
Alameda Police Reforms and Racial Equity Steering Committee Presentation to:

— City Council Meeting —
Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Alameda Police Reforms and Racial Equity Steering Committee Members

— Christine Chilcott
Cheryl Taylor

Al Mance
Jolene Wright

Policing In America Looks Different for Different People

3:26   

Messages

Thread

 **Timothy Burke** 
@bubbaprogram

Cops are taking selfies with the terrorists.



12.6M views

12:42 PM · 1/6/21 · [TweetDeck](#)

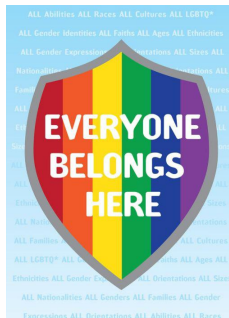
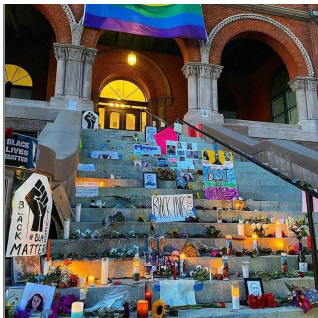
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United States Park Police officers push back protesters during a Black Lives Matter demonstration near the White House, June 1, 2020.

Roberto Schmidt / Getty Images

Everyone Belongs Here!



Education vs. Experience: Where Are You in Terms of Racism



“This quote applies to Alameda’s history and Alameda’s present... there are those of us who don’t find the history new (or something) and who experience these sorts of incidents in the present.”

A Timeline of Racism In Alameda

- The Ohlone are living on the land that later becomes Alameda for 3000 years. They are completely gone from this land by the year 1801, having been converted (baptized), run away, or died.
- Housing in Alameda was segregated for Black people to certain areas of the city. Although this was not the case for Asians, in 1870, White people blamed Asians for an economic downturn in California and the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring any additional Asian people into the United States, was enacted in 1882, later ending in 1952. Anti-Asian sentiment in the Oakland-Alameda area led to economic harassment, legal and physical attacks, and a violation of freedoms.
- June 15, 1925 Fernside Conditions, covenants and restrictions (CC&Rs) limited occupancy: No person or persons other than Caucasian said property...except in the status of domestic servants...No person of African, Japanese, Chinese or of any Mongolian descent shall be allowed to purchase, own, or lease said property or any part thereof. Racially restrictive covenants were made illegal by the Fair Housing Act of 1968; Fernside residents voted to remove clause sixteen from its CC&Rs in 1969, but it was only officially removed 10 years later.
- There were 200 Black people living in Alameda prior to the war. In 1945 there was 6000 largely due to the naval base. On **March 16, 1943 (78 years ago TODAY)**, Mayor Milton Godfrey called on Alameda's City Manager to report "on the problem of the increased negro population" due to the influx of war workers and the housing shortage. Based on Census information, this number dropped to 4500 in 1950, 3100 in 1960, and 1800 by 1970.

A Timeline of Racism In Alameda cont.

- **In 1991**, an audit found that some APD officers exchanged racist messages from the Mobile Digital Terminals "MDT" in their patrol cars. Officers texted statements about donning Blackface, dressing up as Ku Klux Klan members and shooting Black people.
- **July 2012**, Alameda Police detained, arrested, and "violently beat" a mentally and disabled man suspected of stealing a phone charger (which was never found). The man (of color) was left with a broken left arm, a fractured right elbow and injuries to his neck and leg. The city settled with the man in 2015 for \$450,000.
- **May 2020**, Mali Watkins. Police, responding to a non-emergency report of a Black man "dancing" in the street handcuffed Mr. Watkins and wrestled him to the ground. An investigation by the D.A.'s office later concluded that the police did not have probable cause to detain Mr. Watkins.
- Anti-Asian negative comments (specific to race) increased during the **2016** presidential election as did anti-Black comments during the rise of the Black Lives Matter protests. Anti-Asian

Experiences Described by Impacted Communities

"As a younger man, my sister would always tell me to get out of Alameda before night, there is a good chance you will be pulled over... that kind of kept me from enjoying sunsets in Alameda... I started thinking about things we should be able to access, having a future where every space is safe and people are welcome." - Alameda Artist

"That is the biggest no-no, In order to breathe, you have to also inhale. What happens in these cases, the cops are on people's backs, they compress the chest, the person can't inhale." - Attorney Ben Nisenbaum describing events on Buena Vista Ave, resulting in a wrongful death suit.

"My name could have been on there, ... I was assaulted by four police officers. I cried and told the officers, I can't breathe, you got to get off of me." - Alameda resident who violated local beach curfew, speaking at a Transgender Day of Remembrance event.

"I know that every year Asians have been attacked especially during Lunar New Year because they carry money around as a form of goodluck. ...Racism against Asians has been normalized. ...If mental health professionals responded to mental health calls, it allows police to do their job to respond to crime." - Public Comment at Feb 16th Alameda City Council Meeting.

"Once when I was buying chips and candy at a store for a party, This officer came and stopped me because he thought I had stolen it, I even showed him the receipt and he still called for backup for no reason." - Alameda High Student - shared during Black Lives Matter Assembly.

Committees' Work Process

Since August, 2020 the Steering Committee has a standing meeting every Sunday for 1-2 hours depending on the topic. We also will meet one weekday for an hour as needed. Occasionally, we have invited the Subcommittee chairs to our meetings in order to coordinate and insure that our processes are uniform and that work is not being repeated. We are constantly re-calibrating and refocusing. We also meet with City Staff at least 1-2 a month.

The Subcommittees meet at least weekly and communicate as necessary between their formally scheduled meetings to accomplish their work. The larger group has been meeting once or twice a month as needed.

This is a community-led effort. While we have key staff members supporting our efforts, our meetings are community-run by the Steering Committee and Subcommittee chairs.

Overall, we estimate over 3000 hours of work by the committees since August 2020.

Community Involvement

The Steering Committee gave/will give presentations to:

- Civil Service Board, January 6
- #1 Public Forum, January 22
- Transportation Commission, January 27
- ACCYF, January 28
- SSHRB, January 28
- "Tuesdays at 2", February 9 (with Business Associations/Improvement Areas)
- Commission on Persons with Disabilities, February 10
- #2 Public Forum, February 13
- Open Government Commission, March 1
- Kiwanis, March 17

Additional Work:

- **Jan 21**, Surveys to the community about the subcommittees' draft recommendations, January
 - **January 20-February 14**: Public engagement to receive feedback on subcommittee recommendations
 - **March 16**, Present draft recommendations with public feedback to City Council
 - **March 2021**, Conclusion of this initial work
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APD: Authorized vs. Sworn Number of Officers Over the Years

- That's been the level since 2011
- According to the criminal Justice Information Services Division
- As of 2016:
 - Average number per capita nationwide is 1.6
 - Average number in the Pacific Region is 1.1 per 1,000 for a city of under 100,000
- 88 puts us right at that average for a city our size.

Year	Authorized	Actual
2000	111	
2001	111	
2002	111	
2003	104	
2004	104	
2005	104	99
2006	104	97
2007	99	96
2008	99	94
2009	92	89
2010	92	87
2011	88	81
2012	88	82
2013	88	83
2014	88	84
2015	88	78
2016	88	78
2017	88	77
2018	88	78
2019	88	75
2020	88	70

Something to Clarify: Do We Want to Defund APD?

We Want to Unbundle Services

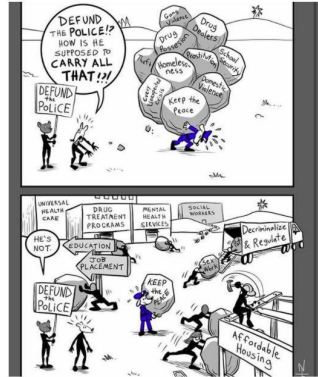
Unbundling services means:

- Mental Health Professionals Handle Mental Health Issues.
- Homelessness programs such as block by block program and the homeless outreach team and expanded and made permanent.

Unbundling means:

- Police officers are free to do real police work.
- Officer stress levels go down.
- Service improves.

Neal Skorpen cartoon on defunding the police



When Asked About Unbundling

In a forum, hosted by the *Alameda League of Women Voters*, Captain Emmitt said:

The APD welcomes the idea that others handle the initial response to mental health calls, homelessness, and minor code compliance issues. "I don't think there is any police officer in America who would balk at the idea of not having to be the initial responder to a mental health crisis situation," said (then) interim Chief Emmitt. "The same thing for our homeless communities."

October 1, 2021

Our Ask

We ask City Council to review, prioritize and accept our recommendations, and direct City Staff on the implementation of these recommendations.

Our Recommendations

Where Do You Go When You Have a Problem with the Police?

Well, right now, you go to the police:

- You have to walk into the police station and file a complaint.
- Or, you go to a lawyer and sue.

2 problems:

- It stops people from making valid complaints
 - Costs the city money
-

Creation of a Citizen's Accountability Commission

- Policing is based on a social contract. Police are given extraordinary powers in exchange for the promise that they will protect and serve the community that gives them these powers. We know that our officers try to honor that.
- It is important that they know what our community needs and expects.
- A citizen's accountability commission can serve that purpose. It can assure that the values displayed by officers in the field are the values of the community that they serve. It can provide an important alternative for citizen complaints.

Institute a “Who to Call” Campaign

- Many of the calls that APD receives and responds to can be handled by professionals other than sworn police officers.
- In the last few weeks the city has produced a document entitled Don't Call 911 was produced by the city.
- That's a great start. We'd like to see that followed with a campaign to clarify the information. That could begin with steps as simple as mailing out refrigerator magnets and a social media campaign.



Bi-Annual Mental Health and De-escalation Training

- Sometime in the 80's this country defunded social services.
- We are currently asking officers to respond to more types of situations than ever before.
- While we hope to have mental health professionals respond to mental health calls,that system is not in place yet. Even when it is some situations will require police response.

Social Media Guidelines for APD

- Community members have expressed concern about the showcasing of suspects.
- This community is 7% Black and while publishing pictures of Black suspects may show good police work it can also have the effect of making marginalized communities feel vulnerable. It doesn't serve any investigative purpose since the suspect is already arrested. We're suggesting a uniform policy that contributes to public safety without marginalizing any members of the community.

Officer's Code of Conduct

- The APD Policy Manual is 755 pages long.
- The APD Field Training Manual is 253 pages long.
- The Staff Report notes that much of what is suggested here is contained in Section 340 of the Policy Manual. That's correct, but Sec. 340 starts on pg. 216 of the policy manual.

We envision the APD Code of Conduct as a Short document. 10 to 15 principles that we as a community expect APD officers to have at the forefront of their minds when they are performing their official duties.

Extend the Block by Block Program or Something Similar

In the short time that the Block by Block campaign was implemented (November 29-December 30) it had a big effect.

- 450 lbs of trash removed
 - Hazardous waste including needs removed from Park St. and Webster St.
 - Increased graffiti removal
 - Increased the number of eyes on the street which has a preventative effect.
 - This took the pressure off of police and freed them up to handle more significant criminal matters.
- In addition to the removal of trash, these main business areas are cleaned daily and “Street Ambassadors” are monitoring the streets to provide homeless supports and as a liaison to the business community.
 - BBB staff are working from 7:00am-10pm with approximately 16 staff on duty from 11am-8pm every day.
 - Since the initial start up costs of this program have already been paid, a yearly contract would cost the City of Alameda \$532,336

Closing

Everyone on these committees lives in Alameda. Everyone in these committees loves Alameda.

- We understand that many Alameda residents love our police force. There are many people who have had nothing but positive experiences with the police. In fact it has been so consistently positive that some people find it difficult if not impossible to believe that anyone else has had a different experience.

Not everyone has been fortunate enough to have had that experience. But, make no mistake, we are not trying to get rid of the police, we are not trying to abolish the police.

- **The goal of these recommendations is an Alameda where everyone receives the same level of effective, caring and respectful policing that some people take for granted.**

"Yes, racism looks like hate, but hate is just one manifestation. Privilege is another. Access is another. Ignorance is another. Apathy is another."

- Scott Woods



**Thank You to All of Our Wonderful Sub-Committee
Members and City Staff and Alameda Police
Department for all of your help with this work.**