

PATROL & SURVEILLANCE

Working Group Recommendations

Reimagine Public Safety Task Force

David Johnson, Sue Gabriel, Rodney Sáenz, Bethany Carson



Art by formerly incarcerated artist Mac (@enron_hubbard)

POLICE ≠ SAFETY

- Police do not and cannot prevent crime from happening.
- Police spend less than 1% of their time responding to calls about violent crime
- Often, there is little they can do when they arrive.

“We experienced a home robbery here in Austin and our door was broken. The officers told us they couldn't do anything about it. They said if it made us feel better they could take some fingerprints but it was very unlikely anything would come of that.”

Patrol policing emerged out of a need to surveil and exercise control over Black, Brown, and poor communities through threat of violence.

1850

FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW

Allowed federal marshals to capture runaway slaves and enlist the assistance of other white people. It also made it possible for a Black person to be captured as a slave solely on the sworn

1854

VIGILANCE COMMITTEES

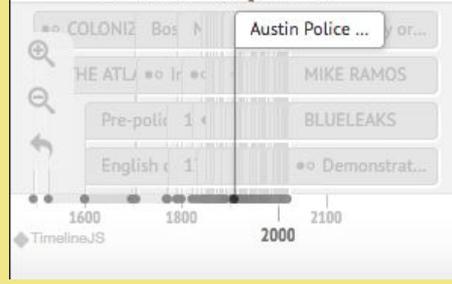
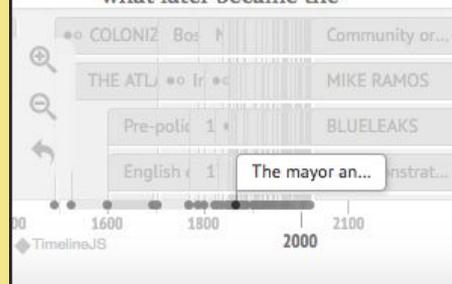
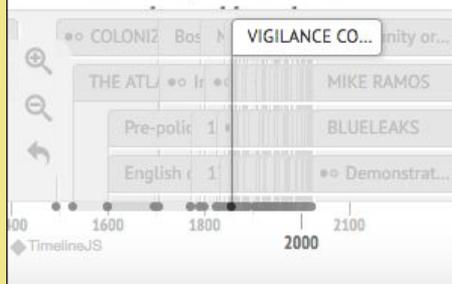
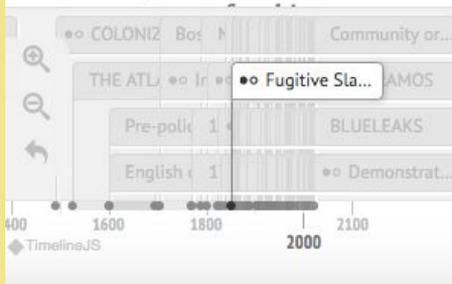
Mayor, newspaper publisher, State Senator, and former Texas Ranger John Salmon "Rip" Ford established a "vigilance committee" to drive Latinos out of Austin, fearing solidarity with enslaved

JUNE 1865

The mayor and city council met regarding "the fact that a large number of Negroes turned loose by their owners are congregating in and about Austin, as also perhaps desperate white men, making it necessary to organize a police force to deal with them." They created what later became the

1908

Austin Police Chief W.J. Morris issued an order that all Black people found idle without work should be arrested and fined with vagrancy. In response to the large demand for cotton pickers, the police department at the time decided that Black Austinites had to choose between the "pleasant



The function of patrol hasn't changed.

From 2015-2021, police killed at least 35 people (4 more died in their custody but APD claimed they were suicide or accidental).

Go back one page
Pull down to show history

NEWS COVID-19 WEATHER & TRAFFIC INVESTIGATIONS SPORTS STUDIO 512 SIMP

Mike Ramos' mom calls for stricter penalties, faster response for officer-involved deaths

f t w a +

Mother of Mike Ramos talks to KXAN following police brutality protests

1 minute left



Family of Man Killed by APD Seeks Answers

The parents of Alex Gonzales file complaint with the Office of Police Oversight

BY AUSTIN SANDERS, FRI., FEB. 5, 2021

tweet print write a letter



'It's like my son didn't matter': Many questions remain after Austin police kill man in shooting

Katie Hall Austin American-Statesman
Published 11:34 a.m. CT Apr. 2, 2021

View Comments f t e

Hutchinson



The function of patrol hasn't changed.

- “Residents in Austin neighborhoods with a higher percentage of African American or Hispanic/Latinx residents, those in poverty, and neighborhoods with higher crime rates, had disproportionate force and severity of force used upon them” - Joyce James report
- Black and Hispanic/Latino men are arrested disproportionately.
 - *Black arrests represent 24.8% (+17%) of the arrests with 7.8% of population.*
 - *Hispanic/Latino arrest represent 41.1% (+7.2%) of Arrests with 33.9% of population*

Protesters Allege Austin Police Dumped Quadruple Amputee Activist Whitney Mitchell Out of Her Wheelchair

Fiancée of Garrett Foster was attending police brutality protest

BY BRANT BINGAMON, 12:59PM, FRI, APR. 2, 2021

Share 548 Tweet print write a letter



Austin teen hospitalized with head injury after police shoot him with bean bags at protest

by Melanie Torre & Jordan Bontke | Monday, June 1st 2020

A



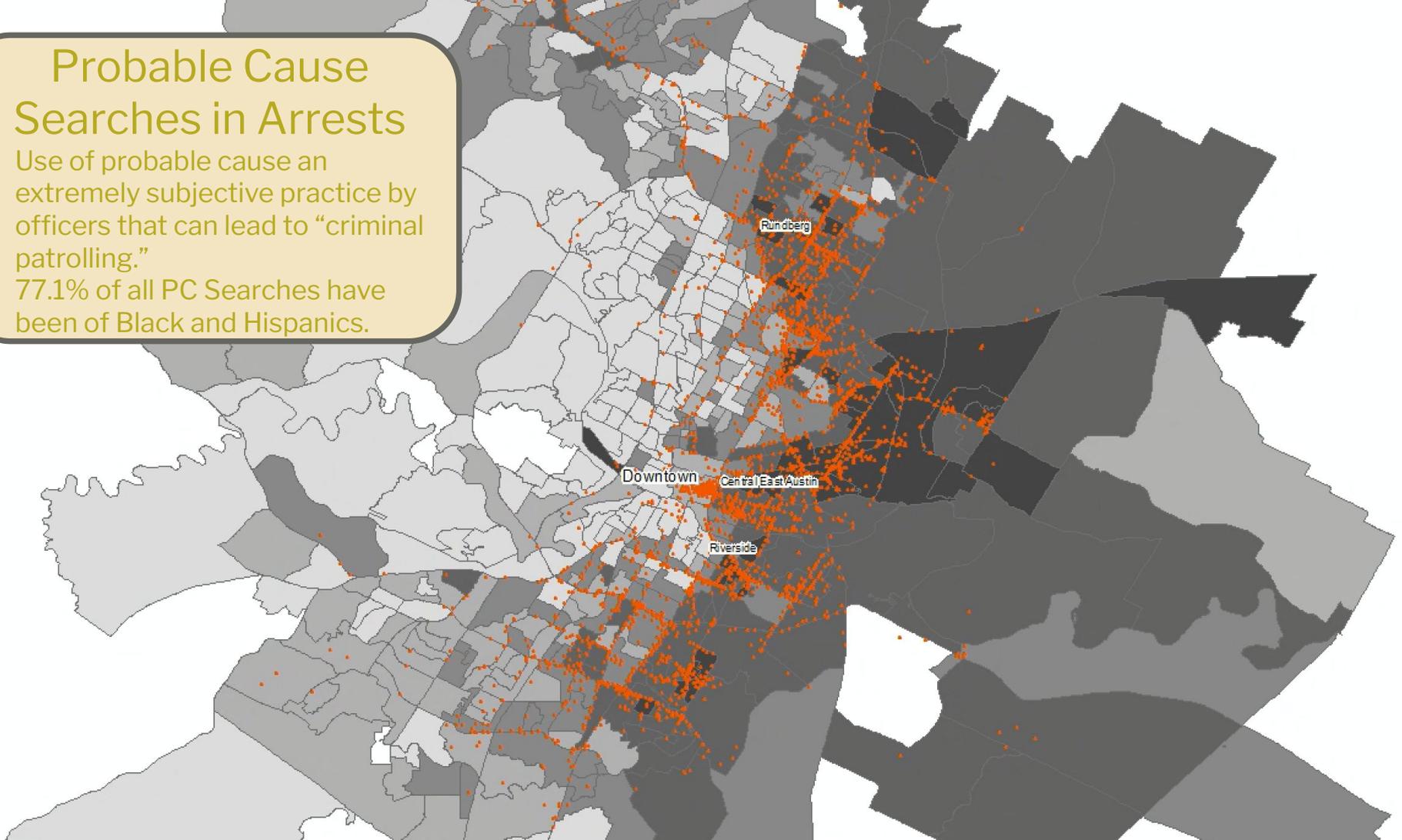
All Arrests

- Arrests in neighborhoods of color are more dispersed than in White neighborhoods.
- This tells us APD is policing more intensely than just major roads.

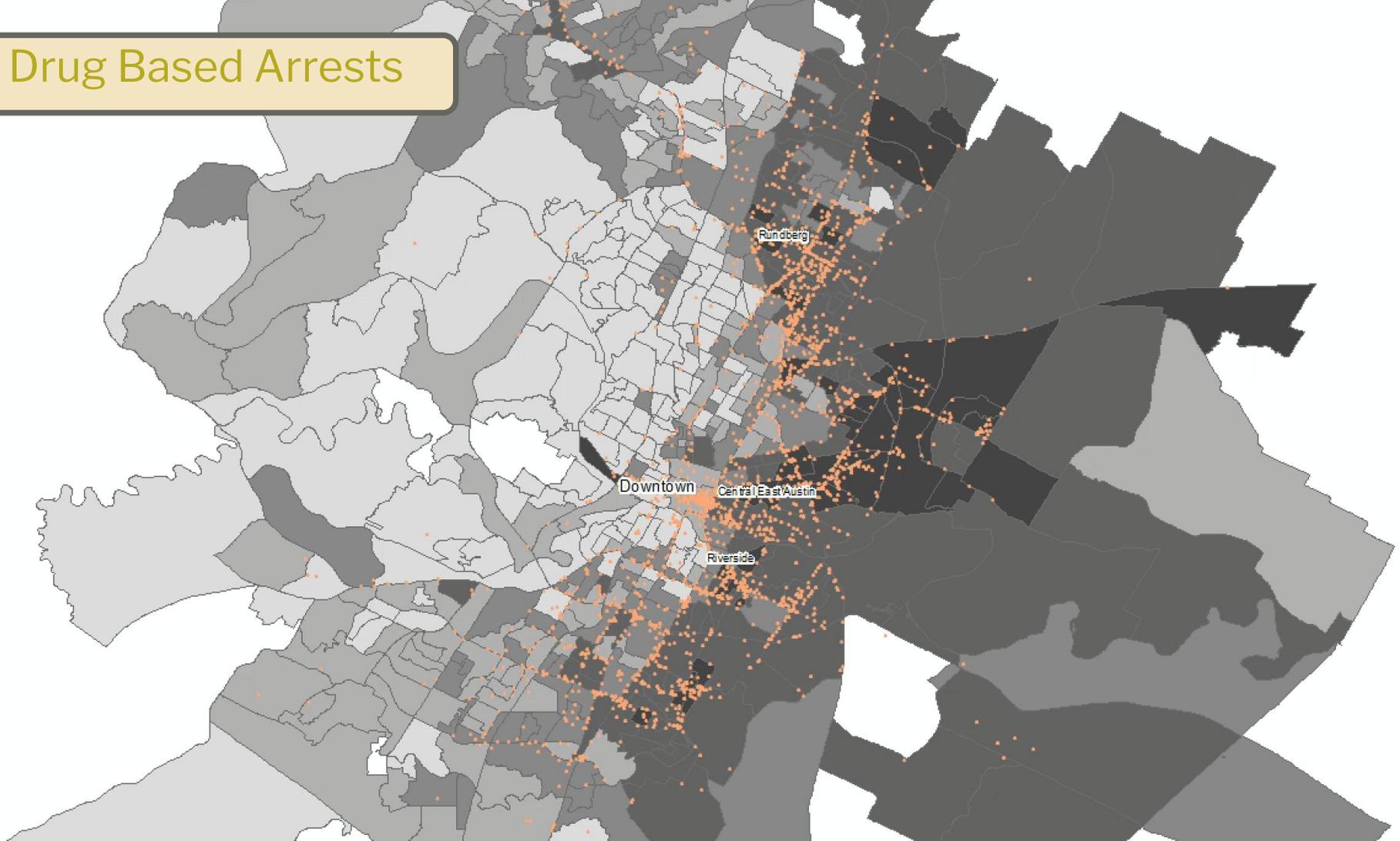


Probable Cause Searches in Arrests

- Use of probable cause an extremely subjective practice by officers that can lead to “criminal patrolling.”
- 77.1% of all PC Searches have been of Black and Hispanics.



Drug Based Arrests



Long Term Vision & Recommendations

Divest from entire racist, classist model of patrol policing.

- **Phase out entire \$210,604,299 Neighborhood-Based Policing line item.**
- **No more cadet classes.** We need fewer officers.
- **Phase out all use of deadly weapons.**
- **Traffic enforcement should be decoupled.** State level changes are needed to decriminalize traffic offenses and allow unarmed civil servants to direct traffic and make stops for civil traffic violations.

Reallocate that money to reinvest in economic, health, and housing resources that create REAL safety for overpoliced communities.

Safe spaces without patrol already exist!

From a participant in our community engagement session:

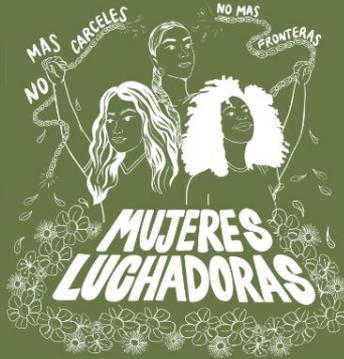
“We moved to a pretty white, affluent suburb. And I remember seeing that there were no police by the grocery store, not at the parks. Nowhere. If you want to know what a community without police looks like, go to a wealthy, white suburb. It’s what their day to day looks like. It’s very unmarked by any sort of surveillance, any sort of police presence. And I remember how striking that was...The fact is that when there is economic security, child care, health care, housing, food and water, the need for the police to be there clearly isn’t necessary.

I just want to remind people who want to block this idea by saying that we can’t abolish the police that there are many instances in our society right now where you don’t see the presence of police in people’s day to day community, and that’s important to remember.”

Scope & Community Engagement

- We looked at areas where APD comes most directly and frequently into contact with people (or information about them) without being called.
- Met with 40 people directly impacted by incarceration, deportation, or immigration enforcement to hear about what safety means to them, and their experiences with policing.
- To date, we have collected 39 surveys, which were disseminated by word of mouth to people directly impacted and their immediate community.

SURVEY FINDINGS



TEXAS
ADVOCATES
FOR JUSTICE

WHAT PEOPLE WANTED TO SEE FUNDED & DEFUNDED THAT WOULD MAKE THEM FEEL SAFER



SEEING THE POLICE



Of those who felt fear:



Of those who felt fear:





87%

STOPPED BY POLICE

Of those stopped by police:



82%

Happened while driving



18%

Were arrested



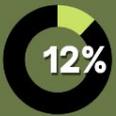
50%

Fined



15%

Stop led to incarceration or detention



12%

Officers used physical force



29%

Verbally threatened



12%

Asked about their immigration status



15%

Could not communicate with the officer because they spoke a different language



35%

The stop caused financial struggles



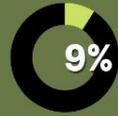
9%

Lost their job



24%

Avoided the situation or location where the stop happened or avoided driving altogether.



9%

The stop led to family separation



3%

The stop led to deportation



53%

Reported a negative emotional or mental health impact

COMMUNITY IMPACT



Of those stopped by police:



RELYING ON POLICE IN AN EMERGENCY



“Police worsen and escalate situations. They automatically criminalize Black and Brown people.”

“they don't come in sufficient time. it will only make the situation worse.”

“fear of being shot.”

“Fear of the police taking it to the next level without understanding the situation first”



MOST COMMON EMOTIONS AROUND DATA COLLECTION & SHARING WITH OTHER POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND ICE



FEAR



ANGER



DISGUST

NOTE:



Respondents who filled out the survey in Spanish reported feeling fear

TAKEAWAY

Nearly all of our respondents have interacted with the police - both as people seeking help and as objects of suspicion - and it hasn't made them feel safer

Police aren't actually able to provide the responses that people need to feel safe

Police stops exacerbate many of the issues that most threaten community safety, including:

- **Mental health struggles**
- **Financial stability**
- **Incarceration**
- **Deportation**
- **Family separation**

IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS

SAFETY IS...

SAFETY IS... an end to discriminatory and dangerous patrol.

DEFUND:

- \$216,581 Crowd management
- \$2,276,488 Gang Suppression Unit
- \$312,381 Nuisance Abatement
- ~\$600,000* Riverside Togetherness Project
- \$1,453,743 US Marshals' Lone Star Fugitive Task Force
- \$685,161+ Weapons and military supplies (rifles, pistols, ammunition, "less lethal", targets & backers)
- \$7,683,510 Cadet class (cadet class salaries, cadet training, learned skills unit)

*federal grant funding

Total: ~\$12.6 Million

FUND:

Reallocate this money to fund services that will help mitigate the impact to communities most harmed.

- Fund immigrant defense through the public defender's office
- Fund direct cash assistance for overpoliced communities
- Fund health, including behavioral and mental health initiatives for overpoliced communities

Disarm traffic patrol that cannot be immediately decoupled.

SAFETY IS... being able to live and exist peacefully in your neighborhood, social, and recreational spaces without constant police presence and harassment.

DEFUND:

- \$3,174,647 Overtime
- \$5,634,493 Park Police
- \$1,445,684 Lake Patrol
- \$2,042,835 Mounted Patrol
- \$53,519 Specialized Patrol
- \$17M ~10% of “Neighborhood policing” patrol
- \$3.5M Motors: static displays, community engagement events, special events, and education functions

Total: ~32.9M

End investigative / discretionary stops for non-moving violations

In Fayetteville, North Carolina de-prioritization of all violations other than speeding, DWI, running stop signs or lights, or other “unsafe movement” led to a 50% decline in the number of Black drivers searched - one of our largest disparities in Austin. Use of force, injuries to civilians and officers, and complaints against officers also decreased. Reallocate money previously spent on these stops to resources that create real safety for overpoliced communities.

DECOUPLE:

- Traffic enforcement units that do not involve directing traffic, conducting traffic stops, or filing criminal charges:
 - \$99,536 Traffic Administration
 - \$590,760 AV/Wrecker
 - \$2,766,584 Highway enforcement / Commercial vehicle unit
 - ~\$300,000 Vehicle Abatement
- \$4,471,999 Special events: Take APD entirely out of event review and security. Convene a team of community members to co-create a re envisioned process for event safety that includes unarmed security. Re-assess needs and reduce spending so that some of this money can be reallocated.
- \$309,928 *Homelessness (HOST): This should be reallocated to a public health and social service response that does not involve APD or any armed security.

Total: ~\$8.5M

SAFETY IS... freedom of speech and movement without surveillance

DEFUND:

- \$2,022,228 Austin Regional Intelligence Center (ARIC)
 - \$2,402,429 *Real Time Crime Center / HALO
 - \$55,500.00 StarChase Pursuit Management Technology Solution
- Total: ~\$4.5M

Provide transparency about the use (technical capabilities, function and location) of all APD drones, including the 13 donated by Austin Crime Commission. Immediately cease the use of these drones for video surveillance and delete any footage from law enforcement databases.

Ban the use of facial recognition software, such as Clearview AI, by any APD officer or city employee.

SAFETY IS... ending the war on drugs and treating drug use as a public health issue.

DEFUND:

- \$1,713,812 K-9 Unit
- \$1,286,953 K-9 Interdiction
- ~7.5M *Narcotics (conspiracy, support, street)

Total: \$10.4M

FUND:

- Behavioral and mental health treatment services
- Direct cash assistance
- Low-income housing, including housing for people experiencing homelessness.

SAFETY IS... an end to manipulative and self-promoting police interactions with community.

When police are paid to hand out food and toys, and have dialogues in under-resourced communities while continuing to harass, injure, and kill members of those same communities, that is manipulation not relationship building. It is APD's responsibility to stop the harm, not the community's responsibility to trust or forgive police while harm continues to occur.

DEFUND:

- **\$2,513,050** Community Partnerships
- **\$728,285** District Representatives

Total: \$3.2M

SAFETY IS... equity and accountability

Take contracting out of APD control.

Any proposed spending (including grant funding or donations) for previously unallocated items (such as the recently purchased highway drones), or overspent budget items, (such as recent overtime expenditures), should require Equity Office approval, and then come before Council for a vote before pulling money from outside the department.

- Create a mandatory equity screening process. Require all potential APD contracts over \$5,000 be reviewed by the Equity Office (through the process recommended by the Uprooting Punitive and Harmful Culture working group) BEFORE APD is able to enter into a competitive bidding process to solicit the product/service or submit a grant proposal, such as the one approved recently for less lethal weapons.
- The contract or grant should not be solicited if it received a failing score from the Equity Office.
- Any new contract or one up for renewal over \$50,000 must pass the Equity Office screening prior to soliciting the product/service AND receive community input in a public meeting posted with 10 days notice before it can be approved.

~\$63.5 Million

DEFUND



REALLOCATE

DECOUPLE

~\$8.5 Million