma informed care.
- Bi-annual mental health screening for students, teachers, and police officers
- Accredited courses in school systems for students on mental health (depression, anxiety, anger management, coping skills, domestic and community violence) starting in elementary school
- More trained mental health professionals in schools who can assess, diagnose, and refer students for treatment
- Change in house suspension to mental wellness and coping skills resource rooms
- Funding to adequately pay mental health nurses and clinicians to work in the school system
- Provide specific job and training opportunities for felons that pay adequately with benefits to prevent recidivation (ie a labor and construction jobs that can rebuild abandoned and dilapidated buildings in the city)

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Thank you to the City of Springfield for everything that you do. In regards to the action plan Springfield Preservation Trust wants to advocate for the continuation of funds towards historic preservation and façade work. Additionally, the Trust hopes a new survey of downtown properties may be completed. The last one was forty years ago and with the programs using Hud and ARPA the survey will need to be updated. Thank you for your consideration.