



Office of the City Manager

August 24, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From *DWR* Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Re: Update on Re-Imagining Public Safety

On July 14, 2020, City Council adopted an omnibus package to re-imagine public safety and policing in the City of Berkeley. The omnibus package consisted of numerous elements including, but not limited to the following:

- Having the City Auditor perform an analysis of City's emergency 9-1-1 calls-for-service and responses, as well as analysis of the Berkeley Police Department's (BPD) budget.
- Analyzing and developing a pilot program to re-assign non-criminal police service calls to a Specialized Care Unit.
- Creating plans and protocols for calls for service to be routed and assigned to alternative preferred responding entities and consider placing dispatch in the Fire Department or elsewhere outside the Police Department.
- Analyzing litigation outcomes and exposure for city departments in order to guide the creation of City policy to reduce the impact of settlements on the General Fund.
- Engaging a qualified firm(s) or individual(s) to lead a robust, inclusive, and transparent community engagement process with the goal of achieving a new and transformative model of positive, equitable and community-centered safety for Berkeley.
- Pursuing the creation of a Berkeley Department of Transportation ("BerkDoT") to ensure a racial justice lens in traffic enforcement and the development of transportation policy, programs and infrastructure, and identify and implement approaches to reduce and/or eliminate the practice of pretextual stops based on minor traffic violations

Subsequent to the adoption of the omnibus package, the City established a multi-department working group to oversee and implement various components of the package. The working group consists of the following:

- City Manager;
- Deputy City Managers;

- City Attorney;
- Fire Chief;
- Health, Housing and Community Services (HHCS) Director;
- Human Resources Director;
- Police Chief; and
- Public Works Director.

Weekly coordinating meetings have been established, as well as an organizational structure that will enable city staff to advance the various referrals in the omnibus package at the same time.

Our work to advance the omnibus package has been organized in the following manner:

- HHCS Director, Lisa Warhuus, is leading the work to develop a Specialized Care Unit pilot program.
- Interim Fire Chief, Abe Roman, is leading the work to develop a plan for priority dispatching.
- City Attorney, Farimah Brown, is managing the analysis of litigation claims and settlements.
- The Public Safety / Police Re-Imagining and community engagement process will be led by Deputy City Manager David White. Deputy City Manager White will also be supporting the City Manager by providing overall project management support to the team.
- BerkDoT will be led by our Public Works Director, Liam Garland.

### **Current Updates (*for the July 27, 2021 City Council Meeting*)**

The following provides a brief overview of what has been accomplished since the last update to City Council on May 25, 2021.

- Priority Dispatching
  - A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued April 27, 2021, to seek proposals from qualified firms to assist the City in transitioning to a prioritized fire and medical dispatch system.
  - A team consisting of staff from the Fire Department reviewed the proposals that were submitted to the City and four (4) firms were recommended for interviews that occurred on July 26, 2021. The top-ranked firm resulting from the interviews will be invited to meet with subject matter experts in both the Information Technology and Fire Departments. The discussion with subject matter experts will inform the scope of work, timing, and deliverables.

- It is currently anticipated that vendor selection will occur by August 26, 2021.
- Specialized Care Unit (SCU)
  - The SCU steering committee, with support from RDA, is wrapping up the community engagement process. This process has utilized focus groups, forums, and written feedback to engage diverse groups and individuals that have lived experience with crisis response (as clients and/or as responders) to inform the best SCU model for Berkeley. The findings of this process will be analyzed and shared in September 2021 as a function of:
    - Alternative Crisis Response Models & Best Practices Research,
    - Current State & Community Outreach Findings, and
    - SCU Model Recommendations for Berkeley.

All of these findings will be the foundation for finalizing the design and implementing the SCU.

- To increase supports for community members on the verge of crisis right now, the SCU steering committee has been assessing service provider capacity to increase pre-crisis services and will be finalizing the service model and initiating implementation in August 2021. Such services will not serve as or replace the SCU, but are considered essential to getting much needed supports to the community until the SCU is fully functional.
- Public Safety and Police Re-imagining Community Engagement
  - (Background) On December 15, 2020, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a contract with the National Institute of Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) to conduct research, analysis, and use its expertise to develop reports and recommendations for community safety and police reform as well as plan, develop, and lead an inclusive and transparent community engagement process to help the City achieve a new and transformative model of positive, equitable and community-centered safety for Berkeley.
    - City staff from the City Manager's Office continue to meet with NICJR to discuss project deliverables under their Scope of Work, prepare for Task Force meetings, review timelines and coordinate their work with other initiatives that are ongoing in the City surrounding reimagining public safety.
    - At the July 29, 2021 Task Force meeting, NICJR will present the results of the community survey and community listening sessions that have been performed to date and will provide an overview of their draft "Alternative Responses" Report that was submitted to the Task Force. The "Alternative Responses" Report evaluates Police Department calls-for-service and provides a framework to discuss the potential to re-assign certain calls for service to alternate service

providers and/or community-based organizations. After discussing this report at their July 29, 2021 meeting, the Task Force will be asked to provide comments and feedback to NICJR when they convene in September 2021.

- [Reimagining Public Safety Task Force \(Task Force\)](#)<sup>1</sup>
  - (Enabling legislation for background only) On January 19, 2021, the City Council adopted [revisions to the enabling legislation for the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force](#)<sup>2</sup>.
  - Since the last update provided to City Council, the Task Force has met on numerous occasions (June 10, 2021, June 30, 2021, and July 8, 2021), with a meeting scheduled for this Thursday, July 29, 2021, before the Task Force.
  - Some highlights from recent Task Force meetings include:
    - After incorporating feedback from the Task Force, NICJR submitted their final report on [New and Emerging Models of Community Safety and Policing](#). The report has been posted on the Task Force website<sup>3</sup>.
    - Interim Police Chief Louis and Police Department staff presented to the Task Force on three occasions discussing the Police Department's budget, along with an overview of Patrol Operations, the Field Training Program, Civilian Oversight of the Police Department and the disciplinary process.
    - Dr. Warhuus provided an update, her second, to the Task Force on the work being done to establish the Specialized Care Unit.

As a reminder, the minutes and full video of Task Force meetings are posted on the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force website and all of the materials presented to the Task Force are also available on the Task Force website.

- Community Survey / Engagement
  - On May 19, 2021, reflecting input from the Task Force and city staff, a survey was made available to the community. The survey was available in English and Spanish and was designed to solicit input to help the City design a new model of community safety. The survey closed on June 22, 2021. The City received 2,744 responses to the survey. The results of the survey will be discussed at the July 29, 2021 Task Force meeting and a report providing an overview of survey results is part of the July 29, 2021 Task Force agenda packet.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/RIPST.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City\\_Council/2021/01\\_Jan/Documents/2021-01-19\\_Item\\_18\\_Revisions\\_to\\_Enabling\\_Legislation\\_for\\_Reimagining.aspx](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Clerk/City_Council/2021/01_Jan/Documents/2021-01-19_Item_18_Revisions_to_Enabling_Legislation_for_Reimagining.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level\\_3\\_-\\_Commissions/New%20and%20Emerging%20Models%20of%20Public%20Safety%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_Commissions/New%20and%20Emerging%20Models%20of%20Public%20Safety%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf)

- In addition to discussing the community survey, NICJR will report the results of various listening sessions that have occurred over the past few months. These listening sessions have been facilitated by NICJR and their consultant team, along with Task Force members. Summaries of feedback received at the listening sessions are included in the July 29, 2021 Task Force agenda packet.
  - At the upcoming Task Force meeting, it is anticipated that the Task Force will discuss additional listening sessions that they are hoping to facilitate, as well as the potential for a citywide townhall.
  - In addition to the above, at the July 29, 2021 Task Force meeting, city staff and NICJR will discuss project timelines and deliverables. The Task Force has asked for additional time to plan for and hear from community organizations and other subject matter experts regarding community safety and policing.
  - Finally, early on in the process, the Police Department invited Task Force members to participate in ride-a-longs with Police Officers and sit in the communications center to observe dispatchers. Many Task Force members have participated in these activities that has resulted in deeper knowledge of Police Department operations.
- BerkDoT
- Following the May 19, 2021 presentation to the Task Force, staff has moved forward with the BerkDOT public engagement plan. A community survey is being developed that will engage about 700 Berkeley residents in 15-20-minute interviews on various traffic safety topics. The survey will include contributions from a sub quorum of the Transportation Committee and Charles T. Brown, founder of Equitable Cities, a firm focused on the intersection of transportation, health, and equity. Results from the survey are likely by mid-September.
  - In addition, staff have been in discussions with SEIU and the City's parking enforcement officers who have indicated their opposition to any shift of this function outside the Police Department. City staff hope to continue to engage with SEIU to understand the concerns raised by the Union and parking enforcement staff.

cc: Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager  
David White, Deputy City Manager  
Jenny Wong, City Auditor  
Farimah Brown, City Attorney  
Mark Numainville, City Clerk  
David Brannigan, Fire Chief  
Lisa Warhuus, Director of Health, Housing & Community Services  
LaTanya Bellow, Director of Human Resources  
Jen Louis, Interim Chief of Police  
Liam Garland, Public Works Director  
Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager