



## PROPOSAL TO THE COMMUNITY JUSTICE COUNCIL

Public Policy Forum, Inc.

March 2008

For the past 95 years, the Public Policy Forum has served as a source of accurate information for local, state and national leaders seeking effective answers to public policy issues. Established in 1913, we have cultivated our reputation for trusted research as a non-profit, non-partisan organization that helps improve the quality of public policymaking in Southeastern Wisconsin. Our mission is to encourage informed public policy and effective use of public resources. We achieve our mission by conducting high-quality research on civic issues of local, state and national concern.

The Forum has observed with great interest the formation of the Community Justice Council to improve coordination among the various entities that comprise the criminal justice system, and to address criminal justice issues that transcend various branches of government. We believe this effort is a shining example of intergovernmental coordination and is precisely the type of approach that is required to address many of the daunting issues facing our community.

Having taken part in or observed similar efforts in the past, we have seen many fail due to lack of sufficient staff support and follow-through. In particular, we have seen such efforts produce many good ideas, only to have those ideas flounder due to an inability to appropriately research them and to develop them into real public policy initiatives.

We would like to help the Community Justice Council avoid that outcome by offering our assistance to the Council as its research arm. We would provide our team of qualified, non-partisan policy researchers to attend Council Executive Committee meetings and research issues and ideas that the Committee wishes to evaluate or pursue as potential means to enhance public safety and/or improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the various components of our criminal justice system.

Specifically, we offer the following:

- Approximately 25-30 hours of research time per month on topics directed by the Executive Committee. Areas of research could include analysis of how other similar-sized metropolitan areas are approaching specific criminal justice issues or designing their systems, fiscal analysis of proposed solutions to criminal justice problems, research into potential governmental or non-governmental funding sources for proposed solutions, high-level policy analysis of proposed ideas and

solutions (including presentation of pros and cons), and actual policy option research and development.

- Coordination and assistance in developing meeting agendas and materials and facilitating meeting discussion.
- Coordination of data gathering activities, research and staff support efforts among and between Forum staff and staff from the various members of the Council's Executive Committee.
- To the extent that the 25-30 hours per month noted above would not be utilized for work directed by the Executive Committee, we would also offer our assistance to Council standing committees in researching issues on their behalf per the approval of the Executive Committee.

Because this set of tasks is so consistent with the mission of the Forum to promote and enhance sound public policy and intergovernmental coordination, we would not request compensation from Council members for providing these services in 2008. It would be our intent, instead, to seek outside funding to support our efforts once we establish a portfolio of products linked to this project. However, if we are unsuccessful in obtaining such outside funding, then we may need to request financial support from the Council if it were to wish us to continue our support in 2009.

Also, we would need the Council to be comfortable with the notion that any research conducted by the Forum in association with this effort would be proprietary to the Forum and could potentially be utilized by the Forum as part of larger research products that ultimately would be distributed to our members and the public.

We look forward to the Community Justice Council's consideration of this proposal. We are ready to begin our work as soon as we are requested to do so. Questions can be directed to Rob Henken, President, at 276-8240 or rhenken@publicpolicyforum.org.