

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING UNIT – X

June 29, 2020



Use of Force Advisory Council
City Hall, Mayor's Office
55 Trinity Avenue SW, #2500
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Sir/Madam,

The residents of NPU-X have begun a grass roots effort to identify those areas of policing in our community that we hope the Mayor's Use of Force Advisory Council (UFAC) may consider as it begins to examine widespread reforms within the Atlanta Police Department (APD). Below, please see a list of those measures we hope the task force will include in its list of potential reforms.

1. The Atlanta Citizens Review Board (ACRB) should have disciplinary power over those APD officers found guilty of misconduct/improper use-of-force.
2. Currently, if ACRB and APD OPS investigations reach different conclusions regarding how to discipline officer misconduct, the APD investigation is given precedent. This should be changed to give full independent disciplinary oversight to the ACRB.
3. APD officers should undergo regular evaluations for job performance (at least monthly), regardless of whether or not they have been involved in any unnecessary use-of-force incidents.
4. Residency requirements – at the zone level, not just at the city level – should be implemented for a target percentage of APD officers. This will allow those police officers participating in the program to have a more intimate knowledge of the communities they are charged with policing.
5. A new organization of unarmed first-responders should be created and tasked with responding to issues involving homelessness, mental health, and nuisance complaints. Armed police officers are not the ideal first responders in these situations.
6. Mandatory time limits should be implemented for APD to respond to all ACRB requests/complaints. These time limits should match those already in place for other City Boards/Committees (30 days, 45 days, etc.).
7. All members of the public should have open access to request all APD officer disciplinary records. Mandatory time limits should also be implemented for APD to respond to such requests.

8. The ACRB should have a seat at the table during all new officer hires within APD, and should have veto power over any hires the ACRB feels may not be suitable based on disciplinary records.
9. The City of Atlanta should exempt APD officers from being able to claim "qualified immunity" in legal proceedings as a prerequisite for their continued employment. APD officers should be subject to prosecution under the same laws as all other Atlanta residents.
10. The UFAC should work with State Senators and Representatives to repeal Georgia's Citizens Arrest Law.
11. The UFAC should work with State Senators and Representatives to repeal Georgia's Stand Your Ground Law.
12. The UFAC should endeavor to review the City's existing cash-bail reform to ensure its equal and equitable implementation.
13. The use of rubber bullets and tear gas by APD should be fully banned immediately.
14. The APD should be banned from participating in federal grants/programs that route military-grade equipment to local police departments.
15. All APD officers should be required to holster all lethal weapons on their "non-dominant" side so as to ensure additional time is required before the use of deadly force is implemented.
16. All APD officers involved in unjustified uses of force should be terminated and de-certified so as to prevent their continued employment as law enforcement officers within other jurisdictions.
17. The UFAC should work with legislators to support the on-going federal effort to create a nationwide use-of-force database for all law enforcement officers.
18. Those APD officers found to have used unjustified use of force or lethal force should not be eligible for paid administrative leave and should forfeit all right to their pensions and retirement funds. In addition, all retirement funds saved (or "banked") at the time of the unjustified use of force or lethal force should be used as restitution to the victims of said misconduct.
19. All APD officers should be forced to pay into their own workplace liability coverage. Wrongful use-of-force findings should increase department-wide rates for such coverage, which the APD officers themselves should pay for – not City of Atlanta taxpayers.
20. Do not begin the hiring process of a new Chief of Police until a community-based council can be formed to review APD's scope of work and disperse hiring decision-making power across a community review committee.
21. Reopen investigations into all APD killings since 2017 and develop a community tribunal to assess use of force and take steps to hold APD officers accountable.
22. Fire the APD officers who killed Alexia Christian who failed to follow policy and procedure.
23. Fire the APD officers who killed Oscar Cain who failed to turn on their body cameras, in accordance with APD policy.

24. Fire the APD officer who killed DeAundre Phillips who failed to follow policy and procedure.
25. If there are ever circumstances wherein an APD officer's body camera "malfunctions" or is not turned on, City of Atlanta courts should assume obstruction of justice.

It is our hope that the UFAC will take these requests into account as it begins to make its own recommendations for the reform of APD. Please also note that we have previously requested that the Mayor include a member of the ACRB on the UFAC, but we have not received a response to that request at the time of this letter.

We eagerly await your response to these requests and hope to see some of them included in your final list of recommendations to the Mayor's Office.

Respectfully,

Zachary N. Adriaenssens
NPU-X Chair

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