

San Bruno Safe and Equitable Policing Review

***An independent, external review of the San Bruno Police
Department's current policies and practices***

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Impact Justice ***Research & Action*** ***Center***

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Overview



Background & Methods

Background – Post George Floyd

Demand for Changes in police practices and procedures

- More accountability
- More transparency
- Stronger, more positive and authentic connections between police & community
- CA enacted new laws to respond to these demands
 - SB 1421 & SB 16 (more access to police personnel files)

Goal of this review is to enhance the SBPD's ability to meet the public safety needs of the community, fairly & equitably

- Project requested by the City Manager's Office, in collaboration with the SBPD

Research Questions

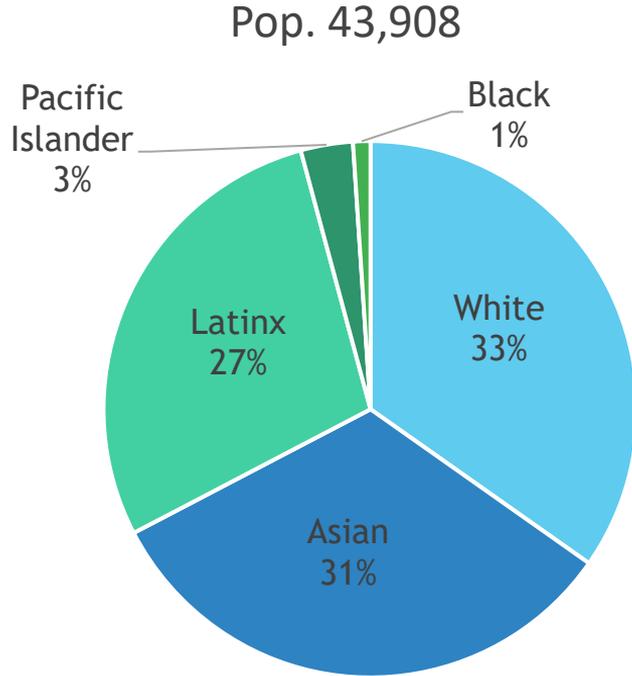
What does arrest, use-of-force, and citizen complaint data tell us about the immediate issues facing the SBPD and San Bruno's communities?

Does SBPD data point to disparities or differences in treatment of individuals from marginalized communities?

What issues do community members and SBPD personnel perceive as core to the city's safety and equity?

What are the experiences of San Bruno's law enforcement officers, and how do demographics such as race/ethnicity, age, and gender impact these experiences?

San Bruno, the "City with a Heart"



SBPD, largest dept. in San Bruno

- 46 sworn officers, 67 employees
- 40,000+ calls for service/yr.
- \$19.3 million budget, 39.2% of general fund

Mixed Methods Data Collection



Data

Data from SBPD

- Arrest, use-of-force, citizen complaint

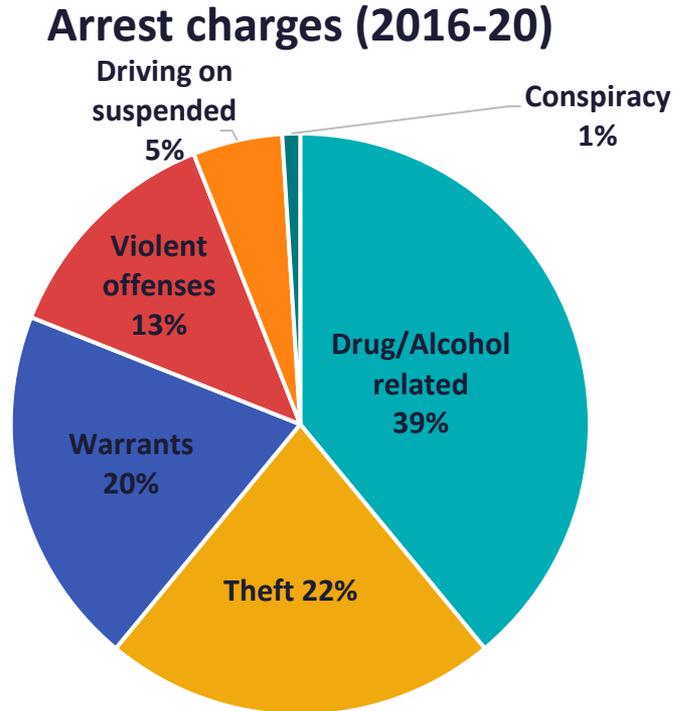
Public data from comparable jurisdictions

Original data re: perceptions of SBPD

- Sworn/unsworn personnel surveyed
- Community members
 - Surveys & focus groups

Arrests

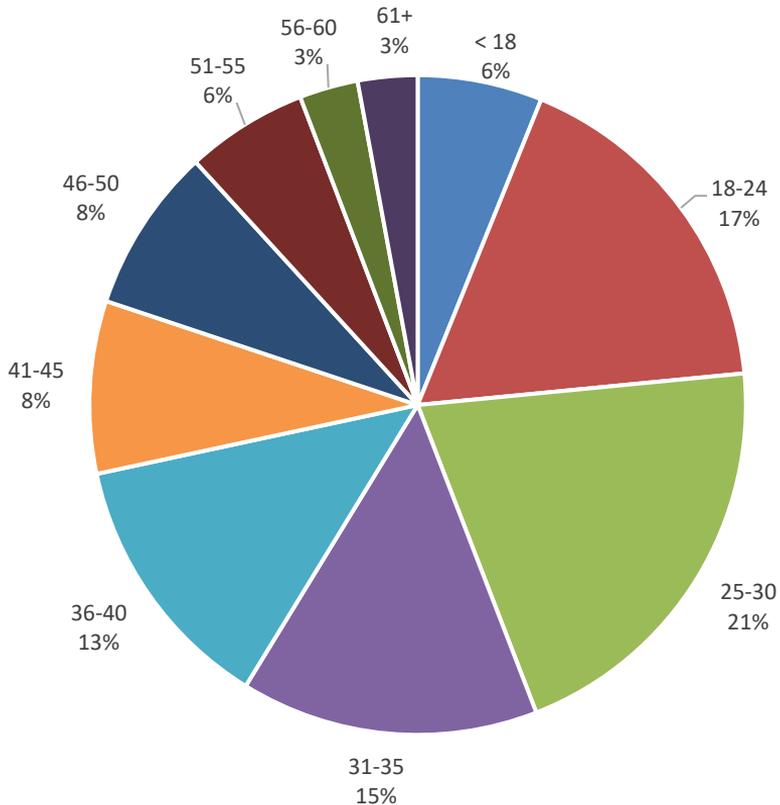
Most arrests for minor, non-violent offenses



SB could begin discussions with County partners re: warrant amnesty

- Most warrants issued by Court, not PD
- Clear misdemeanor/traffic warrants (22%)
- Protect low-income community
- Shift resources to matters of public safety

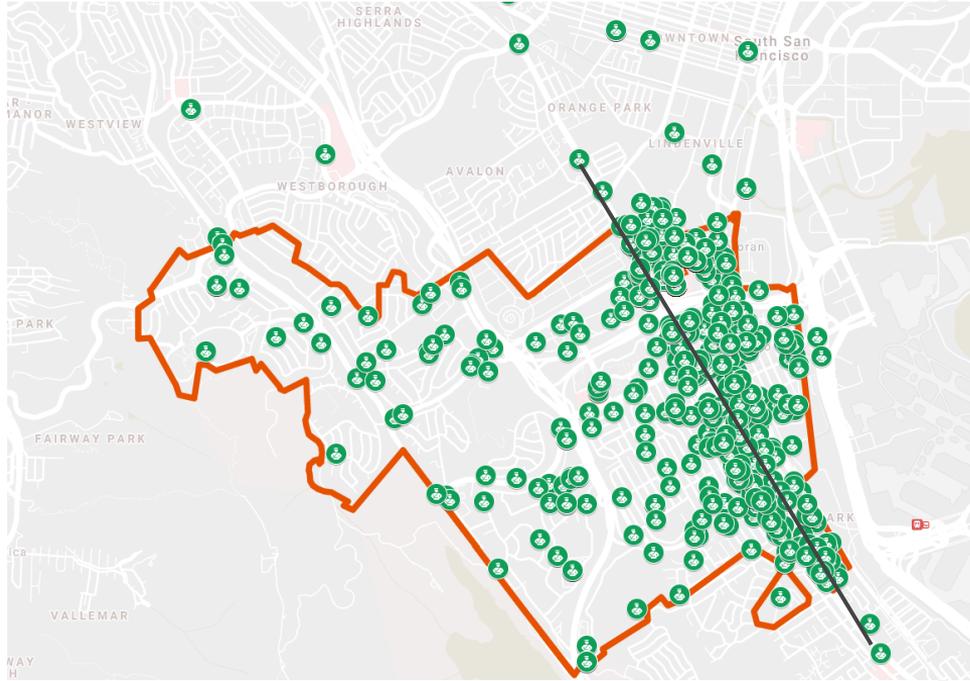
Young adults (<30) most likely to be arrested



Diversion for young adults could have large impact

- Those under-30 represent ~45% of arrests
- 18-24 (aka Transitional-Aged Youth or TAY) are particularly vulnerable population
- Research on brain development has shown that even though TAY are legally adults, their brains are still developing & they're still more likely to take risks, etc.
- Cut off from juvenile services, but not yet fully independent

Location and residency matter



Arrests concentrated around commercial & mixed-use areas

- Interviews with community members and SBPD personnel revealed a perception of “East vs. West” patterns of crime
 - Our analysis revealed patterns were less about “East vs. West” and more about commercial & mixed-use areas
 - This pattern is common in urban and suburban areas
- Most arrests are of non-residents
 - ~27% of arrestees live in San Bruno
- Bay Area experiences large transient populations due to work, school, recreation, shopping, etc.

Mental/Behavioral Health

- Training and resources needed to support vulnerable community members



Expand mental/behavioral health training and community resources



Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)

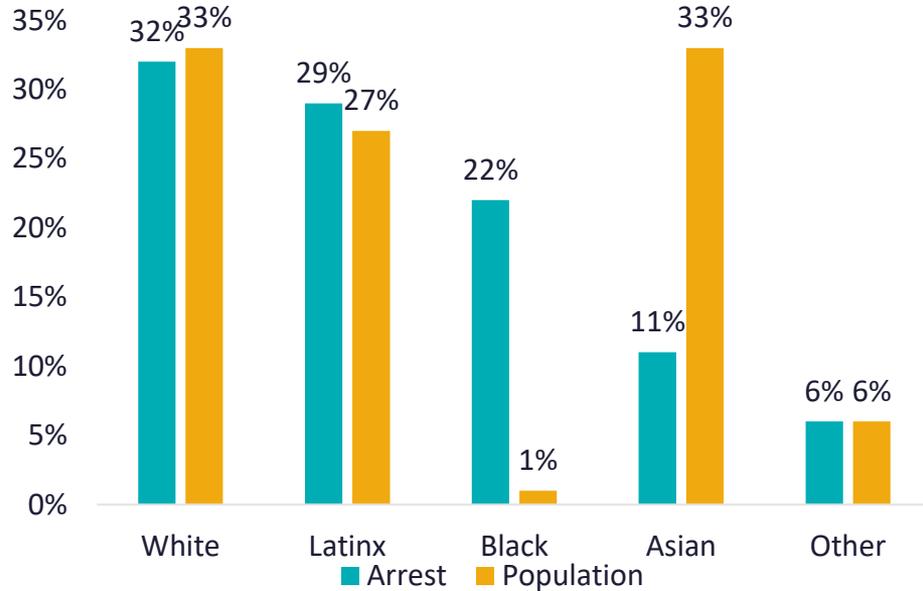


City & County support needed

To increase opportunities for diversion

Disparities in arrest rates highest for black civilians

% of arrests vs. % of pop. by race/ethnicity
(2016-2020)



Racial discrepancies systemic or particular?

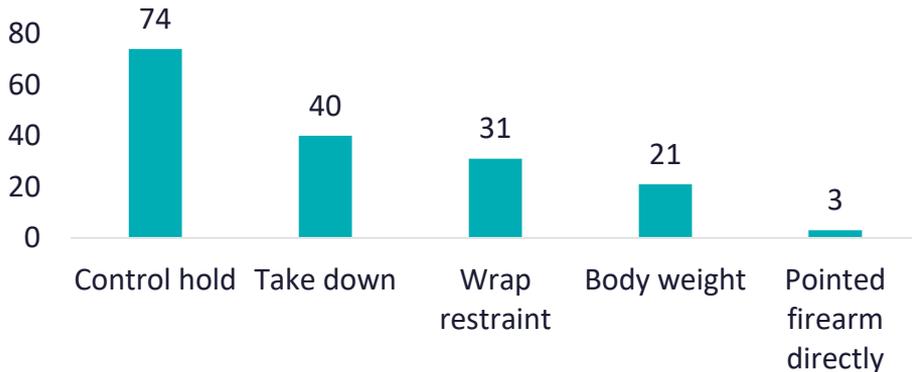
- SB, like much of Bay Area, hosts large transient pop.
 - In SB for work, shopping, recreation, etc.
 - Untangling underlying mechanisms, including systemic inequalities, implicit bias, poverty, etc. beyond current project
 - Warrants further research; recall that most arrests are of non-residents
- Current project found no evidence of purposeful bias or unfair treatment by SBPD
- Report and compare arrest data on race/ethnicity over time
- Clear policy re: bias, with clear disciplinary consequences
- Hire full time data analyst

Use of Force & Citizen Complaints

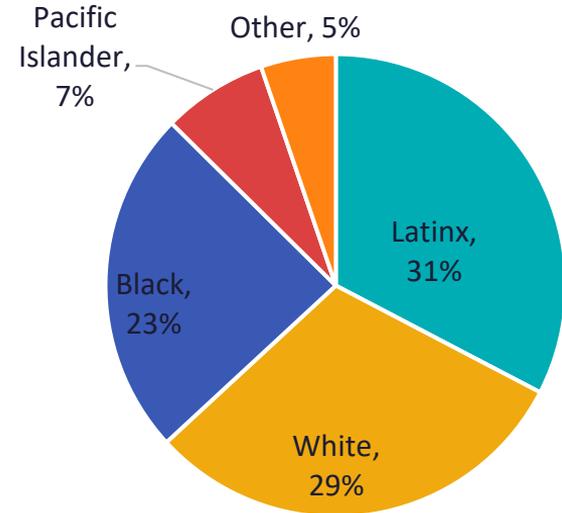
Use of force: "more than gentle touch"

- ~ 43 use of force incidents per year
 - SBPD leads in best practices in reporting UoF – definition is expansive & broader than other jurisdictions
- No fatalities in the past 5 years; most UoF incidents resulted in no injury to civilians
- Monitor data continuously
 - Assess for racial bias

Most common SBPD use of force (5-year avg. # of incidents 2016-20)



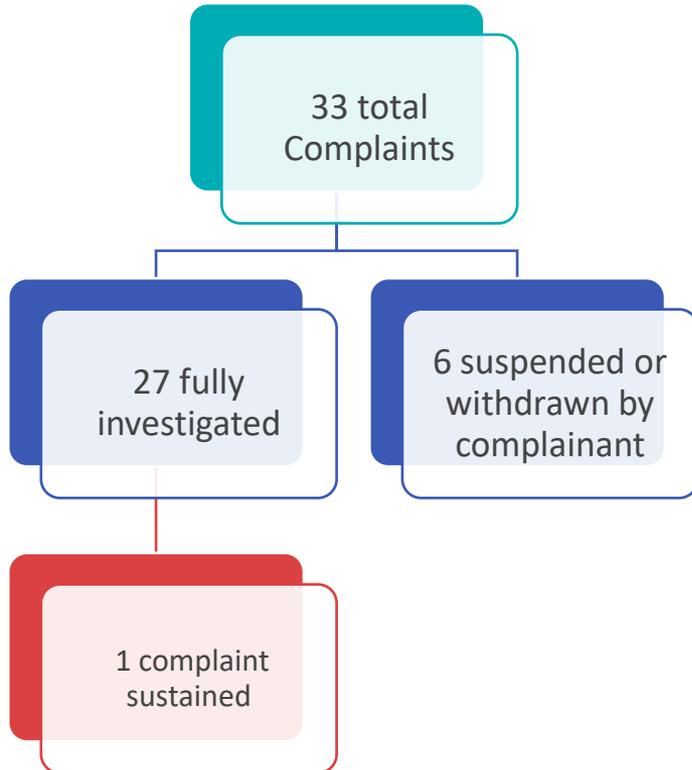
Use of force by race/ethnicity



- Very small differences between Latinx, Black, & white arrestees

Citizen complaints are few and handled efficiently

Complaints by disposition
(total counts, 2015-2019)

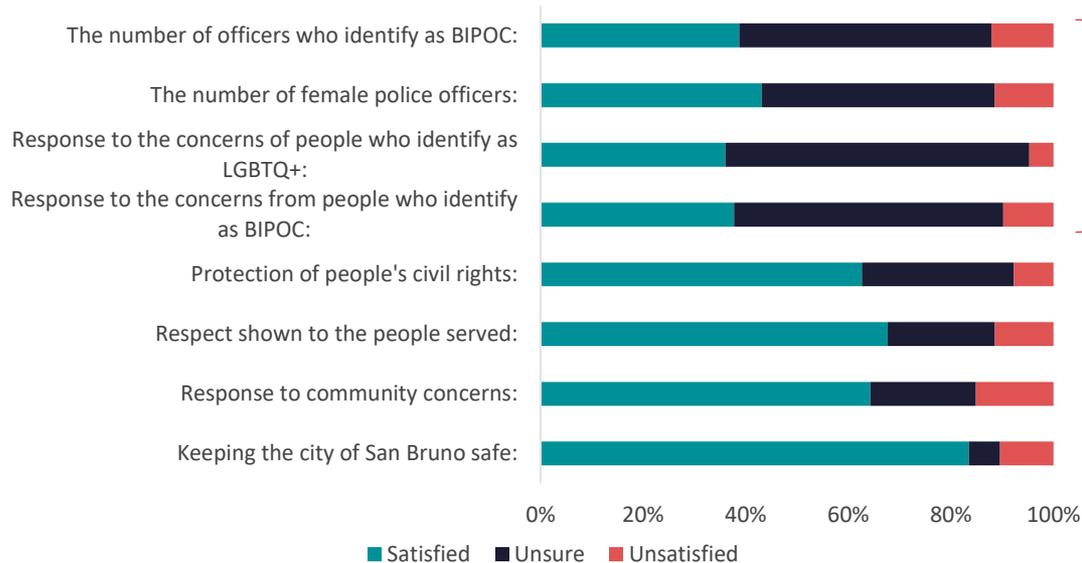


Amend review process for citizen complaints

- Create an additional avenue for filing complaints through the City Mgr's Office
- Process should be clearly outlined and stated on both the SBPD & City Mgr's Office websites
- Process should be clear and accessible in English and Spanish

Community Perceptions

Community perceptions of SBPD favorable overall



High levels of community satisfaction with SBPD,

- But more uncertainty with regards to diversity & equity

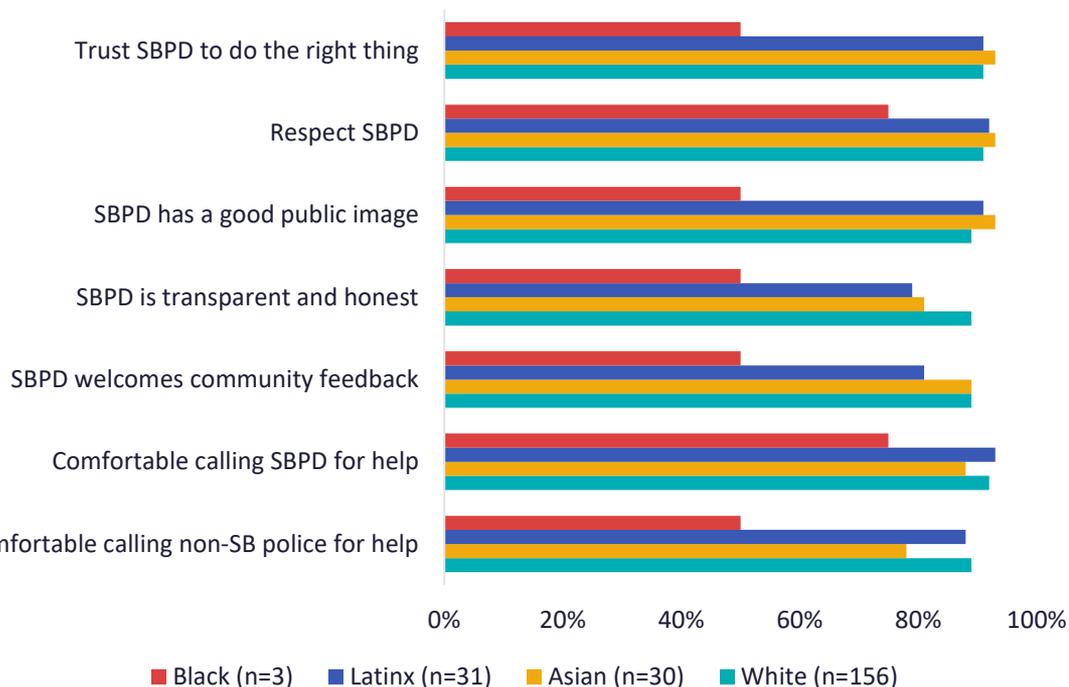
SBPD should develop a strategic plan to engage BIPOC & LGBTQ+ populations

- Opportunities for feedback
- Solicit underrepresented perspectives on policing

Note: BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, & Other People of Color; LGBTQ+ = lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, queer, and other members of this community

Community perceptions of SBPD favorable overall, with lower ratings from Black residents

Community Satisfaction with SBPD by race/ethnicity



Residents more comfortable with SBPD than police outside of the community

- Difference especially large for Black & Asian residents

SBPD should engage with community members outside of patrol/enforcement contexts

- Engage as equals
- Trainings to reduce biases

Community satisfaction differs by location: East compared to West side (along El Camino Real)

Satisfaction level with SBPD



On most items, east & west side residents are similarly satisfied with SBPD

SBPD should increase outreach and dedicate time to fostering relationships with El Camino Real area residents in particular

- Plan needed to increase diversity of Citizen Crime Prevention Committee
 - Targeted outreach
 - Examine possible selection biases
- SBPD should increase racial and gender diversity among staff

Final Reflections and Conclusions

Review is not meant to be exhaustive, but provides recommendations based on current best practices

- SBPD personnel and San Bruno residents who participated in review were positive and approving of SBPD
 - Residents reported feeling safe and well served
 - Officers feel included in leadership decisions
- At a high level, no indications of purposeful bias or inequitable practices
 - Disparities in arrests warrant further research
 - Should seek to increase input from BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and younger people
- Economic shifts and changes in landscape (Tanforan Mall) will require continued attention to impact on safety and equity

Summary of Recommendations: Arrest

- Explore possibility of warrant amnesty programs with County partners
- Explore developing & expanding diversion efforts for young adults, especially TAY (transitional-aged youth, ages 18-24)
- Work with County partners to expand community-based behavioral and mental health services
- Consider hiring a full-time data analyst

Summary of Recommendations: Use of Force & Citizen Complaints

- **Create additional avenue for filing complaints through City Manager's office**
- **Complaint process should be clearly outlined on SBPD & CMO websites**
 - **Information & complaint form should be translated into Spanish**
- **Continue training on use-of-force best practices & implicit bias**

Summary of Recommendations: Community

- **Increase outreach & continue dedicating time to relationship building, especially with East-side residents & neighborhoods**
- **Develop a strategic plan to engage and solicit input from BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and youth populations**
- **Seek out opportunities for interactions with community members, outside of patrol and enforcement contexts**
- **City of San Bruno should develop a strategic plan to increase the diversity of the Citizen Crime Prevention Committee**
- **Increase the number of BIPOC & women officers**

Any Questions?



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Thank you