



**Reimagining Public Safety
City Council Update
October 26, 2021**

Background (*reference only*)

- 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 groups 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.
 - 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 is now being led by Interim Deputy City Manager LaTanya Bellow. Interim Deputy City Manager Bellow 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 October 26, 2021 City Council Meeting)

The following provides a brief overview of what has been accomplished since the last update to City Council on August 24, 2021.

- Priority Dispatching
 - On October 26, 2021, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a contract with Federal Engineering Inc. to provide consulting services to analyze staffing, infrastructure and technology needs for Berkeley's 911 Communication Center as well as recommend a project plan to help the City implement an accredited prioritized medical dispatch system.
 - Staff is working to develop the scope of work, timing, and deliverables and expect to have the contract executed in November 2021.

- Specialized Care Unit (SCU)
 - Resource Development Associates (RDA) has completed the first of three reports on Crisis Response Models in which they share information, learnings, and best practices among nearly 40 crisis response programs across North America.
 - RDA is finalizing their 2nd report on the community engagement process outcomes this week and 3rd and final report which is recommendations for an SCU for Berkeley by the first week in November. Both of these reports involved analysis of a large volume of materials and so were slightly delayed.
 - Once RDAs reports are complete and made publicly available, the SCU steering committee will work to finalize the planning, protocols, and timelines for roll out of the SCU.
 - The SCU steering committee also worked diligently over the summer on program design for the 1.2 million dollars that City Council allocated to enhance supportive services on the ground while the SCU is being designed. Steering committee members met with a variety of community-based organizations and community groups that currently provide extensive outreach and field services (such as street medicine, emotional support, peer support, and substance use) to understand the needs they are seeing in the community and to assess community capacity for being able to expand their services. This information was then utilized to conduct a Request for Proposals process to expand these services among a variety of agencies. The RFP has closed and proposals are currently being reviewed by a subcommittee of the steering committee.

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 September 30, 2021 Task Force meeting, NICJR presented an alternative responses Tiered Dispatch model which includes, the Community Emergency Response Network (CERN). The CERN model involves a framework with the potential to re-assign certain calls for service to alternate service providers and/or community-based organizations. In response to the [Alternative Responses Report](#)¹ discussion on July 29, 2021, the Task Force put forth feedback and comments to NICJR on the proposed CERN model.

A number of things are on the horizon:

- NICJR will present a draft of the final report to the City on October 29, 2021.
- Also, planned is a series of Community Town Hall meetings to further promote deep community engagement and input into final recommendations. NICJR is coordinating with their team to facilitate sessions throughout the community. The following dates are scheduled:
 - District 1, 2,- November 10th 6:00-8:00 pm PST – virtual platform
 - Downtown Civic District, South Berkeley-District 3,4,-November 15th 6:00-8:00 pm PST – virtual platform
 - November 23rd 6:00-8:00 pm PST –In person- TBD
UC Campus, Southeast Berkeley District 5,6,7,8- November 30th 6:00-8:00 pm PST – virtual platform

¹ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_Commissions/07-27-21%20Combined%20Alternative%20Responses%20Report%20Draft%20with%20Appendices.pdf

- [Reimagining Public Safety Task Force \(Task Force\)²](#)
 - (Enabling legislation for background only) On January 19, 2021, the City Council adopted [revisions to the enabling legislation for the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force³](#)
 - Since the last update provided to City Council, the Task Force has met on numerous occasions (July 29, September 9, 2021, September 30, 2021, October 14), with each meeting lasting around four (4) hours. The next meeting is scheduled for this Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 5pm.

Some highlights from recent Task Force meetings include:

- On July 29, 2021, NICJR submitted their final report on [Community Engagement⁴](#).
- Dr. Lisa Warhuus and Staff presented an overview of Berkeley's Mobile Crisis Team discussing operations, staffing levels and coordination.
- The Task Force extended invitations to several community-based organizations to speak about matters related to public safety and policing.
- Finally, at the upcoming meeting, the Task Force will discuss a process for submitting its final recommendations on reimagining public safety.

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.

² <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/RIPST.aspx>

³ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_Commissions/2021-01-19%20Item%2018%20Revisions%20to%20Enabling%20Legislation%20for%20Reimagining.pdf

⁴ https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Clerk/Level_3_-_Commissions/CE-presentation-Final.pdf

- In addition to the community survey, NICJR compiled the results of twelve 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. The overview and summary of results has been posted on the Task Force website².
 - Finally, at the October 14 Task Force meeting, NICJR discussed a potential schedule for Community Townhalls. NICJR is coordinating with their team and the Task Force to support outreach to the community.
- BerkDoT
- Following the May 19, 2021 presentation to the Task Force, the public engagement process for BerkDOT continues and is being advised by the Transportation Commission's subcommittee dedicated to this issue. A recent citywide survey included a randomized sampling of 550 residents and additional sampling of black and Latinx Berkeleyans to ensure responses within each demographic group are sufficient to reports survey results with a margin of error less than 10% in those groups. To supplement with input from groups likely to be left out by such a survey, listening sessions are being held for people of color who work (but don't live) in Berkeley, are high school or college students, or parts of minority religious communities. The survey and listening sessions will conclude at the of October after which staff will incorporate this input into preliminary recommendations.