

**HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
 FY 2022 BUDGET WORKSHOP
 May 18, 2021**

PUBLIC COMMENT	
Question:	HPD Response:
<p>1. <u>Doug Smith</u></p> <p>I recently heard about a City that instituted a program where when you call 911, you are asked if you need Fire, Police or Mental Health. Could this be interested in Houston?</p> <p>If the Mayor’s Vision Zero of no traffic deaths is ever going to be realized, you’re going to have to deal with speeding which seems to be out of control on streets in my neighborhood like Alief Clodine between Wilcrest and Highway-6 – and of course the 65 mph speed limit</p>	<p>The Houston Police Department is in the beginning stages of a process like this. Currently we have the MCOT (Mobile Crisis Outreach Team) who are non-classified employees that address non-violent, non-criminal mental health calls. Traditionally they have been called by officers to the scene, after officers have arrived and determined it is appropriate for the MCOT to handle. We are now in the process of having them dispatched directly to these scenes.</p> <p>The Mayor’s Vision Zero is a multifaceted strategy involving multiple city departments, consultants, and organizations pooling their collective resources to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all. This is an incredibly ambitious yet necessary long term vision to reduce these terrible tragedies in our city. As the Mayor has stated many times, we cannot do this alone. The community has to come together as a City to achieve this goal.</p> <p>In Houston, the overwhelming top two contributing factors in fatality crashes this year has been vehicles failing to drive in a single lane and pedestrian failing to yield the right-of-way to vehicles in the roadway. A distant third contributing factor was failure to control speed. The speed in the city is regulated by the City of Houston Public Works, while the Texas Department of Transportation regulates the highway speed limits. The Houston Police Department places the highest priority on life, which is why our Traffic Enforcement Division focuses enforcement on major freeway systems where we have the greatest deterrent impact on driver behavior. We realize that our units cannot be everywhere at once, which is why we are constantly exploring innovative strategies and technologies to act as a force multiplier for our traffic enforcement units.</p>

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<p>on freeways where most of the fatalities occur can be a joke during non-rush hours.</p>	<p>Our Patrol Divisions focus more heavily on neighborhood traffic enforcement issues as those tend to be unique to each particular neighborhood. This works best when partnering with members of the community who can help us identify those troubled areas, so we can tailor our enforcement strategies to get the best value out of our collective efforts.</p> <p>The Houston Police Department places the highest priority on the sanctity of life in all aspects of our operations, including traffic safety. We are committed to continually working with the public and our partner agencies and departments in achieving the Mayor’s Vision Zero.</p>
<p>2. <u>Jason Oliver</u></p> <p>a. How much of HPD’s budget goes specifically towards violent crime?</p> <p>b. What percent of classified officer time is spent on violent crime?</p> <p>c. What are the total itemized costs of the provisions of the Meet & Confer agreement?</p>	<p>a. As stated during the budget presentation and response, a large percentage of the general fund budget is dedicated to personnel costs. Moreover, all budget items related to equipment such as vehicles, fuel, technology and resources used by personnel are all part of the department’s response to citizen calls for service and response to crime incidents. Thus, it is not possible to parse out a specific budget item relative to violent crime because all resources working as part of an overall response is dedicated to the mission of enhancing the quality of life in the City of Houston by working cooperatively with the public to prevent crime, preserve the peace and provide a safe environment.</p> <p>b. The amount of time an officer or employee spends on responding to violent crime is dependent on multiple variables to include crime type being investigated and officer assignment. For example, an officer assigned to Burglary and Theft Division would spend the majority of their time investigating property crimes while an officer assigned to Homicide Division spends their time responding to violent crime incidents. Details regarding officer staffing and assignment to include budget totals for all commands were provided in the budget presentation.</p> <p>c. Please refer to the link below for the Meet and Confer Agreement.</p> <p>https://www.houstontx.gov/hr/hrfiles/classified_testing/hpd_meet_confer_2008_2015.pdf</p>

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3. Christopher Rivera

How will more money going to policing solve Houston's housing, homeless and healthcare crisis?

Responding to calls for service and investigating crimes against property and persons as well as community outreach and providing a safer environment are a part of the mission of the Houston Police Department. Efforts by the Houston Police Department alone are not enough to respond adequately to larger issues such as homelessness and health care. It is incumbent that we continue to work with all partners and stakeholders in the region to have the most holistic and appropriate response to issues effecting homelessness, health care and mental health needs. As always we are committed to working with all partners for the best possible solutions and outcomes in these important areas. Examples of collaborative programs are:

911 Crisis Call Diversion Program – partnership with The Harris Center; the purpose of the program is to divert eligible non-emergency crisis intervention police calls from HPD to mental health professionals with the Harris Center.

Mental Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT) – The Mental Health Division and Emergency Communications Division have launched a pilot program that expands the existing Crisis Call Diversion Program. If a call for service meets the eligibility criteria, the CCD counselors will send out a Mobile Crisis Outreach Team to respond in lieu of a police response. The members of these Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams are clinicians employed by The Harris Center, the mental health authority of Harris County. The MCOT clinicians are trained to request law enforcement in the event that they are unable to assist the person in crisis. These calls will be diverted automatically by call-takers. No action is required on the part of officers or supervisors. In CAD, the MCOT clinicians are listed as MCOT1, MCOT2, etc.

MCOT clinicians respond to calls for service from persons (adults and juveniles with a legal guardian present) experiencing a mental health crisis or who are at risk for experiencing a mental health crisis and who have significant barriers to accessing mental health services independently. MCOT clinicians may not respond to calls for service where the person is actively attempting suicide and needs medical attention, where the person is currently intoxicated or exhibiting inappropriate sexual behavior, where the person is in possession of weapons or drugs, where criminal activity or medical emergencies are involved, or where there is an risk of violence to the MCOT clinicians.

At the present time, this program is operational from 0600 hrs to 2000 hrs, Monday through Friday and 0600 hrs to 1600 hrs, Saturday and Sunday, with on-call capacity for other times.

In rare circumstances, officers may see the MCOT clinicians on a scene. The clinicians work in a plainclothes capacity with an unmarked vehicle, but will have The Harris Center identification on their person. The MCOT clinicians do not currently have radio communication with officers. Officers should cooperate with MCOT clinicians to determine the appropriate outcome for the call.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT)</u> - CIRT is Houston’s co-responder program partnering a Houston CIT officer with a masters-level licensed professional clinician from The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD. The officer and clinician attend roll-call together and ride together in a patrol car. CIRT units ride citywide with the sole responsibility of responding to CIT-related calls; they are not in the calls-for-service loop. To our knowledge, Houston has the largest co-responder program with the officer and clinician riding together as partners of any single police department in the nation. • <u>Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative</u> – partnership with The Harris Center; clinicians utilize wrap-around model to assist early identification of trigger behaviors, treatment compliance and human services delivery; HPD Mental Health Unit will identify and refer the service to individuals who have encounters with HPD through the NeuroPsychiatric Center, Crisis Intervention Response Team and emergency and routine phone calls. • <u>Homeless Outreach Team</u> – the team helps homeless with: housing, Social Security cards, passports, birth certificates, shelter referrals, medical equipment, employment, bus fare, medical care and mental health treatment. The team works with several organizations, for example: SEARCH Homeless Services, Lord of the Streets, Star of Hope, and US Vets. • <u>Judge Ed Emmett Mental Health Diversion Center</u> - The Diversion Center provides law enforcement with a community-based alternative for persons with mental illness who have been picked up for low level, non-violent offenses such as trespass. Since the opening of the Center, there have been over 1000 low level misdemeanor jail diversions of which HPD is responsible for 66% of these diversions.
<p>4. <u>Sara Blanding</u></p> <p>a. What percent of classified officer time is spent on violent crime?</p> <p>b. How does this budget reflect the focus on violent</p>	<p>a. The amount of time an officer or employee spends on responding to violent crime is dependent on multiple variables to include crime type being investigated and officer assignment. For example, an officer assigned to Burglary and Theft Division would spend the majority of their time investigating property crimes while an officer assigned to Homicide Division spends their time responding to violent crime incidents. Details regarding officer staffing and assignment to include budget totals for all commands were provided in the budget presentation.</p> <p>b. As stated during the budget presentation and response, a large percentage of the general fund budget is dedicated to personnel costs. Moreover, all budget items related to equipment such as vehicles, fuel, technology and resources used by personnel are all part of the department’s response to citizen calls for service and response to crime incidents. Thus, it is not</p>

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<p>crime prevention - on actual prevention – not just response?</p> <p>c. What is the clearance rate on the different types of violent crime?</p>	<p>possible to parse out a specific budget item relative to violent crime because all resources working as part of an overall response is dedicated to the mission of enhancing the quality of life in the City of Houston by working cooperatively with the public to prevent crime, preserve the peace and provide a safe environment.</p> <p>As it relates to NIBRS clearance rates, HPD held a detailed press conference explaining the Department’s transition from UCR Summary Reporting to UCR National Incident-Based Reporting. Because of the transition, we cannot compare NIBRS clearance rates associated to UCR clearance rates as there are additional unique categories of crime under the NIBRS structure that drives down the ratio suggesting clearance rates are skewed due to more crime categories being reported under NIBRS. We do know that our current Homicide Division clearance rate is at 62.00% year-to-date. As additional years of crime data and clearances become available under the NIBRS reporting system then we will see more correct comparison from year to year.</p>
<p>5. <u>Caroline Duble</u></p> <p>a. What percentage of the items seized in Asset Forfeiture were taken from people who were found innocent or never charged with a crime?</p> <p>b. What processes do you have in place to ensure that those asset forfeiture funds are returned to civilians as much as possible?</p>	<p>a. The Asset Forfeiture Program’s mission is to use asset forfeiture as a tool to deter, disrupt, and dismantle criminal enterprises, denying them the instruments and the proceeds of criminal activity. The effective use of both criminal and civil asset forfeiture is an essential component of law enforcement's efforts to combat the most sophisticated criminal actors and organizations including terrorist financiers, fraudsters, human traffickers, transnational drug cartels, and cyber criminals.</p> <p>b. Asset Forfeiture is a civil process and separate from the criminal process. The civil process requires a preponderance of the evidence while criminal proceedings require beyond a reasonable doubt.</p> <p>At the state level, Chapter 59 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CCP) requires a preponderance of the evidence to support seizure of contraband or the proceeds of criminal activity. Contraband is seized when by a preponderance of the evidence, it is believed the contraband was used in the commission of a crime, used or intended to be used in the commission of a crime, the proceeds gained from the commission of certain felony or misdemeanor crimes or a crime of violence, or used to facilitate or intended to be used to facilitate the commission of certain felony or other offenses as prescribed in the CCP.</p> <p>At the federal level, U. S. Code 981 Title 18, is like the state law in that it allows for the civil asset forfeiture process to begin when certain criminal activity occurs or when the property is a direct or indirect proceed of certain illegal activity.</p> <p>HPD follows the Federal/State asset forfeiture guidelines which do not require charges to be filed in the event of an asset forfeiture as this is a civil process. It should be noted that we do not track the outcome of any charges, nor whether a</p>

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	<p>warrant was filed on the person involved later. This information would best be obtained from the Harris County District Attorney's or US Attorney's office.</p> <p>b. HPD will seize assets when they meet the Federal/State Forfeiture Statues. We present the seizure to the US Attorney's Office (via Federal partner) or Harris County District Attorney's Office (HCDAO) and they either accept or decline the seizure. Once the seizure is filed, HPD is not involved in the civil process, nor do we follow the proceedings. HPD does not seize any asset that does not meet the criteria set out by the State/Federal government code. HPD reviews the seizure information with the appropriate attorney's office, and they determine whether the seizure meets the civil criteria. The appropriate US or District Attorney's Office advises us of the award or order to return seize property.</p> <p>In state seizure cases, HCDAO processes the seizure through the courts and the courts decide whether the property will be forfeited or returned. The property is handled according to the court's ruling. Once the courts have ruled, the HCDAO notifies HPD of the outcome of the property, advising if there is any action needed on our part (i.e.-return of property). HPD is not involved in the civil process and does not determine the outcome of the property.</p>
<p>6. <u>Michelle Stay</u></p> <p>What percentage of calls for service have no indication of violence, no indication of weapons, and no indication of criminal offenses and what is the cost of responding to those calls?</p>	<p>The Houston Police Department responds annually to an average of approximately 1.2 million calls for service within 670 square miles. Yes there are calls for service that deal with quality of life issues and citizen concerns and are not necessarily crimes in progress or violent in nature. However, until such time officers arrive and investigate citizen concerns it is largely unknown what details are included in each call for service when it originates at dispatch. Those calls that can be diverted and reports that can be taken virtually are done so and programs are in place to realize those efficiency gains such as the Patrol Desk Unit and Teleserve Unit thereby eliminating the need for an officer to respond. The HPD will continue to work with partners to realize the benefits of call diversion for certain call types and lessening the need for a police response if not necessary further employing technology as a force multiplier.</p>
<p>7. <u>Bernard Ambe</u></p> <p>a. How much of HPD's budget goes specifically towards violent crime?</p>	<p>a. As stated during the budget presentation and response, a large percentage of the general fund budget is dedicated to personnel costs. Moreover, all budget items related to equipment such as vehicles, fuel, technology and resources used by personnel are all part of the department's response to citizen calls for service and response to crime incidents. Thus, it is not possible to parse out a specific budget item relative to violent crime because all resources working as part of an overall response is dedicated to the mission of enhancing the quality of life in the City of Houston by working cooperatively with the public to prevent crime, preserve the peace and provide a safe environment.</p>

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<p>b. What percent of classified officer time is spent on violent crime?</p> <p>c. What are the total itemized costs of the provisions of the Meet & Confer agreement?</p>	<p>b. The amount of time an officer or employee spends on responding to violent crime is dependent on multiple variables to include crime type being investigated and officer assignment. For example, an officer assigned to Burglary and Theft Division would spend the majority of their time investigating property crimes while an officer assigned to Homicide Division spends their time responding to violent crime incidents. Details regarding officer staffing and assignment to include budget totals for all commands were provided in the budget presentation.</p> <p>c. Please refer to the link below for the Meet and Confer Agreement.</p> <p>https://www.houstontx.gov/hr/hrfiles/classified_testing/hpd_meet_confer_2008_2015.pdf</p>
<p><u>8. Cassandra Jones</u></p> <p>a. HB 1900 will penalize cities for decreasing police budgets in the future – Do you support this bill?</p> <p>b. Is it smart to increase our police budget knowing the possibility of penalization in the future?</p>	<p>a. HPD does not support HB 1900.</p> <p>b. The HPD budget is determined by the Mayor and City Council based upon the demonstrated needs of the police department to provide service to the public.</p>
<p><u>9. Justin Glasper</u></p> <p>a. How many unfilled positions does HPD have right now – both</p>	<p>a. <u>Civilians</u>: As of April 30, 2021, there are 220 unfilled positions. For the FY22 proposed budget, 49 of these positions are delimited.</p> <p><u>Classified</u>: In general, the only vacant positions are in cadet classes.</p> <p>b. <u>Civilian</u>: \$53,700 in average base compensation per unfilled position. <u>Classified</u>: \$42,400 in average base compensation for new graduated officers.</p>

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<p>Civilian and Classified? b. How much is budgeted for them? c. What performance measures would be affected if these were to be removed?</p>	<p>c. Performance Measures:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="420 365 961 711"> <tr><td>Classified Attrition</td></tr> <tr><td>Classified Overtime FTEs</td></tr> <tr><td>Priority 1 Average Response Time (minutes)</td></tr> <tr><td>Priority 1 Calls Responded to within 6 Min</td></tr> <tr><td>Priority 2 Average Response Time (minutes)</td></tr> <tr><td>Total Dispatched Calls</td></tr> <tr><td>Traffic Fatalities</td></tr> <tr><td>Crime Rate</td></tr> <tr><td>Expenditures Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization</td></tr> <tr><td>Revenues Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization</td></tr> </table>	Classified Attrition	Classified Overtime FTEs	Priority 1 Average Response Time (minutes)	Priority 1 Calls Responded to within 6 Min	Priority 2 Average Response Time (minutes)	Total Dispatched Calls	Traffic Fatalities	Crime Rate	Expenditures Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization	Revenues Adopted Budget vs Actual Utilization
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<p>10. Sarah Bronson a. If extra OT is needed beyond budget, what is the process for approving that overtime? b. What guardrails do we have, if any, to prevent over-surveillance of peaceful gatherings and where is that tracked</p>	<p>a. A PBJ (Project & Budget Justification) form is submitted to Finance requesting additional funding.</p> <p>b. HPD does not engage in any covert surveillance of protests or public assemblies. The gathering of intelligence at a public gathering that is protected by the first amendment is governed by federal statute 28 CFR Part 23.</p> <p>When HPD learns of a public assembly or protest our Criminal Intelligence Division public assembly group reaches out to the listed organizer by phone before the assembly to introduce themselves and notify them that they will be at the assembly with our Special Response Group (SRG) to work together to ensure a peaceful assembly. CID will provide a copy of protest rules and ordinances if that is needed. HPD personnel will introduce themselves in person on the day of the event as well.</p> <p>If prior contact is not possible for some reason, first contact will be made at the scene of the assembly. Personnel from CID are often times joined by leadership from the HPD Special Response Group when making contact at the assembly location. The goal of the conversation is to ensure the group knows their rights, learn what their plans are for the assembly and answer any questions they may have. HPD personnel then provide their contact information to the organizer or leader of the event.</p> <p>All response to public assemblies is overt in nature and not covert. Therefore there is nothing to be tracked.</p>										

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<p>11. <u>Jodie Sabino</u></p> <p>a. What will your budget changes mean in terms of change for services provided to Houstonians?</p> <p>b. What are the investments made to preventing crime and building trust in the community and not just responding to crime?</p>	<p>a. As indicated in the budget presentation the Houston Police Department is currently understaffed in both classified and civilian positions but is continually adjusting strategies and resource allocations to respond appropriately to law enforcement needs in the City.</p> <p>The Houston Police Department is continually working with the Administration, Council Colleagues, and the community to enhance trust and accountability. We are actively engaged with the Mayor’s Police Reform Task Force and are making great strides in areas outlined by the Task Force for meaningful accountability measures to enhance trust, transparency and accountability.</p> <p>b. HPD has expanded our Relational Policing initiatives to include the use of social media and additional public outreach programs such as the ones listed below:</p> <p>Greater Houston Police Activities League (GHPAL) - Since its re-launch in 2017, HPD’s Greater Houston Police Activities League has established a core membership of 100 youth from around the city that engage in regular programming, during and after-school with 14 PAL Advisors. The full-time advisors and corporate sponsors - the Houston Texans, Academy Sports and Outdoor and McDonald’s interact with members through mentorship, leadership and a sports curriculum. In 2018, Academy provided 80 bikes and helmets as an early Christmas present to PAL members and associates. The Houston Texans provided a grant to support the program.</p> <p>G.R.E.A.T. - Houston Police participate in the GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program in multiple schools throughout Houston to establish positive relationships and interactions between police officers and youth, with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of teens that turn to gangs. But the officers’ outreach to students doesn’t stop in the schools. GREAT operates an annual week-long summer camp and has recently established a parent training and a program for families living at the Star of Hope.</p> <p>Alianza Against Crime - A relational policing initiative started in Houston's East End to help build stronger relations with the community. The event is three fold, and includes a bilingual town hall forum, resource fair, and police displays/demonstrations. The Eastside Division first launched Alianza Against Crime in 2017 and the program has now grown to other parts of the city. The goal is to provide the community with one-on-one interaction with their local police officers</p>
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