

MEMORANDUM

TO: Austin City Council Public Safety Committee

FROM: Terra Tucker, Managing Director of Advocacy, Alliance for Safety and Justice, Strategic Lead, Scaling Safety (Austin)

DATE: August 3, 2026

SUBJECT: Briefing on relationship between Austin Police and community violence prevention programs

Purpose

This memorandum serves as a formal response to the City of Austin's August 3, 2026 Public Safety Committee's agenda Item, "Briefing on relationship between Austin Police and community violence prevention programs".

What is Scaling Safety?

Scaling Safety is a five-year, multi-city, resident-powered public safety initiative and joint venture between Just Safe and Community-Based Public Safety Collective (CBPSC). The initiative works to build stronger community-based public safety ecosystems by investing in trusted local organizations, strengthening their capacity, and advancing coordinated, data-informed strategies that prevent violence, promote healing, and improve resident wellbeing. Through approaches such as Safe Passage, High-Risk Intervention, Public Safety Roundtables, victim services and trauma recovery, mental health crisis response, reentry support, and other community violence intervention strategies, Scaling Safety centers residents and survivors while strengthening collaboration among community organizations, local government, and public safety partners. Its overarching goals are to reduce violence by up to 50 percent in targeted communities, double residents' access to supportive services, and diversify and unlock sustainable public funding for community-based safety solutions. Scaling Safety complements traditional public safety systems by expanding the people, resources, relationships, and infrastructure communities need to prevent harm, respond to crises, support healing, and sustain long-term systems change.

In Austin, Scaling Safety partners with and financially supports Hungry Hill, the Tomorrow's Promise Foundation, and local victim services agencies to achieve these objectives. I serve as the Strategic Lead for the City of Austin, working for Just Safe. We

recommend that the Committee read our recently released report, "[How Austin Became Safer: Community Partnerships and the Decline in Violent Crime](#)."

Response to Questions from the Committee

Community Violence Intervention (CVI) practitioners have a professional understanding with Austin Police Department (APD), but CVI work operates as its own discipline. Proximity to police can create a risk for CVI practitioners due to some residents' historical experiences with law enforcement. However, CVI organizations' strategy can benefit from public safety information provided by law enforcement, such as location and nature of incidents.

Hungry Hill Foundation and Tomorrow's Promise Foundation both coordinate with police at crime scene responses to ensure that they never interfere with an investigation or disrupt a scene. Their CVI practitioners, called High Risk Interventionists, do not cross the yellow line, rather they are gathering street intelligence needed to prevent retaliatory violence and providing immediate victim services to survivors. CVI practitioners also provide services outside APD's scope by providing victim services to survivors in their darkest moments and connecting them to their healing path. They serve victims who may not be able or interested in connecting to victim services provided by systems. This peer support can also interrupt the transmission of further violence among those who caused harm.

HHF and TPF remain key partners of the ATX Peace initiative and with Austin's Office of Violence Prevention, but their critical violence reduction work is currently sustained without any direct funding from the City of Austin.

HHF and TPF have responded to multiple shooting incidents at the request of the City and the community. Following these events, HHF and TPF teams engage in retaliation prevention and support survivors and families through intensive case management, meeting basic needs, and providing peer support. Notable incidents include the Sam's BBQ and Givens Park shootings. For each incident, the organizations responded within 18 minutes of notification, deploying 8 team member teams each, averaging approximately 5 hours of on-scene response per incident plus extensive follow up. *Due to community credibility, HHF and TPF have access to street intelligence not available to law enforcement and identified possible retaliation risks in 3 documented incidents and initiated mediation follow-up.* Additionally, these community based organizations are a safe space for survivors who are not ready to engage with systems. Immediate, no

barrier access to healing services is essential to starting survivors on their healing journey and preventing repeat victimization and/or retaliation.

Hungry Hill Foundation and Tomorrow's Promise Foundation recently launched the Public Safety Round Table (PSRT), a resident-led forum for developing collaborative solutions to public safety problems. The APD will soon be invited to join the PSRT as part of the collaboration. In particular, residents and CVI organizations would like a bi-weekly live update at the PSRT on information related to violence, in order to keep residents informed and inform strategy for CVI and victim services organizations.

We are aware of the funding reductions facing the city budget for Community Violence Intervention. While HHF and TPF are not currently funded with these dollars, ATX Peace is. As this [report](#) makes clear, a reduction in city funding, especially in light of decreased funding from other sources, will diminish the CVI organizations' ability to continue violence intervention work and therefore increase the violence in the city and the workload of APD.

Terra Tucker
Texas State Director, Alliance for Safety and Justice
Strategic Lead, Scaling Safety, (Austin)