



City of Rohnert Park PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT

Name: Don Schwartz
Phone: 707-588-2242
Email: dschwartz@rpcity.org

For Immediate Release

Rohnert Park City Council Approves Comprehensive Plan for Police Accountability and Community Relations

Rohnert Park, CA (August 11, 2021) – At its meeting of August 10, the Rohnert Park City Council unanimously approved the most comprehensive measures on police accountability and community relations in Sonoma County.

The measures include:

1. Retaining an independent police auditor to review public safety investigations into civilian complaints. The Auditor will provide its own report, including recommendations to the Director of Public Safety regarding whether investigations into civilian complaints was adequate and followed department policies. The report will be available to the public.
2. Adopting a Public Safety presentation calendar for regular opportunities for the City Council and the community to provide feedback on Public Safety matters.
3. Creating a community roundtable to obtain feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders representing underrepresented minority groups.
4. Implementing an alternative response model to enhance crisis intervention, mental health, and assistance to those experiencing homelessness.
5. Restarting the Civilian Public Safety Academy.
6. Expanding trainings regarding explicit and implicit bias, sensitivity, de-escalation, LGGTQ+, and racial profiling. Invite non-Public Safety staff and City Councilmembers to partake in trainings when appropriate.
7. Augmenting staff resiliency programs by adding 24/7 counseling services on demand, to be accessed through a phone application.
8. Continuing existing officer stewardship and mentoring.
9. Engaging community stakeholders regarding the Council's direction for enhanced public safety accountability and community relations.

Mayor Gerard Guidice stated, "I'm very pleased that the City Council came together on this challenging issue. We take our role in police oversight seriously. These measures will help us reach the next level, including engaging all members of our community."

The Council's actions follow a report on May 11, 2021 which provided an update on laws, policies, and practices being reviewed or enacted to address police accountability. At the same meeting, the City Manager provided use of force and traffic stop statistics by race. This report is available under the Transparency section of the Public Safety portion of the City's website.

The data from that report suggest that Rohnert Park Public Safety is equitable in its treatment of people of all races. It shows that 99.7% of events with the police are resolved without the show or use of force. The report also notes that Rohnert Park is complying with numerous new state requirements in these areas, ahead of deadlines in at least some cases.

###