

# Reimagining Public Safety

## QUARTERLY REPORT



### About this report

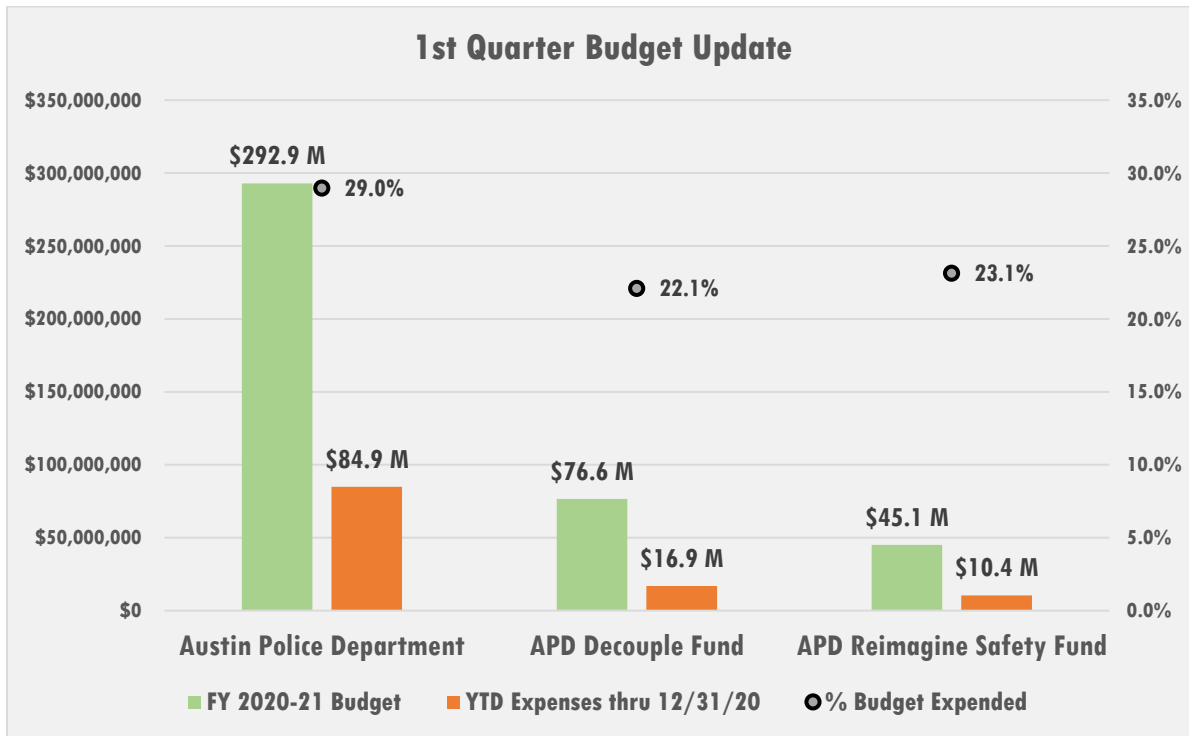
The City’s Reimagining Public Safety (RPS) scope of work continues to be informed by a series of public safety [reform resolutions](#) adopted by City Council in the summer of 2020 as well as several other [reform initiatives](#) , underway prior to summer 2020, which are now included in the RPS framework. This report serves as the first in a series of RPS quarterly updates as directed by Council. In an effort to provide a look at RPS progress in full context, this report includes also includes a summary of significant milestones and from spring 2020 through the end of January 2021. The report is organized by RPS priority categories: Decoupling, Reimagining and Reinvestment. This report also summarizes the work of the RPS City-Community Task Force and RPS communications and community engagement activities.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget Update

With the adoption of the FY 2020-21 budget, City Council passed Budget Rider 1 that, among other provisions, directed “the Manager to report to Council quarterly on the funding and expenditures in the Austin Police Department (APD) budget, including the items in the Decouple Fund and the Reimagine Safety Fund.” The funding and expenditures in the APD, APD Decouple Fund, and APD Reimagine Safety Fund through the first quarter of FY 2020-21 are shown on the following chart.

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APD has expended \$84.9 million of its \$292.9 million budget (29.0%). Programs within the APD Decouple Fund have expended \$16.9 million of their \$76.6 million budget (22.1%). Programs within the APD Reimagine Safety Fund have expended \$10.4 million of their \$45.1 million budget (23.1%). Sworn overtime expenses are \$5.4 million through the first quarter. An estimated \$2.6 million of those expenses are expected to be reimbursed through FEMA and the CARES Act. The total sworn overtime budget of \$3.2 million is budgeted in the APD Reimagine Safety Fund.

APD is nearing completion of a zero-based budgeting review of their FY 2020-21 budget. This will serve as the base budget for an outcomes-based budgeting approach, informed by the results of the Reimagining Public Safety process. This action is being completed in response to [Council Resolution No. 20200611-096](#).

### Decoupling Milestones

### [Quattrone Report Outlines Recommendations for Improving Future DNA Lab Operations](#)

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In an October 2020 memo to Mayor and Council, Assistant City Manager Rey Arellano provided a detailed update on the [Quattrone Report's](#) comprehensive look back/look forward review of the APD DNA Lab. Staff is working on a plan to implement several recommendations outlined in the report to ensure any future lab operates with substantial improvements and ensures independence, transparency, flexibility, and efficiency. A key component of the plan is the creation of a new Forensic Sciences Department that will operate independently of APD under the direction of the City Manager. Staff is bringing the [reorganization](#) forward for City Council review and action on the February 4 agenda. Travis County will be an important partner in determining how DNA lab services might be provided in the future. The current Inter-local Agreement on lab operations with the Texas Department of Public Safety continues through 2023.

### **APD Public Information and APD Human Resources Staff Re-alignment**

The transfer of APD public information positions to newly created public safety communications program in Communications and Public Information Office was completed in fall 2020. APD's human resources staff began reporting to the City's Human Resources Department in October 2020.

## Reimagining Milestones

### **Summary of APD Departmental and Training Academy Reviews**

#### ***APD Training Video Community Review Panel Recommendations Released***

In January 2021, a community panel assembled by the Equity Office released recommendations following a comprehensive review of selected APD training academy videos. APD has accepted all the panel's recommendations concerning video content and is actively making changes in advance of the release of the formal report.

The eleven-member panel included six community members, a representative from the Office of Police Oversight (OPO), a representative from the Equity Office, an academic professional with expertise in racial justice and equity, a police lieutenant who oversees cadet training, and an APD training instructor. The panel reviewed the accuracy, relevance, effectiveness, and cultural sensitivities of the selected course videos to determine their suitability from an equity perspective. A summary of the



recommendations resulting from the panel's work, developed by Life Anew Restorative Justice is outlined in the [Video Review Panel Facilitator Final Report](#) as well as the [APD Training Videos Community Review Report](#) drafted by the community representatives serving on the panel.

### ***Training Academy Organizational and Curriculum Review Findings***

APD received the results of a comprehensive needs assessment and Strength, Opportunity, Weakness, Threat (SWOT) analysis of the training academy's culture, curriculum, and organizational structure in May 2020. The results are summarized in a [report](#) from Dr. Sara Villanueva which also includes a draft strategic training plan which focuses improvements around four key themes: Cultural shift, commitment to Diversity, equity and inclusion, academic excellence, and resource development.

Additionally, in June 2020, Dr. Michael Ferguson provided APD with a preliminary [report](#) summarizing recommendations following his review of training academy diversity and inclusion curriculum including courses on the following topics: Cultural Diversity, History of Policing Professionalism and Ethics. Fair and Impartial Policing Services for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired Multiculturalism and Human Relations Spanish, Transgender, LGBTQ, and Racial Profiling. The review included class observation, course materials analysis, end of academy critiques for the 141st and 142<sup>nd</sup> classes, instructor Surveys, and best practices research. The Ferguson review offers a tiered approach to recommendations with an emphasis on the transition to active learning grounded in Adult Learning Theory, use of custom digital curriculum, and use of simulation and virtual reality training techniques. Dr. Ferguson's final report is anticipated in February 2021.

### ***APD Equity Analyses***

In December 2020, the Equity Office released the [findings](#) of two bodies of work documenting racial inequities within APD. The first body of work contains a series of evaluations of seven division-level equity assessment responses and the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) identified by a third-party evaluator, The Peace Mill Research and Communications.

The second body of work is a report prepared by Joyce James Consulting to identify racial inequities within APD and develop strategies to eliminate them. Key components of their scope of work include a documentation review; survey of the APD climate and culture; facilitation of the Groundwater Analysis®



training and debrief for APD leadership; and collaboration with APD and the Equity Office to develop strategies and objectives based on the findings.

The completion of these assessments is an important milestone in our process to identify the root causes of cultural and systemic biases within APD which contribute to policing inequalities within our community. The Equity Office is following up with APD to discuss the next steps of this equity including developing a plan to address assessment findings and recommendations.

The APD equity analyses, training academy organizational, curriculum, and training video, reviews and recommendations are outcomes related to [Council Resolution 20191205-066](#).

### **Review and Revision of APD General Orders and Use of Force Policies**

As a part of the Reimagining Public Safety process, City Council directed the City Manager to direct OPO to facilitate a rewrite of the APD policy manual, known as the General Orders. The scope of the rewrite covers all policies, including search and seizure, body-worn cameras, dash cameras, mental health response, discipline, bias, language, and courtesy.

In January 2021, OPO accomplished a critical first step in the rewrite process by releasing a [publication](#) outlining policy change recommendations to six of APD's use-of-force policies. This publication was written through the lens of Campaign Zero's "8 Can't Wait" initiative, which advocates for more restrictive policies to reduce use of deadly force by police. At the center of 8 Can't Wait are the following recommendations:

- Restrict shooting at moving vehicles;
- Exhaust all alternatives before using deadly force;
- Require de-escalation;
- Impose a duty to intervene in cases of improper or excessive use of force;
- Require comprehensive reporting of uses of force;
- Ban chokeholds and strangleholds.

OPO's report also outlined the phased approach it will use to facilitate the General Order rewrite process. The approach includes the following three phases:

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- **Phase I** - Conduct a preliminary analysis of APD's current policy language and make the analysis publicly available on the [OPO website](#).
- **Phase II** - Work with community partners and stakeholders to gather public input on proposed changes to APD's policies. Outreach will include events, surveys, and other community engagement methods.
- **Phase III** - OPO will submit policy recommendations and community feedback to APD. APD, in consultation with the City Manager's Office, will review the recommendations and modify as appropriate prior to final incorporation. APD will subsequently bring the proposed modified General Orders to Council for feedback in accordance with [City Council Resolution 20200611-095](#).

In a July 30, 2020 [memo](#) APD Chief Brian Manley provided City Council with a link to the [website](#) where all revisions to General Orders (GOs) will be posted, as directed in [City Council Resolution 20200611-050](#), which specifies all changes to APD's General Orders must be reported back to the Council and relevant Council committees as they are implemented. In an effort to be fully transparent, APD will post all GO changes on the website along with a redline version of the original GO so that Council and the public may easily view the policy changes in detail.

### **Analysis of APD Racial Profiling Data Released**

In November 2020, the Police Oversight, Equity, and Innovation Offices released a [report](#) that examined Austin Police Department (APD) motor vehicle stop data from 2015-2019 to understand how various racial/ethnic groups in Austin experience motor vehicle stops.

The report concluded that between 2015 and 2019, racial disparities persisted and, in many cases, grew worse. The report, available on the [OPO website](#), offers recommendations to address areas where disproportionality exists and to improve data collection.

### **Racial Disparity Dashboard Published**

A [traffic stop racial disparity dashboard](#) was published in November 2020. The tool, collaboratively developed by representatives from the Offices of Performance Management (OPM), Police Oversight, Innovation, Equity and the Police Department, allows the public to review data released in the latest



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disparity study on traffic stops. The dashboard, which also allows citizens to plug in their zip code to learn about stops in their neighborhood, is included in City's [Strategic Performance Dashboard](#).

The racial profiling report and racial disparity dashboard are outcomes related to [City Council Resolution 20200611-050](#).

### **Mental Health Diversion Program Update**

In October 2020, Assistant City Manager for Public Safety, Rey Arellano, provided an update on the implementation of the Mental Health Diversion Program in a [memo](#) to Mayor and Council.

The memo outlined how APD collaborated extensively with Integral Care and Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services (ATCEMS) to work toward achieving service improvement goals including:

- Better match a mental health crisis call with an appropriate mental health response.
- Improve triage at the 911 Call Center to direct mental health calls more appropriately to Integral Care's Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT) or the Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services Department (ATCEMS), and fewer to APD.
- Get mental health clinicians on scene in response to mental health crisis calls to 911, particularly during the hours identified as the times of highest need.

Work on mental health call process improvements and implementation of program recommendations, outlined in a [report](#) commissioned Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute for Texas (MMHPI), will advance with funding Council approved in the current budget which also includes:

- \$1.4 million towards expanding and enhancing the Integral Care EMCOT contract for clinical staff and telehealth services
- \$1.1 million to expand the mental health diversion initiative within the Community Health Paramedic Program by adding seven new positions and necessary equipment.

Council executed a contract with MMHPI in October 2020 to oversee implementation of the program and Austin-Travis County EMS Assistant Chief Andy Hofmeister will serve as the City's project manager and will ensure the working group, which is comprised of City departments, Integral Care and key stakeholders collaborate and work closely with the contractor to effectively connect mental health crisis calls with the appropriate mental health response.

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### **9-1-1 Call Data Analysis Results Released**

Kerry O'Connor, Chief Innovation Officer, conducted a comprehensive review of 9-1-1 call data. The analysis findings were [presented](#) during the September 21 Public Safety Committee meeting. A 9-1-1 calls for service dashboard is a key component of the analysis. The tool provides a visual representation of the [call process](#) including how calls start- [Officer initiated vs dispatched](#), the volume and category of calls, [how much time officers spend](#) responding to different types of calls, [mental health call data](#), and more. Data from the analysis will be used as a tool to identify areas of opportunity to reimagine public safety response.

### **Evaluation of APD's Sexual Assault Investigations**

In late summer and fall 2020 Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), the independent consultant selected to conduct an extensive evaluation of how reported sexual assaults are investigated and processed within APD, including why a number reported of cases do not proceed to criminal prosecution, provided updates before the Austin Women's Commission, Sexual Assault Response and Resource Team (SARRT), and the Public Safety Commission. PERF's team includes members from the Women's Law Project and the Wellesley Center for Women. A key component of PERF's evaluation is stakeholder interviews. PERF began reaching out to stakeholders for the interview process in January 2021. Stakeholders include, local subject matter experts, entities that work directly with sexual assault survivors, the District Attorney's Office, APD's Sex Crimes Unit, and other materially relevant stakeholders. This evaluation is conducted at the direction of [City Council Resolution No. 20190131-077](#)

The next progress update from PERF is expected in May 2021.

### **Review of APD Grants**

Council [Resolution No. 20200611-096](#) directed the City Manager to review all grants received by the Austin Police Department to determine if those funds and initiatives align with and advance Council's affirmed vision for department policies and practices.

Beginning in August 2020, the City Manager's Office (CMO) began reporting to Council via memo, the grants received by the Austin Police Department. CMO continues to work closely with APD to ensure



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grant funding and initiatives align with and advance Council’s affirmed vision for department policies and practices. As the City continues to work through decoupling aspects, CMO will work with the APD grants manager regarding proposed decoupling activities to effectively review existing and ongoing APD grants for potential implications and to work with grantors to ensure that current and future funds continue to support successful programming.

### Reinvestment milestones

As part of the FY21 budget process, public safety funding has been reinvested to:

- Establish an audit of City costs related to suspected and/or confirmed officer Police misconduct, including paid administrative leave, replacement compensation and overtime, litigation fees, and settlement payouts.
- Provide additional funding for the Police Oversight and Equity Offices for staffing and resources to adequately support implementation of Council policy and administrative initiatives.

### Equity Office RPS Community Engagement Mini-Grants

In November 2020, the Equity Office accepted applications from the community for the Reimagining Public Safety Grant Fund. These grants will provide flexible resources for local, community-based organizations to support community engagement projects focused on the reimagining of public safety in Austin.

Funds for these grants are a part of the [Austin Police Department \(APD\) budget re-alignment](#) and will support projects aligned with advancing one or more concepts from the [framework created by the Reimagining Public Safety Leadership team](#). The input obtained through this grant will inform the recently created [City-Community Reimagining Task Force](#), which includes community organization representatives, on addressing questions such as “What is a ‘reimagined’ public safety system in Austin and how do we get there?”

### City-Community Reimagining Public Safety Task Force

The City-Community Reimagining Public Safety Task Force, created by the City Manager, brings together staff and community members to provide recommendations for policy, cultural and structural changes

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to redefine public safety. The task force first convened in late summer 2020 and has since established a governance structure, values framework, work groups, and developed a history of policing timeline.

In its January 20, 2021 meeting, the task force voted to approve a recommendation to City Council not to resume the APD training academy until concerns regarding systemic bias in curriculum and training materials are adequately addressed in alignment with findings in the [APD Training Videos Community Review Report](#).

The full list of task force members, work groups, agendas, and meeting summaries can be found on the task force [web page](#).

### RPS Communications and Community Engagement

The RPS strategic communications team launched RPS websites in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), to serve as a one-stop shop for news and information about RPS initiatives and feedback opportunities. The website also offers an opportunity to sign up for the RPS newsletter.

Phase I of the RPS public input process launched in September 2020 with a multi-platform approach to community conversations which offered residents several ways to share their thought and ideas about the RPS process including:

- City hosted Council District and citywide community conversations.
- Community and neighborhood partner hosted community conversations to center voices center voices disproportionately impacted by police violence and public safety disparities. Community partners included Austin Justice Coalition, Austin Area Urban League, Austin Voices, Caritas, Maternal Health Equity Collaborative, Integral Care, YWCA Greater Austin, South Asians' International Volunteer Association- SAIVA
- [The listening session for one](#)
- [Public safety reform idea forum](#)
- [Police reform short survey](#)
- Austin 3-1-1 call in feedback

RPS conversations were interpreted and/or facilitated in Spanish, Hindi, and Arabic, and survey materials were made available in eight of the most frequently spoken languages in Austin.

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At the conclusion of the Phase I engagement in January 2020, nearly one-thousand residents were directly engaged through 31 City and Community partner conversations and digital feedback tools.

Public comments gathered in the process will be shared with the RPS Leadership Team, Mayor and Council, RPS City-Community Task Force, and published on the RPS website.