

RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA, May 10, 2021

The Special Meeting of the Richmond City Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by presiding Vice Mayor Demnlus Johnson III via teleconference.

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Contra Costa County and Governor Gavin Newsom issued multiple orders requiring sheltering in place, social distancing, and reduction of person-to-person contact. Accordingly, Governor Gavin Newsom issued executive orders that allowed cities to hold public meetings via teleconferencing (Executive Order N-29-20).

DUE TO THE SHELTER IN PLACE ORDERS, attendance at the City of Richmond City Council meeting was limited to Councilmembers, essential City of Richmond staff, and members of the news media. Public comment was confined to items appearing on the agenda and was limited to the methods provided below. Consistent with Executive Order N-29-20, this meeting utilized teleconferencing only. The following provides information on how the public participated in the meeting.

The public was able to view the meeting from home on KCRT Comcast Channel 28 or AT&T Uverse Channel 99 and livestream online at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3178/KCRT-Live> and <http://www.youtube.com/user/KCRTTV>.

*The methods to submit public comment were via mail, email to cityclerkdept@ci.richmond.ca.us, teleconference, and telephone during the meeting. Written comments received by 1:00 p.m. on May 10, 2021, were put into the record and considered before Council action. Written comments received after 1:00 p.m. and up until the public comment period on the relevant agenda item closed, were also put into the record. **Attached herewith all written public comments received.***

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Claudia Jimenez, Eduardo Martinez, Gayle McLaughlin, Melvin Willis, and Vice Mayor Demnlus Johnson III **Absent:** Councilmember Nathaniel Bates and Mayor Thomas K. Butt were absent for the entire meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO

The Public Comment Instructional Video was shown.

STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

AGENDA REVIEW

None.

STUDY AND ACTION SESSION

E-1. The matter to discuss and provide direction to staff regarding next steps on the current recommendations from the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force and recommendations still under consideration was introduced by Interim Library and Community Services Director Jim Nantell.

Mr. Nantell presented a Powerpoint that highlighted an overview of the following four task force subcommittees: Community Based Solutions, Health and Safety, Smart Budgeting and Resource Allocation, and Accountability as Safety. Eddy Chacon, Tamisha Torres-Walker, Luis Chacon, Marcus Njissang, Kristin Kilian Lobos, Marisol Cantu, and May Lin presented recommended proposals for the following: YouthWorks; police policies and procedures; public safety initiatives; gun violence prevention and intervention; Community Crisis Response Program; the Richmond Police Department budget analysis, computer-aided dispatch event analysis, and reallocation proposal of \$10.3 million. Mr. Nantell concluded the presentation with possible and suggested next steps. The following individuals gave comments via teleconference: Carol Hegstrom, Jovanka Beckles, Jason Martens, Katrinka Ruk, Leisa Johnson, Marylou Mendez, Lourdes Lozano, Dan Lawson, Mark Wassberg, Alix Mazuet, Janet S. Johnson, Daniel Cervantes Liera, Steve Bischoff, Susala (last name not provided), Jan Mignone, Ben Choi, Elsa Stevens, Everth Fuentes, Denny Khamphanthong, Karla Perez, Carole Yu-Johnson, Deborah Bayer, Jacqueline Thalberg, Linda Delgado, Shawn Dunning, Andrew Yeung, Cinthia Hernandez, Katt Ramos, Peggy Chow, Sara Fong, Nancy Donald, William McGee, Chandra Davies, Evan Farmer, Robin (last name not provided), Cynthia Black, Annie Pennell, Dave Campbell, V. Minassian, Floy Andrews, Patricia Aguiar, Barbara Chase, Audrey Shields, Sue Wilson, Seren Pendleton-Knoll, Leah Jarvis, Jeffrey Kilbreth, Luis Pacheco, Michael Gilksohn, Victoria C., Chris McDonell, Christina B., Francisco Andres Salas-Tamayo, Ozmar Huerta, Laura Thomas, Jocelyn Khansouvong, Jamie McBean, Zack Jenssen, Garland Ellis, John Temple, Alberto Avendano, Naomi Williams, Luis Padilla, Edith Pastrano, Helene Burks, Christina Echavarren, Shiva Mishek, Rio Tirado, Ms. Dandie, Jane Courant, Veronica Rojero, Oscar Garcia, (first name not provided) Valasquez, Mike Parker, Isaiah (last name not provided), Samone Anderson, Pam Stello, Alyssa Alvarado, Greg (last name not provided), Celeste Guap, David Sharples, Lavonia Bobo, Rod Rodman, Emily Ross, Monica Diaz, Rita Barouch, Donna Darling, Tania Pulido, Don Gosney, Joey Schlemmer, Ben Therriault, James Lee, Andres Soto, Yenny Garcia, and two unknown phone callers. Discussion ensued. A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez, seconded by Councilmember Jimenez, directing that the approved proposals be inserted in the departmental budgets in collaboration with the corresponding task force subgroups, as part of their charge for implementation, with ongoing coordination and discussions until the Council voted on the overall budget in late June 2021. Further discussion ensued. The motion maker clarified the motion was directing that the approved proposals be inserted in the departmental budgets *with* collaboration with *staff and* the corresponding task force subgroups. The motion maker further clarified the motion by requesting that the subcommittees recommendations be taken seriously and be worked on with the task force subgroups so that the Council would be assured that the will of the task force was represented in whatever staff brought back to the Council.

(At approximately 10:59 p.m., on motion of Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Martinez, extended the meeting to 11:30 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Councilmembers Jimenez, Martinez, McLaughlin, Willis, and Vice Mayor Johnson III. Noes: None. Absent: Councilmember Bates and Mayor Butt. Abstained: None).

Further discussion ensued. The motion maker further clarified the motion was directing that the approved proposals be *considered* in the departmental budgets with collaboration with staff and the corresponding task force subgroups. The motion maker recommended that staff made two budgets, one with the city manager's essential recommendations, and the other using an intelligent, reasonable solution of the implementation of the task force recommendations and for that to have happened, the task force needed to be part of the process. **The motion maker confirmed that the final motion was for the approved task force proposals to be considered by the city manager as part of the budget, and return to the Council with recommendations on how to implement the proposals, with the understanding that it was done in coordination with the task force.** Mr. Nantell suggested that the city manager worked with the task force budget subcommittee. The motion for the approved task force proposals to be considered by the city manager as part of the budget, and return to the Council with recommendations on how to implement the proposals, with the understanding that it was done in coordination with the task force passed by the following vote: **Ayes:** Councilmembers Jimenez, Martinez, McLaughlin, Willis, and Vice Mayor Johnson III. **Noes:** None. **Absent:** Councilmember Bates and Mayor Butt. **Abstained:** None. A motion by Councilmember Jimenez, seconded by Councilmember Martinez, to extend the term of the task force was withdrawn for consideration at the May 18, 2021, City Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:24 p.m., to meet again on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

Clerk of the City of Richmond

(SEAL)

Approved:

Mayor

From: [Ajeya Hernandez](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Agenda Item: E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

As a Richmond city resident and voter, I strongly urge you to increase the Task Force budget by pulling funding from the police dept. We need you to fund the community, not the police.

From: [Akeylah Hernandez](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment for Agenda Item: E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:19 PM

Hello Richmond City Council,

As a Richmond City resident and community member, I strongly urge you to vote in favor of funding (\$10.3 million) the community Task Force. We know that policing DOES NOT keep our communities safe, it does the opposite.

I worry for the safety of my family and neighbors when I see RPD (or any other police force) in the streets . NOW is the time to dismantle the grotesque and racist system of policing in America. You have an opportunity today to instead invest in REAL community safety and REAL community healing.

PLEASE, listen to the Black, Indigenous, and POC community members of Richmond who have been fighting for this change for decades!

We keep us safe. Vote to FUND COMMUNITY and DEFUND RPD!

- Akeylah Hernandez (they / them / elle)

From: [Ana Apodaca](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Special Meeting City Council Item E1
Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:32:14 AM
Attachments: [Letter to Richmond City Council 5-10-2021.pdf](#)

City Clerk,

This email bounced back yesterday evening, so I am resending to be submitted to council.

Kaiser Permanente is submitting a letter on Item E1. for tonight's Special Council Meeting.

Ana Apodaca

Community and Government Relations Manager

Kaiser Permanente

Core Bay Area Hub
2401 Merced Street, Suite, #100
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510-292-8685 (mobile)

kp.org/thrive

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v.173.295 Thank you.



May 10, 2021

Mayor Tom Butt and Members of the City Council
City of Richmond
450 Civic Center Plaza
Richmond, CA 94804

Honorable Mayor Butt and Members of the City Council

Kaiser Permanente Richmond has been made aware of the pending discussion regarding the possible realignment of police funding in the upcoming budget cycle.

As a medical care provider and the only Hospital located the City of Richmond we recognize and support the great work being done by agencies addressing the health and socio-economic needs of our community. We understand the importance of leveraging these crucial partnerships to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our community.

We also value the partnership of the Richmond Police Department in their role in the community and their responsive support to our Richmond Medical Center. However, we are concerned about the potential impact of a reduced police force and reductions in response time to our Hospital, which regularly experiences crisis conditions around our emergency room intakes.

Therefore, we respectfully urge the City Council to consider taking more time to analyze the recommendations of the Task Force and the full impact of the proposals. We are in support of next steps to ensure a transparent process that would, 1) provide more information to all stakeholders, including opportunities for the community and small business to weigh in, and, 2) thoroughly examine alternative and similar programs successfully launched in other cities.

Should you find it helpful, we would be glad to meet and discuss this matter further.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edmund Chan".

Edmund Chan
Sr. VP and Area Manager
Kaiser Permanente East Bay

From: [Andrea Mullarkey](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Support for Reimagine Public Safety Task Force Recommendations
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:21 PM

Good evening,

I am a Richmond resident and homeowner, a member of SEIU 1021 and I am writing in support of the proposals lifted up by the Reimagine Public Safety Task Force Recommendations.

It is vitally important that we expand violence prevention and intervention efforts, that we invest in youth employment and increase services to our neighbors who are unhoused. We need a mental health crisis response program that is not based in policing and need to address the racial inequities which plague our traffic enforcement in Richmond.

I urge you to join neighboring cities like Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco and others to bring a more just vision of public safety for all of Richmond.

Andrea Mullarkey

From: [chemo Ramirez](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I understand that you will be discussing and providing direction to staff regarding the next steps on the current recommendations from the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force. I am writing this email in support of the Task Force's recommendations. I ask that when you consider the recommendations that you do so with thoughtfulness and that you give credence to the atrocities that have taken place across the US, including Richmond, CA for years. This special meeting can be a pivotal moment in the history of Richmond, CA. and it is important that you as elected officials heed the recommendations your constituents support. And remember "It's never the wrong time to do the right thing." - Martin Luther King Jr.

Best regards,
Anselmo Ramirez
(Richmond Native)

From: [Barbara Howell](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment on agenda item Reimagining Public Safety
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 6:30:00 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the recommendations from the Reimagine Richmond Public Safety Task Force.

My husband and I have lived in Richmond for 29 years and we love our community. We are very supportive of the reallocation of public safety resources toward mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and community development and away from traditional policing. We hope that you will accept the task force's recommendations.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Barbara Howell
5813 Fresno Avenue
Richmond, Ca 94804

Sent from my iPhone

From: [okdf](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Reimagining Public Safety
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:22 PM

To the Mayor and Council members.

I would like to echo the last lines of an email sent to the Mayor by another resident, Linda Hemmila :

"..... this plan is not fair to the people who have invested in Richmond and chosen to raise their families here. Leaving a city of 111,323 people without a full-time police department is unconscionable. This is a plan motivated by politics, not safety, and I urge you to reject it."

This is a sentiment echoed by many. And it is not as simple as people not being interested in making changes to the Police department policies but people who are interested in moving forward in a positive manner that provides both for safety in the community and services. The Reimagining committee does not seem to have fully grasped this safety issue. Though they are prepared to take money from the budget they do not have all the resources, personnel, and policies in place to provide required services and do not realize that the **positive effect of said services will not be instantaneous**. The proposed budget cut and **loss of trained officers will be immediate** as of the beginning of the new fiscal year. Once these officers are gone, if it becomes necessary to recruit and rebuild the department, it is likely that quality candidates will not be enticed to work for a city that impulsively responds to issues and even if candidates can be found, the city will once again face the expense of training and retaining staff.

Please vote No, if for no other reason than to give all those involved in the positive progression of the City of Richmond enough time to proceed in a manner that is beneficial to the majority.

Sincerely,

C. Cardenas
Hilltop Resident

From: [Daniel Choi](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: public comments agenda item Reimagining Public Safety Task Force
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

I support the City Task Force's new public safety plan that would change the response to low-priority calls from the police to people better trained to deal with the issues..

Thank you..Daniel

Daniel Choi
An Army of Monkeys, Inc

Technical Director

6250 Arlington Blvd
Richmond, CA 94805

415-235-2583 Cell
510-210-6202 Office
monkeyarmy13@icloud.com

From: [David Harris](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #E-1, Special Meeting, 5-10-21
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:03 PM

I see the concept of the "Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force" as a cowardly capitulation to the "woke" mob. A police force is there to slow down or stop those who break the laws, in the same way the brakes on a car slow and stop the movement of the vehicle. By diverting funds away from (i.e., removing) the police force and its mandate is like draining the brake fluid from the master cylinder, putting it in the radiator, and then wondering why the brakes don't work as well as before. Richmond's police was working quite well for many years under Chief Magnus, and now it seems the City Council is considering draining and re-distributing the brake fluid, which cannot end well.

When the "woke" mob comes for you, who would you rather answer the call, an arbitrator? Maybe a social worker? I'd rather call a cop. I think the "reimagining" should be about what sort of City Council Richmond should have instead of the one it has, given some of its current priorities.

Dave Harris
Richmond

From: [Don Gosney](#)
To: [Tom Butt - external](#); [Eduardo Martinez](#); [Demnlus Johnson](#); [Nat Bates](#); [Melvin Willis](#); [Laura Snideman](#); [Gayle McLaughlin](#); [Claudia Jimenez](#); [Jim Nantell](#); [Bisa French](#); [City Clerk Dept](#); [Eduardo Martinez](#)
Cc: [Don Gosney](#)
Subject: Comments on the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force Recommendations
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:07 PM
Attachments: [05.10.21 Reimagining Public Safety City Council Proposals.pdf](#)

Please see and read the attached set of comments to the Council on tonight's set of proposed recommendations from the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force.

As always, I am free and available for discussion.

Don Gosney

929 Lassen Street

Richmond, CA 94805-1030

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dongosney@comcast.net

Don Gosney

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dongosney@comcast.net

Mayor Tom Butt
Vice Mayor Demnlus Johnson
Councilmember Nat Bates
Councilmember Gayle McLaughlin
Councilmember Melvin Willis
Councilmember Eduardo Martinez
Councilmember Claudia Jimenez

May 10, 2021

Re: Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force Recommendations

Greetings to all.

At your Council meeting of May 10th, 2021, you'll hear recommendations from some members of the Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force that was appointed by the Council late last year.

Most of you would be proud of what the hard working task force members that you appointed have accomplished. You appointed them to do a job and, I believe, they've succeeded.

The end results of the proposals that you will be presented will have a drastic impact on the future of Richmond and the people you were elected to represent.

It is not unusual when the issues are as grave as these and opinions vary as wildly as we have here, along with opinions of the majority of the group, there is also a minority report. With our appellate judicial system as well as our Supreme Court, if there is even a single dissenting opinion, that opinion is made a part of the record.

Several times over the life of this task force the suggestion of a minority report has been brought up and each time it has been shot down.

While I do not have the authority to speak for anyone other than myself, I'm offering opinions here that may differ from those being presented to you as the official voice of the task force. I served on the task force from beginning to end. I was not always allowed to sit in or participate in the working groups (some were adamantly against that option). As a matter of fact, I asked to serve on all of the subgroups but my request

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was shot down by some members of the task force. As a result, I was not allowed to offer my services or opinions. Please understand that what you will hear in these proposals should never be confused as to be considered “the will of the people”. Because we have no real newspaper in Richmond and even the social media opportunities are read by such a few number of Richmond residents, I would suggest that the vast majority of our neighbors have no idea that this task force is speaking on their behalf let alone what they’re saying on behalf of the people of Richmond.

I hate to use him as an example but when confronted by a loud, angry and active group of protesters who disagreed with his policies, President Richard Nixon referred to the rest of the American people as ‘the silent majority’. These were the ones we never saw on the 6:00 o’clock news. Even though we never saw them protesting, fighting with the police and the National Guard, breaking windows and burning businesses, it didn’t mean that they didn’t exist and it didn’t mean that their opinions didn’t matter.

This whole process started off using the words “DEFUND THE POLICE”. We heard activists eventually try to walk things back by saying that their definition of the word “defund” was not the same as the one used in most dictionaries. That’s when some smart person suggested remarketing their plans with a new label: REIMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY. But, as the Bard wrote so many years ago, “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet” and as Indiana poet James Whitcomb Riley wrote a few years later, “if it walks like a duck, if it quacks like a duck, it’s a duck”. My point is that no matter what the Council wants to call this task force, I believe the goal was and is to defund the police. Maybe not completely but certainly enough to make it difficult for them to protect the people as the majority of the people in this community demand.

As I look through the 82 pages of material included in the agenda packet, I have a problem with what was put out for consideration.

First, the task force voted on some very specific recommendations. We did not vote on the rest of the PowerPoint presentations and we did not vote on the back-up information that we see in these presentations. As a matter of fact, some of what we’re seeing here was not presented at all by the task force for the majority of the task force to see. And the public was never given the opportunity to see it.

One of the problems that we had with the task force is that the four working subgroups routinely had difficulties with providing the City staff with copies of their presentation materials so they could be disseminated to the full task force and the public (as the Brown Act requires. At our meeting on April 21, Senior Assistant City Attorney Mr. Bruce Soublet told the task force that as long as the presentations were shown on the computer screen, the Brown Act would be satisfied. I’m not sure that I would agree

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with that but the extent of my legal education comes from watching every episode of Perry Mason and he never dealt with the Brown Act.

Where I have a serious problem with the implementation of this requirement is that I believe that a presentation slide needs to be viewable long enough to be read. Many of the slides that night and since were shown for only a few seconds. Some were not shown at all or, for lack of time, skipped altogether. If we had the time, I would suggest that you watch the videos to validate this assertion.

Jim Nantell, the City's Interim Community Services Director, has been the City's point person for this task force and, in my opinion, has done an outstanding job—**when allowed.**

I worry, though, that he added to the agenda packet pages and items that were not voted on by the task force and the Council and the public might be confused into thinking that that the task force took actions that they did not. If you recall a few months ago when the Council was discussing the RV Safe Park, I wrote you all about the importance of understanding that when you take a vote, you're voting not on a concept or an idea—you're voting on the very specific words included in a motion. Such is the case here—you have to consider NOT what individual members of the task force may have said those nights—or have told you in their personal communiques with you—but what was included in the motions.

I've reviewed the videos numerous times and have read the transcripts. I've posted below what we actually voted on. I believe I have it correct but there's always a chance that I've erred.

What's also critically important is to consider the recommendations **that were rejected** by the task force—with scant comment so the subgroup might know what needed to be revised before being brought back. These may come back for reconsideration by the task force—or not. If they come back, they may be accepted or they may be summarily rejected—as they have been twice before. This does not, however, mean that the Council needs to reject them. A good idea is a good idea whether an 11 person majority of a task force likes the idea or not.

Below you will see the actual recommendations accepted/rejected by the task force with my comments affixed. The text is taken directly from their PowerPoint slides. The text was taken directly from the slides with no editorial corrections made.

REJECTED PROPOSALS

From the presentation on April 21:

Shift emphasis from Firearm to Less Lethal Use of Force.

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Don's Comments: Call me stupid but this seems to be something that everyone could embrace but the task force rejected the call to use Less Lethal Use of Force—without comment.

More Hands-On/Defensive Tactics Training. At present RPD has yearly training for Use of Firearm. Defensive Tactics should be required every month or quarterly.

Don's Comments: Shouldn't the RPD be required to emphasize the use of defensive tactics training rather than the use of force to affect an arrest?

Ensure the city accurately track money reimbursed for Training either go back to RPD or allocated for Public Safety Community groups.

Don's Comments: Isn't the Council already working to ensure that reimbursable funds go back to the RPD instead of the General Fund? But the task force rejected this as an option.

Ensure Police Strategies Consulting Group provides community access portal to Use of Force Data (upcoming contract for RPD on for council 4/20/21).

Don's Comments: Since the task force rejected this recommendation, are they really recommending that the Council reverse their already agreed on course of action?

City Council support AB 988/Miles Hall Lifeline Act, Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Hotline. Dial 9-8-8 Bill aims to better address mental health emergency calls. Hire more dispatch operators to fill vacancies.

Don's Comments: Again, the rejection of an effort to support a measure to make it safer for mental health issues to be handled without the use of deadly force embarrasses me.

Dispatch is 24 hours/365 Days and is a pivotal part of people outreach in crisis. We need to Separate Police Emergency and Non-Police Response Calls.

Don's Comments: This only makes common sense. How much dispatcher time is wasted when someone calls 911 for a nonemergency issue? If any of us had a real emergency and it took extra minutes to reach a human to report this emergency, wouldn't we like to see 911 dispatchers dealing with real emergencies (shootings, heart attacks, fires and the like)? Why would the task force reject this?

From the presentation on April 28 [Note: although listed by the subgroup as a 'recommendation', some of these items are merely data]:

Ensuring monthly updates on the de-escalation policy. Focus training on arrest/control techniques.

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Don's Comments: Once again, is the goal of the task to reimagine community policing or to eliminate it? As a resident, I'd like to see our police officers better trained so they know how to de-escalate a bad situation without having to resort to deadly force. The next time they pull their weapon it might be aimed at me—or you. I'd rather that they know how to de-escalate. Does anyone remember that scene in Raiders of the Lost Ark where Indiana Jones is faced with the Arab with the huge Saracen sword and he simply pulls his revolver from the holster and shoots him dead? Looked good in the movie but how about if you were on the receiving end of this “de-escalation” technique?

Ensure additional scenario-based training incorporated into training plan. Scenarios need to be diverse in age, ethnicity, sexual identity.

Don's Comments: More and better training seems like a good way to address many of the complaints we hear from when it comes to people who have negative interactions with the RPD. So why did the task force reject this?

Focusing on physical restraint training that would reduce the likelihood of use of deadly force.

Don's Comments: More and better training seems like a good way to address many of the complaints we hear from when it comes to people who have negative interactions with the RPD. So why did the task force reject this?

Ensure the city accurately track money reimbursed for Training either go back to RPD or allocated for Public Safety Community groups.

Don's Comments: See above.

Ensuring Field Training Officer's receive same level cultural competency as recruit officers. Require Field Training Officer's to receive procedural justice training and police legitimacy training.

Don's Comments: This seems to make sense so why did the task force reject it outright and without comment?

Currently RPD training budget is only 132k – this does not include all internal training as required by POST.

Don's Comments: Comes across as a statement of fact rather than a recommendation.

Ensure Police Strategies Consulting Group provides community access portal to Use of Force Data

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Don's Comments: Agreed. Let the public have access to the data. Knowledge is power.

City Council support a nonbinding resolution AB 988/Miles Hall Lifeline Act, Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Hotline. Dial 9-8-8 Bill aims to better address mental health emergency calls. This system will free up 911 calls for the City of Richmond. Hopefully over time, all mental health crisis calls will be diverted to this new system.

Don's Comments: See comment above when this was rejected by the task force at an earlier meeting.

Improve process to fill budgeted dispatch operator vacancies.

Don's Comments: Try calling either the 911 dispatcher or the nonemergency number and tell us how pleased you are with the length of time needed to get a human being to respond? These delays are often the result of dispatcher vacancies. Why would the task force not support improving the process to fill these vacancies?

(SIMPLY DATA?)

In 2006-2007, the 911 Center was authorized 28 dispatchers, 4 supervisors and 1 manager. Those numbers remained the same thru 2009-2010.

In 2010-2011, the 911 Center was authorized 24 dispatchers, 4 supervisors and 1 manager.

In 2011-2012, the 911 Center was authorized 23 dispatchers, 4 supervisors and 1 manager. Two call taker positions were added.

In 2019-2020, the 911 Center is authorized 16 dispatchers, 4 supervisors, 1 manager and 1 call taker. 1 dispatch position is frozen.

CURRENT Staffing level is.....10 Dispatchers (2 in training) - total of 12, 1 manager and 2 supervisors. There are 3 vacant dispatch positions and 1 frozen positions.

In 2018, the 911 Center processed 291,661 calls.....88,611 were 911, creating 123,945 calls for service. That's a daily average of 799 calls, with 243 911 calls per day.

In 2019, the 911 Center processed 280,889 calls.....85,386 were 911, creating 150,169 calls for service.

We need to separate Police Emergency and Non-Emergency Police Response Calls. Ensure dispatch operators have cultural competency training on par with police officers.

Don's Comments: Makes sense, doesn't it? So why did the task force reject it without comment?

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PROPOSED RPD REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

RPD has to reduce the budget by \$10.3 million by:

Reducing sworn officers, not non-sworn employees

Reducing overtime and “other pay”

Reducing ancillary expenses as a result of the reduction of sworn officers (e.g., vehicles, equipment, computers, building rentals, professional services, etc.)

Don’s Comments: Is the goal of the task force and the City Council to simply remove sworn police officers from our streets or is it to rethink how the police make our city safer? Chief French has reported that it may be impossible to reduce some of the expenses recommended by the task force by the requisite 11.5% (such as rent and utilities). She suggests that instead of firing 25 sworn officers, this may require firing 32-35 sworn officers. How does reducing the ranks of sworn officers from 158 down to 123 make Richmond safer for everyone? This may be what lawbreakers would like to see but the multitude of victims here in Richmond might have another view on the matter.

The overtime model used for City employees is seriously flawed but this is largely the result of the health care and retirement benefit model used by the City. This model makes it too expensive to hire the requisite number of employees to get the job done. As a result, the existing workers are **required** to work overtime. And, of course, this overtime pay has a seriously negative impact on the pension obligation. A better model needs to be found.

If the landlord of a business has negotiated a monthly rent, and the business comes back and tells them that they’ll only pay 88.5% of that amount, what action would this Council expect the landlord to take? If any member of the Council had the wherewithal to actually own a building that was being leased out, what action would you, as the landlord take? What would you tell the mortgage holder, the insurance carrier and the County tax collector when you tell them that your tenant will only pay you an amount less than what you owe? How realistic is that?

Hasn’t the police department already bent over backwards by deferring the replacement of vehicles, equipment and computers? And now the task force is demanding an 11.5% reduction? This isn’t to save the people of Richmond money—it’s so these funds can be redirected to projects that some task force members embrace.

There are too many ‘unknowns’ included in this recommendation. What, specifically, is included in “EQUIPMENT” and what is included in “ETC”? Both are rather vague and even among the members of the Council, each of you may have a completely different concept about what is included therein.

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D O N G O S N E Y

APPROVED RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase funding for SOS [Funding of \$3,404,339]

Homelessness/unhoused support and care

Shower power, streets team, transitional villages

Don's Comments: Exactly who should be responsible for paying for an are wide problem. I certainly don't have the solutions to solving the homeless crisis but I firmly believe that this is a reginal issue better handled by the County and the State. When Richmond tax dollars are used to make things better for the homeless, it only encourages homeless from other areas to migrate to Richmond to take advantage of what we offer. We've seen this before when Berkeley and Albany pushed their homeless away from their Marina and Albany Bulb areas. Almost immediately we saw vast new encampments near Costco and on Rydin Road.

The Council should advocate for the homeless with the County and pressure our state legislators for the funds and programs but to ask the people of Richmond to finance this is too big of an ask.

I speak for the crimes perpetrated against myself this year by unhoused persons—some with mental or substance abuse issues. I've had six break-ins into my back yard so far this year with a loss of more than \$3500 in tools and goods. I cannot believe that providing them with showers, sanitary facilities and mentoring will have protected me and my home. A more visible police presence, though, might have deterred these break-ins.

There comes a time for all of us when we grow tired of playing the victim and expect our elected officials to work to protect us—and that's NOT what I've been hearing from this Council and their supporters. I cannot believe that I'm the only victim here in Richmond. Call me and I'll delineate the dozens of thefts, break-ins, violence against and threats made to me over just the past decade. Block out more time and I'll go back even further. But I'm sounding like a broken record mentioning this to people who have shown little to no interest in the past.

Increased funding for ONS [addtl. Funding of \$2,500,000]

Gun-violence prevention and intervention

Don's Comments: While there are segments of the community that fully embrace the ONS, there are others that would like to see more transparency.

Where is the nexus between the efforts of the ONS and the reduction of gun violence in Richmond? Could the drop in gun violence be the result of other considerations

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such as other policing efforts, a better economy, improved employment opportunities or even better intergang relations? When Lucky Luciano organized crime in New York City in the early 1930s and divided the City into areas controlled by the five families, violent crime dropped dramatically. Should the New York Police Department be credited for this? My point is that until we have more definitive information that would link the ONS to the reduction of gun violence **in Richmond** then we should hold off taking funding away from the RPD and putting it in the hands of the ONS.

If you have the time, please check out these news stories about an incident at the ONS offices IN CITY HALL—a place where city staffers work and need to feel safe. While the crime scene cleanup crew was making the offices safe to return to, the ONS staff refused to cooperate with the RPD officers investigating the crime. This suggested to the public that the ONS was protecting and colluding with their ONS Fellows (the gang members being paid not to shoot each other).

<https://abc7news.com/archive/8396462/>

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2011/10/18/bloody-gang-fight-breaks-out-at-richmond-city-hall/>

Funding and implementation of CCRP (Community Crisis Response Program)
[Funding of \$2,445,600]
Mental health crisis response and support

Don's Comments: While some members of the task force have their own idea how this program should be established and set up, until the Council actually makes this happen, isn't transferring funds to this program premature?

Is this something that should fall under the purview of the Richmond City Council as opposed to the County Board of Supervisors and/the State Legislators? There are some issues that fall under the auspices of a local government while others fall under the umbrella of a broader legislative body. Should the Richmond City Council negotiate treaties with other countries or declare war against fascist governments? Or should this be left to other bodies?

Youthworks 2021 Proposal – Serving up to 1,000 youth (Potentially including Undocumented/DACAmented Youth)
2020 YouthWorks Budget: \$335,000 (General Fund)
2021 Proposed Re-allocation Fund: **\$1,930,150**

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D O N G O S N E Y

2021 Youthworks Proposed Budget: \$2,255,150

Possible Breakdown of Reallocation Funding*:

Participant wages: 1,000 youth x 100 hours x \$15.21/hour = \$1,521,000

Payroll taxes & payroll service fees = \$228,150

COR staff and intern cost = \$175,000

Office & web services = \$6,000

Total Expense = \$1,930,150

*Depending on the specific number of youth enrolled, hours could be increased, new worksites utilized, and other occupational skills training with a focus in-demand occupations (digital tech literacy, healthcare, special trade), On-the-Job training, needs such transportation, Laptops, wifi, work/interview clothes/ID cards, and childcare could be met with this increase of funding.

Don's Comments: Putting younger people to work in Richmond is always a good idea. It's the specifics that concern me. For instance, are these young people to be employed by the City of Richmond or by outside businesses? If it's Richmond, is it the intention of the Council to bypass the collective bargaining agreements in place to bring in workers at wages lower than union wages? And how about benefits? If these young people are to have health care benefits paid on their behalf, and if the program is just a summer program, the City will be paying for health care insurance benefits that will largely be unavailable to the employees. By the time the benefits kick in, the program will have concluded and the youth will no longer be employed. And it's highly unlikely that these youth will return to a CalPERS job before their vesting period has passed so these pension benefit payments will be wasted with only CalPERS benefitting.

If these jobs are to be provided by outside companies, why is Richmond spending nearly \$2 million—and on what will this money be spent?

Where are the specifics? This is a feel good general idea but without specifics, not a single dollar should be allocated.

TRAFFIC VIOLATION PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES

Written consent for all vehicle searches pursuant to a traffic stop

Banning Pretextual Stops

Don's Comments: When a person is pulled over and the officer sees a bag of meth or an AK-47 sitting on the front seat, is this City Council really going to require the

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D O N G O S N E Y

written consent of the driver before a search of the vehicle? Is this Council really going to go into the business of supporting criminal activities?

Institute a moratorium on traffic fees and fines until March 2022

Don's Comments: What kind of message does it send when th Richmond City Council directs that there will be no punishment for speeding, running a red light, driving on the sidewalk, sideshows, illegal parking next to a fire hydrant, illegal parking in a handicapped zone and any of the other ticketable offenses? Are we really to revert to what was shown in the movie "The Purge"?

De-prioritize traffic stops for minor violations that do not impact public safety – e.g. not wearing seat belt, expired registration, failure to signal.

Don's Comments: Minor violations such as expired registrations and failure to signal are "harmless" offenses but a failure or refusal to wear safety belts is a safety issue. Does the Richmond City Council really want to promote drivers not wearing seat belts? Will texting while driving be next?

Focus police actions on investigative stops and driving violations related to traffic safety – e.g. speeding, running red light or stop sign, impaired driving.

Don's Comments: Agreed.

Consider developing an alternative method of traffic law enforcement led by unarmed civilians.

Don's Comments: Across the nation, how many times do we read about a sworn police officer shot or struck by a moving vehicle when pulling someone over for a traffic violation? In my opinion, even once is too many times but they seem to be more commonplace these days. And now it's being proposed that a glorified meter maid pull these people over? What protection will this Council offer these low paid civil servants?

Include directly impacted people in police training courses.

Don's Comments: Is the recommendation for the City to have persons who break the traffic laws of the State of California be brought in so the police can be trained by them on how they should be cited?

There were two tables presented by one of the subgroups that listed a list of proposed cuts and where they believe the funds should be reallocated. I'm posting them here with comments:

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D O N G O S N E Y

Proposed Investments of Funds		
Program	Current Budget	Proposed Increase
Office of Neighborhood Safety	\$ 1,994,534	\$ 2,500,000
RichmondWorks Summer Youth Program	\$ 375,000	\$ 1,930,150
SOS Street Teams	n/a	\$ 1,190,907
SOS Shower Power	n/a	\$ 627,774
SOS Transitional Village	n/a	\$ 1,585,658
Community Crisis Response Program	n/a	\$ 2,445,600
	TOTAL	\$ 10,280,089

The proposed reallocation would require a nearly 17% cut in an already depleted RPD budget. Some of the comments by task force members and callers suggesting that everyone has to suffer and accept cuts is not an acceptable option. Not every City department is the same. I believe that most believe not only want to feel safe but they want to BE safe and expecting showers for the unhoused and fewer police officers on the street is not the way to accomplish either of those goals.

Richmond has nine beats for the police to patrol. At any given time, there are only 9 officers on patrol at any given time considering the assaults, home burglaries, car burglaries, auto thefts, gang activity and other serious crimes that we see each and every day, how can we expect the police to protect us when the task force—and those on the Council that appointed them—wants to reduce that number?

The table below was part of the April 21 presentation to the task force. Each item has been assigned a reference number and my comments follow afterwards.

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D O N G O S N E Y

Sample RPD Reallocation of Funds			
1	Overtime	Current Amount (based on pro rata share of projected amount in 4/17/20 detailed budget) Proposed Reduction Cost Savings - Overtime	\$ 3,768,171 85% \$ 3,195,398
2	"Other Pay" (including holiday pay and uniform allowances)	Current Amount (based on pro rata share of projected amount in 4/17/20 detailed budget) Proposed Reduction Cost Savings - "Other Pay"	\$ 2,150,734 72% \$ 1,548,528
3	Sworn Officers	Average Salary (based on 4/17/20 detailed budget) Estimated Benefits (@ 35%) Average Salary & Benefits - Estimated Proposed Reduction in Sworn Officers Cost Savings - Reduction in Sworn Officers	\$ 124,836 \$ 43,693 \$ 168,529 25 \$ 4,213,215
4	Professional Services (including computer software maintenance, animal control services, and other professional services)	Current Amount Pro Rata Cost Savings - Professional Services	\$ 3,949,808 \$ 455,047
5	Cost Pool (including vehicle replacement and general liability)	Current Amount Pro Rata Cost Savings - Cost Pool	\$ 3,422,833 \$ 394,336
6	Other Operating Expenses (including building and equipment rentals)	Current Amount Pro Rata Cost Savings - Other Operating Expenses	\$ 2,600,587 \$ 299,607
7	Asset/Capital Outlay (including computer equipment and furniture)	Current Amount Pro Rata Cost Savings - Asset/Capital Outlay	\$ 607,780 \$ 70,021
8	Equipment & Contract Services	Current Amount Pro Rata Cost Savings - Equipment & Contract Services	\$ 511,872 \$ 58,971
9	Utilities	Current Amount Pro Rata Cost Savings - Utilities	\$ 390,299 \$ 44,965
TOTAL COST SAVINGS			\$10,280,089

With the exception of the drastic cutting of sworn officers, everything else here seems to be a flat 11.5% reduction. Some members of the task force went outside of the group to solicit input from Jim Freeman and May Lin—consultants that appear to be based out of Colorado.

1. As previously written, the City's overtime model is flawed and needs retooling. The need to work people overtime needs rethinking and the means to fill the manpower needs is equally in need of rethinking.
2. Would any member of the Council—if they had a job—work on a holiday for straight time wages? When uniforms are required as part of the job, I know of no union that would allow their workers to pay for a uniform specific to their job duties. Does this Council advocate requiring City workers to pay for their own uniforms and equipment?

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3. Sworn Officers—this comes across as vindictive against highly trained persons who they believe to be the source of this country's social ills. Rather than cite specific instances of recent issues with Richmond police officers, we heard generic complaints using incidents in locales outside of Richmond. We even heard references to incidents in Richmond dating back 40 years and more. Errors were made in the past and they've been addressed. And, of course, more recent incidents from well more than a decade ago were brought up telling a one sided version of the incidents.
4. Better computer software will help provide the public and the Council with the data they demand. Slashing the budget for this will not get them the results they crave. The Council/public can't demand the data and refuse the funding to gather the data. As has been brought up numerous times recently, the cost that Richmond has to pay the County for animal control is an area that needs serious attention.
5. Reducing the costs for replacing vehicles has been before the Council numerous times in recent years. Sadly, police vehicles are driven hard and Richmond's streets have been compared to those in battleground cities in the Middle East. It's one thing for the Council to slough off complaints by the public about the damage to their vehicles driving on streets filled with potholes but why should the City's own departments be punished for driving on the bad streets that the Council provides them with? Patrol cars need to be maintained for the safety of Richmond's workers. Is this Council against providing a safe workplace for the City's employees? Which is more expensive—maintaining patrol cars or paying for workmen's comp cases or early disability retirement? The 'general liability' cost is for insurance to pay for legal teams and settlements when the City is sued—which this Council should know happens a lot. The world is full of attorneys willing to sue a local government even when they know there isn't a case. They get paid handsomely just for settling out of court.
6. Building Rentals—previously addressed above. All efforts can be made to negotiating a lower rent but hasn't that been happening already? And exactly what equipment rentals are being referenced here?
7. This is an area where taking a minimalist approach can work. I understand that Windows 7—even though Microsoft stopped supporting it four years ago is a perfectly good operating system even though the rest of the world uses Microsoft 10 and a lot of the software the City uses won't run on software created 12 years ago. Luxuries like desks and chairs aren't really necessary, are they?
8. Equipment and Customer Services—what does that mean? As a resident, I'm one of the customers that uses the police services so I'd like to see my needs met. I know how upset I get when I can't get a hold of human being when I need help. If the RPD's customers can't get help from the RPD, is that a good thing?

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9. The task force wants to cut utilities by 11.5%? Really? Should the employees work in the dark? Should we contract with Rich City Rides to rig up some of those bicycle generators so employees can pedal the bike to provide power for their computers? Should we only allow flushing the toilets on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to conserve water?

Having spent so much time on the task force—and being the subject of ridicule, harassment and racial discrimination—I’m disappointed that aside from slashing the budget and triple decimating the corps of sworn officers, this task force has done little to imagine ways that the police can make us safer. Many of the task force members arrived on this committee predisposed to ways to, as one caller put it, “abolish the police force”.

Several of the Councils representatives would interrupt when I suggested they follow the Brown Act, that they remember that only the Council has the authority to turn this task force into a full committee or to extend the time that we exist, that we try to manage our time better so the two hour meetings don’t stretch into four+ hour meetings. I was told numerous times to “stop wasting their time”. On three separate occasions we had callers talk—in a very negative tone—about “the three White guys” on the task force (even though one of them is a Native American. One task force member used profanities several times when he spoke. I routinely felt harassed and bullied by some of the people appointed by members of this Council and representing the City. I would hope, whether you agree with my positions or not, that you disagree with this kind of behavior.

I urge the Council to listen to what is presented at your meeting and then, before taking any action, speak with the responsible City staffers who can provide the data and background absent from the task force discussions. And then go out and speak with members of the community. Don’t speak with the people that already support you—they already share your beliefs. Speak to the people outside of your core group of supporters and learn what they think. Go out to Carriage Hills, May Valley, the Hilltop area, East Richmond, North & East. This is too important to allow it to be turned into a political issue.

Sincerely,



- cc: Laura Snideman ~ Richmond City Manager
Bisa French ~ Richmond Police Chief
Jim Nantell ~ interim Richmond Community Services Director
Pam Christian ~ City Clerk

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From: [Faith Gardner](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment for 5-10-21 open session
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:23 PM

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to voice my support for the proposals outlined by the Reimagine Public Safety Community Task Force to budget five new safety programs, funded by the reallocation of police funds. This move would make our community safer by investing in crime prevention and sending trained professionals to handle mental health crises and other non-violent situations where police presence isn't necessary. It would also expand needed support for youth, homeless residents, and address racial inequities in traffic stops. Such moves would be a more effective use of funds, they would make our public safety system feel like it works for more than just some people, they would add support for the people in Richmond who need it, and would save lives in the process. This country is at a turning point right now as we reckon with a problematic system of overpolicing, institutionalized racism, and mass incarceration, and steps like the ones proposed by Reimagine Richmond are direly needed at the local level to begin the work to transform our world into a safer, more equitable place.

As a resident of Richmond now for nearly seven years, I have personally seen police respond to multiple mental health crises where a mental health professional would have been better equipped to deal with the problem. With the growing number of homeless people and the rise in mental health crises, this move is more important than ever. I urge you to please accept the proposals outlined by the Reimagine Public Safety Community Task Force to fund five new public safety programs.

Thank you.

Faith Gardner
Richmond resident

From: [Gabe Torney](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comments agenda item reimagining public safety task force
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:05 PM

Hello,

I have been a resident of Richmond nearly my entire life. I have seen the inequities that my friends face on a daily basis. This entire country is founded on a racist economy and we have the power to fight against that system at a local level. The Richmond police department receives an obscene portion of the city's budget. When people hear the term "defund the police," they get scared that this means there will no longer be any public safety officers. How about we consider the truth of what this phrase means: we need to reallocate some of the police funding and use this money to support much-needed mental health and education programs. The world would function better if education, housing, and health equity was accessible. The greedy people with the majority of wealth continue to do everything in their power to prevent this from happening. Richmond can do better and can become a beacon of inspiration for similar communities around the globe. Please make the right choice and support the reimagining public safety task force.

Thank you,
Gabe

From: [Hatuey Hernandez](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment for Agenda Item:E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

Dear Richmond city,

As a Richmond city voter and community member, I strongly urge you to pull funding from the police to increase the Task Force Budget. Police are not serving the community, in fact, they actively target people within our community and have no repercussions. We need something new and that's why I support the Taskforce, so we can start creating an emergency response team that can actually serve the people.

sincerely
Hatuey Hernandez

From: [James Wilts](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Re: Reducing Richmond's Police Budget
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:03 PM

I did not notice the "special requirements" for submitting this email to you: "Emails MUST contain in the subject line 1) public comments – agenda item #__ [include the agenda item number]." However, after reading this requirement, I searched for the agenda, etc. and could not find it. Now I am outraged that the city would invite comments without clearly providing the information, means, link, etc. to meet this/these requirements. It smacks a bit of not really wanting Richmond residents' input. A meetings notice arriving on Sunday evening for meeting on Monday is at best inconsiderate and at worst bureaucratic incompetence, particularly if no publicly available agenda exists at the time the notice was posted.

Richmond City resident,
James Wilts

I believe that simplistic platitudes, trite tautologies, and overloaded aphorisms are poor substitutes for respectful and rational discussions about complex issues.
And: go nuclear or go extinct.

Sent from my iPhone

> On May 9, 2021, at 6:30 PM, wiltsassociates@att.net wrote:
> I don't think there should be much debate about the impact of cutting Police budgets. The effect is an increase in crime rates: NY city, Portland, Seattle, Chicago, to name a few, and I would expect Oakland and SF rates, while not reported, are up too. To date I do not believe an initiative in this area has yet been classified as an success. If the city wants to experiment with this (in my opinion) crazy idea, fund alternative intervention programs, but don't reduce police funding until the effectiveness of these alternatives is established.
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> I believe that simplistic platitudes, trite tautologies, and overloaded aphorisms are poor substitutes for respectful and rational discussions about complex issues.
> And: go nuclear or go extinct.
>
> Sent from my iPhone

From: [Janis Hashe](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments: Agenda Item "Re-imagining Public Safety Task Force"
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

I am in full support of the recommendations of the Public Service Task Force to reallocate \$10.4 million from the Richmond Police Department budget to fund five essential public services: expanding violence and intervention efforts; investment in youth employment; investing in services for the unhoused in our community; creating a non-police mental health crisis response program; and addressing racial inequities in traffic violations and fines.

Janis Hashe
336 W. Bissell Ave.
Richmond, CA 94801

From: [Jessica Cortes](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Taskforce Budget
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 10:58:27 AM

I am writing in support of the task force recommendation to reallocate police funds to alternate programs that serve Richmond residents and strengthen the community.

Thank you,

Jessica Cortes, Richmond resident for 20+ years

From: [Jillian & Molly Provance](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Special Meeting 05/10/2021 - Public Comments- Agenda Item #E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

Dear Mayor Butt and City Council Members,

I do not support defunding the City of Richmond Police. This plan is a political stunt. If passed the "defunding plan" will wipe out the hard won successes of the current community policing policies. The facts and statistics presented elsewhere support the success of the Richmond Community Policing Policies.

Sincerely,

Jillian M Provance

From: [Josephine Stoddard](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments- Agenda Item: Task Force Budget Proposal
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

Dear City Council,

While the Richmond City budget continues to be discussed by the council, the Reimagine Richmond proposals are finally giving voice for the budget to be a moral document. At over \$65million, the RPD's budget consumes nearly 40% of the money in our General Fund, while community services are merely less than 3%. I ask the council to ask themselves if this is who we are.

While the idea that Chief Magnus permanently "fixed" policing in our neighborhoods, those against the proposals continue to use threats of increased violent crime toward their own community members who support them. I and my neighbors will not settle for what some think, is permanently "fixed". The Community Policing model adopted by RPD was not a miracle cure-all, and the Task Force is aware that the proposals are not either. The fundamental idea that progress is an ongoing and continuous effort is clearly demonstrated and understood by the Task Force who has worked diligently and intricately upon these proposals. I'm baffled by those insinuating that the best move forward is to keep things as they are, and allow RPD who has, in our recent history been a slight step ahead of departments across the country. to now stagnate.

In his e-forum to the public, threateningly titled "Reimagining Public Safety or Reviving a Crime Wave?" Tom Butt stated:

"Painting RPD as a racist organization makes no sense when it is led by a female African American chief and formerly led by a male African American Chief."

Blatant tokenism does not allow for one to speak for all BIPOC within the community. Those at tonight's meeting should listen closely to the stories that ALL have to share about their own experiences.

I ask you to please accept and adopt the Task Force budget proposals and continue to identify what safety means for ALL who reside in Richmond.

Thank you,
Josephine Stoddard
Richmond Resident

From: [rick.perez](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Reimagine Richmond Special City Council Meeting
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:19 PM

Hi from Julie and Rick Perez,
Parents of Richard "Pedie" Perez III .

We are pleased to see our Richmond and many other cities across our nation addressing the Barbaric responses by Police to situations that could be handled with other resources.

We firmly believe that Pedie would still be alive if a response was handled by the approach presented by Reimagine Richmond.

This would also free up Police to address real criminal actions that are what they train for.

It's very annoying to us that the Police Unions are crying about cutbacks and are more interested in the losing money aspect than Public Safety . The Police Unions are already planning on many members calling in sick with the "Blue Flu" in their form of striking to regain funds.

The public is under a false sense of security thinking that Police are here to "Protect and Serve" , I agree that Police are very much needed to address Real Criminal Actions at which they do a Good Job. Police fall short while addressing minor law breaking offenders sometimes ending fatally for the offenders.

After the fatality occurs the Police then proceed to justify the fatality by demonizing the victims.

I for one don't think that there's any thing worse than when police lie to justify murder.

Justice4Pedie / Reimagine Richmond

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kathryn Dunn](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENTS
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:22 PM

As a special education provider and resident of Richmond, I am advocating for the defunding of the Richmond police department. Funds need to be re-routed to mental health professionals, educators, and mediators that can support the community without hurting or killing black and brown citizens. As a 140 lb woman I have deescalated adults with mental health needs in crisis without ever hurting a person. The police system is inherently built around principles of violence and force and I do not want my taxes funding this brutality any longer.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Katie Harrison](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Re: public comments - agenda item E-1 - CLARIFICATION
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 9:20:49 PM

I wanted to correct MYSELF, as I am still a new member of this community.... I live in Richmond Annex (though very close to the border of El Cerrito). I live at [REDACTED], Richmond, 94804 - just to be more precise :)) Thank you again

- Katie

On Mon, May 10, 2021 at 8:48 PM Katie Harrison <beercangardens@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Richmond City Council,

I am writing in support of an immediate reallocation of funding *from* our police department to other more urgent areas of community support, such as funding (& promptly expanding) the 311 mental health line; the funding of all areas of the crisis response team; the training and hiring of more mental health professionals (as opposed to police officers); AND THE TRAINING & **SHIFT TO A FOCUS OF DE-ESCALATION IN OUR POLICE FORCE.**

The policing culture as it stands in our communities is not working, but has rather gotten quite out of hand due in my opinion to an almost complete absence of accountability that our police have for crimes that they themselves commit, when *they* break laws, whether on or off duty.

I'm hoping therefore that Richmond can be a TRAILBLAZER in this effort of rethinking police culture & mental health, and set an example for other cities across the country!

Thank you all so much for your time and thoughtful consideration in this very crucial effort of much needed change in our community for a better, healthier & safer future.

--

Katie Harrison
Owner, Beer Can Gardens
El Cerrito, CA

IG: @beer_can_gardens
310•739•8787

From: [Katrinka Ruk](#)
To: [Tom Butt - external](#); [Demnlus Johnson](#); [Nat Bates](#); [claudia jimenez](#); [Eduardo Martinez](#); [Gayle McLaughlin](#); [Melvin Willis](#); [City Clerk Dept](#); [Laura Snideman](#); [Jim Nantell](#)
Subject: Public Comments- agenda item #E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:21 PM
Attachments: [05.10.21 #E-1 ReimagingPublicSafety.docx](#)

/ email/

COUNCIL OF INDUSTRIES

P.O. BOX 70088, PT. RICHMOND, CA 94807

(510)215-9325

501(C)(6) FED ID# 94-0672760

May 10, 2021

/email to:

To: Richmond City Council, City Clerk

Item: E-1 Reimagining Public Safety/Recommendations

On behalf of the Council of Business and Industries (COI) we are submitting these comments for your review. We want to thank the Task Force for the time spent on issues that impact our neighbor and businesses' health and safety.

Further downsizing an already depleted police department is not the answer. We fear that the loss of 35 sworn police officers will create an open environment to increase crimes – against our neighbors, businesses and even against those homeless to which the police resources were diverted.

While we welcome discussion and debate of reasonable ideas, we do not agree that there has been sufficient outreach, education and involvement of all citizens of Richmond. In addition, as stated in the Agenda Report, "Staff has not had the opportunity to discuss or verify the amounts and recommends staff review before finalizing decisions as part of a future implementation plan."

We suggest the following:

- (1) consider implementing recommendations that have been budgeted for to improve services – for example, those from the Accountability Subcommittee;
- (2) conduct a more aggressive outreach to the community including meetings with the Neighborhood Councils, RNCC, community groups and businesses of the summary recommendations to determine their concerns, hear their recommendations and obtain their feedback on the services that would be

cutback;

(3) provide answers to staff questions posed in the Agenda Report and those submitted by the COI at the April 21st meeting of the Reimagining Public Safety Committee (list follows);

(4) include an assessment by the Police Department on what services would be cut with a \$10.3million cut in their budget;

(5) survey the Police Department to assess their recommendations for improving public safety;

(6) assess the additional monies that the City is slated to receive to determine if money can be earmarked for pilot programs;

(7) investigate a phased-in pilot program(s) to address these social concerns based on input from the community at large

The Task Force report delves into a great deal of recommendations. To ensure proper time to assess the success of programs, focus should be on establishing a few pilot programs and monitoring outcomes. Once it can be determined that the pilot program(s) is effective in reducing crime then a larger implementation can be considered and funding sources determined. Other similar cities' successful programs should be reviewed as to their applicability to Richmond, for example, adding a mental health professional to assist in mental health calls to determine if this intervention would decrease escalation.

Taking away 35 sworn officers is not the way to go. In fact, in Oakland they just funded their police department another \$10M since the murder rate tripled.

Overall, we urge you to hold public hearings and offer more information, education and ability for citizens to weigh in before you take such a radical approach that will affect the entire city.

Katrinka Ruk, Executive Director

The 04/21/21 Budget Analysis presented a great deal of information; however, it also raises questions that have yet to be answered:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->(1) <!--[endif]-->Is the Richmond Police Department in agreement with the statistics that are quoted in this report, and the associated assumptions?

<!--[if !supportLists]-->(2) <!--[endif]-->Per Capita Spending – The City of Richmond recruits its force from local cities; therefore, wages need to be competitive with those local cities. Why not include Oakland and Martinez in

the comparison? According to Chief French, there is a turnover of personnel going to cities which pay higher wages.

(3) 2019 RPD Arrests- 15.2% for violent crimes, the arrests for other crimes could be a result of good policing policies to prevent escalation to a violent act. Has this been studied? Should more money be redirected to these policies and programs?

(4) Incidents Responded to by Community Crisis Response Program – include mental patient, welfare check and drunk in public, etc. What other cities have implemented this procedure? How successful are they? Whereas some of these incidents might require more of an administrative role (ie. missing person, missing juvenile) others could easily escalate to a situation requiring police support (ie. suspicious vehicle or unwanted person). Therefore, it would be imperative to examine what successful programs have been implemented in other similar cities.

(5) Proposed investments of Funds – how were these budget increases determined? What are the specific programs that will be added? What studies at other cities support adding these programs to reduce crime rates? What are the criteria benchmarks for success? Have grants been investigated to provide financial support of additional programs?

(6) Community Crisis Responses Program proposal – references programs in Oakland and Sacramento. What services do these programs provide? How long have the cities had these programs? How do they measure success?

Katrinka Ruk
Executive Director
Council of Business & Industries
510)260-4820 cell
www.councilofindustries.com

From: [Kimberly Berger](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#); reimaginerichmond510@gmail.com
Subject: Public comments agenda item E1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

Hello,

I strongly support the Reimagine Public Safety Community Task Force proposals!
They will benefit our community and uplift residents.

Thank you,
Kimberly Berger

From: [Kyle Janssen](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments- Agenda Item: Task Force Budget Proposal
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:19 PM

Dear City Council,

Thank you for taking the time to hear the proposal by the Reimagine Safety Task-Force. This group is doing work mandated by the people, and is proposing a plan that could be the future of what safety can truly be in our community. I ask you to please accept their budget proposal and support the efforts of this work.

Thank you,
Kyle Janssen
Richmond Resident
Dist. 6

From: [Laura Thomas](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Agenda Item E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:23 PM

My name is Laura Thomas, a Richmond resident and homeowner for over 10 years. I support Richmond Re-imagining Public Safety and their proposal to re-allocate \$10 million from the RPD budget in order to fund crucial community services.

I believe the scope of RPD's responsibilities is too broad. As someone who suffers from mania as a result of my Bi-polar disorder I have been 5150'd by RPD three times.

I believe my privilege combined with RPD's good intentions resulted in a positive outcome for me overall. I also believe my situation would be better handled by mental health care providers rather than officers and handcuffs.

My mania has never resulted in suicidal or homicidal ideations and the fear and trauma I have sustained as a mentally ill patient in need of care and support in those challenging times is not because RPD did anything wrong, it's because they are not the people who should be receiving/answering the call when my mania takes hold. I respect and appreciate RPD's mission to provide community policing but no amount of community focused police work can replace the need for mental health care workers.

I believe RPD can better serve and protect if we significantly lighten the load of what they are expected to do. This can only happen if we divest funding of RPD and fund critical community services.

Thank you for your consideration,
Laura Thomas

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Join the [Richmond Shoreline Alliance](#) in the fight for environmental justice.

From: [Laurie Isenberg](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: public comments – agenda item #E-1, meeting 5/10/21
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

Please do not cut the Richmond Police officer budget.

I think that we need more police assistance in Richmond, not less. And then we should also add mental health specialists who can partner with and/or be backed up by police. I would not want to send mental health specialists out into harm's way without police protection. Bring in mental health professionals, but NOT at the cost of reducing the regular police force.

And yes, I am appalled by police violence. But cutting the police force in a high crime area is definitely NOT a good move. Do you hear the nightly gunfire, fireworks, sideshows? Has your catalytic converter been stolen? Your home broken into? Do you have prostitutes and johns on your block? Don't tell me that the johns just need counseling. Was a man selling dope in your driveway yesterday? Do you want some poor social worker to get shot when they try to peel that man off your driveway?

Calling the police budget "public safety" and then suggesting that mental health or social workers will be part of the public safety budget is disingenuous. An attempt to obfuscate.

I am a staunch leftie and I believe that Black Lives Matter and that homelessness and addiction should be hit from all sides, especially from the root. But let's not pretend that there isn't real crime here.

I beg of you, do not cut Richmond's police force.

Laurie Isenberg
Richmond, North & East

From: [Leisa Johnson](#)
To: [Tom Butt - external](#); [Nat Bates](#); [Demnlus Johnson](#); [Gayle McLaughlin](#); [Eduardo Martinez](#); [Melvin Willis](#); [Claudia Jimenez](#)
Cc: [Bisa French](#); [Laura Snideman](#); [City Clerk Dept](#); [Leisa Johnson](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Item E-1, Reimagining Public Safety Task Force Proposal, 10MAY2021
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 5:44:15 PM

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers:

I think we all see & understand the concerns around bad policing, issues with the "blue wall", and qualified immunity. Richmond is not perfect, but we have also been a national model for how things can change when you have effective community policing and engagement. We can't ignore what has worked, defund it and decimate our force down to a number that is simply insufficient to effectively serve a city with this large of a geographical footprint & its history.

Are there programs that should be explored and/or potentially expanded? Absolutely.

However, we should not be stripping limited and vital Richmond tax dollars from RPD to pay for certain programs (e.g., homelessness, mental health) that the County, State and Federal government should be supporting since they are **regional, state and national issues**.

Make no mistake, we need policies that effectively address very real issues that disproportionately affect people of color, not policies that willingly and dangerously create new ones.

You claim you represent ALL Richmond residents, so please do your job and pass policy that serves & protects ALL of us equally.

I think the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force proposal to take \$10.3M from RPD, resulting in the loss of an estimated 35 sworn officer positions, is reckless and will not be in the best interests of our entire community.

1. Per the National League of Cities ARPA presentation (<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/57795/National-League-of-California-Cities-Presentation---March-16-2021?bidId=>), slide 5:

Use of Funds

- *Respond to the COVID-19 emergency and address its economic effects, including through aid to households, small businesses, nonprofits, and industries such as tourism and hospitality.*
- *Provide premium pay to essential employees or grants to their employers. Premium pay couldn't exceed \$13 per hour or \$25,000 per worker.*
- *Provide government services affected by a revenue reduction resulting from COVID-19.*
- *Make investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure.*

- *State cannot use the funds towards pensions or to offset revenue resulting from a tax cut enacted since March 3, 2021. Local governments cannot use the funds towards pensions.*

- *State and local governments could transfer funds to private nonprofit groups, public benefit corporations involved in passenger or cargo transportation, and special-purpose*

units of state or local governments.

Based on the guidance above, it sounds like these ARPA funds could potentially be used to fund private nonprofit groups (e.g., SOS!) and special-purpose units of local gov'ts (e.g., ONS).

That being said, I respectfully request this Council to consider using some of the \$20.8M in ARPA money over the next two years be used to fund **pilot programs**, with **clearly defined metrics of success & failure**, that encompass **some of the ideas** proposed by the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force **and**, importantly, which a **majority** of Richmond residents support.

To that end, the City needs to conduct a **comprehensive & confidential survey of its entire community** (>110,000 residents) -- not just the few individuals that served on the task force - - to understand how they feel about reallocating \$10.3M from RPD's budget and losing an additional 35 sworn officer positions. And are they supportive of instead using one-time ARPA funds to fund pilot public safety initiatives over two years.

Some of these proposals need to be much more thoroughly reviewed & vetted by the Public before they are even considered for funding (see below).

2. Again, any one-time potential ARPA funds that could be applied should be used to support programs that are Richmond's responsibility and **not** that of the County, State or Federal government (e.g., homelessness, mental health services).

3. A key point which a majority of task force members have repeatedly failed to recognize and incorporate into their proposal is that mental health crisis counselors routinely request / require that a police officer accompany them for their own safety. Yet they want to eliminate 35 more sworn officers.

I spoke with an officer just last week who had spent the past 6 years working as a supporting officer for mental health calls. During those 6 years, none of the mental health counselors he protected lasted a year. Why? They could earn equal or higher pay in a county desk job and not put their own personal safety at risk.

So I ask you, who will accompany these mental health crisis counselors?

How do you seriously plan to provide these counselors with the protection they need and deserve if you simultaneously cut an additional 35 sworn officer positions?

Even with today's RPD understaffed numbers, if those mental health calls take the few sworn officers on duty that we currently have, you still leave the rest of the community under-served and under-protected.

If you think you get no police response now to property crimes, theft, sideshows, reckless driving/speeding, fireworks, human trafficking, drugs — it will only get worse.

The morale in our police department will further erode and expect more to leave.

- It takes ~ 1 year to get a rookie officer fully trained. **We can't hire our way out of a crisis of too few sworn officers.**
- We have our first female police chief ever. Why should she stay when you would completely undercut her?
- On April 27th, the City had two back-to-back homicides. Because RPD is already severely understaffed, this required RPD to call in both off-duty officers as well as mutual aid from other jurisdictions.
- We are already incurring significant overtime. Do you seriously think the Public is going to buy this proposal, cutting 35 sworn officer positions, and incurring **less** overtime?
- We can't currently meet the state's mandate for 911 response time for dispatchers to pick up the calls. Because our dispatchers are understaffed, sworn officers are being trained and answering these calls.

To consider culling another 35 sworn officer positions is insanity.

4. Oakland recently re-allocated \$10M back to their police dep't after their homicide rate tripled. Oakland also just released their draft budget and while they reduced the budget for public safety, they did not come anywhere close to cutting it by 50% as many were demanding.

Why? Per Oakland's Mayor, they appropriately conducted a community survey and 78% of survey participants said they did **not** support drastically cutting OPD's budget.

5. I am asking the City conduct a confidential survey of **all of its residents/households**, akin to what Oakland did, **before** they make any decisions on how to proceed. Many people are ignorant of what is happening. Moreover, many are not comfortable speaking up in public given the sensitivity around policing in this country and need a mechanism by which they feel they can anonymously express their concerns.

6. I support Daniel Barth & SOS! and think many will agree that they have done a tremendous amount of good for our community and stepped up when our County, State & Federal government have failed to do so. Their efforts have been one shining moment throughout this crisis.

Again, this is a regional, state and national issue that should be funded via County, State & Federal dollars. Why should Richmond's already limited budget be used to support this?

Moreover, why is SOS! asking for **\$3M per year** (\$3.4M for year 1) when the services they provide are being sold to the Public as **"temporary"**?

Remember, the RV Safe Parking Program was being sold to the Public as a temporary "one year" program, which we all knew was not factual.

There is, however, no accounting for declining numbers of homelessness in this proposed model which is asking for a lot of Richmond taxpayer money, at the expense of RPD.

If they are expecting the same \$3M in funding “after the first year”, by default this proposal is saying that our homeless problem is supposed to continue to grow at the same rate every year while the City & County simultaneously claim they will be transitioning people in need off the streets and into shelters and other **transitional** forms of housing in route to stable housing.

Where are the timelines? Where are the partners that must be brought in to support an expansion like this?

So many questions and a lack of substance in a proposal that is requesting \$3M+ per year, and which again, should be funded by the County, State & Feds.

7. I respectfully request the Council to help the Public understand which programs are critically needed to support our youth and which are not already funded by existing programs and initiatives like the one voters passed in 2018 - Richmond Kids First Initiative.

In closing, if our police need more training & help in overcoming "the blue wall", then focus on that. When we are already understaffed and require mutual aid from neighboring jurisdictions with their own training & practices — how does that best serve our community?

I will repeat what I said earlier. We need policies that effectively address very real issues that disproportionately affect people of color, not policies that willingly and dangerously create new ones.

Respectfully,

Leisa

21-year Richmond resident & community advocate

From: [Lucielle Riley](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item: Reimagine Public Safety Task Force
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

To whom it may concern:

I have been a Richmond homeowner for over ten years. I support my tax dollars being reallocated from the police budget to the Reimagine Public Safety Campaign proposals. Richmond has become a model for police reform. I support our city council expanding the definition of how we "keep the peace" in Richmond.

Respectfully,
Lucielle Riley
3107 Fiesta Court
Richmond, CA 94803
415-342-6433

From: [Madalyn Law](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Reimagining Public Safety Community Task Force Item E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM
Attachments: [Police Reimagining Concerns.docx](#)

Attached is a letter of concern from Park Plaza Neighborhood Council.

May 4, 2021



Mayor Butt and Richmond City Council,

As a long-time resident (42 years) and President of the Park Plaza Neighborhood Council, I would like to address the possible upcoming decision regarding the re-imagining of our Police Department. First, I would like to question why the city council saw it necessary to develop a task force with outside appointees, to decide how we, the residents of Richmond, should run our police department. That gives the appearance that we do not have responsible residents in Richmond with the fore thought and ability to create a way for our police to function more efficiently. Although it has not yet been made public, we understand that the recommendation of the task force is to reduce funding to the police department by \$10 million. If this is true, know that we do not agree with the recommendation. Our police department is already understaffed and overworked. Reducing funding by \$10 million would undoubtedly risk the safety of both residents and officers. We should be considering ways to attract more officers to ensure our police department has the ability to best protect our city.

We are also aware that the city has or will receive resources from the State and Federal Government for COVID 19 recovery. Instead of redirecting resources from the police department, the Covid 19 money can be used to fund programs within the city that need funding. We all agree that we need funding for more mental health services and additional youth programs. We implore you to consider other options to provide funding for these services without depleting our Police Department. We are one of the few cities with a Police Department that successfully practices Community Policing. For those of you who remember, long gone are the days of the “Cowboys” and we should be proud of our progress. We should look to continue that progress by building our police force, building morale, and cultivating relationships between the community and our officers, not retreating. And yes, there is a national call to “defund the police”. However, that is not a practical option in every situation, and Richmond is one of those situations.

As the leadership of this city, it is in your best interest to have the constituents in favor of the decisions you make on our behalf. A final decision is not appropriate until all Neighborhood Councils have an opportunity to give feedback on how the task force recommendations could impact our communities.

As President of Park Plaza Neighborhood Council, we are recommending that the city council not reduce police funding but identify ways to fully staff our police department and find other resources to fund the mental health services and youth programs our City needs.

Respectfully Submitted

Madalyn Law, President
Park Plaza Neighborhood Council

From: [Molly](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Let's not defund !
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:21 PM

We now have a model police department thanks to the community policing program ! There is always room for improvement or enhancements but let's focus on those and not throw out the baby with the bath water.

Margaret Provance
Pt Richmond

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Marina Zubareva](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Agenda Item: E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

Good afternoon,

I am a Richmond resident, teacher and mother.

I want a safe community for my daughter to grow up in. Today, **that is not possible**. The police who swear to protect us, spend their time and our taxes exploiting the law and those most vulnerable among us.

How can we in good faith continue to fund an institution that lacks transparency, accountability and responsibility?

Our taxes should be used to support youth services, mental health services, and get our unsheltered community members off the street.

Vote to defund the police and fund services that help Richmond GROW!

Marina Zubareva

From: [Mary Marsella](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: "public comments agenda item Reimagining Public Safety Task Force
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:03 PM

During the pandemic in 2020 and until now, I've witnessed behaviors in my neighbors that I'd never seen or heard before.

Some of it was simple positive interaction. At other times, it was psychotic outbursts difficult to ignore. On one occasion, the police were called and 7 black richmond police SUVs were parked near the residence of the person having this psychotic moment. There was little the police could do, as handcuffing her in that moment would accelerate her reaction. I got closer and when she saw me, she called out a name- not my own. I answered her and said take a deep breathe. Relax. She actually tried that. I'm not a mental health professional, I just practice meditation and I felt that who this person needed at this time was someone well trained in mental health and in bringing people to calm in such moments. Richmond does not have that now.

I think Richmond cops need to respond other types of danger. I thing they also need mental health training AND mental health support for all the trauma they face daily. They need the space to process the violence and bad actors they see so that they themselves aren't believing in negative mindsets of fear and unprocessed emotions that lead to violence.

Please, please, please, be proactive about truly meeting the needs of the community and the police with respect to mental health. There are a lot of well trained people out there who have solutions. Get them on board!

Mary

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Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: [Meredith Benz](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: public comments—agenda item # E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:05 PM

Dear Mayor Butt and City Council Members,
Re: Special Meeting 05/10/2021

I do not support defunding the Police in the City of Richmond. Because the City of Richmond hired Chief Magnus— who made an important and significant contribution by introducing the policies of Community Policing to Richmond and this legacy has been carried on by our current Chief French. We have no need for defunding.

I believe Linda Hemilla's letter to the City and the statistics on our policing are a clear argument not to defund.

Thank you, Meredith Benz—Richmond Resident since 1972

From: [Rebecca Sedillo](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments- Agenda Item: Task Force Budget Proposal
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:19 PM

Dear Richmond City Council,

My name is Rebecca Martinez. I am a Richmond resident and nurse practitioner working in public health and harm reduction for people who use substances.

I support the Reimagine Richmond Task Force budget proposal and recommendations to reallocate \$10 million from the Richmond Police Force to fund the Community Crisis Response Program, Safe Organized Spaces and the Office of Neighborhood Safety.

As a nurse practitioner and public health professional, I strongly believe that preventing disease, violence, and harm in our communities is more meaningful, cost-effective work than just responding to disease, violence and harm after they occur. This proposal is brilliant from a public health perspective because it focuses on keeping our communities safe, giving youth job opportunities and reinforcing health systems to respond to health crises that require trained healthcare professionals rather than police officers.

In scenarios involving individuals who are experiencing altered mental status due to substance use or mental health episodes, mobile crisis teams have been shown in medical research to provide both efficient and cost-effective mental health care. We need interventions that will decrease arrests for people experiencing mental health crises and decrease the handling of psychiatric emergencies by police. Rather than relying on county crisis services, which are slow at best and take multiple hours before a mental health professional can be on the scene, Richmond could benefit immensely from having our own community crisis response program. Since the current system is failing our community members experiencing mental health crises and puts them at risk of harm or death at the hands of police officers, we need to identify a new way to support them in their moment of need. I believe this proposal is sound and should be passed by City Council.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Martinez, MS, RN, FNP-C

From: [Richard Brabham](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENTS Agenda Item # E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:03 PM

I am in strong opposition to reducing the budget for the Richmond Police Department. The Re imagining Public Safety Task force idea to take \$8.3 million will destroy the decade of work around community policing and the progress made in reducing crime on all levels. We are already short staffed in the department as it is. I fully support using various mental health and crisis personnel on many types of calls, but not at the expense of the officers. We can be proud of the training and policies put into place by former Chief Chris Magnus. We need to expand on that and introduce the crisis teams, along with our officers.

I feel that cutting the budget will put me and Richmond residents in more jeopardy.

Thanks,

Richard Brabham

From: [Rita Barouch](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Cc: [Claudia Jimenez](#); [Melvin Willis](#)
Subject: Public comments agenda item Reimagining Public Safety Task Force
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:19 PM

Good evening Richmond City Council persons and Mayor Butt,

My experiences as a Contra Costa County public health social worker for over 23 years leads me to strongly support the visionary proposals submitted by the Reimagining Richmond Task force.

I continually assessed the needs of Richmond women who were pregnant and parenting to promote health families. The negative impacts of unemployment, homelessness, domestic and community violence on maternal and child health outcomes were evident. Too many of my pregnant clients lost the support of the father of their baby due to violence, incarceration and/or deportation. We referred clients to community based job training, violence prevention, and/or substance abuse treatment programs but they faced long waiting lists and staff shortages.

This is your opportunity to reorient our funding priorities. I strongly encourage you to approve the reallocation of \$10.3 Million to fund the proposed new safety programs. We can improve the lives of Richmond families by funding programs that address the root causes of public safety issues.

Sincerely yours,

Rita Barouch M.S.W.
Member of Board of Consulting Editors, Journal for Progressive
Human Services
Richmond resident

From: [Sadie Egan](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

Hello,

My name is Sadie and I grew up in Richmond and am now raising my family here. First I want to thank the task force for their dedicated work towards reimagining community safety. I have been so inspired and hopeful listening to the meetings, I thank you all.

I am in full support of the proposals to cut RPD by 25 FTE to fund programs that support our neighbors and children in need. Police do not reduce crime, they do not have the education, life experience, or skillset to effectively help people struggling with mental health, drug addiction, housing, poverty, conflict management, etc. Spending over 40% of our budget on RPD is an ineffective and dangerous waste of money and resources. No amount of training will make a police officer capable in these areas and we cannot continue to pay large salaries for people to do jobs they are not equipped, trained or interested in doing. Police do not reduce crime, this has been shown in countless studies, including the data right here in Richmond. We must restructure our public support systems and we must do it now. This is long overdue and our Black and brown community members are paying the price every day.

City councilmembers: I beg you to have the courage to radically reimagine what safety means in Richmond. We need to create systems that support and care for our people. A budget is a moral document and you will be remembered for maintaining an ineffective status quo OR building for a more just and caring Richmond.

Thank you

From: saratheiss@aol.com
To: [City Clerk Dept; reimaginerichmond510@gmail.com](mailto:City_Clerk_Dept_reimaginerichmond510@gmail.com)
Cc: reimaginerichmond510@gmail.com
Subject: Public comments agenda item E1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:19 PM

Dear Council Members and Mayor Butts,

As a Richmond resident, I strongly support the recommendations of the Reimagine Public Safety Community Task Force. The recommendations are evidence-based and in line with the need to relieve police officers from certain tasks that they are not suited for. ONS has already saved the city millions. Changing the way our community is police will have vast benefits for the community and ultimately the police. I urge you to approve all these recommendations. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Sara Theiss
4613 Wildwood Court
Richmond CA 94803

From: [Savitri Khalsa](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Cc: [Laura Snideman](#); [Tom Butt - external](#); [Bisa French](#); [Nat Bates](#); [Claudia Jimenez](#); [Eduardo Martinez](#); [Gayle McLaughlin](#); [Demnlus Johnson](#); [Melvin Willis](#); [Teresa Stricker](#)
Subject: May 10, 2021; Item E-1; Public Safety
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:21 PM

May 10, 2021

Dear Richmond City Councillors, City Mayor, City Manager, City Attorney, and City Staff,

Thank you for considering the suggested programs presented by the Reimaging Public Safety group of volunteers. I appreciate the enthusiasm and time this group of individuals has put into thinking about public safety within the city of Richmond, CA.

My family and I live in Richmond and DO NOT support the proposals presented by this committee. We prefer that the city fully fund our police department.

If the council feels any of the suggested ideas generated by the Reimaging Public Safety group are worthy of funding then please find alternative funding and run these programs for 1 year, as trial programs with funding from other sources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Savitri Khalsa

Sent from my iPad

From: [senia alegrya](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item E1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:18 PM

dear city council and community,

my name is senia. i got siblings, friends who grew up in Richmond and were misguided as a youth. who struggled and resorted to stealing to dealing drugs.who have been incarcerated and have had that on their records for decades. who had to resort to these things because they were poor, because their schools neglected them. because the city of richmond neglected them. that all could have been prevented. these are good people who deserved a chance in life

i wish more than anything they had the types of opportunities and programs like YOUTHWORKS that we have now. i had a wonderful experience with YOUTHWORKS where i got my first job and was able to provide for my family. i believe taking care of our youth at a young age is what will prevent crime. not policing. im so happy that these programs exist, and that we have this opportunity to defund rpd and reinvest more money to **ONE THOUSAND YOUTH**. thank you all so much for considering us young folks in these proposals. we are always left out of the conversation, but its our future that we're working to improve. i fully support these proposals and urge all of you city council members to support them too.

From: [Susan Rattray](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comments - agenda item #E-1 (city council meeting for May 10) - "Reimagining Public Safety"
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

Hello Mayor and city council members,

Please do not take any funding whatever from the Richmond Police Department. We need our police. First, the police department should be FULLY FUNDED and FULLY STAFFED. After that, please consider additional training for our police officers so that they can respond properly to the various situations they must deal with.

We need MORE funding, not less!

Sincerely,
Susan Rattray
North & East neighborhood

From: [Tania Pulido](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment for Agenda item E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:22 PM

Dear Richmond City Council,

My name is Tania Pulido. I am a Richmond resident and care deeply about the community. I support defunding the police to support community response teams that can address mental health and other situations in the community that should not be criminalized. I support the Reimagine Public Safety recommendations to invest in programs that will create alternatives to police and strengthen programs like ONS to grow capacity within. We need a 24/7 community crisis response team that can support Richmond residents and help responded to the 38% of calls for Health and Disturbing the peace-related incidents that the RPD is currently trying to address. We must break the cycle of over-policing and move towards alternative police response teams. We need to make the investments today, or else we will fall into the same cycle that we know does not work. Over policing, incarceration, and tickets do not make communities safer. Systems of care, rehabilitation, therapy, counseling, mentorships, true mutual aid, make communities safe. I urge the council to invest in proven solutions that help people and make communities safer.

From: [Taylor Kennedy](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comment-Agenda Item: Task Force Budget Proposal
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

I am a Richmond resident and an educator writing in to express my full support for reallocating 10.3 million back into our communities. Speaking as an educator for students with disabilities who experience mental health crisis, I have been forced to make the incredibly difficult and scary decision of calling police. In these situations I find myself on the phone with 911 Dispatchers trying to provide a rapid education in how to interact with students with disabilities in crisis. The responding officers are not equip to handle these situations and these police interactions time and time again lead to further escalation from the students who already have a traumatic past of experiences with the police. We need a better solution. We need to invest our communities money in providing comprehensive emergency mental health crisis intervention with trained personnel who do not carry weapons. I can not say loudly enough that our community needs more mental health resources, community outreach programs,resources for families, and homeless outreach.

Thank you
Taylor Kennedy

From: [Tomas Hernandez](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment for Agenda Item: E-1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:21 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hello Richmond City Council,

As a Richmond City voter and resident, I strongly urge you to vote in favor of funding (\$10.3 million) the community Task Force. We know that policing DOES NOT keep our communities safe. I worry for the safety of my children, family, and neighbors when they are out in the community. It is the time to dismantle the system of policing in America, and instead invest in REAL community safety. We keep us safe. Listen to the Black, Indigenous, and POC community members of Richmond who know how to actually uplift and empower our community.

Vote to FUND COMMUNITY and DEFUND RPD!

All the Best,

Tomas Hernandez

Video Production Manager

Micro Focus

4555 Great America Parkway

Santa Clara, CA 95054

Mobile +1 415-515-2515

USA – PST



From: [Vahe Minassian](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public Comments — Agenda Item E1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:20 PM

To whom this may concern,

I am extremely concerned with the behavior of this city council. It appears as if this city council is trying to forcefully and drastically reduce the police budget without taking into consideration the repercussions of this.

By reducing the police budget by \$10 million dollars, 33 sworn positions will be lost, multiple other sworn officers will eventually leave and the ones remaining won't have the support or confidence to conduct their jobs properly.

If the city council votes to defund our police, our city council will directly be responsible for endangering the lives of the families that live and work here.

Oakland tried to defund the police but it didn't work. They've had a drastic increase in murders during the last two years, in fact, they have 3 times as many murders this year as they did last year and they're on pace for having a record breaking homicide rate. Is that what we're aspiring for? Is that what we consider a progressive movement?

Everyone deserves professional policing but good policing doesn't start or end with defunding the police or drastically reducing the police budget, especially in a city which is historically known for having a high crime rate.

We should be proud of the Richmond Police Department, this organization is the only entity protecting the lives of the people that live and work here. If this city council votes to reduce the police, our city will lose any and all progress that it's made over the course of the past 20-30 years and once again we'll have a drastic increase in crime. The sad result of this is innocent lives will be lost and the police will not have the necessary tools to preform their duty.

Please come to your senses, you are all putting our lives in danger.

Regards

Vahe Minassian

Sent from my iPhone

From: wiltsassociates@att.net
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Reducing Richmond's Police Budget
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:47:04 PM

I don't think there should be much debate about the impact of cutting Police budgets. The effect is an increase in crime rates: NY city, Portland, Seattle, Chicago, to name a few, and I would expect Oakland and SF rates, while not reported, are up too. To date I do not believe an initiative in this area has yet been classified as a success. If the city wants to experiment with this (in my opinion) crazy idea, fund alternative intervention programs, but don't reduce police funding until the effectiveness of these alternatives is established.

I believe that simplistic platitudes, trite tautologies, and overloaded aphorisms are poor substitutes for respectful and rational discussions about complex issues.
And: go nuclear or go extinct.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [yoli aceves](#)
To: [City Clerk Dept](#)
Subject: Public comment agenda item E1
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 4:48:21 PM

To the Richmond city council,

As a brown person and native to the Bay Area for 56 years and presently living in Richmond the police department has never been our friend. I would like to insist that all funds go to community task force and NOT to the police department. Though I have met very few individual earnest officer, the police department as a whole has never been part of and for the community. We are always looked as criminals and not the law bidding community that we are. It's time to truly start a new and put our money where it will nurture a safe community. Study after study shows when we have strong foundation in education, medical and housing we have a more safe, and thriving community. I urge you to be bold and put the money to community not policing.

Sincerely,
Yoland Aceves

Sent from my iPhone