



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager 

DATE: April 9, 2021

SUBJECT: Reimagining Public Safety Council Agenda Items scheduled for April 22, 2021

On April 22, 2021, Council will be presented with four agenda items related to Reimagining Public Safety mid-year budget amendments and decoupling activities. **Item #20** is a comprehensive budget amendment regarding the Austin Police Department (APD) which includes creation of the new Emergency Communications Department, the transfer of alarm administration to Development Services, the centralization of a number of support functions, and the reallocation of resources in alignment with the APD staffing plan and zero-based budgeting exercise that Council directed APD to conduct. **Item #31** is a purchasing item to contract with security services for the Municipal Court and the Downtown Austin Community Court instead of utilizing APD officers.

Two addendum items will also be added next week for the April 22 agenda – a purchasing contract with Joyce James Consulting and an ordinance amendment to shift the alarm permitting authority from APD to the Development Service Department.

Creation of the Emergency Communications Department – Item #20

After reviewing the services provided by APD's Emergency Communications Division and researching how other comparable jurisdictions manage emergency calls, City Management recommends removing these functions from APD and establishing a stand-alone, independent Emergency Communications Department reporting directly to the Assistant City Manager for Public Safety. This new model offers an opportunity to streamline and provide for continuous improvement in emergency communications while also allowing APD to focus on their primary law enforcement functions. Given the expansion of public health and mental health response initiatives, the new model also allows for increased independence to better serve a wider range of crisis response across the enterprise. The accompanying budget amendment moves 222 full-time equivalent civilian (FTEs) positions out of APD as well as \$16,085,640 out of the Decouple Fund into a new Emergency Communications Department (ECD) annual budget. This is the first step in an extensive process to establish an independent Emergency Communications Department which could take up to a year. In the interim, there will not be any immediate changes in day-to-day operations. APD and City Management leadership are working together to develop a timeline to complete the process.

Transfer of Alarm Administration Unit to the Development Services Department – Item #20

After reviewing the APD Alarm Administration Unit's services, City Management recommends transferring the Alarm Administration Unit to the Development Services Department (DSD). Under DSD, the Alarm Administration Unit would continue to perform alarm permitting review and services for the public. To enact this change in the budget, six (6) full-time equivalent positions will move from APD to DSD. The budget amendments involve a multi-stepped revision:

- DSD’s requirements will increase by \$551,790 to cover the positions’ salaries.
- The budget within the Decouple Fund will decrease by \$551,790.
- The transfer to DSD from the General Fund will increase by \$551,790. This action allows the General Fund to collect the revenue from alarm permit application fees (that are capped by state law) and pass their portion of those fees on to DSD. In effect, the increase in costs to DSD will be fully offset by revenues from permit application fees.

Centralization of Support Functions – Item #20

City Management identified a number of administrative functions being performed by APD that could be more effectively situated with corporate support services departments. These functions include human resources, public information, facility maintenance, and finance. Also included in the transfer is contract funding related to the Travis County Interlocal for booking services, Axon Body Worn Camera, and AT&T Cell Phone contracts. These contracts will be managed by the corporate Financial Services Department. This table summarizes the changes to the Support Services department FY21 budgets.

Support Services Recipient Departments	Budget Increase	FTE Increase
Building Services	\$1,880,723	8.0
Financial Services	\$16,447,189	26.0
CPIO	\$548,540	0.0
Human Resources	\$2,357,848	22.5
Total	\$21,234,300	56.5

The amendment to accomplish this adjustment is slightly more complex. The Support Services Fund receives its funding from departments that benefit from the services provided by the support departments. All recipient departments belong to the Support Services Fund. The FTEs will come from APD as will \$4,476,458 for the previously mentioned contracts. Additionally, \$16,529,765 of the Decouple Fund and \$228,077 of the Reimagine Safety Fund will be transferred into the Support Services Fund. Therefore, the Support Services Fund will increase by \$21,234,300 to provide this pass-through funding to the decoupled functions.

Resource Reallocation – Item #20

On June 11, 2020, City Council passed [Council Resolution No. 20200611-096](#) that, among other provisions, directed the City Manager “to explore and propose ways to structure the FY2021 Austin Police Department budget using outcomes-based budgeting and zero-based budgeting frameworks.” While the direction was unable to be completed in time for the adoption of the FY 2020-21 budget due to time constraints, APD, in collaboration with the Budget Office, redeveloped the FY 2020-21 APD budget using zero-based budgeting frameworks. The work incorporated APD Leadership’s revised staffing plan implemented last year. Following the results of this work, the budget amendment shifts \$6,874,928 into APD’s budget and \$60,692 into the Decouple Fund, offset by a decrease in the Reimagine Safety Fund of \$6,935,620. This reallocation is due to the reassignment of Park Police and certain units within Traffic Enforcement, including the partial reassignment of the DWI Enforcement Unit. It is important to note that with the decrease to the Reimagine Safety Fund, additional parks or traffic enforcement services will require new budget funding.

Decoupling Budget Amendment Summary – Item #20

The net impact of these changes to the requirements is detailed in the following table, which includes the impacted departments along with the Reimagine Safety Fund and Decouple Fund. Additional detail will be contained within the fiscal notes accompanying the budget amendment.

Department/Fund	FY21 Budget	This Action	FY21 Revised Budget
Austin Police Department	292,948,716	23,632,770	316,581,486
Emergency Communications Department	0	16,085,640	16,085,640
Development Services	55,795,459	551,790	56,347,249
Building Services	19,921,552	1,880,723	21,802,275
Financial Services	46,634,214	16,447,189	63,081,403
CPIO	4,504,019	548,540	5,052,559
Human Resources	18,195,874	2,357,848	20,553,722
Reimagine Safety Fund	45,080,081	(7,163,697)	37,916,384
Decouple Fund	64,645,244	(33,106,503)	31,538,741

Contracts for Municipal Court Security Services – Item #31

In response to the Reimagining Public Safety initiative, the Building Services Department facilitated discussions with Municipal Court, Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) and the Austin Police Department (APD) on how to best outsource court security services currently performed by five APD officers. G4S Secure Solutions Inc. was identified as the vendor to provide unarmed security services. The private security guards will perform an array of functions, including: staff screening stations, perform interior patrols of the building and exterior patrols of parking areas, operate the x-ray and magnetometer and conduct hand inspections as necessary, staff the security control room, relay radio messages, and monitor alarms. Once the court security service is procured, the five officers will continue to provide key duties that only a law enforcement officer is authorized to provide, such as prisoner transfers; inmate monitoring; warrant service; contempt of court arrests ordered by a judge; and enforcement of lawful orders issued by the presiding judge. The long-term goal is to re-establish a Marshal Program that will be managed by the Municipal Court. Once implemented, APD officers will not be required to support the Court.

Addendum Items: Joyce James Consulting Contract and Ordinance Amendment

In alignment with services performed by Joyce James Consulting with the Equity Office to provide a comprehensive review of studies related to racial inequities in APD, the City will also be bringing forward an item to contract additional services with Joyce James Consulting. Joyce James Consulting would serve as a consultant to City Management to ensure successful implementation of Reimagining Public Safety efforts, including providing reform recommendations, facilitating strategy sessions, and assisting to provide a racial equity lens to key decision-making.

To formally transfer alarm permitting functions, including responsibilities such as revocation and appeals, from APD to DSD, an ordinance amendment is necessary. Staff is completing necessary documentation to include both items on the April 22 Council agenda.

Should you have any questions regarding these action items or next steps, please contact me, DCM Rivera-Vandermyde, or Office of Police Oversight Director Farah Muscadin.

- cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
- Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager
- Ed Van Eenoo, Chief Financial Officer, Financial Services Department
- Diane Siler, Interim Budget Officer, Financial Services Department
- Farah Muscadin, Director, Office of Police Oversight
- Chief Joseph Chacon, Interim Police Chief, Austin Police Department