

**Reimagining Public Safety in  
Urban Unincorporated King County:**

**PILOT PROGRAM  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PREPARED FOR THE KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE**



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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

**AAPI:** Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander

**BIPOC:** Black and Indigenous People of Color

**CBO:** Community-Based Organization

**DLS:** Department of Local Services

**EMT:** Emergency Medical Technician

**KCSO:** King County Sheriff's Office

**RPS:** Reimagining Public Safety

# Terms and Definitions

**Behavioral health:** A term used to include both mental health and substance abuse issues.

**Structural racism:** "The interplay of policies, practices, programs, and systems of multiple institutions, which leads to adverse outcomes and conditions for communities of color compared to white communities, that occurs within the context of racialized historical and cultural conditions."<sup>1</sup>

**Survey respondent:** A person who gave answers to the questions in the Reimagining Public Safety Survey.

**Upstream approach:** A process of addressing issues that, when left unsupported, leads to more significant issues.

**A level of trust:** Combining the number of responses that were reported to be "very trusting" and "somewhat trusting."

**A level of distrust:** Combining the number of responses reported to be "very distrusting" and "somewhat distrusting."

**A level of agreement:** Combining the number of responses that reported "strongly agree" and "agree."

**A level of disagreement:** Combining the number of responses that reported "disagree" and "strongly disagree."

**A level of comfort:** Combining the number of responses reported to be "very comfortable" and "somewhat comfortable."

**A level of discomfort:** Combining the number of responses that were reported to be "uncomfortable" and "very uncomfortable."

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<sup>1</sup> Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016–2022, Page 17: <https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/dnrp-directors-office/equity-social-justice/201609-ESJ-SP-FULL.pdf>





# Executive Summary

This report details the findings of the first phase of community outreach under King County's Reimagining Public Safety (RPS) Initiative. Funding for the initiative comes from the County's 2021–2022 Adopted Budget, which included a \$750,000 investment to develop a new approach(es) to keep people safe in urban unincorporated King County (UKC). The information presented in this report will inform the creation of public safety pilot programs in urban UKC to improve community safety and care, and create alternatives to a traditional police response.

# Background

Since declaring racism as a public health crisis after the murder of George Floyd in 2020, King County has taken on the historic challenge of addressing structural racism within the County’s government and region. As the primary provider of public safety services in urban UKC, 12 partner cities, the Muckleshoot Tribe, King County International Airport, Sound Transit, and King County Metro Transit, King County government can play a crucial role in developing effective, community-driven alternatives to traditional policing. By taking steps to improve the level of safety and well-being for and in communities that have been systemically underserved and over-criminalized, King County can become a place where every person can thrive.

The RPS outreach process has taken place in conjunction with several other critical Executive Branch engagement efforts to co-create solutions to pressing issues with King County residents. Two of which include the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) and the Department of Local Services’ work to build a Community Needs Lists. In March 2020, the King County Executive and Council appointed 13 members to a newly formed Public Safety Advisory Committee to ensure that with the transition of the King County Sheriff’s Office to the Executive Office, the County centered the knowledge of directly impacted stakeholders in the process to appoint a new Sheriff and improve how the County as a whole provides public safety. That same year, the Department of Local Services began building Community Needs Lists with residents from each urban unincorporated area to better inform County projects and priorities.

**The information presented in this report will inform the creation of public safety pilot programs in UKC to improve community safety and care, and create alternatives to a traditional police response.**

The RPS project team includes representatives from the Executive’s Office, the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget, the Department of Local Services, the Office of Equity and Social Justice, and the King County Sheriff’s Office. Of the \$750,000 allocated to this project, \$250,000 has been reserved for public safety pilot program development. The RPS project team estimates that at least \$500,000 will fund pilot program(s) identified by the Executive and his Senior Leadership Team.

<sup>2</sup> See the full list of partner cities and agencies: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/sheriff/police-partnerships/partners-list.aspx?msclkid=e53fb893a71e11ecb396cad6a6b7e209>

# Reimagining Public Safety Survey

The community feedback presented, analyzed, and used to make recommendations comes from the feedback of 730 respondents living in urban UKC and represents less than one percent of King County’s unincorporated population, emphasizing the need for ongoing and expanded community engagement.

Due to the public health guidance and other challenges presented by COVID-19, only one focus group was conducted in person during the first round of community engagement. All other community gatherings and focus groups were held virtually. The pandemic created barriers to securing insight from residents who do not have access to the internet.

## Summary of Findings

Through community meetings, focus groups, and a widely shared and promoted Reimagining Public Safety Survey, the RPS Project Team gained insight into how residents in the urban unincorporated areas of East Federal Way, East Renton, Skyway, and White Center felt about the current state of safety in their respective communities and their vision for a safer King County.

Of those surveyed, residents across King County share similar perspectives about what is needed to improve public safety.

**Key findings show:**

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-  Residents want a well-staffed King County Sheriff’s Office to address slow response times and increase the amount of police presence they see in their neighborhoods.

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  -  When in an emergency or other unsafe situation that requires a professional response, residents want a specialized approach to finding a resolution; an alternative response needs to be an option.

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  -  Law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians are not best equipped to handle behavioral health issues. Innovation is needed to coordinate an optimal response with other departments and agencies.
-

## Summary of Recommendations

Creating access to an alternative crisis response for non-violent crisis calls to 911 may create more capacity in the public safety infrastructure in King County. The RPS project team recommends that King County continue to invest in alternative crisis response models that respond to behavioral health crises with and without law enforcement. Taking a humanistic approach to public safety by providing social services to underserved communities is an upstream approach to reducing crime.

## Next Steps

The community feedback and the recommendations within this report will be presented to the County Executive and his Senior Leadership Team for review in March 2022. The approved recommendations will then be further developed. During the second phase of community engagement, urban UCK residents will help select which pilot program or programs will launch in their community.



# Acknowledgments

Many thanks to all the King County residents who shared their lived experiences, ideas, and perspectives. Thank you for investing your time and energy to share your vision for how King County can change the way it provides public safety for the better.

Thank you to the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, the Department of Local Services, the Office of Equity and Social Justice, and the King County Sheriff's Office for advancing the work of this project. Thank you to our communications consultants who developed the messaging, design, community toolkit, and survey distribution strategy for this initiative. The individuals below all played an essential role in developing the content in this report.

# Reimagining Public Safety Project Team

The Reimagining Public Safety project team designed, oversaw, and assisted with both the execution of engagement strategies and utilizing the data gathered through the community outreach process to prepare recommended pilot program categories for Senior Leadership and Executive approval. The RPS project team includes representatives from the Executive's Office, the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, the Department of Local Services, the Office of Equity and Social Justice, and the King County Sheriff's Office. Of the \$750,000 allocated to this project, the RPS project team estimates that at least \$500,000 will fund pilot program(s) identified by the Executive and his Senior Leadership Team.

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# Background

## **Introduction | Reimagining Public Safety**

King County is committed to continued investment in public safety methods that go beyond the role of policing and jails, and prioritizes personal and community wellness and care as defined by communities themselves. Reimagining public safety is part of a county-wide focus to dismantle structural racism.

# Racism is a Public Health Crisis

In the United States and King County, individuals from historically marginalized communities experience shorter life expectancies, higher rates of incarceration, and higher rates of poverty that are perpetuated by institutional racism at all levels of government.<sup>3</sup> The racism that is ...”embedded within the County as a whole has perpetuated a systemic failure to the community, to law enforcement, and others.”<sup>4</sup> Tackling systems of oppression and racism in King County requires continued investment in the work to reimagine public safety. As the primary provider of public safety services in UKC, 12 partner cities, the Muckleshoot Tribe, King County International Airport, Sound Transit, and King County Metro Transit, King County government can play a crucial role in developing effective, community-driven alternatives to traditional policing.<sup>5</sup>

Ensuring King County is a place where every person can thrive means improving the level of safety and well-being for and in communities that have been systemically underserved and over-criminalized. Since declaring racism as a public health crisis after the murder of George Floyd in 2020, King County has taken on the historic challenge of addressing structural racism within the County’s government and region. The County’s 2021–2022 Adopted Budget included a \$750,000 investment to develop a new approach(es) to achieve safety and well-being in urban UKC, which honors its meaningful history of working to improve equity and social justice.

Starting in 2022, the King County Sheriff will be appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. The King County Sheriff’s Office is the primary law enforcement agency for all unincorporated areas of King County. The Sheriff’s office provides essential services like employment background checks, protection order service, sex offender registration, and 911 response. In 2020, King County voters passed Charter Amendments 5 and 6, which changed the King County Sheriff from an elected to an appointed position.

In September 2021, the Public Safety Advisory Committee’s Recommendations on Hiring a New Sheriff and Improving Public Safety have been transmitted to the County Executive and Council. At the time of publication of this report, an Interim Sheriff has been appointed.

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<sup>3</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice; Committee on Community-Based Solutions to Promote Health Equity in the United States; Baciu A, Negussie Y, Geller A, et al., editors. *Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Jan 11. 3, The Root Causes of Health Inequity. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK425845/>

<sup>4</sup> BDS Planning & Urban Design. Public Safety Advisory Committee; 2021. [https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/~media/elected/executive/constantine/news/documents/2021/KC-PublicSafetyAdvisoryCommittee-FinalReport-20210930.ashx?la=en](https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/~/media/elected/executive/constantine/news/documents/2021/KC-PublicSafetyAdvisoryCommittee-FinalReport-20210930.ashx?la=en) Accessed January 11, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> See the full list of partner cities and agencies: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/sheriff/police-partnerships/partners-list.aspx?msclkid=e53fb893a71e11ecb396cad6a6b7e209>



# Reimagining Public Safety Survey

In 2021, residents across King County—particularly those living in urban unincorporated King County—were invited to participate in a 31-question survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather from them their lived experiences with law enforcement and their ideas for reimagining public safety.

The survey included multiple-choice questions, sections where respondents could provide comments, and open-ended questions. The survey was organized into three sections to gather respondents' experience and feedback on using 911 and social services; their feelings towards law enforcement and the establishment of an alternative public safety crisis response; and their thoughts and feelings towards social programs to support their community.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Questions 15 and 16 in our survey were modeled after the survey featured in a Final Reimagining Public Safety Report the City Council of Columbus, Ohio, released in 2021. <https://www.columbus.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2147519465>

Respondents were also asked via an open-ended question to share how they would address the public safety issues in their community. The survey was made digitally available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Somali on November 22 and closed on December 31, receiving over 2,600 responses from across King County, with over 700 from urban unincorporated King County.

All community feedback (data) collected via the RPS Survey is available in **Appendix 4** and **Appendix 5**.

## Survey Access and Community Outreach

The RPS project team utilized four core strategies, outlined below, to promote and invite engagement with the survey, allowing for maximum promotion during the survey's open window. Outreach methodologies used to collect responses from residents living in urban UKC included the following:

- 
- 1 Paid digital promotion:** Targeted social ads on Facebook and Instagram in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese using targeted zip codes in urban UKC
  - 2 Social sharing:** Activated the Executive's Office and Executive's social channels and, via a partner toolkit, conducted focused outreach to activate trusted messengers.
  - 3 News coverage:** Shared a news release and appeared in more than 30 stories within the first week
    - With online outlets that reach a combined 4.7 million unique visitors per month
    - With broadcast outlets with combined audiences of 1.3 million
  - 4 In-community promotion:** Targeted in-community postering and activations outlined below.

# Connecting Virtually

## Community Meetings

The RPS project team facilitated community meetings to introduce the Reimagining Public Safety Initiative and answer any questions about the County's project and process to identify and develop pilot program(s) to reimagine public safety. RPS project team staff also listened as community members shared their experiences related to public safety and their ideas about how the County can take steps to improve public safety. Staff attended the following seven meetings:

- West Hill Community Association Board meeting, 10/13
- White Center Public Safety Community meeting, 10/19
- King County, Community Investment Budget Committee, 10/20
- King County, Skyway Leadership meeting, 10/29
- Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council meeting, 11/9
- Not This Time regular meeting, 12/8

## Focus Group Sessions

Three focus group sessions were held in person and virtually to ensure that the community feedback used to inform the creation of public safety pilot programs included a diverse array of voices and insights.<sup>7</sup> Black, Indigenous, and People of Color's (BIPOC) voices and experiences were centered throughout, aligning with the King County Executive Branch value, "We are racially just."<sup>8</sup> Focus group participants were surveyed and engaged in discussions about public safety through the end of 2021. In early 2022, focus groups were centered solely on having participants engage in public safety discussions.

## Community Partners

The following organizations and groups helped to distribute the digital Reimagining Public Safety Survey.

- Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence
- Community Investment Budget Committee
- Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council
- Federal Way Black Collective
- Integrity Life Church

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix 1: Focus Group Results

<sup>8</sup> True North and Values: <https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/true-north.aspx>

- King County Department of Local Services
- King County Equity Cabinet
- King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission
- Not This Time
- Renton Innovation Zone Partnership
- Skyway Leadership Meeting
- Washington Coalition for Police Accountability
- West Hill Community Association Board

### **Community Engagement Challenges**

Due to limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and preventative measures necessary to limit the spread of infection, the Reimagining Public Safety Survey was the principal method used to collect the community feedback presented and analyzed in this report. The pandemic created barriers to securing insight from residents who do not read or write in any language or may not have internet access or whose disability prevented them from digitally accessing the survey.

Community feedback was intended to be collected with the help of community-based organizations (CBOs) in a manner that would be beneficial to their organization and the urban UKC residents they serve in order to overcome the barriers previously listed. County-funded grants were made publicly available through a competitive Request for Proposal. However, no CBOs applied, a reality attributed to a lack of capacity due to the impact and persistence of the pandemic, which also has limited community engagement efforts across King County.

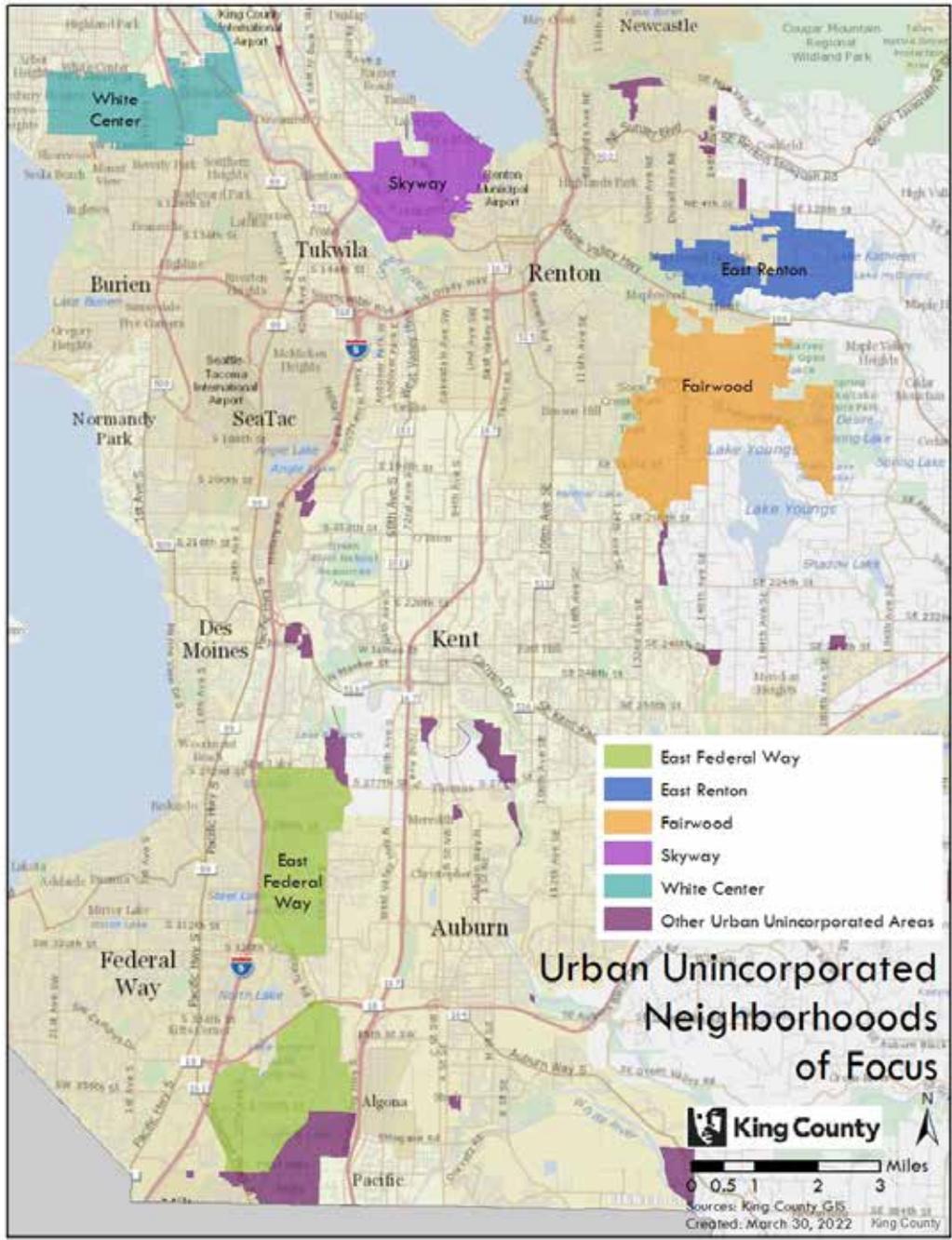


# Respondent Demographics Unincorporated King County



<sup>9</sup> April 1, 2021 (Revised) Estimated Population of Cities, Towns, and Counties, Washington State Office of Financial Management: [https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/dataresearch/pop/april1/ofm\\_april1\\_population\\_final.pdf](https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/dataresearch/pop/april1/ofm_april1_population_final.pdf)

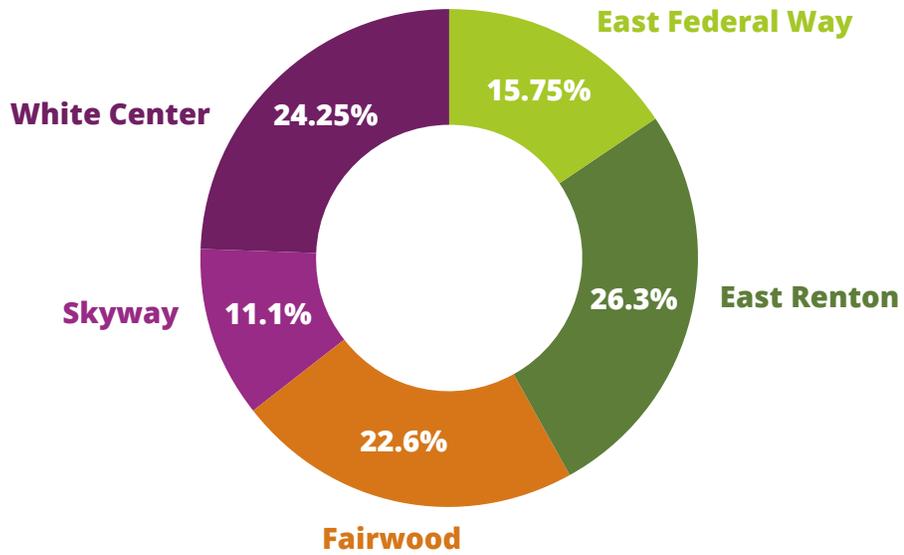
The community feedback analyzed and presented in this report comes from community members living in urban unincorporated King County. Of the **2,633 total responses** received to the survey from King County residents, **27.72 percent** (730) were received from **urban unincorporated King County**.<sup>10, 11</sup>



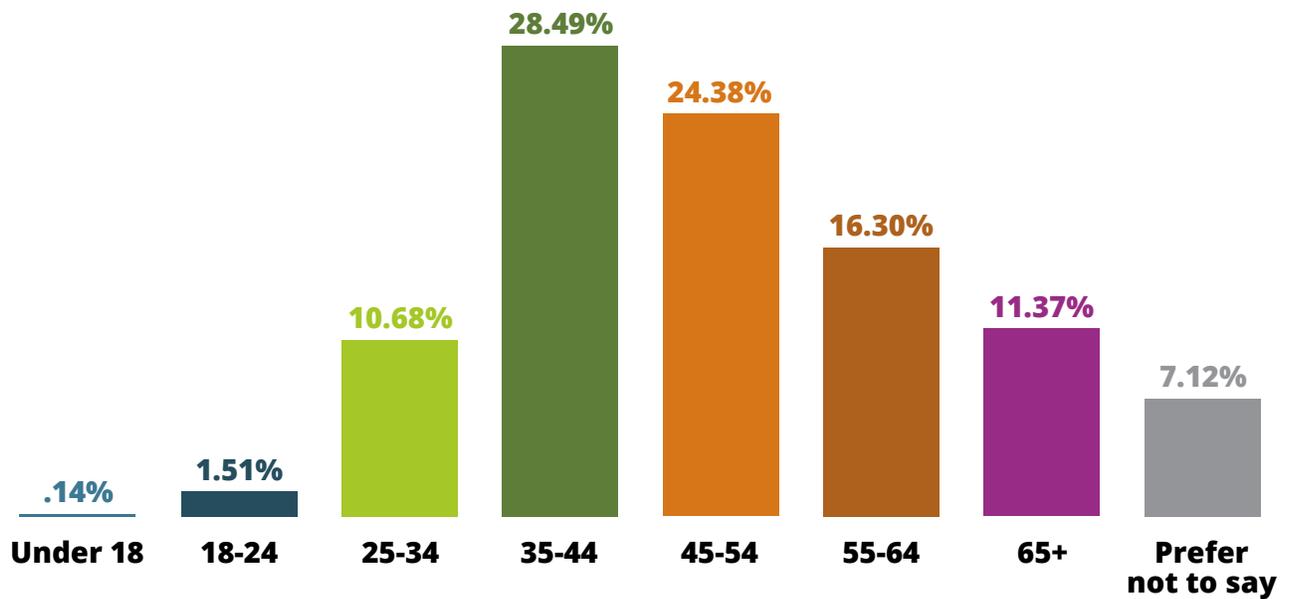
<sup>10</sup> The other urban UKC areas are smaller potential annexation areas that cities are encouraged to annex. Learn more about Potential Annexation Areas (PAA) here: <https://gis-kingcounty.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/kingcounty::potential-annexation-areas-paa-and-other-urban-unincorporated-areas-of-king-county-paa-area/about>

<sup>11</sup> You can find a full map of all of the urban unincorporated King County communities in Appendix 7 on page 70.

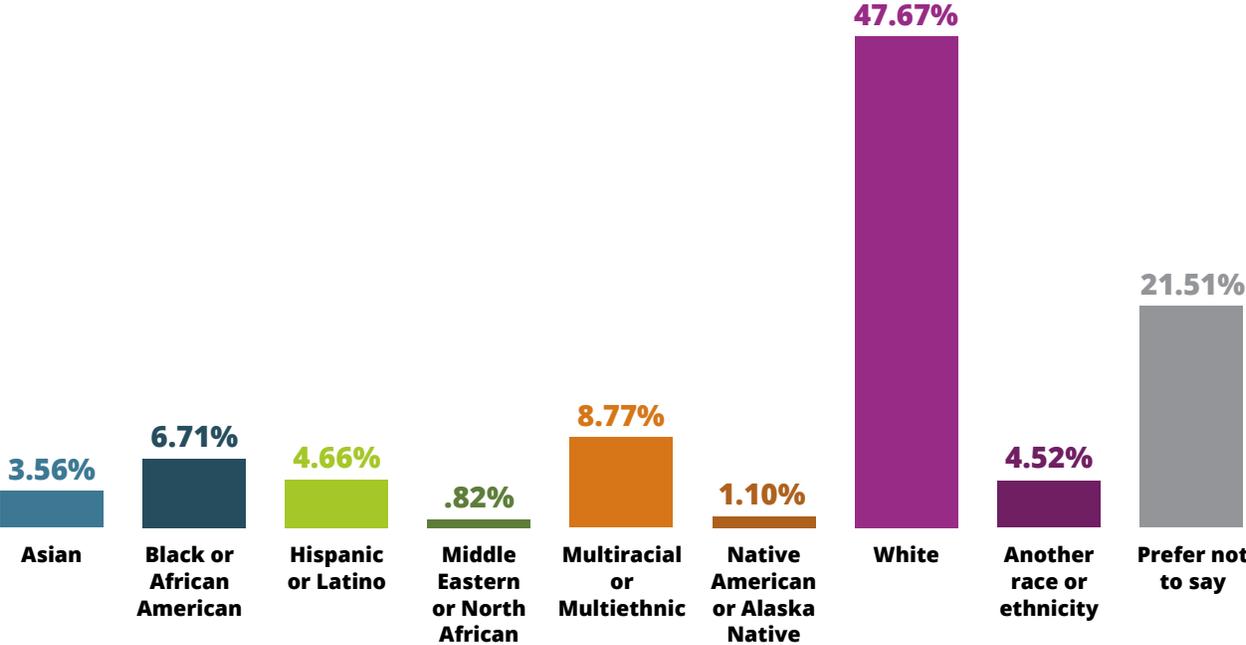
**Figure 1: Respondent Location - Urban Unincorporated King County**



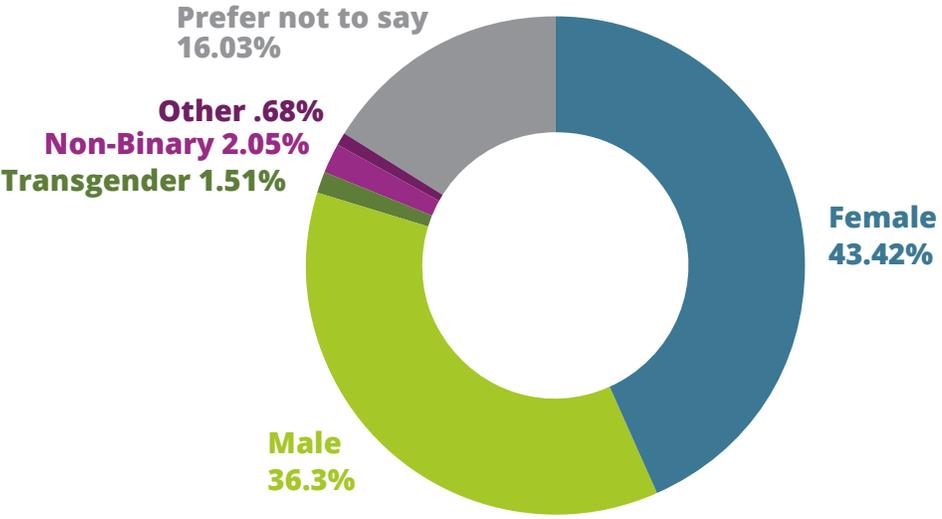
**Figure 2: Respondent Age**



**Figure 3: Respondent Race or Ethnicity**



**Figure 4: Respondent Gender**





# Alternative Crisis Response Summary

Alternative crisis response uses an alternative crisis responder to resolve an emergency. The alternative crisis responder(s) can arrive at an emergency with or without traditional crisis responders, such as law enforcement officers, EMTs, or firefighters. This is an evolving approach to crisis response, used most notably in circumstances where an individual is experiencing a behavioral health crisis.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Vera Institute Report: <https://www.vera.org/behavioral-health-crisis-alternatives>

The first set of questions in the RPS Survey asked respondents questions to understand their experience using 911. The majority of survey respondents, 80.68 percent, reported being directly impacted by an emergency and calling 911 for help.

Over 22 percent of respondents reported that they would have preferred another professional were available to respond to non-violent 911 calls instead of the emergency responder that arrived at the scene.

When asked who responded to their call, respondents answered law enforcement at a rate of 54.57 percent, EMTs at a rate of 20.32 percent, and firefighters at a rate of 16.44 percent.

When asked if they received the help they needed from 911 and emergency responders, 63.15 percent responded “yes,” and 14.25 percent responded “no.”

More than 50 percent (51.41 percent) of the written comments by respondents noted a desire for behavioral health professionals to respond to the emergency.

**More than a third of respondents (36.71 percent) reported not calling 911 during an emergency.** The most common reasons (in order of frequency) included:

- 1** A belief that law enforcement would not respond.
- 2** A belief that a police response should be avoided because the situation included a person with mental health issues and or was BIPOC.

Written comments included:

***“A homeless person of color was in crisis, and I didn’t want them to become a headline.”***

***“I was afraid of what would happen to the person of color in distress if they were to encounter a police officer. I would have loved to call a mental health crisis line but did not know of any such numbers.”***

# Alternative Crisis Response

## Trust in Law Enforcement and King County Sheriff's Department

The survey included a set of questions that asked respondents to rate their level of trust in law enforcement officers and leaders in their community. Another set of questions asked them to rate their level of trust in how the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) serves members within their community.

### Trust in Law Enforcement

Most respondents reported having a level of trust in the law enforcement officers in their community. Approximately 54 percent of respondents reported a high level of trust in their community, with 26.16 percent reported being "somewhat trusting."

### Trust in Law Enforcement Leadership

Fewer respondents reported a high level of trust when asked the same question about the law enforcement leadership that serves their community: 36.16 percent of respondents were "very trusting," and 29.30 percent reported being "somewhat trusting." No law enforcement agency was explicitly mentioned in this question.

### Performance of King County Sheriff's Department

When asked specific questions about levels of trust or distrust related to the performance of the KCSO, respondents reported:

- **"Acts in the best interest of the community":** 72.06 percent reported a level of trust, and 17.40 percent reported a level of distrust.
- **"Acts within the law":** 75.89 percent reported a level of trust, and 9.86 reported a level of distrust.
- **"Uses appropriate force":** 64.79 percent reported a level of trust, and 14.38 percent reported a level of distrust.
- **"Treats residents in your community fairly":** 67.94 percent reported a level of trust, and 14.25 percent reported a level of distrust.



## Alternative Crisis Response Co-Response and Alternative Non-law Enforcement Response

Alternative crisis response can be separated into two categories, a co-response, and an alternative non-law enforcement response. A co-response pairs a behavioral health professional with a law enforcement officer to address an emergency together. As the name implies, an alternative non-law enforcement response does not include a law enforcement officer but does include an alternative crisis responder, and may also include an EMT or paramedic.

### Support for co-response

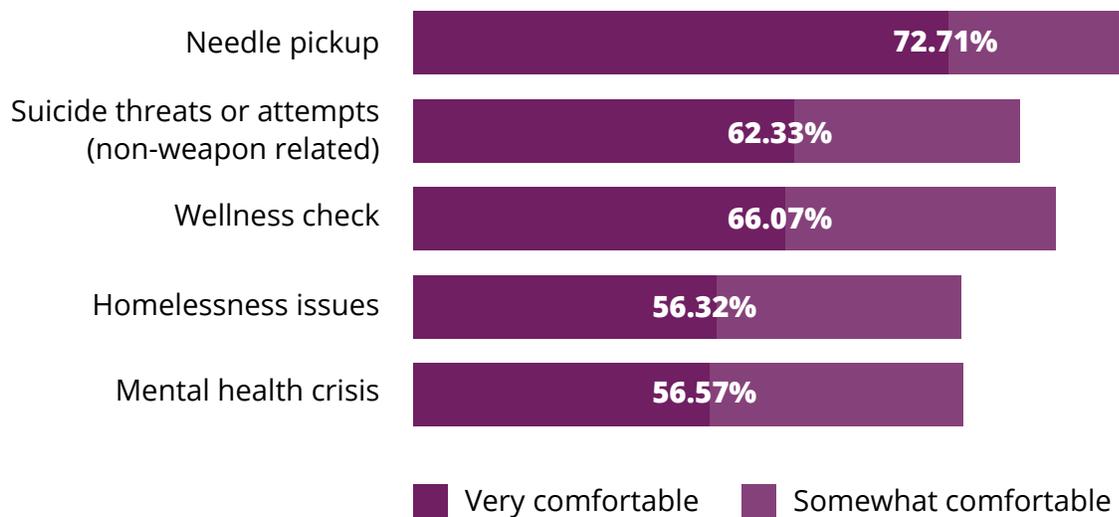
Survey respondents reviewed traditional as well as alternative crisis professionals and their duties when asked to rank how they would feel about alternative crisis professionals responding with law enforcement. Most respondents (50 percent or more) were comfortable with a trained crisis team responder accompanying law enforcement officers to 911 calls for all 24 issues listed in question 15. See **Appendix 4** to review the results of this question.

Issues that would be appropriate for a co-response due to their traumatic nature include mental health crises, homelessness issues, suicide threats or attempts, domestic disputes, human trafficking/sex trafficking, and drug use or overdose.

## Alternative Non-Law Enforcement Response

Respondents asked how comfortable they would be with trained crisis team responders sent to incidents without law enforcement.

**Figure 5: Issues respondents felt were most appropriate for trained crisis team responders to address *without* law enforcement officers**



Should King County Invest in an alternative non-police response? Approximately 45 percent of respondents reported a level of agreement with KC investing in an alternative, non-police, or other community-trained, unarmed crisis response to emergency (911) calls.

When looking at how respondents within the 50.96 percent who reported a level of disagreement answered the same question, it appears that several are worried that investment in an alternative response would mean a divestment in the KCSO but also support investing in an alternative response.

Below are some examples of responses from those who “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with the question posed in Figure 6:<sup>13</sup>

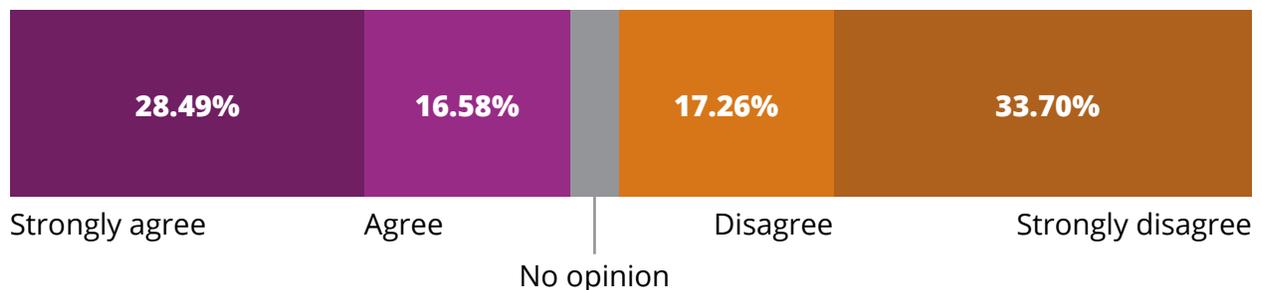
*“Both police in their current capacity and an increase in service workers to facilitate efforts after dangerous situations are under control. Perhaps paramedics or community service workers should be part of patrols teams. It’s also important to tighten and enforce laws against possession of stolen firearms.”*

*“The calls for assistance would come in as 911 calls. Police or fire/EMTs would always respond to the calls they do now. Based on the type of call, a mental health counselor, child services counselor, substance abuse counselor, etc. would accompany the police/fire/EMT on the call if appropriate.”*

*“It would have a fully funded police force and mental health professionals that travel with police, not alone ...”*

*“Invest in more Designated Crisis Responders and put them on the Sheriff’s Office radio. Designated Crisis Responders on KCSO air (24 hours a day) dispatched along with Deputies would be a great response to people in crisis.”*

**Figure 6: Responses to question “Should King County invest in an alternative non-police response?”**



<sup>13</sup> Question 21: Imagine if you had everything you needed to create a great program to improve public safety in your community. What would that program look like? Who would it serve? What are the things it must have to meet the needs of those who use it?



# Investing in Crime Prevention

United States residents comprise only five percent of the world's population but 25 percent of the world's prison population.<sup>14</sup> Punitive measures enacted in this country since 1975, intended to reduce and deter crime, have resulted in today's high incarceration rates and have had little to no effect on crime reduction.

Since 2000, incarcerating more Americans has had no impact on reducing the crime rate. On the other hand, large states like California, Texas, and Michigan have seen a reduction in their crime rates as their prison populations have declined. People of color, especially Black and Brown people, make up a disproportionate number of incarcerated people. Taking a humanistic approach to public safety by providing social services to underserved communities is an upstream approach to reducing crime.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Oliver Roeder, Lauren-Brooke Eisen, and Julia Bowling. 2015. *What Caused the Crime Decline?* Brennan Center for Justice, 3–4. [https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/analysis/What\\_Caused\\_The\\_Crime\\_Decline.pdf](https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/analysis/What_Caused_The_Crime_Decline.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Roeder, Eisen, and Bowling. 2015. *What Caused the Crime Decline?*, 3–4.

Over the past several years, King County has shown a commitment to this crime reduction approach by increasing its investments in county departments, funds, and local organizations that provide services and programs targeting the most vulnerable residents, including children and families.

Respondents were asked generally about their experiences with and perceptions of social services but were not explicitly asked about King County community health and human services programs or agencies.

Of the respondents who had participated in a social service program within King County (14.93 percent), 70.64 percent said they had received the help they needed compared to 19.27 percent who reported that they had not.

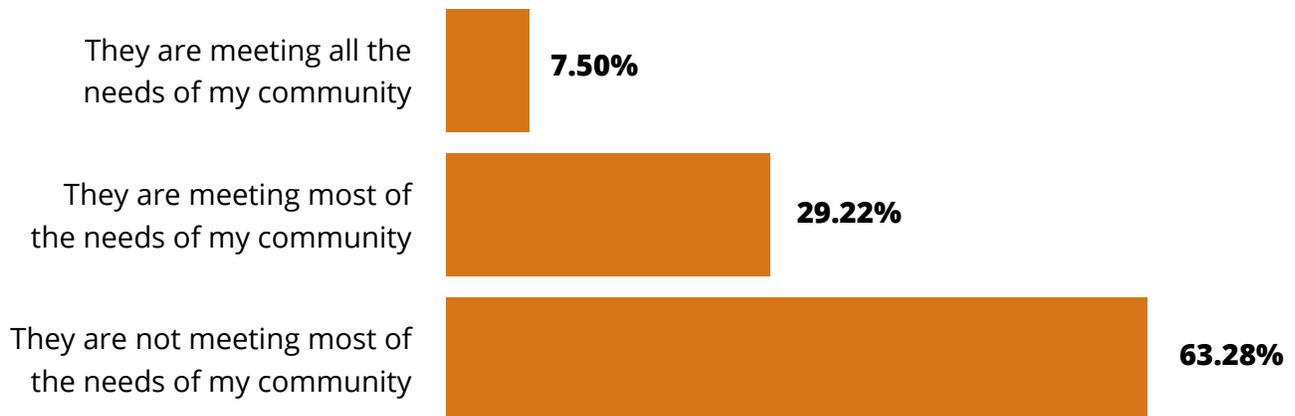
**Figure 7: Did respondents who use social programs within King County, such as housing assistance, food pantries, or jobs programs, get the help they needed?**



Over 64 percent of respondents reported never using social services programs or knowing someone who did. Notably, the same respondents reported a level of distrust in social service providers within King County.

When asked whether the programs they mentioned met most of the needs of their communities, 63.14 percent reported they did not (option "C"). However, 84.73 percent of the 63.14 percent reported having no direct experience using social services. Respondents who chose option "C" were asked to list the specific issues that were not being addressed: homelessness issues (25.45 percent), drug-related issues (22.08 percent), and mental health issues (11.43 percent) were mentioned the most.

**Figure 8: Perception of needs met by social service programs in King County**



## Community Visioning: Reimagining Public Safety

Through the survey and focus groups, participants were able to share their visions for public safety in King County.

Respondents expressed a need for:

- More staff dedicated to serving residents in urban unincorporated King County and for those programs to be more accessible
- More funding to be distributed to community-based organizations whose work centers around addressing the root causes of crime

When asked what issues new public safety pilot programs should address in King County, respondents prioritized mental health, addiction, homelessness, youth support and development, and assistance related to employment (training, education, and jobs).

Examples of how respondents would reimagine public safety:

*“We need trained mental health professionals to respond to non-violent and domestic problems, social workers to respond to social concerns, including homelessness, and mentorship programs for youths. Our community centers should also have mental, public, and medical health professionals who can address concerns and help guide community members toward long-term health care goals and help establish permanent/long-term care. We also need sidewalks and safe biking paths.”*

*“An ideal public safety program for me would be one that is primarily community-based and community-focused. It would be nice if our emergency services phone line could help the caller assess the situation and then send a community member best trained for whatever the situation is (a mental health crisis, homelessness support/outreach, domestic dispute, sex trafficking, etc.) rather than just a police officer. I also think a public safety program would need to address the root causes (better mental health support services, access to employment opportunities, space for youth recreation, etc.) of violence and misdemeanor crimes, and I think the biggest way to achieve this would be to provide more funding for programs outside of police departments. Currently, our police departments receive far too much money and are expected to do too many duties that they are not trained for. I think there are already some great organizations supplementing/doing the OTG work that police are not needed for; and organizations that address root causes, such as Community Passageways, Choose180, and Creative Justice, need more funding to be more effective.”*

*“We need space for young adults to learn to be adults and how to function in the world. They need someone to guide them while they learn to live alone in a safe space that allows them to learn and earn at the same time. [Five] acres land tiny homes with a giant communal home with desks, computers, kitchen, laundry, bathrooms—think like a dorm but for people learning to survive in a supervised, safe space. Especially youth!”*



# Recommendations

The pilot program(s) that launch based on the findings of this report presents an opportunity to better protect marginalized communities and thus improve the overall level of public safety in urban unincorporated King County.

The Reimagining Public Safety project team used the community feedback described in this report to inform the following public safety pilot program recommendations to serve the urban UKC neighborhoods of East Federal Way, Skyway, and White Center. The RPS project team also used their professional knowledge to add additional insight into the recommendations below, facilitating the creation of three different pilot program categories.

## Pilot Program Categories:

- Behavioral Health Crisis Response
- Alternative Non-Law Enforcement Crisis Response
- Community Responders

## Behavioral Health Crisis Response — Co-response model

The RPS project team recommends that King County continue to invest in alternative crisis response models that respond to behavioral health crises without law enforcement. Over 22 percent of the 730 RPS Survey respondents in urban unincorporated King County reported “wishing” another crisis professional arrived to address their non-violent 911 call. Of those 164 respondents, 93 left comments, and approximately 42 percent specifically mentioned wanting a mental health professional. According to the findings of the RPS Survey, it is possible that implementing a co-responder model will receive more widespread support from residents in urban UKC than an alternative response model.

### Specific Recommendations for urban UKC Pilot Program:

- 1 Focus co-response model towards residents who are experiencing one or more of the following: mental health issues, homelessness, and or substance abuse.
- 2 Establish a co-responder model that pairs a Sheriff’s Deputy with a behavioral health professional to respond to emergencies. Having both professionals address the issues at each scene as a team is a primary objective.
- 3 Provide training and logistical support for 911 dispatchers in advance of operationalizing a co-response team
- 4 Provide logistical support to have 911 dispatchers assign a co-response team to issues involving behavioral health crises, homelessness, wellness checks, and calls involving suicide threats or attempts. Data gathered from the survey and feedback sessions indicate community members support sending co-responder teams to calls related to the following: human trafficking/sex trafficking, child neglect/abuse, and domestic disputes. It is recommended to allow the model to be thoroughly evaluated for effectiveness before addressing those issues.

# Alternative Non-Law Enforcement Crisis Response

Establishing an alternative response model tasked with responding to a specific set of non-violent issues without law enforcement would benefit King County in the way of service and systems optimization, as well as cost-savings.<sup>16</sup> Creating access to an alternative crisis response for non-violent crisis calls to 911 may create more capacity in the public safety infrastructure in King County.

## Specific Recommendations for urban UKC Pilot Program:

- 1** Focus alternative responses model towards residents who are experiencing one or more of the following: homelessness, substance abuse, and or mental health issues.
- 2** Design and initiate alternative crisis response teams to respond to a small subset of low-risk calls where individuals are not at imminent risk. More information is needed to identify which exact calls fall into that category and how 911 operators can determine such calls.
- 3** Provide training and logistical support for 911 dispatchers in advance of operationalizing the crisis team program.
- 4** Develop protocols and processes within KCSO to ensure appropriate alternative response team areas assigned to calls.

<sup>16</sup> Eugene, Oregon's CAHOOTS model uses a team that includes a mental health crisis worker and a medic to respond to non-violent 911 calls. Law enforcement was only called in to back up the CAHOOTS team 150 times over approximately 24,000 CAHOOTS calls. The program's annual budget of roughly \$2.1 million allows the program to better address 17 percent of the Eugene Police Department's total 911 call volume. The CAHOOTS program has been in operation since 1989 and has saved its city an estimated \$8.5 million in public safety spending annually. Read about CAHOOTS and its White Bird Clinic: <https://whitebirdclinic.org/what-is-cahoots/>

# Community Responders

Reimagining public safety provides an opportunity for King County to empower more community members to have an organized and direct role in keeping their neighborhoods safe. Increased access to professional training and employment on its own helps to reduce crime.<sup>17</sup> Programs that utilize a team of community responders who have deep knowledge about their community based on lived experience have seen success in reducing gun violence.<sup>18</sup> When residents who mistrust 911 and law enforcement are in crisis, they often try to take action themselves or call a friend or family member for help.<sup>19</sup>

Both King County and the City of Seattle are currently utilizing community responder models. As a part of Public Health – Seattle and King County's Zero Youth Detention Initiative, the Regional Peacekeepers Collective employs knowledgeable community members to help prevent and eliminate youth gun violence by providing support and services to highly impacted young people and families. Seattle Police Department currently employs Community Service Officers. These officers respond to non-emergent calls for service, public safety, and educational outreach, which do not require a law enforcement officer. Community Service Officers work collaboratively with community members, organizations, and local police to provide a more equitable approach to public safety.

## Specific Recommendations for urban UKC Pilot Programs:

- 1 Focus community responder model towards – residents in unincorporated King County or in KCSO contract cities who need help accessing social services and or are directly impacted by gun activity or violence.
- 2 Expand the Regional Peacekeepers Collective to address gun violence in urban unincorporated King County.
- 3 Establish a Community Service Officers program within the King County Sheriff's Office.

<sup>17</sup> Tripodi S.J., Kim J.S., Bender K. Is Employment Associated With Reduced Recidivism?: The Complex Relationship Between Employment and Crime. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*. 2010; 54(5):706-720. doi: 10.1177/0306624X09342980

<sup>18</sup> William Wical, Joseph Richardson, and Che Bullock. *Violence and Gender*. Jun 2020.66–69.

<sup>19</sup> This is according to community feedback collected in RPS Survey and during the Federal Way Black Collective Focus Group





# Next Steps

The community feedback and the recommendations within this report will be presented to the County Executive and his Senior Leadership Team for review in March 2022. The approved recommendations will then be further developed, including pilot program details, estimated cost, timelines, data gathering, evaluation, geographic area served, and other details that will help describe the pilot program.

These descriptions or pilot program scenarios aim is to help the public understand each potential pilot program's impact on improving public safety. During the second phase of community engagement, urban unincorporated King County residents will help select which pilot program or programs to launch in their community. A timeline that includes the second phase of engagement is needed to understand how long the chosen pilot program(s) will need before launching in mid to late 2022. Please go to the **Reimagining Public Safety in Urban Unincorporated King County webpage** for more information.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> RPS Webpage: <https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/reimagining-public-safety.aspx>



# Appendices

# Appendix 1:

## Focus Group Results

### King County White Center Teen Program

August 20, 2021

Participants completed a teen version of the survey, which excluded questions 15 and 16 from the Reimagining Public Safety Survey to reduce the length and encourage completion.<sup>21</sup> The in-person focus group was organized and facilitated with help from King County staff at the White Center Teen Center. A total of 14 respondents between the ages of 12 and 18 completed the survey. The results of the survey are as follows.

- Over 71 percent of the respondents lived in White Center, 7.2 percent lived in Skyway, and 21.4 percent lived outside of urban unincorporated King County.
- Over 64 percent had called 911 while in an emergency, and 89 percent reported receiving the help they needed. Of those who responded, 66.66 percent were from Sheriff's Office/Police Department, and 33.33 percent were from the Fire Department.
- When reporting their level of trust in law enforcement, most respondents reported having a lower level of trust than the majority of respondents who took the Reimagining Public Safety Survey.
- When asked to report their level of trust in Sheriff's Deputies/Police, it was a near tie between being trusting and having no opinion, 42.8 percent to 43 percent, respectively. Half of the respondents (50 percent) had no opinion when asked their level of trust in law enforcement leadership, 42.8 percent reported a level of trust, and 7.1 percent reported a level of distrust.
- Over 71 percent of respondents reported a level of trust when asked if King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) acts in the community's best interest, 21.4 percent reported having no opinion, and 7.1 percent reported a level of distrust.
- When asked if KCSO acts within the law, 57.3 percent reported a level of trust, 35.7 percent had no opinion, and only 7.1 percent were less trusting.

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<sup>21</sup> See Appendix 3: Reimagining Public Safety Teen Version

- Most respondents, 57.2 percent, believed that KCSO uses appropriate force, 28.6 percent had no opinion, and 14.2 percent distrusted.
- When asked if KCSO treats residents in their community fairly there was a near split between respondents who had no opinion, 43 percent and those that were trusting, 42.9 percent – 14.2 percent reported a level of distrust.
- Respondents were asked how much of a priority the King County Sheriff's Office should place on the following: Drug-related: addiction, treatment, overdose; traffic enforcement; school safety; and homelessness. Drug-related issues were ranked the highest at 61.5 percent; homelessness issues were the second-highest-rated priority at 53.8 percent; school safety was the third-highest-rated at 46.2 percent; and traffic enforcement was the fourth-highest-rated at 7.7 percent.
- Most respondents, 57.1 percent, reported having a neutral opinion about 911, and only 7.1 percent had a “somewhat negative” opinion. Approximately 43 percent of respondents reported being in a situation where they thought they should call 911 but ultimately did not call. When asked why, respondents said they did not want to get the people involved arrested; the most commonly mentioned issues involved fighting and domestic violence. One respondent said there was a fire, and someone else called 911 before they did—all others reported not feeling comfortable calling 911.
- When answering a set of questions related to their experience with crisis responders, 42.8 percent, believed King County needs to invest in an alternative crisis response model, compared to 21.4 percent who reported a level of disagreement. Approximately 43 percent of respondents who called 911 experienced a time when they wished another person had arrived. The most commonly mentioned situations involved domestic disputes and mental health issues.
- When asked how they felt about social programs and community efforts to support people in their communities, 66 percent of respondents said that the social programs they were familiar with met most of the needs in their community. Over 64 percent reported a level of trust in social programs, with only 7.1 percent reporting having a level of distrust. All respondents regularly use the social programs provided by the White Center Teen Program.

# King County Library System Operations Managers

**December 7, 2021**

Operations Managers took the online survey as a collective and engaged in discussions about public safety. Operations Managers representing urban and rural unincorporated King County were present during the virtual meeting. The following are comments made by meeting participants.

- Feeling safe at work requires a safety plan and awareness of your surroundings.
- Issues related to homelessness and substance abuse present the most common safety issues King County library branch staff must handle. COVID-19-related issues, such as mask-wearing, have been a new challenge.
- When law enforcement has been needed, there have been issues with response times and deputies not addressing problems due to law enforcement's interpretation of state law. Calling law enforcement to address homelessness issues at libraries has not brought about solutions.
- The County could provide places where people experiencing homelessness have access to clean water and bathrooms.
- An alternative crisis response would be most appreciated.

# Federal Way Black Collective

January 12, 2022

Participants met virtually and were given a presentation on King County's Reimagining Public Safety Initiative and then engaged in a group discussion about public safety. Members representing the Black, Latinx, and AAPI communities were in attendance. The following are comments made by meeting participants.

- Public safety should create spaces where all people feel freedom within their movement and feel free from racially-based persecution or harassment. Public safety is related to having a sense of community and a sense of peace.
- For many people in America, public safety has meant keeping white people safe, specifically from the dangers of Black men. One participant, an older Black man, remarked that he had never been asked what public safety meant to him and never heard another Black man define public safety. Many other participants were moved by this statement and confirmed that they too felt like public safety conversations and public policy often have an inherent prejudice against Black people built into them.
- Homelessness is a growing issue in King County because BIPOC communities are disproportionately represented in the homeless population.<sup>22</sup>
- Not feeling safe enough to call 911 for help because they had an experience with police brutality or harassment.
  - A woman shared details about a situation where law enforcement officers sexually harassed her after she called them to respond to a domestic dispute.
  - A man who said he and his sister were held at gunpoint by law enforcement officers when they were children, has not called for the police in the last 15 years. As a result, he has ensured that everyone in his family has access to firearms.
  - A woman shared that her mistrust of the police came from an incident where she was arrested and put in jail for speeding while on her way to an early morning class. Instead of getting a ticket, she spent all day in jail.
  - A participant who is an attorney mentioned that Black people must be calmer and more professional than the officers they interact with to keep themselves safe.

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<sup>22</sup> "Based on surveys conducted as part of the Count report, Native American/Alaska Native people made up one percent of the population in Seattle/King County, but 15 percent of the respondents experiencing homelessness. Black/African Americans are seven percent of the Seattle/King County population, but 25 percent of the respondents. Latinx persons are ten percent of the Seattle/King County population, but 15 percent of the survey respondents." [Point-in-Time count estimates a 5 percent increase in people experiencing homelessness, newly updated data dashboards reveal more people receiving shelter and services - King County](#)

# Appendix 2:

# Reimagining Public Safety Survey

## Reimagining Public Safety Survey

(participants completed the survey digitally)

**Welcome:** King County continues to work in partnership with community to keep the places where residents work, live, and play safe. In the survey, we ask you to challenge your concept of what's possible when answering questions related to reimagining public safety. Don't be afraid to think creatively.

The information you give us will be kept confidential. Your opinions and feedback will aid in our process of creating pilot programs that may become long-term programs. Thoughtful solutions that take into consideration your community's wants and needs will have a better chance of becoming established programs.

### Please tell us about your experience with 911 and Social Services

- 1.) Have you ever had to call 911?
  - Yes
  - No
- 2.) If yes, did you receive the help you needed?
  - Who responded?
    - [Fire, EMTs, Police]
- 3.) How would you describe your feelings toward 911?
  - 1 – Very positive
  - 2 – Somewhat positive
  - 3 – No opinion
  - 4 – Somewhat negative
  - 5 – Very negative

4.) Have you ever been in a situation where you thought you should call 911 but decided not to?

Yes

No

- If yes, why, and did you call anyone else instead?

5.) Have you ever been in a situation where you wished another type of professional arrived to address a non-violent 911 call?

Yes

No

- Comment:

6.) Have you ever taken part in a social program within King County, such as housing assistance, food pantries, or jobs program?

Yes

No

7.) If yes, did you receive the help you needed?

- What was the name of the program?

### **Please share how you feel about law enforcement**

8.) How would you describe your level of trust in the law enforcement officers in your community?

1 - Very trusting

2 - Somewhat trusting

3 - No opinion

4 - Somewhat distrusting

5 - Very distrusting

9.) How would you describe your level of trust in the law enforcement leadership that serves your community?

1 - Very trusting

2 - Somewhat trusting

3 - No opinion

4 - Somewhat distrusting

5 - Very distrusting

**Please tell us your feelings about the King County Sheriff's Office based on the following:**

10.) Acts in the best interest of community

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

11.) Acts within the law

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

12.) Uses appropriate force

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

13.) Treats residents in your community fairly

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

14.) Over the next two years, how much of a priority should King County Sheriff's Office place on the following:

Drug: addiction, treatment, overdose

- 1 - High Priority
- 2 - Medium Priority
- 3 - Low Priority
- 4 - No Priority

#### Traffic enforcement

- 1 – High Priority
- 2 – Medium Priority
- 3 – Low Priority
- 4 – No Priority

#### School safety

- 1 – High Priority
- 2 – Medium Priority
- 3 – Low Priority
- 5 – No Priority

#### Homelessness

- 1 – High Priority
- 2 – Medium Priority
- 3 – Low Priority
- 5 – No Priority

### **Which professionals do you think should arrive at an emergency?**

Today, law enforcement officers are the first to respond to a wide range of situations that occur in the community. Some of these situations may be better suited for a response from other professionals whose training is dedicated to certain areas, such as domestic disputes, mental health, drug overdose, and more. Several of the crimes listed below currently require a law enforcement response in accordance with the Revised Code of Washington. If King County were to adopt a new crisis response method, then law enforcement officers and trained crisis team responders could address these situations together when appropriate. This section will capture feedback and insights about whom you think should respond to a situation and your level of comfort.

Below is a list of crisis professionals and their duties to help you answer these questions.

- *Sheriff's Deputy/Police Officer* – enforces the law via various methods, including de-escalations, and is armed.
- *EMT (Emergency Medical Technician)* – provides basic emergency health services and is unarmed.
- *Alternative Non-Law Enforcement Crisis Responders:*
  - Domestic Intervention Responder – de-escalates situations that happen at home or within families and is unarmed.

- Mental Health Crisis Responder – de-escalates situations where there is a known or suspected person with a mental health issue and is unarmed.
- Peacekeeper/Credible Messenger – de-escalates situations, has a great working knowledge of the community (ideally is from the community) and is unarmed.

15.) How comfortable would you be with Sheriff's Deputies or Police Officers responding to the situations listed below along with trained crisis team responders? [each has the option to mark: Very comfortable, Somewhat comfortable, Uncomfortable, No opinion, Very uncomfortable]

- Mental health crisis
- Homelessness issues
- Needle pickup
- Wellness check
- Suicide threats or attempts (non-weapon related)
- Traffic or motor vehicle accident with no injury
- Neighbor complaints or disputes
- Loud party or loud music
- Alcohol abuse or public intoxication
- Noise complaints
- Trespassing
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Arson
- Drug abuse or overdose
- Illegal sex work
- Panhandling/Loitering
- Child neglect/abuse
- Domestic disputes
- Human Trafficking/Sex Trafficking
- Drug sales or trafficking
- Animal attacks
- Missing person
- Suspicious person

16.) How comfortable would you be with trained crisis team responders responding to the situations listed below without law enforcement? [each has the option to mark: Very comfortable, Somewhat comfortable, No opinion, Uncomfortable, Very uncomfortable]

- Mental health crisis
- Homelessness issues
- Needle pickup
- Wellness check
- Suicide threats or attempts (Non-weapon related)
- Traffic or motor vehicle accident with no injury
- Neighbor complaints or disputes
- Loud party or loud music
- Alcohol abuse or public intoxication
- Noise complaints
- Trespassing
- Drug abuse or overdose
- Illegal sex work
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Arson
- Panhandling/Loitering
- Child neglect/abuse
- Domestic disputes
- Human Trafficking/Sex Trafficking
- Drug sales or trafficking
- Animal attacks
- Missing person
- Suspicious person

17.) After reviewing the list of crisis professionals and their duties, do you think King County should invest in an alternative, non-police, or other community, trained, unarmed crisis response to emergency (911) calls?

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

**Please share your thoughts about social programs and community efforts to support people where you live**

18.) What are some social programs that help address issues linked to crime (hunger, poverty, mental health needs, substance abuse, etc.) in your community?

19.) Have you or someone you know used any of the programs you mentioned?

- Yes
- No

20.) Overall, how would you say the programs you mentioned met the needs of your community?

- A - They are meeting all the needs of my community
- B - They are meeting most of the needs of my community
- C - They are not meeting most of the needs of my community
  - If you answered "C," what needs are not being addressed by these social programs?

21.) Imagine if you had everything you needed to create a great program to improve public safety in your community. What would that program look like? Whom would it serve? What are the things it must have to meet the needs of those who use it?

**Please tell us how you feel about social programs and community supports**

22.) How would you describe your level of trust in social service providers within King County, such as programs that address housing, hunger, and mental health?

- 1 - Very trusting
- 2 - Somewhat trusting
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat distrusting
- 5 - Very distrusting

**Please tell us about the resources in your community and any investment you want to see**

23.) How do you feel about the amount of investment your community receives from King County?

- 1 – Very positive
- 2 – Somewhat positive
- 3 – No opinion
- 4 – Somewhat negative
- 5 – Very negative

24.) Do you visit any locations that host regular community programs or services?

- Yes
- No
  - If yes, what are they, and how often do you attend?

25.) What does your community need to keep the youth and young adults engaged throughout the year? / If you believe your community already has the resources it needs, please list what they are.

**What else would you like to tell us about public safety?**

26.) Is there anything we didn't ask that you think we need to know?

**Please tell us about yourself**

27.) What neighborhood do you live in?

[East Federal Way, East Renton, Fairwood, Skyway, White Center or Other: \_\_\_\_\_]

28.) What is your 5-digit zip code?

29.) What is your age range?

[Under 18, Prefer not to say]

30.) What is your race or ethnicity?

[Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Middle Eastern or North African, Multiracial or Multiethnic, Native American or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White, Prefer not to say, Another Race or ethnicity, please describe below]

31.) What is your gender?

[Female, Male, Transgender, Non-Binary, Other, or Prefer not to say]

# Appendix 3:

## Reimagining Public Safety Survey, Teen Version

### Reimagining Public Safety Survey, Teen Version (participants completed the survey on paper)

**Instructions:** These questions aim to gain information about how King County Government can help better keep the places where residents work, live, and play safe. When answering questions related to reimagining public safety, we ask you to challenge your concept of what's possible. Don't be afraid to think creatively.

Your answers will aid in our process of creating pilot programs that may become long-term programs. Thoughtful solutions that take into consideration your community's wants and needs will have a better chance of becoming established programs.

*The information you give will be anonymous.*

#### **Please tell us about yourself**

Neighborhood (circle one or list)

- East Federal Way
- East Renton
- Fairwood
- Skyway
- White Center
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Race or ethnicity (circle all that apply)

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black

- Hispanic or Latinx
- Indigenous/Native American
- Multiracial/Biracial
- White/Caucasian
- A race/ethnicity not listed here

Gender identity (circle one)

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Non-Binary
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Have you ever had to call 911? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
  - If yes, did you receive the help you needed? (circle one)
    - o Yes
    - o No
  - Who responded? (circle one)
    - o Fire
    - o EMTs
    - o Police
    - o Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Please share how you feel about law enforcement**

How would you describe your level of trust in the law enforcement officers in your community? (circle one)

- 1 - Very trusting
- 2 - Somewhat trusting
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat distrusting
- 5 - Very distrusting

How would you describe your level of trust in the law enforcement leadership that serves your community? (circle one)

- 1 - Very trusting
- 2 - Somewhat trusting
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat distrusting
- 5 - Very distrusting

**Please tell us your feelings about the King County Sheriff's Office based on the following:**

Acts in the best interest of your community (circle one)

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

Acts within the law (circle one)

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

Uses appropriate force (circle one)

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

Treats residents in your community fairly (circle one)

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

**Which professionals do you think should arrive at an emergency?**

*The 911 system provides North Americans with a short universal number for calling police, fire, or emergency medical assistance.*

How would you describe your relationship with 911? (circle one)

- 1 – Very positive
- 2 – Somewhat positive
- 3 – No opinion
- 4 – Somewhat negative
- 5 – Very negative

Have you ever been in a situation where you thought you should call 911 but decided not to? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
  - If yes, why? \_\_\_\_\_
  - If no, who did you contact for help? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been in a situation where you wished another type of professional arrived to address a non-violent 911 call? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
  - Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

Below is a scenario we'd like you to imagine yourself in, and we've included a list of crisis professionals and their duties to help you answer the question.

- Sheriff's Deputy/Police Officer* – enforces the law and is armed.
- EMT (Emergency Medical Technician)* – provides basic emergency health services and is not armed.
- Domestic Intervention Responder* – de-escalates situations that happen at home or within families and is not armed.
- Mental Health Crisis Professional* – de-escalates situations where there is a known or suspected person with a mental health issue and is not armed.
- Peacekeeper/Credible Messenger* – de-escalates situations, has a great working knowledge of the community (ideally is from the community), and is not armed.
- Unarmed Crisis Professional* – trained to respond to crisis calls and is not armed. Traditionally, these are firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and social workers.

Imagine that you are about to call 911 to address an emergency, and the dispatcher has the option of sending you a team of Sheriff's Deputies/Police Officers or a team of unarmed crisis professionals. The dispatcher's ability to assign the best team of professionals to the call depends on the information gathered during the 911 call. How can you, the caller, communicate whether the emergency is violent or non-violent?

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After reviewing the list of crisis professionals and their duties, do you think King County should invest in an alternative, non-police, unarmed crisis response to the emergency (911) calls? (circle one)

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Somewhat agree
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat disagree
- 5 - Strongly disagree

**Please share your thoughts about social programs and community efforts to support people in your community**

What are some social programs that help address issues linked to crime (hunger, poverty, mental health needs, substance abuse, etc.) in your community?

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Overall, how would you say the programs you mentioned met the needs of your community?

- A - They are meeting all the needs of my community
  - B - They are meeting most of the needs of my community
  - C - They are not meeting most of the needs of my community
    - If you circled C, what needs aren't being addressed by these social programs?
- 

Imagine if you had everything you needed to create a great social/community program to improve public safety in your community. What would that program look like? Whom would it serve? What are the things it must have to meet the needs of those who use it?

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**Please tell us how you feel about social programs**

How would you describe your level of trust in social service providers within King County, such as programs that address housing, hunger, and mental health? (circle one)

- 1 - Very trusting
- 2 - Somewhat trusting
- 3 - No opinion
- 4 - Somewhat distrusting
- 5 - Very distrusting

Is there anything else you want to say that's related to your trust in social services in King County?

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**Please tell us about the resources in your community and any investment you want to see**

Do you visit any locations that host regular community programs or services other than the Teen Center? (circle one)

- Yes
- No
  - If yes, what are they, and how often do you attend?

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What does your community need to keep the youth and young adults engaged throughout the year? If you believe your community already has the resources it needs, please list what they are.

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In August 2020, King County began collecting information from those who work and live in unincorporated King County to create community needs lists. Below are the top four public safety-related issues communities identified. Over the next two years, how much of a priority should King County Sheriff's Office place on the following:

Drug: addiction, treatment, overdose (circle one)

1 – High Priority

2 – Medium Priority

3 – Low Priority

4 – No Priority

Traffic enforcement (circle one)

1 – High Priority

2 – Medium Priority

3 – Low Priority

4 – No Priority

School safety (circle one)

1 – High Priority

2 – Medium Priority

3 – Low Priority

4 – No Priority

Homelessness (circle one)

1 – High Priority

2 – Medium Priority

3 – Low Priority

4 – No Priority

What do you think you need in your community to help promote health and safety in your household?

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**What else would you like to tell us about public safety?**

Is there anything we didn't ask that you think we need to know?

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# RPS Survey Terms and Definitions

## Professionals and their duties

**Sheriff's Deputy/Police Officer** – enforces the law and is armed.

**EMT (Emergency Medical Technician)** – provides basic emergency health services and is not armed.

**Domestic Intervention Responder** – de-escalates situations that happen at home or within families and is not armed.

**Mental Health Crisis Professional** – de-escalates situations where there is a known or suspected person with a mental health issue and is not armed.

**Peacekeeper/Credible Messenger** – de-escalates situations and has a great working knowledge of the community (ideally is from the community) and is not armed.

**Unarmed Crisis Professional** – trained to respond to crisis calls and is not armed. Traditionally these are firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and social workers.

## Types of issues and terms

**Urban Unincorporated King County Service Area** – includes East Federal Way, East Renton, Fairwood, Skyway, and White Center.

**Social programs** – help members in the community by providing them with access to resources they need—for example, food pantries, job programs, mental health support, and services.

**911** – a system that provides North Americans with a short universal number when people need to call police, fire, or emergency medical assistance. The National 911 Office oversees America's 911 emergency response system.

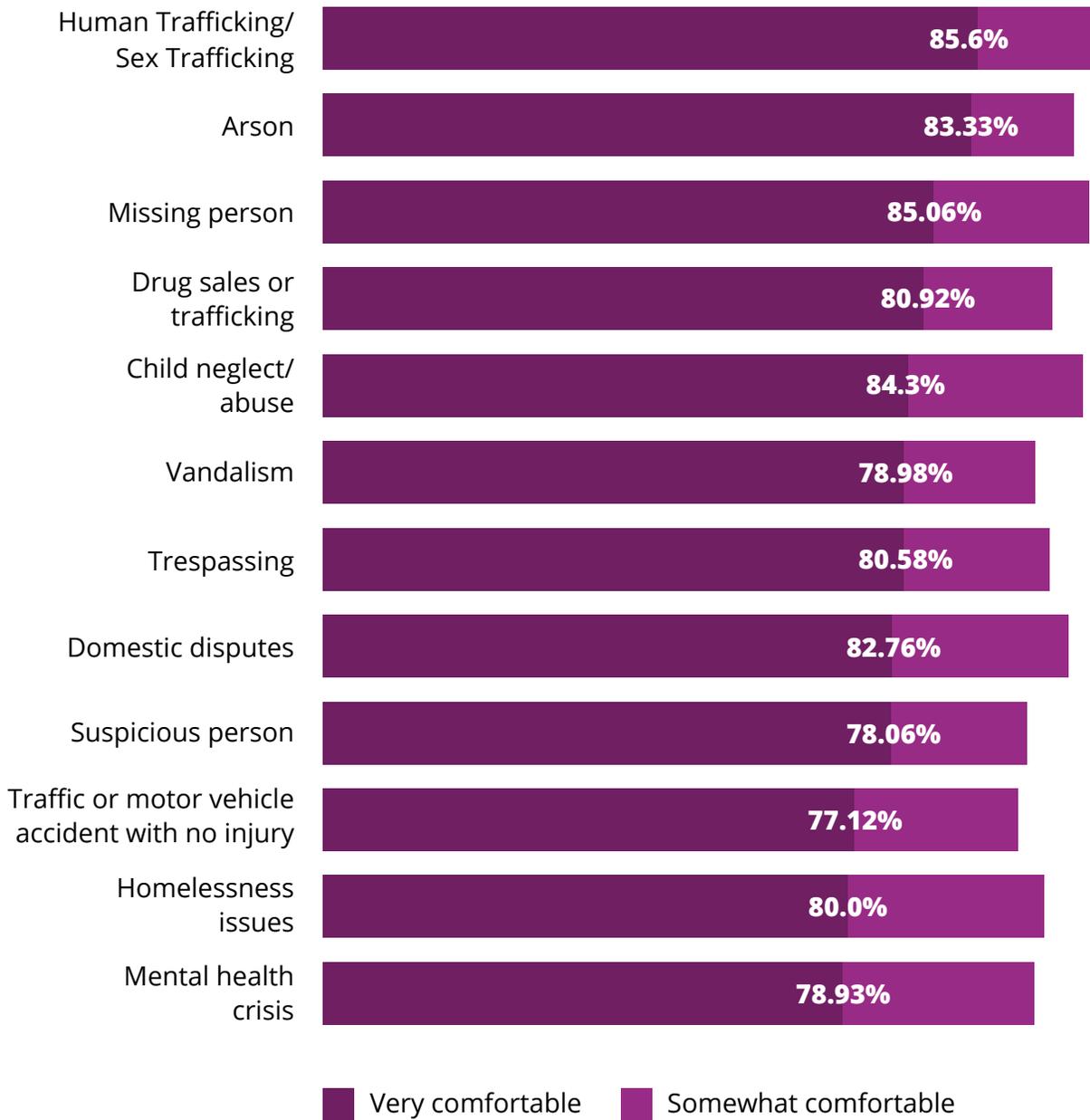
# Appendix 4:

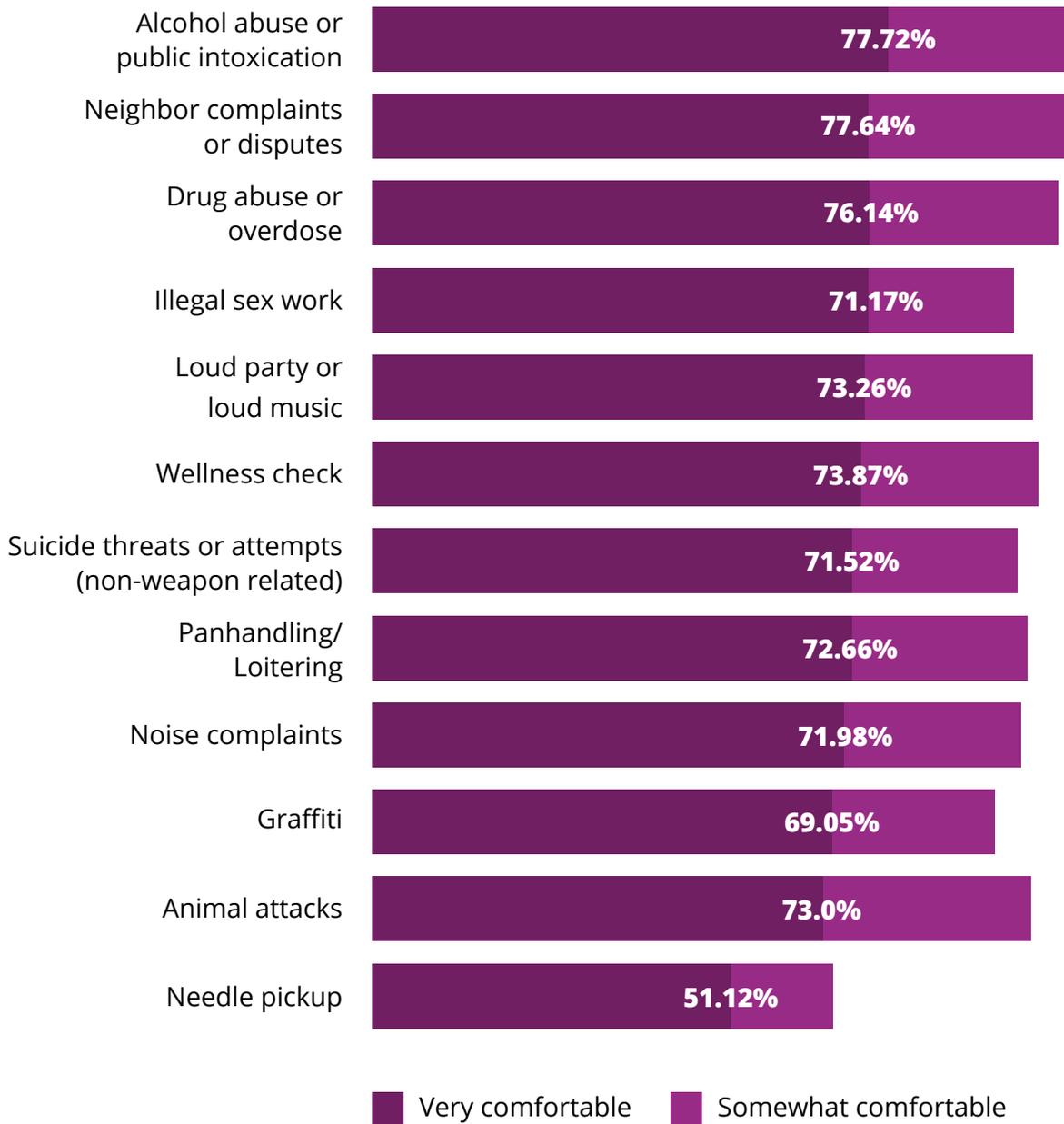
## Reimagining Public Safety Survey Responses— Urban Unincorporated King County

The link below connects to a dashboard where Reimagining Public Survey Data from respondents across urban unincorporated King County can be found: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-82YX7BCW/>

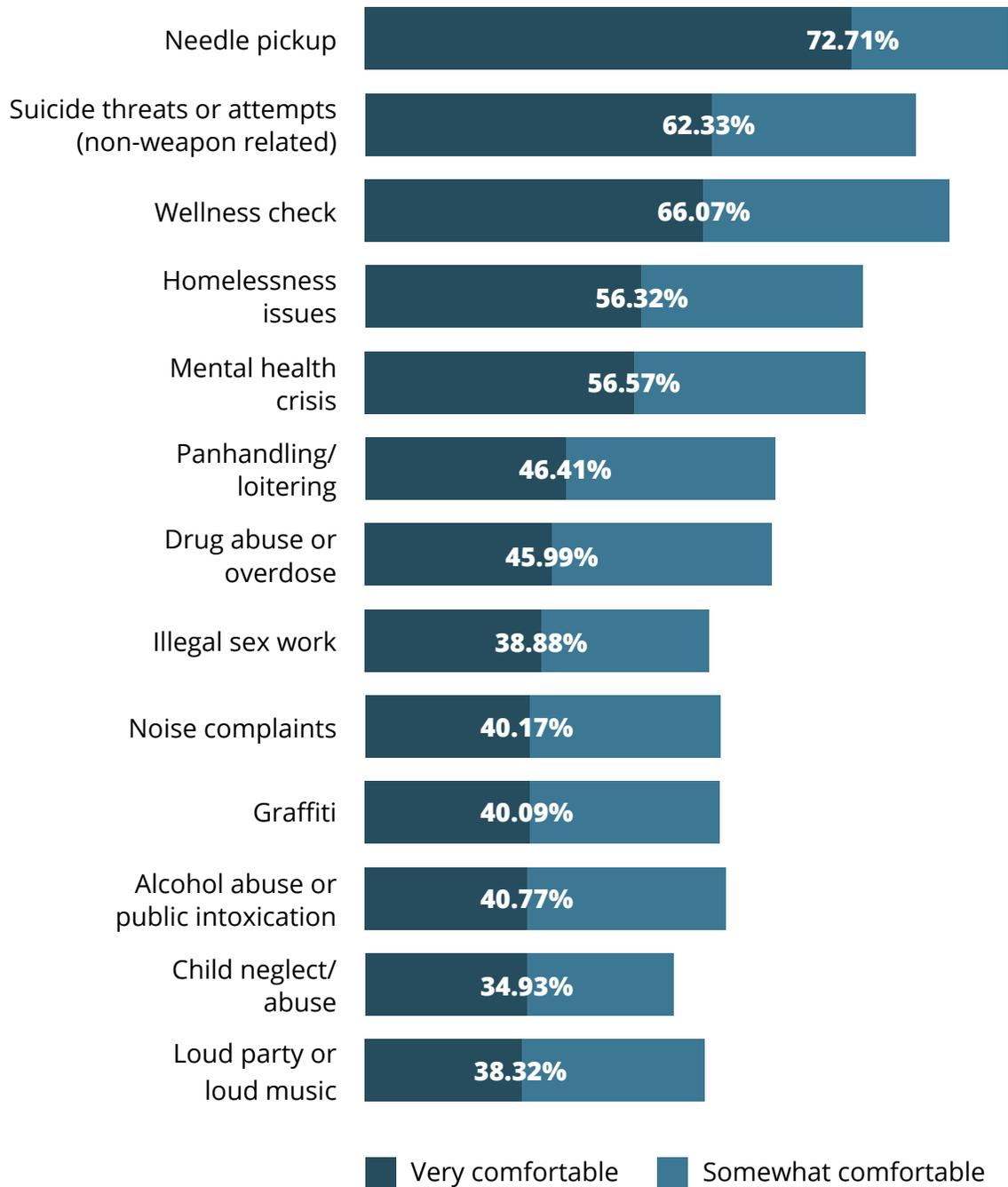
Data missing from the Dashboard: Questions 15 and 16 located on the pages below.

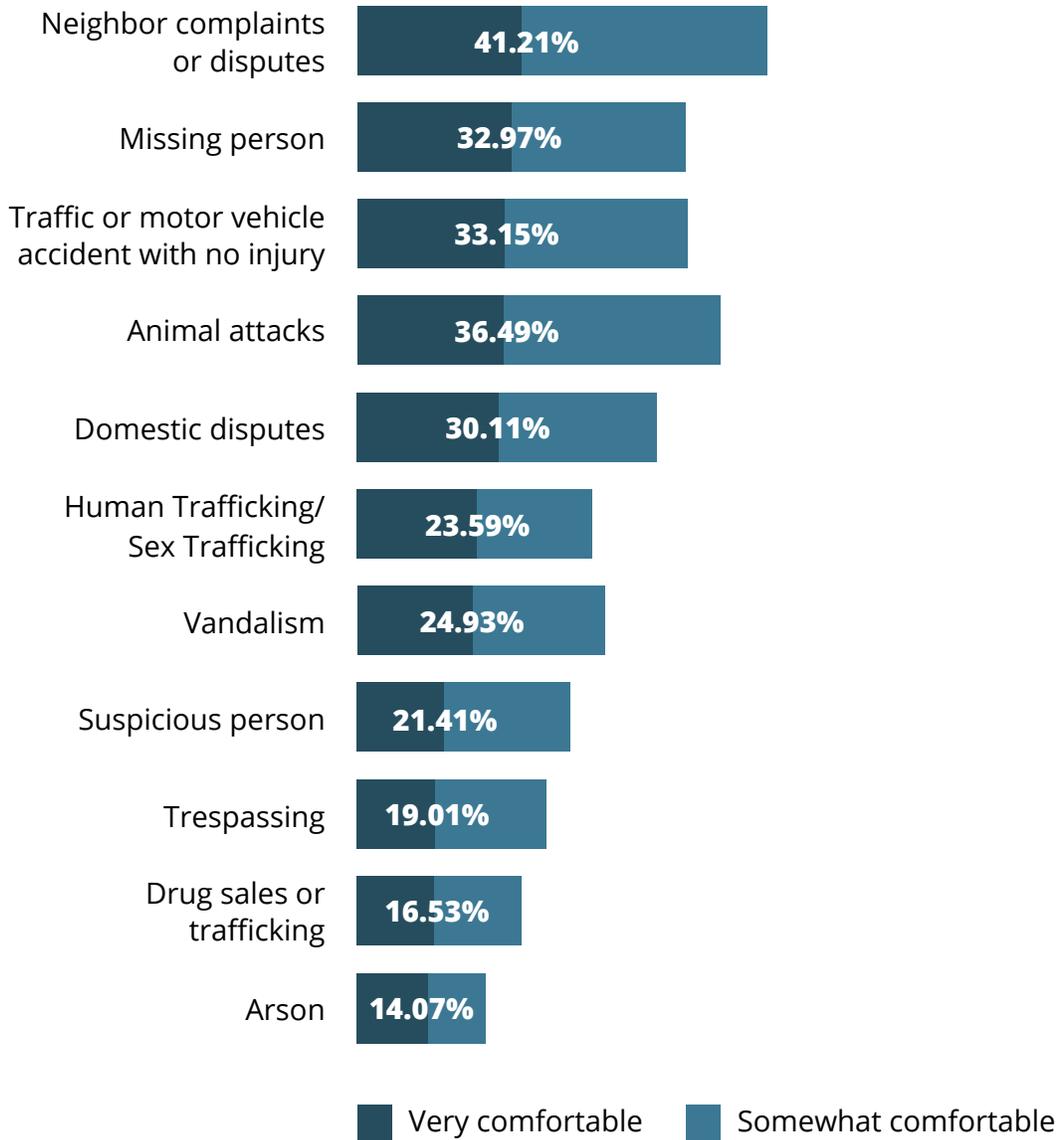
**How comfortable would you be with Sheriff's Deputies or Police Officers responding to the situations listed below along with trained crisis team responders?**





## How comfortable would you be with trained crisis team responders responding to the situations listed below without law enforcement?





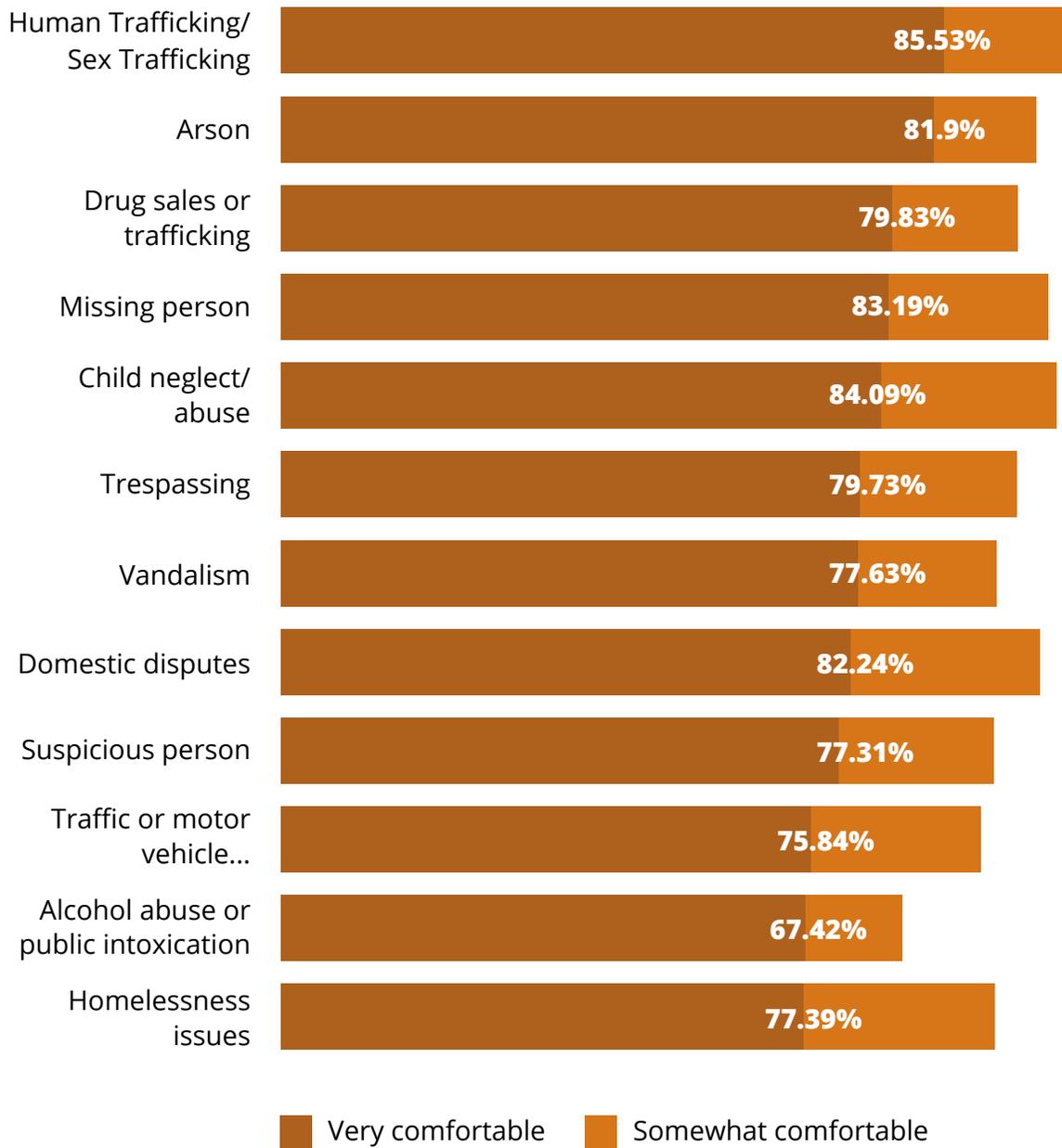


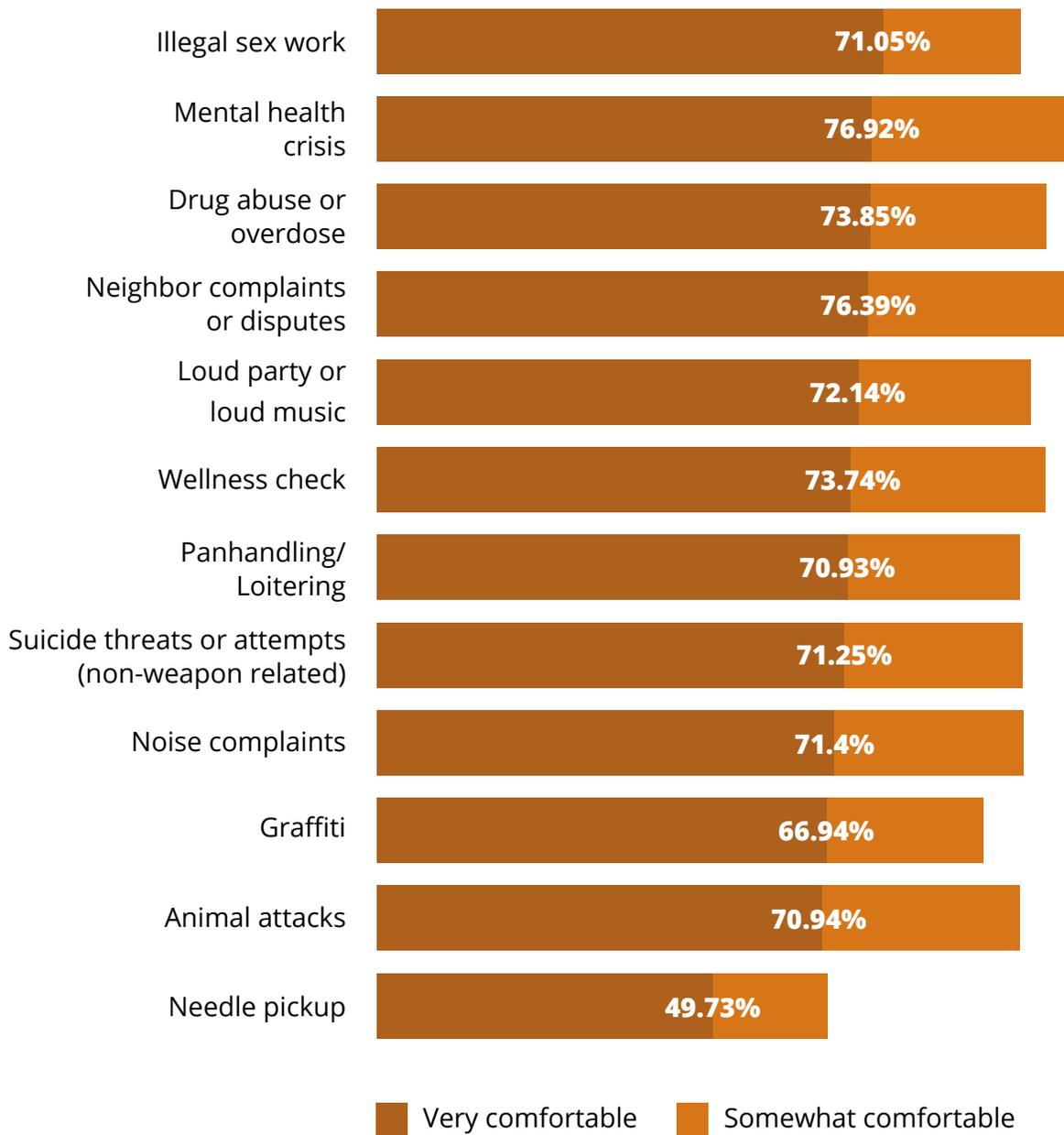
# Appendix 5: Reimagining Public Safety Survey Responses— County

The link below connects to a dashboard where Reimagining Public Survey Data from respondents across the County can be found: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-HWPFV8ZQ/>

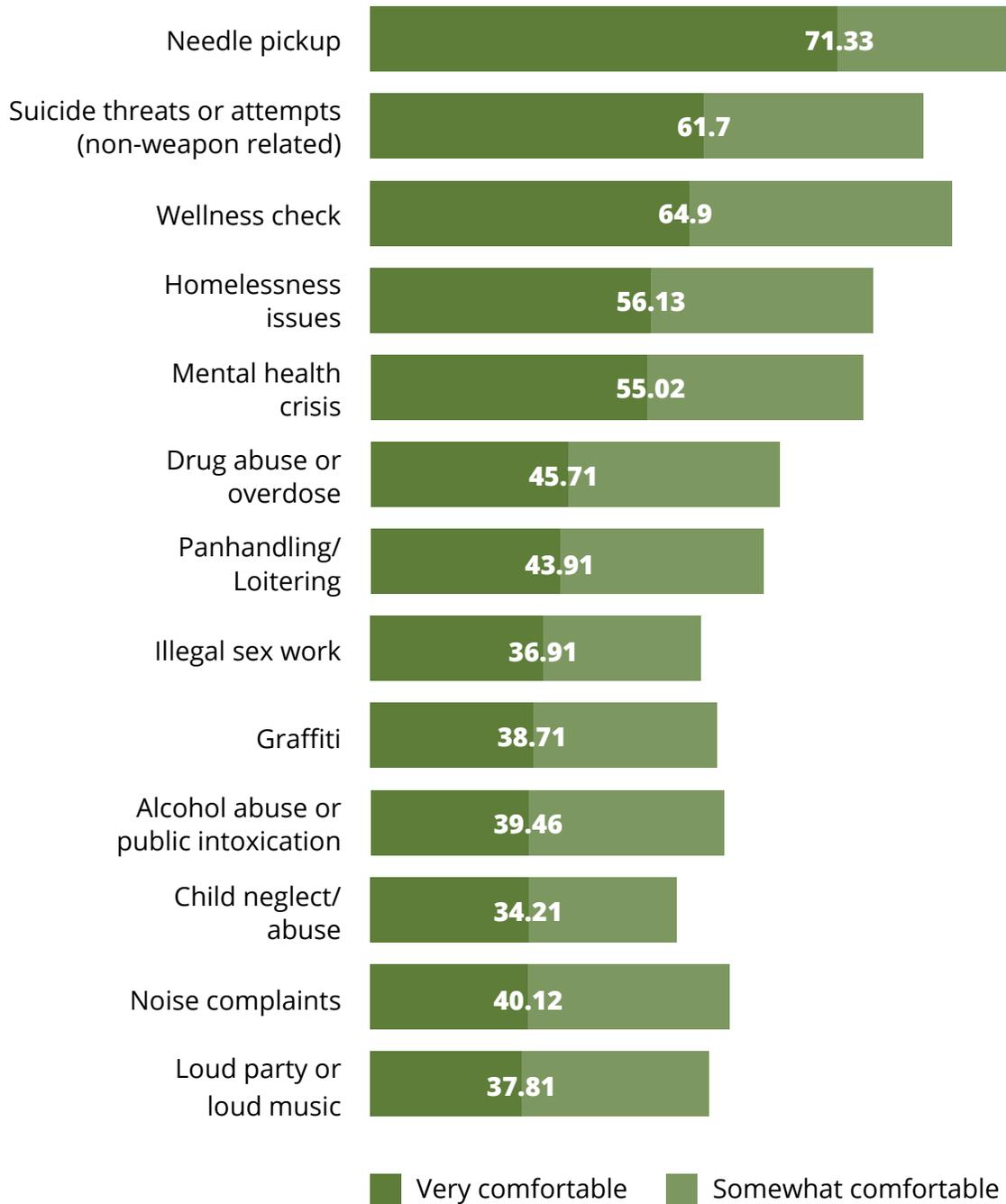
Data missing from the Dashboard: Questions 15 and 16 located on the pages below.

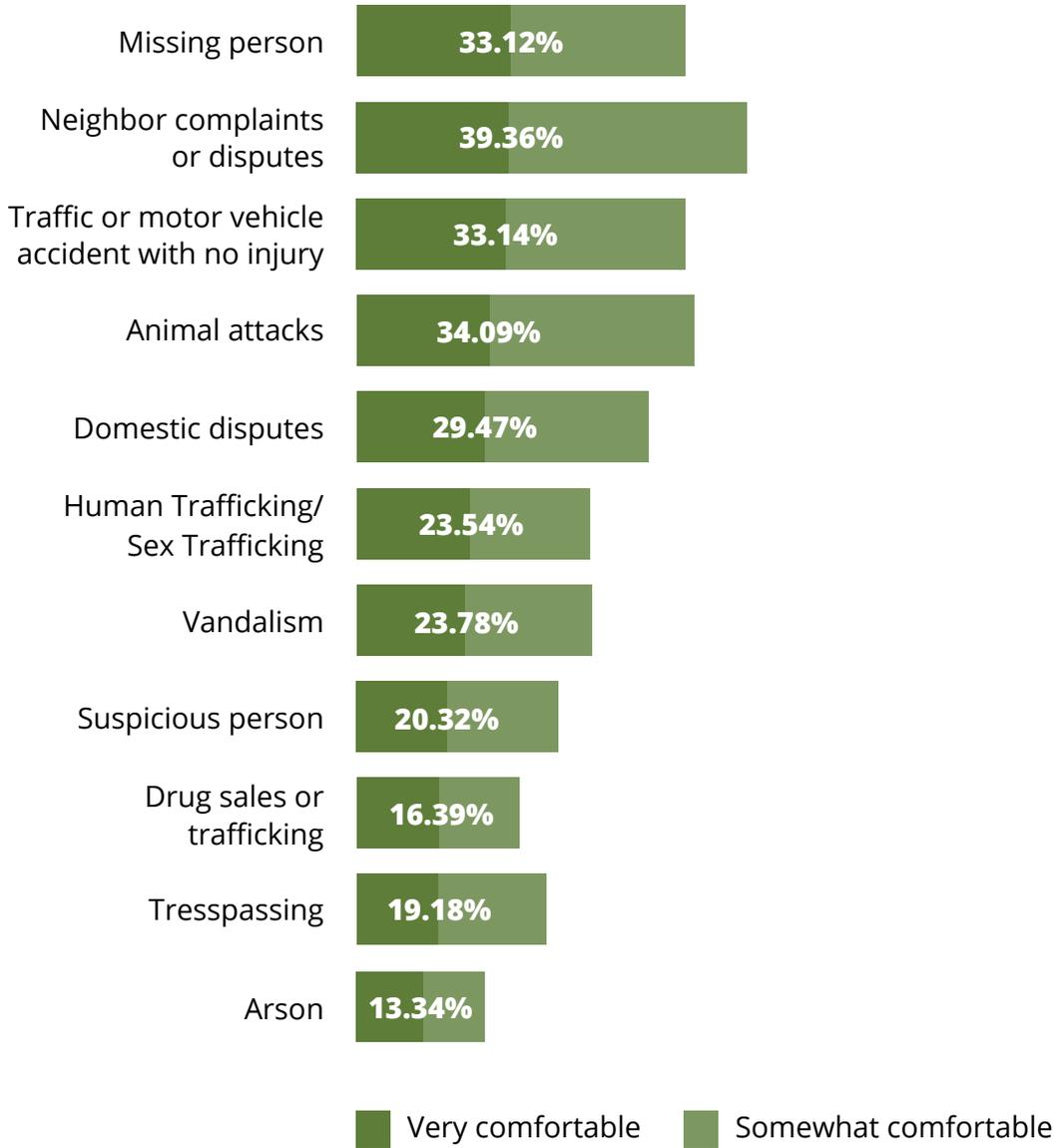
**How comfortable would you be with Sheriff's Deputies or Police Officers responding to the situations listed below along with trained crisis team responders?**





## How comfortable would you be with trained crisis team responders responding to the situations listed below without law enforcement?





# Appendix 6:

## Recommended Core Value and Operating Principles for Public Safety Pilot Program(s)

The RPS project team created a list of core values and operating principles to guide public safety pilot programs using the community feedback presented in this report and best practices used by King County.

### Core values and operating principles:

#### Values

- **Transparency:** Maintain a high level of transparency with employees and stakeholders in the community via communications and performance reports.
- **Accountability:** Ensure that there are processes to stay in communication with internal and external stakeholders. The Public Safety Advisory Committee or a successor community advisory group will be able to provide a level of community oversight and accountability.
- **Equity:** Review processes and performance to ensure the program operates equitably for both employees and the community it serves. Ensure alignment with the theory of change presented in King County's 2016–2022 Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan 2016–2022:

<https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/dnrp-directors-office/equity-social-justice/201609-ESJ-SP-FULL.pdf>

## **Operating Principles**

- Prioritize local hires; use community hiring panels to help select candidates.
- Allow individuals in the community and/or community-based organizations to help select pilot public safety improvement projects for implementation.
- Keep community stakeholders in the loop.
- Collaborate with other departments, programs, and community organizations dedicated to improving public safety in urban unincorporated King County.
- Optimize accessibility by using plain language and translating materials into multiple languages.
- Streamline processes to make the program as user-friendly as possible for the targeted/affected population.

# Appendix 7: Urban Unincorporated King County





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