



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION NO. 20220124-02b

Date: January 24, 2022

Subject: Proposal that the Austin City Council create an Austin Municipal Court Marshal Office

Motioned by: Rebecca Bernhardt

Seconded by: Rebecca Webber

Recommendation: The Public Safety Commission recommends that the City Council reject the proposal to create a Marshal Office within the Austin Municipal Court and Downtown Austin Community Court.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin operates the Austin Police Department, which currently provides security to the Austin Municipal Court and Downtown Austin Community Court;

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is committed to the Reimagine Public Safety Initiative, which is a holistic approach to assessing and evolving public safety systems. Reimagine Public Safety is supposed to go beyond the scope of law enforcement, to design community centered interventions to reduce harm and address the root cause of systemic inequities which often lead to crime;

WHEREAS, the Austin Municipal Court has been a driver of inequity for the City of Austin for decades and continues to need reform to stop deepening poverty for Austin's low-income residents;

WHEREAS, creating a new police force, a Marshal Office within the Austin Municipal Court and Downtown Austin Community Court, will worsen inequities, increase criminalization and undermine the progress that has been made in reforming the Austin Municipal Court;

WHEREAS, processes around training, accountability, oversight and operations could not be approved and finalized in advance of the creating a new Marshall Office.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin and Austin Police Department are undergoing a reimagining of the Austin Police Academy to create a pool of law enforcement officers to align with Reimagining Public Safety efforts.

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department has the tools and capacity to provide for the security needs of the Austin Municipal Court and Downtown Community Court and creating a new police force for the courts is unnecessary; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RECOMMENDED BY THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN THAT:

- the proposal that the City create a Marshal Office within the Austin Municipal Court and Downtown Austin Community Court be rejected; and
- The City of Austin continue to provide for the security of the Austin Municipal Court and Downtown Austin Community Court with Austin Police Officers.

Vote: Unanimous

For: 11 (Commissioners Gonzales, Ramirez, Husenfluck, Austin, Kiracofe, Lewis, Lane, Sierra-Arevalo, Hall-Martin, Webber, Lewis)

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 0

Attest: *[Staff or board member can sign]*

Janet Jackson, PSC Liaison