Alameda Police Reforms and Racial Equity Committee Members
Steering Committee Philosophy:
Our Approach to This Work

We are committed to the idea of reforming aspects of the way in which policing is done in the City of Alameda, we hope to do so in a collaborative way.

We understand that policing is important to our community and we respect APC's commitment to the safety and security of our community but we believe that the manner of policing can be improved so that all of the people in our community as well as all who visit our community feel safe, secure and respected.
Steering Committee and Subcommittee Members: How We Were Chosen

The Steering Committee members were appointed in late August 2020. In addition to the four of us on the Steering Committee, we have five Subcommittees involving 60 Alameda community members, chosen in September 2020.

To fill those subcommittees, with the city's help we put out a call for volunteers and we received over 250 responses. Some applicants included detailed background/qualification information and some did not. We felt a need to begin this important work as quickly as possible and we made our decisions based on the information we received as well as any information we were able to gather through internet research. It is worth saying that with a few exceptions, our committee is composed of lay people with no experience or expertise in policing. We are all volunteers and we're here because of our love for this community and commitment to positive change.
The Five Sub Committees

- Unbundling Services Currently Delivered by the Police Department
- A Review of Police Department Policies and Practice
- Police Department Accountability and Oversight
- A Review of Law that Criminalize Survival
- Systemic and Community Racism Anti-Racism
Committees’ Work Process

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. Our 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. The Steering Committee meets once-twice a week and on occasion we have invited the Subcommittee chairs to our meetings in order to coordinate and assure 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.

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.
Early Sub Committee Recommendations

Subcommittees met regularly, fulfilling their charge to develop solutions for racially equitable policing in Alameda. Although they met separately for the most part, many of their recommendations converged. Above all, we know this work is ongoing.

Racist and anti-Black practices are endemic to policing in the United States and all of its communities. Positive change will be a continuous process. These recommendations move us closer to the changes we would all like to see, but we know they are not enough. We must all remain vigilant in keeping policing accountable to all those who live, work, play and pray in Alameda.

Below are not all of but a beginning of a discussion about some of the considerations/recommendations we wanted to explore. We also note that several of these were overlapping recommendations that came from multiple committees.
1. Create a Police Accountability Department and Citizens' Police Oversight Committee tasked with holding APD accountable for adherence to good police practices.

- The Task force should ensure that qualitative data on police-citizen interactions is documented and released for public oversight.

- The City should conduct further analysis of fines and fee revenue to determine their extent and effects on poor people of color. The City should also consider how these fines and fees can escalate to criminal offenses, further harming affected BPOC residents.
2. A Police Oversight Board needs to be written into the City Charter.

- This will provide the longevity, strength, reliability and legally sound effectiveness the community needs.
- In places where such a board was not written into the charter, in short order it was made largely ineffective by political erosion of rights and powers.
- If we are to have accountability – and the members of the subcommittee are in complete agreement that we need accountability – it must be effective.
A Policies and Procedures Review Board could be formed, overseen by both the newly formed Police Accountability Department, reporting to the Citizens' Police Oversight Committee.

- Members could be appointed by the Mayor and/or City Council members as well as staff of city offices members (e.g., City Manager, Police Chief, City Attorney, or their designees).
- All efforts should be made to include a cross section of the city taking into consideration race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, and location of residence, business, and/or place of worship. Policies and procedures review board could meet at least quarterly and as needed to review proposed permanent changes and/or additions to APD policies and procedures.
- This board would advise the City Manager on proposed police policy and procedures and before any such changes are adopted and/or implemented.
4. We recommend that ATOs require Mental Health and De-escalation Training on an Annual or Semi-Annual Basis

- In recent years, police force has been unable to implement or maintain uniform policies for the treatment of incidents and the use of force. This has led to an increased focus on mental health and de-escalation training for police officers. The lack of consistent training has resulted in inconsistent handling of situations that require police intervention.

- The majority of police incidents involve the use of force, which can be traumatic for both the officers and the public. The use of mental health and de-escalation training can help reduce the incidence of forceful incidents.

- Currently, police officers are required to receive mental health and de-escalation training on an annual basis. However, officers are only trained in basic skills, such as de-escalation, cultural diversity, and stress management. This is not enough to prepare officers for the complexities of mental health incidents.

- We will be recommending that ATOs conduct de-escalation and mental health training for officers at least once a year. This training should include advanced techniques and strategies for handling mental health incidents.
5. Add a full-time "Crime Analyst" position and expand the statistical/data
expertise of the Alameda Police Department.

- Report requests for public information in a timely fashion (14 business days).
- Continue to improve data collection and transparency without compromising resident integrity,
privacy, and increasing the department's reach in the usage of unnecessary criminological
surveillance.
Special attention should be paid to candidates traditionally underrepresented in police chief positions.
7. Advance a dynamic and robust annual assessment of community needs, conducted by individuals outside of AHS, using service call data, police dispatch and outcome data, surveys of Alameda residents and visitors, and other community outreach modes.

- This taps into recommendations from both Unbundling and Community Racism/Anti-Racism Sub-Committees.
Once a report is received, the data shall be provided to city staff for assessment. We recommend amplifying this portal’s visibility to the community once it’s active, use all communication methods the city currently utilizes to communicate with its residents.

This data should be monitored annually conducted by individuals outside of ARO, using service call data, police dispatch and outcome data, surveys of Alameda residents and visitors, and other community outreach modes.

Once this data is collected from this portal, it shall be assessed and/or addressed, much like the current data from the policing portal but with a larger scope. Any instance of prejudiced racism within our local healthcare providers, landlords, and City Services (fire/MET, code enforcement, building inspection) will be documented in this database and shared with the appropriate parties to be assessed accordingly.
Next Steps

The Steering Committee will give presentations to:
- City Council Board, January
- ATF Public Forum, January 27
- CAC, January 30
- "Landmark of the Year" on the Business Association Agenda

- Commissioner on Puerto with Children, February 13
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Additional Work:
- Design for the community about the subcommittee's recommendations, January 30
- January 31 to February 14, Public engagement to receive feedback on subcommittee recommendations
- February 15 to February 28, Recommendations with public feedback to City Council
- March 2021, Final report of this initial work
Questions

Any additional questions can be sent to:
aps@alamedagmail.com

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

- James Baldwin