



# South High Youth Engagement Session

April 19, 2024



On Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Office of Community Safety staff facilitated a discussion with students at the South High School's after school program. 14 students provided feedback on the Lake Street Community Safety Center and South Minneapolis Community Safety Center.

The students received a presentation, engaged in an interactive activity, and conversation to help the city decide what services and resources will be in the community safety centers. For each social service they voted and explained what the selected service meant to them.

Students voted and six social services got the most support for the South Minneapolis Community Safety Center:

1. Affordable housing
  - Free/affordable housing built with limited strings attached (find a job)
  - Helping homeless people find resources
  - Point to areas with affordable housing.
  - Resources to help pay for housing
2. Education support
  - College debt
  - Adult education
  - Tutoring/homework help
  - College or post-secondary education
  - Raise money for poorer schools
  - Increase scholarships for students of varying ages
3. Employment support
  - Internship opportunities and awareness for all youth and college graduates
  - A job center
  - Skill building
  - Help with resume building
  - Find career to meet skills and education
  - Help finding jobs
  - Career exploration
4. Food security
  - Free food resources
  - Food pantry and donations
  - Garden to grow fresh food
5. Mental health
  - Provide people an understanding environment to discuss their problems
  - Therapy and professional talk groups with other people
  - Therapy in the building with ongoing support

6. Unsheltered homelessness resources

- Structured and long-term help
- Help people off the streets, provide them good places to live, and help to get their lives on the right track
- Prioritize especially near the transit station

Students said the same social services should be in the Lake Street Community Safety Center. They said the most important social services for that site should focus on the issues of unsheltered homeless and substance use disorder.

When asked about the top five other building uses and resources for the South Minneapolis Community Safety Center, the students voted and came up with the below top five:

1. Medical services
  - a. STI
  - b. Sex education
  - c. If medications are handed out they have it be administered and supervised
2. Childcare for people utilizing services in the community safety center
3. Space for donations
4. Gun buy-back
5. Space for community meals

When asked about Minneapolis Police Department and their presence at the community safety centers students had various feedback:

- Police in the center could be a barrier if they have a weapon.
- Depends on training of police.
- Depends on the person.
- Need event(s) to reconnect community with police.
- Don't hide the police.
- People need some place where police aren't present.
- Police need training to work with the youth.
- Police need training on bias and how to interact with people with Autism.

**Who attended:**

Students were asked to share demographic information. Here is a snapshot of those students who chose to provide information:



Most students who identified as Black also identified their ethnicity as Somali or Ethiopian.