

## **The Oregonian**

# **Consultants Urge Portland Police to Send Officers with Enhanced Training to More Mental Health Calls**

*By Maxine Bernstein  
April 3, 2018*

Portland police officers who receive training in advanced crisis intervention should be sent to more mental health-related calls because they're more likely to send people to a hospital for care, city-hired consultants recommend in a report released Tuesday.

The approach will help the Police Bureau meet the requirements of a federal settlement agreement, the consultants said.

The Chicago-based Rosenbaum & Associates issued a draft of the quarterly report just two weeks before officials from the city and the U.S. Department of Justice are expected to appear April 19 before U.S. District Judge Michael A. Simon for a hearing on the status of required police reforms. The consultants also plan to hold a town hall on the report April 18.

A Justice Department investigation found in 2012 that Portland police used excessive force against people with mental illness. The negotiated settlement with the city, approved by Simon in 2014, called for changes to police policies, training and oversight.

The agreement called for a different crisis response model that has a team of trained officers responding to mental health crisis calls as their full-time role and answering to one high-ranking supervisor.

Instead, Portland police provided extra crisis training to officers who volunteered. The so-called Enhanced Crisis Intervention Team officers now number 118, 38 percent of the bureau's patrol officers. They continue to work patrol and are scattered throughout the bureau's three precincts. They're dispatched if available to certain types of crisis calls.

The consultants have worked for more than a year to try to evaluate the officers with the enhanced training and the bureau's response to mental health-related calls, but often found police and dispatch data was sparse or nonexistent.

So, they worked with police to compare outcomes of calls between regular patrol officers and the officers with the extra training from mid-April to mid-September last year.

They found that the enhanced crisis intervention officers were significantly more likely to have a person taken to a hospital, such as the Unity Center psychiatric emergency room, than regular patrol officers.

They didn't find significant statistical differences between the two groups of officers, though, in whether an encounter led to an arrest.

The police and consultants evaluated 8,939 mental health contacts. For every 100 calls, officers with the enhanced training would transport seven more people to a hospital or the Unity Center than would the regular patrol officers. They responded to 70 to 75 percent of the emergency mental health calls.

"This difference has the potential for meaningful impact on those experiencing a mental health crisis," the consultants wrote.

As a result, the consultants echo recommendations from a now-defunct community oversight board in suggesting that the officers with the special training be sent to all calls when a person's mental health is the primary issue.

Currently, the officers with enhanced training are sent to a mental health call if a person is violent, has a weapon, is threatening or attempting suicide, threatening to jump from a bridge or building or structure, threatening to obstruct traffic, if the call comes from a residential mental health facility or if the caller specifically requests an enhanced crisis intervention officer.

The consultants recommended that the bureau expand the types of calls that these officers handle to any mental health crisis call involving someone experiencing intense personal distress or anxiety, obvious changes in their ability to function such as neglect of personal hygiene or unusual behavior, catastrophic life events such as a breakup or loss of parental rights, or any other disaster that may make them a danger to themselves or others.

Patrol officers already often request help from the other officers for many of these types of calls, the report said.

The consultants noted that the bureau has been reluctant to expand the dispatch criteria, preferring to send patrol officers to less-serious calls so they can gain their own experience.

Yet Chief Danielle Outlaw said Tuesday that the bureau has worked with federal Justice officials and emergency dispatch to revise its protocol to enable the officers with extra training to respond to more calls involving mental health crises. The bureau did not provide further details.

The consultants had asked the police bureau to compare if force is used when the officers with extra training are sent to a mental health call, compared to a regular patrol officer. But there were only 22 cases involving force during the period studied, so it didn't provide a reliable analysis, the consultants noted without describing those encounters.

Anna So, a member of Critical Resistance PDX, urged the city to spend money on mental health resources and not police. The group is mounting an awareness campaign called Care Not Cops.

"We must ... invest in life-affirming resources that can respond and provide long-term care to people in mental health emergencies," she said.

## **Portland Police Sergeant Honored for Fighting Sexism, Discrimination**

*By Maxine Bernstein  
April 3, 2018*

Portland police Sgt. Liani Reyna, the first woman member of the bureau's elite tactical squad, was honored Tuesday with a city award recognizing her fight against sexism and discrimination.

Reyna reported inappropriate and sexually-degrading initiation rites by the Special Emergency Reaction Team in a complaint that led to discipline in 2002 against 20 current or former members of the team.

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries also concluded that Reyna was subjected to a hostile work environment based on her gender and that the hazing during training at Camp Rilea amounted to discrimination.

Reyna was one of five city employees who received the "WE Persist" award. The WE stands for women's empowerment.

"Reyna had to wrestle with a very difficult decision, come forward and report the inappropriate activity which could compromise her career, or remain silent and endure the behavior," city employee Debbie Caselton said in announcing her award.

Read why award was presented to Sgt. Reyna

In her complaint, Reyna said officers dressed in dresses and wigs while others ripped off their clothes in strip-tease acts and simulated sex. New members were issued "rodent gear" -- a plastic helmet, a seashell necklace and a wooden boot -- and were told to wear the gear in restaurants and sing songs, some lewd, so other customers could hear.

As initiation, new members made coffee, cleaned the firing range and drove veteran team members around. For failing to load equipment into a van, she complained that she was handcuffed and subjected to a mock trial. She said the team also passed around a "birthday idol" for team officers to display in their homes. She described the object as an opaque statute of two men performing oral sex. Other officers described it as a Greco-Roman statute of two men wrestling.

Reyna had joined the team in February 1999 after a selection process that caused some acrimony because she was selected over two men who ranked higher than her on eligibility tests. She was the team's first and only woman and openly gay member. She resigned from the team in November 2000.

While Reyna's complaint led to changes and an end to the team's hazing, it "came at a great price to Reyna," Caselton told a standing-room only crowd in City Hall's council chambers.

Reyna was passed up for promotions, shunned by fellow officers and exposed to complaints from colleagues, Caselton said.

Reyna eventually was promoted to sergeant in October 2005 and most recently has led and developed the bureau's Emergency Management Unit. She has been with the bureau for 24 years.

In her free time, the 48-year-old single mother played eight years for the semi-professional women's tackle football team called "Portland Fighting Shockwave" and served as the team's general manager for two of those years.

Reyna told The Oregonian/OregonLive that said she was fortunate to make friends in the agency who appreciated her work and that she was grateful for the support she's received from many of her colleagues and community members.

"My career has not been easy," she said after the ceremony. "I've had to jump over many hurdles, which included staving off relentless and unfair biases and unfair treatment, all while doing my job with a smile."

# The Portland Tribune

## Economist Reinforces Residential Infill Project

*By Jim Redden*

*April 4, 2018*

Analysis says plan should lead to more lower-cost housing, although some existing homes will continue to be torn down.

Fewer home demolitions. More but less-expensive replacement housing units.

Those three housing goals would be achieved if the City Council approves the recommendations of the Residential Infill Project, at least according to a revised economic analysis released by the city Monday.

The project — which started under former Mayor Charlie Hales — has become a flashpoint in the contentious debate over how the city should accommodate the 100,000 additional households expected to be here by 2035. It is primarily supported by those who favor increased residential density and largely opposed by those who want existing neighborhoods to remain unchanged.

Now, as the appointed Planning and Sustainability Commission is preparing to hold public hearings on the project's most recent set of recommendations, Johnson Economics says the results should offer something for everyone.

For those opposed to residential demolitions, restrictions on the maximum size of replacement homes will prevent the construction of new "McMansions," saving at least some smaller houses in existing neighborhoods, Johnson Economics concluded in the analysis, which is included in the proposed draft report.

And for those who favor increased density, future replacement projects are more likely to be duplexes and triplexes, which will house more people and cost less to rent or buy than single-family homes.

Not everyone opposed to the project is likely to accept the conclusions in the analysis, because it was commissioned by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which is managing the project. But it will now shape much of the debate before the commission, which will recommend a version for the council to consider later this year.

### **Current provisions**

The most recent recommendations were posted in the latest project report on its website on April 2. Like earlier versions, it proposed rezoning approximately 60 percent of existing single-family neighborhoods in the city to allow relatively small multifamily projects near transit stations and major transportation corridors. It also recommends shrinking the maximum allowable size of new residential homes on 5,000-square-foot lots from 6,750 square feet to 2,500 square feet.

The 10-page analysis is included in the most recent report. Dense and wonky, it is hard for anyone but an economist to understand. The private Johnson Economics firm examined how the recommendations would potentially affect 17 subareas within the Additional Housing Options Overlay Zone that would be rezoned.

The analysis concluded the square-foot restrictions would reduce future residential demolitions by 22 percent. But allowing replacement projects to house more than one family could increase the overall number of new units by an estimated 31 percent.

In addition, the smaller new units would be more affordable than the larger ones that otherwise would be built. Rents would drop from an average of \$4,597 for a new large single-family house to an average of \$2,997 for half a new duplex. Average sales prices would fall from \$848,000 for a new house to \$392,000 for half a duplex. The differences would be even greater for triplexes, which could be built on corner lots.

As the analysis puts it, "The modest increase in allowable units is offset by the lower allowed square footage of new development, which generally reduces the supportable land value for new development. The lower supportable land value decreases the likelihood for redevelopment on a significant number of parcels.

"Sites that do redevelop under the proposed modifications would be expected to deliver units at a generally lower price point and higher unit density. When adjusted to reflect net new units (deducting units lost during redevelopment), the net unit yield is significantly higher."

Still, for those who want existing neighborhoods to stay the same, the analysis confirms that older, less-expensive homes will continue to be demolished and replaced with new housing that many people cannot afford, even if it happens at a slower rate.

The recommendations are also intended to encourage additional accessory dwelling units and the redevelopment of so-called skinny lots, although their potential totals are smaller.

### **Council already signaled intent**

The City Council approved the concept of rezoning existing single-family neighborhoods for more "missing middle housing" when it updated the Comprehensive Plan that governs growth through 2035 last year.

The state Land Conservation and Development Commission recently approved the update, which is scheduled to take effect on May 24. The Residential Infill Project recommendations add city code and zoning changes to enact that concept.

The Planning and Sustainability Commission has scheduled public hearings on the project recommendations on May 8 and 15. It will hold a work session on May 22 and is scheduled to vote on a version for council consideration on June 26.

The council will then hold its own public hearings on the recommendation, with approval expected in the fall.

## **The Skanner**

### **Community Budget Forum**

*April 3, 2018*

In April and May, the City of Portland will host a series of public meetings about the city's annual budget. Portland residents are invited to attend and provide testimony to Mayor Wheeler and the City Council. Tickets will be available an hour and a half prior to start time, and will be drawn at random throughout the course of the event. Each speaker selected for testimony will have two minutes to address the City Council.

Mayor Wheeler will release his proposed budget at the end of April. The budget forum dates and locations are as follows:

**Tuesday, April 3, 2018**

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

David Douglas High School, South Cafeteria

1500 SE 130th Ave, Portland, Oregon 97233

Bus lines: 20, 73

**Tuesday, April 17, 2018**

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Roosevelt High School, Commons

6941 N. Central, Portland, Oregon 97203

Bus lines: 44, 75

**Thursday, May 10, 2018**

6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

City Hall, Council Chambers

1221 SW 4th Ave, Portland, Oregon 97204

For details about the budget process and ways to make your voice heard, please see the links below:

[FY 2018-19 Budget Documents](#)

[Get Involved in the City's Budget Process](#)

[Budget Testimony Tips](#)