



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2023 to 6/30/2024

Public Safety Commission

The Public Safety Commission of the City of Austin meets the first Monday of each month. The mission of the Commission is to review the City of Austin's needs and concerns with regards to public safety through presentations, documents, and data provided by the three public safety departments of the City of Austin: Police, Fire, and Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services and from advocates, community organizations, and citizens. During the previous year, the Public Safety Commission heard concerns from citizens and requested presentations from experts in addition to regular quarterly reports from each of the public safety agencies on:

- APD/DPS Partnership
- Processing of overtime pay
- Department budgetary needs
- Coordination of the public safety departments with Homeland Security Emergency Management
- Public safety department uses of overtime
- Staffing of special events
- Austin Fire Department's coordination with other city departments on wildfire prevention
- Austin Police Department protocols & procedures on communication with families after officer-involved shootings
- Public safety department language access policies
- Victim Services and Collective Sex Crimes Response Model working group
- Sobering Center
- Office of Police Oversight
- Virtual Magistration Pilot Program
- 88th Texas Legislative Session
- Office of Police Oversight Policing and Disabilities Report

- Public Safety Wellness Center
- Opioid overdose response
- Downtown Austin Community Court Mobile Court Pilot
- APD Training Academy
- 2024-2025 Community Investment Budget

The Commission made recommendations to City Council on relevant issues. The recommendations included:

RECOMMENDATION 20230710-006

Public Safety Commission recommends the partnership between the Austin Police Department and the Department of Public Safety be discontinued unless there is significant community engagement and an Austin City Council resolution establishing a formal interlocal agreement between APD & DPS, adopting parameters and guidelines that define goals, time periods, accountability, data sharing, reporting and expectations.¹

RECOMMENDATIO 202300807-005

The Public Safety Commission's budget recommendations on the Public Safety Department unmet needs and further recommends that the Office of Chief Medical Officer not be restructured until further analysis is made.²

RECOMMENDATION 20230911-005

Public Safety Commission recommends the Austin City Council review the viability of maximizing the use of unsworn staff in support of special events for as many functions as is possible to alleviate demand on our public safety agencies year-round and to mitigate expenses for the city.³

RECOMMENDATION 20240304-005

Public Safety Commission encourages the Austin Fire Department, the Austin Police Department, Austin Travis County EMS, and Austin City Council allocate funds and explore all available means to incorporate the following the commissions priorities into the FY24-25 Budget.⁴

¹ <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=412202>

² <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=413230>

³ <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=415386>

⁴ <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=424533>

RECOMMENDATION 20240603-005

Public Safety Commission recommends that the Austin City Council allocate funds and explore all available means to incorporate public safety related priorities into the FY24-25 Budget and all unfunded existing public safety programs be incorporated into permanent budget.

Public Safety Commission further recommends that the Austin City Council, the Austin Police Department and the City Manager's office reallocate a portion of the approximate 342 sworn vacancy budget⁴, temporarily or otherwise, to alleviate the workload of APD's current sworn officers with retired officers, unsworn staff, and other solutions where and when appropriate.⁵

RECOMMENDATION 20240603-006

Public Safety Commission recommends the Austin City Council explore all available means to incorporate as many of the line items included the Community Investment Budget into the FY24-25 Budget.⁶

All Public Safety Commission actions complied with its mission statement. In the coming year, the Public Safety Commission's goals and actions will include:

- Discussing and analyzing existing and emerging public safety issues in Austin.
- Examining the functioning, long-range planning, budget requests, and needs of the City's public safety departments within an evidence and data-based context.
- Seeking the input of citizens and hearing presentations from experts.
- Responding to requests from City Council related to public safety matters.
- Collaborating with and supporting the Public Safety Council Committee.

⁵ <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=430225>

⁶ <https://services.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=430253>