

My name is Linda Yeatts. I live in the Sunridge Neighborhood, which is part of the Parker Neighborhood Planning Area. I am here tonight to speak about the need for more patrol officers in the EROC area. This is one topic that everyone in the EROC Neighborhood Planning area can agree on. At the beginning of this planning process, The Neighborhood Planning Department conducted a survey, and the number two concern of the respondents was crime in this area. You only have to look on the City of Austin Website to see why. For as far back as statistics were available, the 78741 Zip code was number one in crime incidents (2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006). These statistics are confirmed by the spreadsheet obtained from the Austin Police Department, which shows that the number of crimes per capita in the South Central Area Command are only exceeded by the Downtown Area Command. The Downtown Area statistics, however, are skewed by the low resident population, and the 6th Street entertainment district.

What is creating these statistics is the high population density in this area. The July 27 Statesman article on density shows that the Riverside area has one of the highest densities in the city. If you look at the way the statistics were calculated, however, Riverside becomes almost the highest. Office buildings are excluded from the downtown area calculation, which makes the downtown density appear higher. Another skew factor is the high immigrant population in the South Central area, which makes underreporting of population a certainty. This density has a negative effect on the ability of officers to respond to calls, as Commander O'Brian noted in the August 16 Statesman article on police response times. The South Central Area is long and thin, and getting from one end to the other though heavy traffic causes delays in response times. Also, this area is growing rapidly to the east through annexation, which creates an additional strain.

These spreadsheets supplied by the Austin Police Department show the ratio of population per officer. These charts show authorized numbers, and do not reflect actual staffing due to vacancies caused by injuries, vacations and training. At the August 8 Henry Sector Commander's Forum, it was reported that the South Central Command had ten vacancies. These charts seem to show that the South Central Area is not as bad off as some other areas. When these statistics are combined into another chart that shows the ratio of crimes per officer, however, the disparity between neighborhoods becomes apparent. For this spreadsheet, the number of crimes per sector was obtained from the City of Austin Website, and the staffing figures were supplied by APD.

Because there are not enough officers to patrol the area, there are needless crimes and injuries. The September 23 Statesman article on car crashes caused by

racing is an example. The combination of East Riverside Drive and East Oltorf has the third highest number of car racing incidents. The top two roads for racing are both freeways, however, while in our area the racing occurs on crowded streets with traffic lights and pedestrians.

The most pertinent facts of this presentation are that the 78741 Zip code has consistently had the most crime, while the South Central Area has had the highest crime to officer ratio. Please help our neighborhoods and our hard working police officers to reduce crime in this area.

The neighborhoods of the EROC Planning Area are asking Council to increase the number of patrol officers in the South Central Area Command to reflect the amount of crime and the population, in order to decrease crime and revitalize our area.

Thank you for supporting our neighborhood goals