



July 31, 2017

Austin City Council
City Hall
301 W. 2nd
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and City Council Members:

The Austin Neighborhoods Council Executive Committee urges you to make public safety a priority. The City of Austin experienced an increase in violent crime last year and police response time continues to rise. Two taxpayer-funded studies have found the Austin Police Department is significantly understaffed and unable to effectively patrol our neighborhoods.

Please fund the additional twelve police patrol positions included in last year's budget and adopt the latest staffing study recommendations to achieve 35 percent community engagement time.

In testimony before the Council last year, Dr. Richard Brady of the Matrix Consulting Group said that the Austin Police Department had the lowest percentage of community engagement time he had ever seen and that many officers have essentially no time for community policing. Hiring more patrol officers will help us reach the 35 percent community engagement goal. The Mayor's Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities also recommended the 35 percent community engagement goal to create stronger relationships between the police and the neighborhoods they serve.

A recent survey of likely Austin voters found a majority believe increasing the number of police officers will improve overall public safety. Eighty-four percent think additional police officers should be hired immediately or over the next three or four years.

If ignored, public safety will end up like housing affordability and mobility: too far behind to catch up and with far more grave and deadly consequences. Further, we support the Austin Police Department in making/renewing their commitment to changing/improving the culture of the organization to support the value of citizen engagement.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Ingle".

Mary Ingle
ANC President

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