



December 7, 2022

Via Email

City Council President Juarez and Members of City Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to questions in advance of the Public Safety Committee hearing on December 13, 2022, and in anticipation of the full City Council hearing on January 3, 2022.

Below, please find my responses and I look forward to continuing our conversations for years to come.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adrian Z. Diaz".

Adrian Z. Diaz
Chief of Police

Council Questions for Chief of Police Appointment

1. What will your top priorities be as permanent Police Chief?

Helping people is my top priority. Helping people in need within our diverse communities; helping victims of crime with effective responses and follow-up; helping our employees who are struggling in a variety of ways even as they work far too many hours trying to keep our city safe.

My mission is to continue to build a compassionate and empathetic department focused on serving and helping people by providing equitable and accountable services.

This will be accomplished by focusing on:

- Organizational Culture
 - Collaborative Reform
 - Accountability and,
 - Crime and Disorder
2. SPD has significantly fewer officers than at the start of 2020. Please explain your approach to staffing the department.

By any measure, SPD is understaffed. Even at the start of 2020, we were working hard to increase the size and capacity of the department to meet the needs of our growing city. COVID and the summer of 2020 created new challenges in policing and the department has been working hard to stay afloat and innovate new ways of providing public safety services given the loss of 35% of our workforce.

Staffing the department under these circumstances means constant triage – how to do more with less. Emergency response to people experiencing threats to life will always be prioritized, which is why I eliminated several specialty units and transferred detectives to patrol response in 2020. I also consolidated investigative sections to allow for cross-assignment of cases, prioritizing crimes against persons. We are working on moving more calls for service to online reporting and telephone reporting and are exploring the possibility of using Community Service Officers to conduct limited case reporting to free officers up for priority dispatching.

- a. Do you see the CSO program as a potential program for recruiting new officers into SPD? What expansions of this program would be necessary to develop it into such a recruitment pool?

The CSO program has historically been a pathway to recruiting new officers and we welcome our CSOs to apply for officer positions or other available opportunities in the police department. However, the program is important in its own right and we fully value and respect the work that CSOs do with our vulnerable populations and people in need. For that reason, we do not want to frame the program as a recruiting tool. The CSOs are a necessary part of SPD's approach to public safety.

- b. If the now underway external review of Criminal Investigations shows that there are too few staff for effective investigations, such as sexual assault, how will you address the situation? Would you move personnel from other places? If so, which kinds of units would be downsized (e.g., Patrol, Specialty Units, Operations Support)?

We are working hard within the department to triage our services with the resources we have even as we plan for the possibility of continued separations resulting in even fewer available officers. Based on the external review of our Investigations Bureau systems and processes, we will make appropriate difficult decisions as to what services we can provide; again, we will prioritize violent crimes against persons. Leaning into practices from other departments, we are also exploring the feasibility of supplementing the bureau with civilian support.

3. How can the Council support you in your retention efforts? Does Councilmember attendance at Roll Call meetings help with retention efforts? What topics would be most impactful for Councilmembers to share and discuss with officers?

Attracting and retaining officers requires making Seattle a more desirable city to work. This requires both a viable economic package and a promise that they will be welcomed into the City workforce as equal partners in keeping our city healthy and safe. On the economic side, the recent hiring incentives proposed by the Mayor and approved by Council are an important first step, as it will put us on par with other departments offering similar bonuses. Even so, however, Seattle is not the highest paying agency in Washington and lacks many of the additional incentives that give other departments a significant advantage.

I appreciate that the City is working on a comprehensive economic package for officers. As they alone among City employees have not had a raise in over three years. A new contract is critical, but so are educational incentives and development programs, wellness supports, career advancement opportunities, and better facilities (especially a modern training facility that values the complexity of and properly resources our training program).

We know from decades of research in organizational development that the primary reason people go into, and stay, in public service is because they want to do something with their lives that contributes meaningful to their communities – because they want the opportunity to make a difference. If people do not feel they are wanted, respected, or included, they will leave – it is that simple, no matter the economics. As Chief I will continue to pursue improvements to provide better working conditions and demonstrate to potential employees that we value the well-being and education of our officers. To answer the question as to how Council can support this effort, the single most important support the City Council could provide is to consistently recognize the Seattle Police Department and its employees as a necessary and valued part of the city ecosystem. Attending roll calls and going on ride-alongs to meet the officer and to better understand their work is always appreciated.

4. What role do you see for alternatives to policing in addressing community safety in Seattle?

I strongly support (and have supported) alternative response options. SPD created the co-responder model with mental health providers for crisis response in 2007, worked with the Crisis Intervention Committee to strategize best practices using local resources, and developed and re-developed the Community Service Officer Program. We engage with the King County Mobile Crisis Team and make over 20% of regional referrals of persons in crisis to that program. I have vocally supported the development of Health One and Triage One, which are complementary SFD programs. SPD is presently conducting a sophisticated call analysis, transparently and with academic review, to create a predictive risk assessment to inform the type of responder would be best suited to respond to or take lead on a particular event. Ultimately, a comprehensive approach to public safety, informed by evidence and thoughtful strategies, will benefit the whole community.

SPD also participates in a host of diversion programs including, but not limited to, LEAD, Mental Health Court, Drug Treatment Courts, and Veterans diversion programs. I have long understood and embraced that police are just one part of an ecosystem to support those in need within our community.

- a. Are you supportive of the dual dispatch pilot that the Council is collaborating with the Executive on in order to stand up next year? Would you ask SPOG to support it?

I have been tracking the development of this pilot and await more details as it progresses. However, I fully support co-responder models that meaningfully bring additional resources to bear in delivery of public safety services and certainly would discuss legitimate options with SPOG and encourage its participation.

- b. Do you think there are some low-level criminal calls (e.g., trespassing) that could receive a civilian response?

As we have set forth in the Risk Managed Demand analysis, there are many calls that are amenable to a safe, civilian response and categorized as Tier 4 within that analysis (e.g., recovery of abandoned vehicles and property). SPD would welcome additional resources for responding to low acuity public safety calls and support expanding the role for CSOs. However, we need to be cautious about assuming that an event is in fact “low level” based on its type - trespass, for example, was coded as a Tier 1 in RMD, meaning that a serious injury or death could be predicted for that call type (there were 834 calls that met this severity in the analysis). Based on that analysis, it does not appear prudent to send alternatives to that specific call type.

- c. On dual dispatch response, do you agree with the statement in the RMD analysis that says: “Under the tiered response model, STAR and CAHOOTS type resources would fall under Tier 3. In these instances, the response ecosystem (e.g., police and fire) would be aware an alternate response was in progress and may stage nearby, able to rapidly intervene, but would not be in attendance.” Do you believe that an officer must approve a civilian response?

That statement in the RMD was descriptive and noted that the types of services provided by STAR and CAHOOTS were consistent with the Tier 3 design under NICJR. That model predicts that it would be safe, based on current data, to send a civilian responder to Tier 3 calls with police awareness. The RMD analysis is a learning system that will be refined as we begin dispatching alternative responders.

I do not believe that a civilian response must be approved by an officer, but without bargaining, it would be expedient to use officer referrals to dispatch CSOs and other alternative responders to appropriate Tier 3 calls. There are also many circumstances where a follow-up resource can be effectively deployed after an initial police response to stabilize the situation.

5. Overall crime has increased in Seattle. What approach do you have toward addressing and preventing crime, as well as violent crime compared to property crime?

As Interim Chief I have emphasized – and as Chief will continue to drive – strategies that are tailored to the nuances of Seattle’s criminogenic environment. For example, with partners in the justice system, SPD will use focused deterrence –evidence-based strategies that focus on persistent offenders, providing interventive alternatives for new, infrequent, or low-level offenders, while enforcement (including custodial arrest) is targeted towards repeat offenders. Such approaches offer restorative options of accountability where prudent while avoiding blanket police actions that have collateral impacts across communities.

I remain acutely aware that in many instances it is BIPOC communities that are disproportionately impacted by crime (especially violent crime), are among the loudest voices calling for increased police service, and yet our road to rebuilding relations in these communities is long. I take seriously my responsibility to ensure that equity and transparency remains at the core of our mission to be a trusted presence.

We have also witnessed success utilizing communities of practice – models that leverage expertise of community members with common interest in addressing a problem. Examples include the development of the South Park Action Agenda and the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. Currently, we are utilizing this model to combat gun violence, partnering with community organizations to disrupt the potential for retaliatory shootings. As Interim Chief, it has been among my highest priorities to strengthen and, in some cases, repair, relationships to grow such partnerships. With the current challenges we face in our deployable staffing, these relationships are especially critical as a service multiplier. As Chief, I will work collaboratively with community-based partners to incorporate such models into more comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies by leveraging opportunities to make referrals, connections, and provide access to services.

- a. CAD contacts in emphasis patrol areas have increased exponentially. What is the ratio of good contacts vs stops and detentions or arrests? Do you believe that officers can deter crime through their presence alone (e.g., walking a block). Or, do you think that it's important to make Terry Stops as a means to identify and arrest frequent offenders?

The term "CAD contacts" isn't within our lexicon but I interpret that to mean on-view contacts in this context. SPD has never used stop and frisk as an enforcement tactic as it is unconstitutional. Stopping and identifying frequent offenders without reasonable suspicion is illegal. Officer presence is a proven deterrent to crime but with current staffing we are hard pressed to meaningfully walk blocks – as noted, this is primarily an emphasis effort. The term "good contacts" isn't clear: officers make social contacts to build rapport and connect with community and such contacts are not recorded; stops and detentions are made with reasonable suspicion; arrests are made with probable cause, often guided by the Seattle Municipal Code. As a learning organization, we continually scrutinize our stops and detentions to validate their legality under the structures set up under the consent decree.

- b. What role do you believe surveillance plays in preventing property crime? Do you intend to more widely use the SPD Surveillance Tower? Do you intend to seek approval to deploy the Waterfront Mesh Cameras under the Surveillance Ordinance?

Most major cities have greater surveillance capabilities than Seattle, typically directed at violent crime. I support exploring options that create efficiencies, effectiveness and are able to respect privacy rights, as we simply do not have the staffing to be everywhere. Considering technological public safety options will be necessary. Of course, any acquisition of technology must go through the surveillance ordinance requirements, which are designed to be a check on new technology, not a prohibition. The SPD Surveillance Tower (Skywatch) is unmanned and has no cameras – this tool is solely used for deterrence primarily during Seahawks games. So, no, there are no expanded uses available.

6. Seattle has suffered an increase in gun homicides in recent years. What is your plan to address this, as well as the increase in shots fired? Do you believe non-police responses can play a role in violence prevention?

Following up on my response to question number 5 above, my approach to violent crime includes prevention, intervention, and restoration, founded on community trust and collaboration with a whole suite of social service resources. The CAPEE model includes:

Community Approaches – Violence interrupters
Analytics – Identifying Hotspots, Trends
Prevention – ERPO, Enhanced social services
Environment – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
Enforcement – Focused deterrence, Identify persistent offenders

So, yes, collaboration with non-police resources, and in particular, the community, is critically important to reduce gun violence.

7. What command staff structure do you plan to use, and why?

- a. The prior Chief used a command structure that did not facilitate communication or control during emergent situations like the CHOP. Is your structure different? If so, how?

The summer of 2020 and the CHOP strained all of the City of Seattle, not just the Seattle Police Department. Regardless, I have made many changes, many that were internally driven, and some that came through the Sentinel Event Review conducted by the Office of the Inspector General, to ensure better communication inside the department, with City partners, and with our community.

Paramount among these efforts and showing clear alignment of department-generated initiatives with community-based asks, are the Public Outreach and Engagement Team (POET) for communication and collaboration during demonstrations and large events and the creation of the Community Response Group (CRG), which has taken the lead in crowd management dynamics. It's important to note that while we continue to debrief and learn lessons from 2020, more than two years have passed since 2020 and Seattle continues to be an active protest environment for political and social expression – and SPD has facilitated all without incident. I strongly believe this speaks to the success of POET in calming, early and through communication, events that could have turned volatile.

As far as a command structure, I continue to develop my team of civilian and sworn leaders to ensure agile, positive, and productive leadership, and have launched a department-wide initiative to foster Outward Mindset principles (internally and externally) and increase overall collaboration and communication. I am committed to finding great people – sworn and civilian – for command level positions to help carry my vision for the department.

8. You have more than two decades of experience in the Seattle Police Department. How have those experiences prepared you to become Chief? What experiences outside the department have helped prepare you?

- a. How have your lived experiences with institutional and structural racism shaped how you police in Seattle? For instance, the potential use of surveillance in vulnerable neighborhoods? Or the use of stops and detentions, understanding that SPD data that demonstration disproportionality in stops, detentions, and searches among people of color?

As persons of color, my family has certainly experienced challenging discrimination. Such history and experiences certainly help focus my mission to continue to develop a compassionate and empathetic department focused on serving and helping people by providing equitable and accountable services. We know many communities have experienced trauma and inequities and that must factor into all our engagements.

We are working to ensure we build a department that is a part of the community and not apart from the community. This is something I have done throughout my whole career. It that experience that is laying the groundwork for programs like Before the Badge, Equity Accountability and Quality, and a new Early Intervention System.

As stated above, SPD does not use stops and detentions as a strategy – they are based on reasonable suspicion. While the stops and detentions do not mirror the population demographics, every review by the Monitoring Team and the department has found that almost all stops (99%) were within policy and supported by reasonable suspicion.

However, SPD has been developing a comprehensive analysis of disparities in frisks (and soon stops and detentions) using a far more sophisticated analysis then previously employed by any reviewer. By holding multiple variables constant, SPD is able to determine what incidents suggest real bias for exploration/resolution. This advanced analytical methodology – propensity score matching – is now baked into version 2 of our Data Analytics Platform.

9. What is your approach to considering ongoing innovations in policing? Do you review the work of other police departments both inside the United States and other countries, and academic research? Have you applied any examples as Interim Chief?

Under my leadership as Chief, SPD has expanded our role in defining the future of policing through evidence-based practices. While a significant amount of this work is achieved through careful observation of innovative practices elsewhere, including active participation in convenings of professional associations such as the Major Cities Chief Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (I serve as a Board Member and Chair of the Human and Civil Rights Committee), and the Police Executive Research Forum (I serve on the Board as Secretary), I have empowered my team to lead where an example has not yet been set. The Research team under the Performance Analytics & Research (PA&R) group, is dedicated to the scientific definition of the future of policing. Over the last ten years, the SPD has supported more than 100 unique and impactful pieces of academic scholarship from more than 70 researchers in nearly 35 institutions around the globe. While much of this research is done without an immediate vision for its practical implications, we have found the insights and methods to be an invaluable repository for innovative problem-solving. Under my leadership, the PA&R team has recently completed the third major

rearchitecting of the most sophisticated platform for the scientific study of policing—in the world—bringing many of these innovations into practice:

- 1) In 2017 the Research team collaborated with researchers from Seattle University to evolve applications of a statistical technique called Propensity Score Matching, into the most rigorous method for the quasi-experimental evaluation of racially disparate impact in policing. This technique is a cornerstone of our Equity Accountability and Quality (formerly CompStat for Social Justice) program and has been made available to other agencies, free of charge.
- 2) Researchers at University of Cologne and the University of Gothenburg recently submitted a manuscript examining gender bias for peer review. This project was supported by the PA&R group and its findings are based on SPD data. Once finalized, the findings from this project will inform policy and may potentially mitigate expressions of implicit gender bias or biasing actions in practice.
- 3) Two associate research scientists employed by the SPD presented at the 2022 annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology (ASC). Topics included scientific research conducted in house (currently in progress) examining the role of the officer and their behavior in subject demeanor and outcomes, as well as the effects of acute fatigue on officer performance (specifically sustained complaints). Both pieces of research will be used to inform policy and the analytical methods used to assess officer performance.
- 4) The PA&R team supports experimental projects to study the efficacy of officer wellness tool and techniques (e.g., NIJ Fatigue & Fisher Wallace Stimulator projects), as well as experimental practices designed to improve victim satisfaction and case closure rates (e.g., GMU Robbery/Burglary project).

Under my leadership, subject matter experts and strategic advisors from the SPD have presented at national and international conferences on Evidence-Based Policing (EBP)/Criminology, participated in professional conferences addressing many of the critical topics of our day, and even host industry, academic and multi-disciplinary forums. The Analytics & Evidence Based Policing (A&EBP) group participates in a monthly call, with more than 10 of the most advanced agencies in the United States sharing their work in developing cutting edge approaches to managing/delivering police service.

The SPD is a founding member and currently coordinates this ongoing conversation. In November, we brought the A&EBP community together with the extensive research network (see above). We believe the greatest innovative progress comes from unfettered collaboration between practitioners and academics of a diverse background. The Civic Roundtable platform connects “public servants to the people they trust most...” in a free exchange of ideas we all benefit from. As Chief of Police, I will continue to support and promote innovative collaboration and leadership in developing the future of fair, equitable, transparent and effective policing in this manner.

Outside of the analytics and technology arena, I implemented the Before the Badge program and Outward Mindset training department wide as set forth below in Question 12.

10. You have served for over two years as Interim Police Chief. What would you change as permanent chief that you have not been able to do as Interim? What would your overall philosophy be as permanent Chief?

From the first day of my interim appointment, I have led as though I was a permanent chief. I have had to change command staff members, modify resources and units, transfer 100 officers back to patrol, and resize bureaus. As I transition to permanent Chief, I will seek to add a Deputy Chief as soon as possible to help coordinate the Operations, Investigations, Special Operations, and Metropolitan Bureau Chiefs. I will continue to examine my command staff to ensure that I have the most effective leaders that embrace my vision, even while providing candid counsel to ensure the department is as effective and equitable as it can be.

Additionally, while not dependent on my permanent appointment, I now have the budget to fully implement my relational policing model by hiring a department-wide Relational Policing Coordinator. This position will continue the innovative work of Before the Badge and will also drive development of other programs to reinforce those values.

11. Please explain how you plan to work with the OPA, OIG, and CPC as permanent Chief. The recommendations' tracker documents the status of SPD implementation of recommendations, are there particular examples of your implementing their recommendations as Interim Chief that you'd like to highlight?

Seattle has a robust accountability structure that provides important perspectives on officer and department performance, individually and systemically. The OPA, OIG, and CPC all perform critical functions in holding SPD to the reforms that were implemented under the Consent Decree and continue to drive improvements to policy. My team meets regularly with these partners to collaborate on productive solutions. Internally, accountability mechanisms such as the Force Review Board, the Collision Review Board, the Performance Review Board, and others ensure that the commitment to self-analysis and improvement, set in place under the Consent Decree, remains rooted in our department's DNA. Even as staffing taxes capacity, as Interim Chief, supported by an extraordinary team of researchers and analysts, I have launched additional initiatives all intended to further support and expand the department's capacity for self-assessment, leveraging technology where available to mitigate against staffing constraints. (For example, using machine learning and natural language processing, refining automated "screening" of reports to identify markers of a use of force, as a backstop to human reporting error.)

12. Please explain your approach to professional development of officers within the department, and approach to officer wellness.

Since its staff psychologist position was abrogated around 20 years ago, Seattle has lagged significantly behind other similarly situated departments in building internal capacity to support officer wellness and growth. While our peer support teams do tremendous work, that is just one part of what a comprehensive wellness program should be. Recognized by President Obama's 2016 task

force on police reform as a key pillar of police reform, ensuring that the people who do this work are trained, equipped, and supported to be at their physical, cognitive, and psychological best is critical to ensuring the overall success of the department.

We also know that people go into public service for the primary reason that they want to feel like they are making a difference and giving back to their communities. Especially in younger generations, people will not stay in jobs if they do not feel like they have the opportunity to self-actualize. Making sure we are promoting not just the health, but the professional growth, of our officers is critical to retaining officers.

Over the past year, I have launched two key programs that support both officer wellness and officer growth – the Before the Badge program, and Outward Mindset training department-wide. I am also immensely grateful that Council's 2023 budget allots us position authority to bring back to the department an in-house mental health practitioner – ideally, a licensed psychologist, board certified in first responder psychology – to build up an in-house wellness section on par with national best practices. Acknowledging that it will take some time to identify the right person, we have just entered into a contract with a nationally recognized expert in this field so that we can begin the work while we recruit for the permanent position.

13. What are your key budget priorities? What will your approach be in the event of an economic downturn and fewer resources being available?
- a. Would 911 response continue to be a focus over specialty units such as investigations?

Investigations is not a specialty unit – it is a key component of public safety. Specialty units such as Anti-Crime teams, Gang Unit, and Community Outreach have been abrogated to increase patrol and consolidation of units in Investigations has occurred in order to augment patrol response. The goal is and has been to balance the department's functions to provide as comprehensive public safety services as possible and without a sufficient patrol response, we will not have initial reports to initiate and guide follow-up investigations. Additionally, as with our staffing constraints (35% decrease in sworn staffing), as budget support is reduced, we will have to triage our innovations into better public safety programs as well.

- b. Given the likelihood of an approaching recession, will you focus deployment of CSOs to relieve officers in the field? Do you think that CSOs need new or different training to do so?

As set forth above, I support increasing the flexible deployments of CSOs as a critical part of the SPD team. However, it is unlikely that re-deployment of the CSOs will significantly relieve officer call loads. More likely, as has been seen in many jurisdictions, they will primarily serve to fill gaps in public safety service rather than moving calls from officers. To my knowledge, CAHOOTS achieved the most significant impact of reducing call loads for officers, but that was at 5-7% of total calls.

14. Seattle, in line with nationwide trends, has seen an increase in bias crimes in recent years. What approach do you believe is needed to address bias crime? Are police responses or community responses needed? How could these different sets of responses collaborate? How can you work with OIG on this issue?

Seattle has indeed seen an increase in bias crimes in recent years. SPD, unlike many jurisdictions, investigates and maintains statistics not only on hate crimes (RCW (A.36.080 and SMC 12A.06.115), but also crimes with bias elements (an event in which a crime is committed that is not bias-based and during the incident the suspect uses derogatory language directed at the victim's protected status or group) and bias incidents (Offensive derogatory comments directed at a person's sexual orientation, race, or other protected status which cause fear and/or concern in the targeted community during a non-criminal incident). The Bias Crimes Coordinator maintains the data, which is shared with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Mayor's Office, and to City Council.

To address bias crime, it must be understood. While white supremacists, organized hate groups, and skinhead groups, which often first come to mind in this area, are definitely a problematic part of the landscape, a substantial number of bias crimes are committed against and by our most vulnerable populations – those in behavioral crisis, the unhoused, and those suffering from addiction. As many of Seattle's bias crimes have a strong correlation with untreated mental illness, working collaboratively with support systems—including community organizations—for those in crisis providing secure and effective treatment options, and addressing the root cause will go a long way to reducing the violent incidents on our streets.

While SPD certainly investigates hate threats and harassment from organized hate groups, doing so systemically will take dedicated intelligence resources – many of which SPD does not have. For example, we have no social media monitoring tools that would allow us to track hate threats – to the degree it can be done, it is a manual process by a detective. SPD also engages in community outreach on critical issues – such as the recent spate of Asian-targeted hate crimes. We continue to work with all demographic communities to build trust.

SPD would welcome collaboration on the OIG to better understand the scope of this problem and to help develop additional strategies and tools to address it systemically.

15. What is your approach to ensure the Seattle Police Department reflects the diversity of Seattle's population?

Under my leadership, the department has prioritized recruiting and hiring personnel that reflect the community it serves. Recruitment and outreach efforts have included advertising in diverse, local news outlets including NW Vietnamese News, La Raza, and the Seattle Medium. In-person outreach has included participation in the Women in Trades Fair, the Juneteenth even at Seward Park, and the Arab Festival at Seattle Center. These efforts have yielded positive results, with 2022 YTD hiring of persons identifying as BIPOC at 54% and persons identifying as female at 18% of sworn hires. These ratios have been increasing since 2014 and we will strive to drive them higher.

16. As Chief of Police, you are responsible for officer discipline. What is your approach to officer discipline?

- a. The OIG Discipline Audit showed that SPD Chiefs are most likely to choose the lower end of the discipline range that is recommended by the Discipline Committee. What criteria will you use to determine discipline?

My record clearly shows that I do not hesitate to discipline officers when warranted, up to and including termination. The OIG audit only examined five of my cases, three of which were below median and two of which were above median.

Ultimately, we know from research that organizational culture derives largely from the opportunities employees are provided to make a difference and the procedural justice they are afforded. My record on discipline shows that I take acts of misconduct seriously, and I will continue to do so. In fact, while I take no pride in this fact, the actions of some of my employees have compelled me to make more terminations than any other prior Chief. Throughout my career, I have worked to ensure trust and accountability is preserved not only for our community, but all our officers and employees. No officer likes a bad officer because it makes their job that much harder and tarnishes the reputation of us all. But as Chief, I commit to ensuring that just as we do not hesitate to hold officers accountable for misfeasance and for meeting the high bar of performance we set, we hold ourselves accountable for creating an environment in which they can thrive and excel. This means, to me, acknowledging the incredible work that the men and women of this department do every day, investing in our supervisors, and doing all we can to ensure that we are mitigating the inherent stress officers face daily with necessary rest and support.

Initiatives that I have launched as Interim Chief, and which as Chief I will advance, include:

- Growth mindset training throughout the department, across ranks, designed to promote both internal and external relationships and support continual employee engagement.
- Before the Badge, a 45-day immersive training for new recruits, pre-academy, that focuses on relational policing, building community connections in each of our five precincts, honest dialogues with formerly incarcerated persons, and outward mindset.
- Recognizing the physiological, cognitive, emotional, and psychological stresses of a job where we are increasingly asking members of our department to do more with less, building out a comprehensive risk management strategy that focuses on wellness, outward mindset, and a cutting-edge early intervention system (based on methodology nationally recognized as emerging best practice) that will allow supervisors to interrupt stress-related impacts before the point at which such stress manifests in behavior.
- Building the Wellness Unit to meet best practice standards for similarly situated departments (standards now often required under more recent Consent Decrees).

17. What is your perspective on the Consent Decree? Has it been successful? Do you believe it should continue? What work should the Office of the Inspector General continue?

The Consent Decree has helped the Seattle Police Department become a learning organization and has unquestioningly driven change in all substantive areas. As the Monitor wrote in the 2022 Comprehensive Assessment:

“These changes do not simply exist in theory or on paper. They can be seen in how officers are performing on a day-to-day basis. Officer use of force has declined 48 percent from 2015 to 2021. Officers and supervisors consistently adhere to Court-approved use of force policies. SPD officers respond to nearly 10,000 people in crisis per year, and Crisis Intervention Teams have dramatically improved interactions and outcomes – with force used in only 1.5 percent of contacts with individuals experiencing crises and many improvements made in connecting individuals in crisis to supportive human services. And when officers stop or detain a person, they must now articulate the reason for a stop and provide justification for searches. As a testament to this progress, policing organizations around the nation, to advance their own reforms, have come to Seattle to learn from SPD and adopt policies and best practices in crisis response, de-escalation, and critical decision-making models.”

But there is work remaining in the very areas that have been crises in policing for many years: public trust, violent crime, staffing, morale, leadership, and wellness. We know that our community voices have to be at the center of our change.

However, the Consent Decree is no longer the driver of change at SPD – the recommendations of the Force Review Board, internal audits and reviews, OPA, OIG, and CPC, along with 160 research partners and collaborations, have moved the department far beyond the expectations of the Consent Decree. As such, the Consent Decree should end. SPD will continue to adapt and learn from its successes and mistakes, undoubtedly validated by the OIG, which is tasked to continually audit and review SPD processes including our use of force, less lethal tools, and interactions with persons in crisis.

At the same time, I cannot caution strongly enough that sustaining change requires continued investment and support. The Consent Decree cannot become another “one and done” initiative in Seattle’s long history; we must continue to honor it as a catalyst for ongoing reform. As best practices continue to emerge, as technology continues to advance, and as our communities and society change, we must be agile and innovative to meet the changing environment in which we operate. It is precisely this commitment to iterative review and reform of our policies, tactics that the Consent Decree sought to engrain, and that SPD has embraced. As set forth in this year’s budget, both the Mayor and Council have supported SPD’s development in wellness, data analytics, relational policing development and internal review systems – thank you for your support of SPD’s innovation.

18. Some constituents have shared that they believe the City Council has authority to mandate which laws are enforced/prevent enforcement of laws. These community members report that some SPD officers have indicated that the City Council has “tied their hands” and instructed officers to not enforce certain laws. Please describe how the Chief of Police ensures that all officers understand their law enforcement duties, regardless of whether the suspect is

housed or experiencing homelessness, as well as b. the fact that law enforcement priorities are not determined by the Council. What steps would you take to ensure that officers accurately communicate their responsibilities, and the limitations of Council authority, to members of the public?

Internal messaging through directives, policy, training, and discussions will continue to clarify what the duties and expectations of officers are and how they are to be carried out. But the issue raised here is complex – officers are expected to follow and enforce the laws. Sometimes officers are directed by City Council that certain laws should be their lowest enforcement priorities. Others are not charged by the prosecuting attorneys, a reality that changes by administration. The King County Jail declines to hold people arrested for many crimes and there is inconsistency in the approach that courts take to different matters brought before them. Add in requirements (that I fully support) for diversion programs and other alternatives that are often poorly supported or resourced, and there is confusion.

I do not support SPD officers providing wrong or politically motivated perspectives about the cause of their frustrations. They are often given instructions and messages that conflict with their day-to-day realities and the frustration of citizens who often want a police response that SPD cannot provide.

There have been substantive legal changes, such as the *Blake* decision, that have changed the operational landscape for officers and increased frustration for the public. We will continue to work with training to provide balanced legal updates and provide our employees with the correct talking points to educate the public.

19. What do you want your legacy to be as Chief?

My vision is to build a beloved community – a community at peace. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about a beloved community that is cared for regardless of poverty or race; I share that goal. To do this we must know what our community wants us to do, we must restore and build public trust, and we must focus on continuous improvement and innovation.

Clearly, I cannot do this alone. I have my team. I have my department. I have my community. And I have all of the City of Seattle, which, if it shares my dream for peace, will hopefully work collaboratively with me and SPD to create this reality.

At the end of my tenure, I hope that people will say: he helped bring peace to Seattle, and he cared.

20. Will you maintain a constructive working relationship with Council with:

- a. Prompt and complete responses to Council information inquiries.
- b. Proactive updates on policy development, operational concerns and financial matters of significance, so the Council is informed of major changes or controversies.
- c. Dependable implementation of formal policy direction provided by the Council.
- d. Assistance in the research and development of Council policy initiatives.

During my tenure, my teams and I have worked hard to be responsive to Council and engage on issues of mutual concern, so I appreciate the ask to “maintain a constructive relationship with Council.” I regularly meet with many members of Council to keep them apprised of critical updates and provide written materials monthly, quarterly, and annually on a host of topics. SPD also strives to implement policy direction provided by Council within our capacity to do so and within legal limitations. We look forward to continuing in a productive manner to collaborate on evidence-based innovations and initiatives to improve public safety.

21. The Chief of Police is a position in the Executive branch of government and, consequently, can be politicized to support the Mayor’s priorities. For instance, this statement made during budget last year characterized a budget action, one that had no impact on staffing support in the budget, in a way that frightened the public and reinforced a narrative that could have had a negative impact on retention and recruitment efforts. Will you commit to communicating with the public and your officers in a factually accurate way?

We as a City are best served by open and honest discussions and providing evidence-based services to our communities. At times, these discussions will be spirited, but I will do my part to communicate in a factually accurate way to the public and my employees.