



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Spencer Cronk, City Manager *sc*

DATE: March 17, 2021

SUBJECT: Reimagined Police Cadet Academy Blueprint

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update and the blueprint for the Reimagined Police Cadet Academy. This matter, [Item 37](#), has been posted on the City Council meeting agenda for March 25, 2021.

The attached blueprint is the pathway to create a new, reimagined police cadet academy that meets the following objectives:

- address concerns about academy curriculum, training techniques, and overall learning objectives identified by Council and the community in the past;
- incorporate recommendations made to date from both Kroll and the APD's own reviews of the academy under the 066 resolution;
- acknowledge the work of, and incorporates input from, the Community Video Review Panel, the City-Community Reimagining Public Safety (RPS) Task Force, and other community members, as well as from our own Equity Office and Office of Police Oversight;
- serve as a launching point for real reforms to academy learning objectives, curriculum, and training that align with the public safety expectations of the Council and our community; and
- address the City's need to maintain adequate staffing within APD to provide for the public's safety and welfare.

Reimagined Police Cadet Academy Blueprint

The blueprint provides further detail; however, the pathway to the Reimagined Police Cadet Academy will consist of three parts: increased community involvement, establishing a culture of adult learning, and transformative change.

Community Involvement:

Community involvement and participation is a key component to this reimagined academy. The police academy should involve the community in the development of officers that will protect and serve them. Specific community involvement will include:

- Participation on the Academy Curriculum Review Committee;
- Co-creation of a pilot pre-academy community connect workshop and programming;
- Co-facilitation with community subject matter experts of courses; and
- Formalization of the video review process with community participation

A Culture of Adult Learning:

As we learned from the reports of Dr. Villanueva, Dr. Ferguson, and Kroll & Associates, the academy's teaching methodology is an area for improvement.

- Adult learning strategies, such as the use of scenario-based training tools and the realignment of course schedule to ensure that cadets are given the proper space to retain and process course content, will be implemented for this pilot academy.
- All course materials will be reviewed to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are prioritized and aligned with our values.
- Academy faculty will be retrained in various teaching methods and given opportunities for expanded professional development.
- The academy faculty evaluation/review process will be formalized, including the Academy Curriculum Review Committee.
- Two additional civilian staff have been added to APD that will primarily facilitate this new culture of adult learning, support, and innovation. Dr. Anne Kringen, has been hired as the Training Division Manager, and next month she will be adding a Training Supervisor to her team to advance this work.

Transformative Change:

It is my expectation that with the implementation of these recommendations, the academy will have a new focus of servant leadership, increased community input and participation, updated curriculum and teaching methods that infuse diversity, equity and inclusion lens, and oversight by an independent evaluator to ensure the changes have been implemented and are achieving our desired outcomes.

The blueprint provides further detail; however, the timeline includes tasks at my direction to City staff, which must be completed over the next three months. City staff has also identified funds to move this forward.

Again, this is a pathway to a reimagined police cadet academy. There is a lot of work that staff must complete, outreach in the community to perform, and further work that will be done after the pilot ends. This is just the first step of an iterative process to sustainably transform the academy in ways that align with our values.

Farah Muscadin, who is serving as our lead on Resolution 66 and the work of Kroll & Associates, will send Council a status update on the academy assessment and timeline for completion. This update will also include an update of the RPS Task Force recommendations.

I am fully committed to moving this process forward and working with you to make our reimagined police cadet academy a reality and model for the rest of the nation.

cc: Nuria Rivera Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager
Shannon Jones, Assistant City Manager
Farah Muscadin, Director, Office Police Oversight
Chief Brian Manley, Austin Police Department
Chief of Staff Troy Gay, Austin Police Department