

Police Monitor Final Report

What we learned about the complaint process.

Office of Design and Delivery
Communications and Technology Management
1st October, 2018

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Introduction

From fixing potholes to issuing building permits to providing free health clinics, the City of Austin provides residents, businesses, and visitors with a variety of services.

As a government agency, It's important that we provide the public with service experiences that are accessible, reliable, easy, and delightful.

The Office of Design and Delivery partners with different City departments and offices to understand their current challenges and find solutions to make work easier and more efficient for staff and improve their delivery of services to residents.

Our office, in collaboration with the Austin Tech Alliance, partnered with the Office of the Police Monitor to understand the current pain points and obstacles residents face when submitting complaints about their experience with the Austin Police Department.



Centering around the user

Before digging into this project report, we want you to center your thinking around the user and empathize with them. Below is just one of the resident experiences that was shared with us during our research.

The resident was trying to visit the Office of the Police Monitor's office building at 1520 Rutherford Lane to submit a complaint:

Users at the Center



“The elevator wasn’t working, and I can’t take the stairs since I’m disabled.”

“I didn’t get a timeline, or updates on the case. They just said to wait, and they would call back.”

“I thought the Office of Police Monitor would do something to hold the officer accountable.”

“I didn’t understand 70% of what the woman told me.”	“I signed something eventually, but I don’t know what it was since it was in English.”	“Once I entered, no one knew where the Police Monitor office was. I’m a permanent resident, so I don’t have a Texas ID and they wouldn’t let me in.”
“I waited for hours until APD gave me a meeting with IA and gave me a paper with contact info.”	“I didn’t know how to find the building, and once I got there the handicapped spots were taken by cars without hangtags.”	

Project Background

Our challenge

How might we help the Office of the Police Monitor make the complaint process more accessible and responsive to public needs?

The challenge to the research team was:

Historically, two thirds of complaints investigated by Internal Affairs and monitored by the Office of the Police Monitor were internal complaints. Internal complaints are complaints that originated from within the Austin Police Department. The difference between internal complaints and external complaints (those arising from the community) is quite significant. It raised several red flags for the Police Monitor. It was apparent there are barriers to the complaint process but it was

not clear exactly what those barriers were or how to fix them. The Police Monitor enlisted the assistance of the City of Austin's Office of Design and Delivery and Paper Census project partner Austin Tech Alliance to conduct research on the barriers of the complaint process.

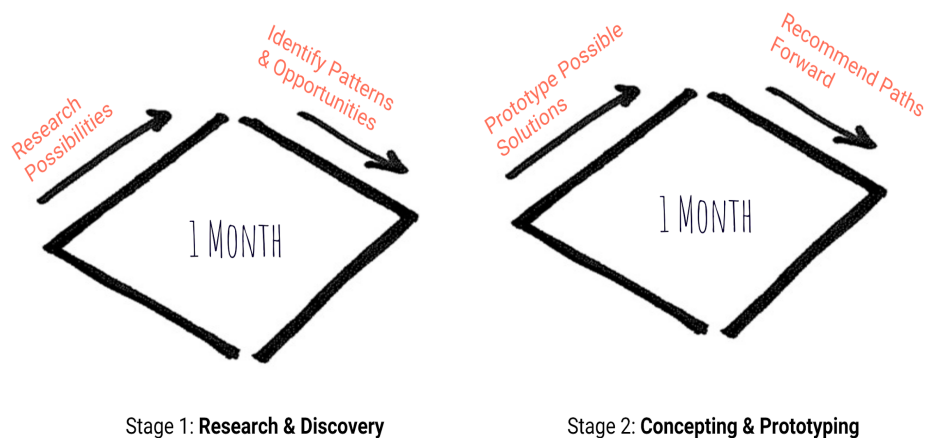
How might we help the Office of the Police Monitor complaint process be more accessible and responsive to public needs?

In just two months, the research team created a user research plan, conducted interviews with many stakeholders, synthesized the research, identified key themes and barriers and recommended solutions to the identified barriers. The research team's report is thoughtful and thorough and will be extremely helpful to the Office of the Police Monitor as it seeks to address and remove the barriers to filing a complaint, the process, and building of trust between the community and the OPM.

Project goals

1. Understand how complaint intake, processing, and follow up works including any pain points, opportunities, and/or gaps in these processes
2. Identify opportunities to address pain points and gaps and test ideas to help the Office of the Police Monitor deliver a more accessible and responsive service

Our process

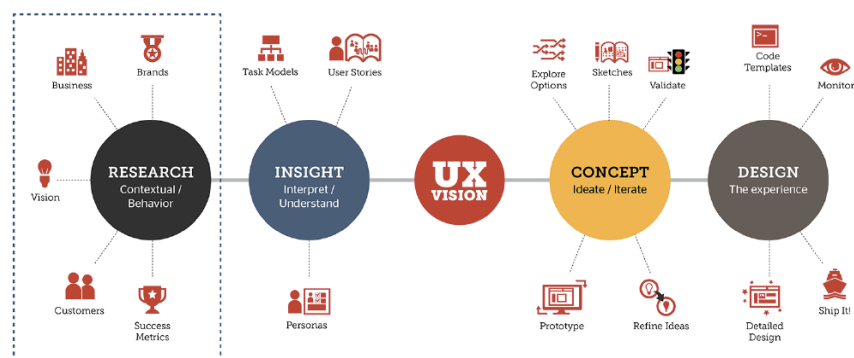


Research and Discovery: Design Principles

We default to users as our source of truth. Designing for users means learning everything we can about them—needs and goals—and iteratively testing our work throughout the design process. If a resident says they don't know, they're busy, or they're scared, we believe them, and we design solutions according to those feelings.

More specifically, User experience is about usability and functionality. Usability is the ability to do something intuitively and easily. Functionality refers to the quality of a function (of a product or a service) working as intended.

Every step in the process must focus on the users—balancing the needs of the city and technology with the needs of people. The product should be intuitive to the users so they know what they can do and what they should do next. The focus is always on maximizing usability to help users reach their goal.



The UX process is an iterative cycle and consists of the following stages:

1. **Discovery and Research:** Identify user needs and find inspiration for our design.
2. **Synthesizing Research and Design Strategy:** Explore our research to find trends and meaning in our data and develop a clear understanding of our target users.
3. **Placement and Layout Design:** Sketch solutions based on our user research and discuss their strengths and weaknesses.
4. **Execution:** Make a decision about our design and bring it to life as an interactive prototype.
5. **Usability Testing:** Explore the functionality and ease of use of our prototype.

Research Activities



Police Monitor staff	8
Internal Affairs staff	1
Police Department leadership	2
Equity Office staff	1
Members of the public	3
Former Community Review Panel	2
Council members/liaisons	2
Community advocates	3



Research and Discovery: Interview Activities

User interviews are crucial technique of the discovery & research phase of the user-centered design process. They help us gain a deeper understanding into people's behaviors and why they do what they do. This helps identify users' pain points or struggles to answer your problem statement.

During this project, Interviews were conducted in person and on location at the OPM office, resident homes, grassroots community centers, as well as city hall and police stations.

Throughout the interview we explored how users currently navigate through the system providing an idea of what they consider important, pain points, how they problem solve, and how they feel when interacting with the service. The interview helped us dig deeper into the user reasoning behind their choices and behaviors during review of observations.



Research and Discovery: Shadowing Activities

Shadowing is a useful behavioral observation of a user in their natural environment that provides ideas for further user research. We conducted various scenarios and observed a resident filing a complaint, at the OPM office. Shadowing then lets us understand existing behaviors, pain points in the process etc, so that we can adapt our designs to those behaviors. This also assists with identifying other issues like messaging or physical/environmental obstacles (file the complaint at a police facility, ID Required to enter, lack of parking).

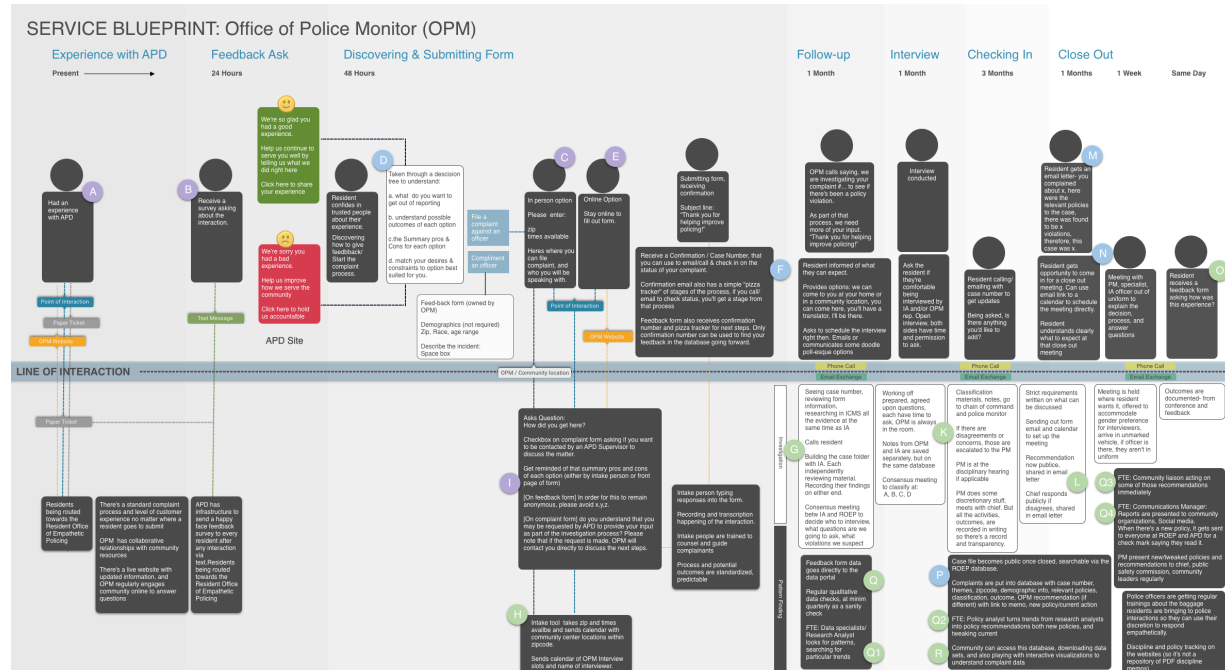


Research and Discovery: Identifying Patterns and Opportunities



After we have collected data, it's important that we periodically regroup to analyse it. In this case, we used tools to make sense of the data we collected. One is a journey map or service blueprint. These trace the experience of a user as they interact with a service or tool across time and touchpoints.

Along with these, we generated user archetypes, or personas, findings, and insights that hone in on the gaps, pain points, and opportunities for departments as they use information to deliver the service. These insights and findings will later frame our ideation around solutions to address these gaps, pain points, and opportunities.



Persona

Jamie: Under-User



"How do I know that making a complaint won't get back to the cops? You have police in your name, you're not on my side, and you're asking for my address. Now that cop will know where I live."

"I was sexually harassed by this guy, but I know better than to think they're going to believe me. Austin Police Department looks out for their own. Complaining is a waste of time and dangerous."

End Goals

- Forget about the incident and move on

Experience Goals

- Feel safe from fear of retaliation
- Be insulated from any interactions with Austin Police Department
- Not spend much time on the process, not have to relive the experience
- Feel as though what she's saying is being taken seriously, and will lead to serious changes

Expectations

- Austin Police Department looks out for their own, so nothing will happen to the officer
- Complaint specialists and Office of police Monitor are an extension of Austin Police Department
- Police have always treated my community badly, why would they stop now? Nothing will change.
- The officer in question will know who she is, and target her since he's regularly in her community

Needs

- To feel safe from retaliation
- To not have to dwell on incident
- To feel that the police are accountable to every member of the public, including her community
- Not interact with APD.I

Persona

Mindy: Super-User



"The complaint process is inefficient, long, and pretty unsatisfying, but I have no other way of reporting what happened to me."

"This officer was rude to me, that's unacceptable. He's a public servant and I shouldn't have to deal with that."

End Goals

- See her complaint followed up on
- Get the officer in question off the streets
- Make sure this behavior is never repeated

Experience Goals

- Receive personal attention and advice from complaint specialists
- Feel heard and validated in her experience by everyone in the process
- Feel satisfied about the outcome of the case that met her expectations

Expectations

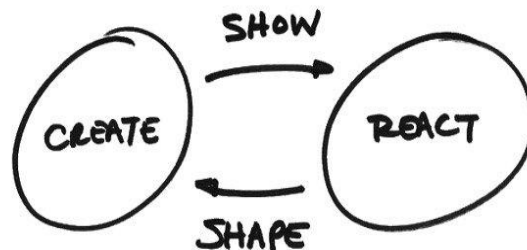
- Officer will be fired for treating her badly
- Complaint specialists are there to give her personal advice, support, updates
- It's an officer's job to be polite, make her feel comfortable and safe no matter what situation

Needs

- To easily submit complaints
- To be kept updated on the status and content of her complaint
- To feel validated that her concern is legitimate
- For the outcome to meet her expectations

Concepting and Prototyping: An Iterative Approach

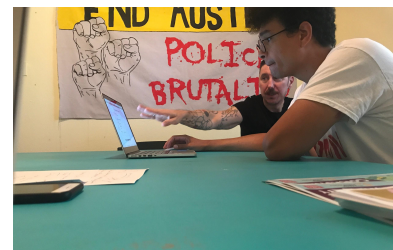
Once, through user research, we identified our user needs, and have generated ideas to meet those needs, we developed a prototype.



Then you test the prototype to see whether it meets the user's needs in the best possible way. We then take what we learned from testing and amend the design and repeat.

Concepting and Prototyping: Prototypes - Digital & Analog

Prototypes are low-investment, low-effort ways to test assumptions and ideas. The most basic definition of prototype is, "A simulation or sample version of a final product, which is used for testing prior to launch." The goal of a prototype is to test products (and product ideas) before sinking lots of time and money into the final product. Prototyping is essential for resolving usability issues before launch. It can also reveal areas that need improvement.



Our prototype was an online version of the [complaint form](#).

Once we can put a draft of the complaint form into the hands of real users, we will finally see how they use the form to meet their needs. We can then go back and adjust our initial guesswork, to better meet the users needs.



What we Learned

Theme #1

There are **barriers to accessing** the complaint process, from fear of retribution to logistical hurdles, that disproportionately affect the most vulnerable communities.

“We had a few stores in the South Asian community that were robbed, and let alone complaining, they won’t even report the crime to the police out of fear that they might get deported or victimized by the police.”

- Community Advocate

“I like phone/computer for communication. It would be easier if Office of Police Monitor was like facebook”

- Vulnerable member of the public

“Folks that have had a really bad experience. There’s a fear of retribution. To ask for your address at the top is wiping out a lot of complaints right off the top. Having the address on there is like ‘ok so now the cops know where I live.’”

- Member of the Public

Theme #2

There's a **lack of transparency** between complainants/public and Office of Police Monitor/Internal Affairs that makes it difficult to demonstrate value, progress, and accountability. This effectively reduces trust between the Police Department and the community.

"You can't be sure they took down what you said. There should be follow up instead of just archiving the issue."

- Vulnerable member of the public

"Average complainant will never know if their complaint was resolved through training or de-escalation, so makes it hard for Office of Police Monitor to provide closure"

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

"We worked for months behind the scenes elevating issues around de-escalation that we were seeing, but we found out pretty much along with the public that a new policy had been advocated for and won without our input."

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

"We worked for a while to get that de-escalation policy in the manual. But really we have no idea how or if it's being enforced. It would be great to have data on that so we can track the efficacy of advocating for policy."

- Community Advocate

Theme #3

There's a preference for mitigating informally, and therefore a **lack of institutionalization** of processes that makes it difficult for Office of Police Monitor to do its work sustainably.

"Another thing that was always difficult was the number of times IA would get a complaint and classify it as something that was not a policy violation even if we felt it was. Showed that Office of Police Monitor had no teeth. When complaints don't go anywhere you stop getting really good complaints."

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

"It usually doesn't come to a disagreement in ICMS because the teams will mitigate it amongst themselves. They're right down the hall from each other and it facilitates those conversations."

- Internal Affairs Staff

"Officers almost never consent to being asked a question directly by Office of Police Monitor... But they can pull the sergeant aside or give them their questions in advance and we pretty much always ask them."

- Internal Affairs Staff

Recommendations by stage and theme

On March 22, 2018, the City Council passed a resolution (20180322-047) directing the City Manager to develop evidence-based best practices regarding police oversight. The resolution stated that the report should contain recommendations that would improve the effectiveness, transparency, and efficiency of our current system. In response to this resolution, City management has conducted [extensive research](#) on various models of police oversight across the country. The research has helped to inform the strengths and weaknesses of the various oversight models and advised of **12 core elements** for an effective police oversight system.

After reviewing our findings and insights, we made sure each recommendation fell under one of these **12 core element** categories. The outcome is our recommendations address the research insights, using opportunities that correlate with core elements proven to work.

CORE ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL OVERSIGHT⁷

1. INDEPENDENCE

Independent of police, political actors, and special interests and legal protection - created through ordinance or charter

2. ADEQUATE JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY

Adequate authority to achieve organizational goals, oversight of internal and external complaints, officer involved shootings, in custody deaths and serious use of force, and recommend discipline and findings on investigations

3. UNFETTERED ACCESS TO RECORDS

Access to all police databases

4. ACCESS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVES AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS STAFF

Must have regular access to police executives and they must be open and willing to consider and implement recommendations from the oversight agency.

5. FULL COOPERATION⁸

The ability of the oversight agency to gain the cooperation of the police department.

6. SUPPORT OF PROCESS STAKEHOLDERS

Government officials and office holders, if not supportive of an oversight agency, can reduce its effectiveness in a variety of ways, including by failing to provide the agency with adequate resources or authority or by appointing ineffective managers or board members. Opposition from police unions, local district attorneys or police executives has the potential to complicate the work of oversight agencies

7. ADEQUATE RESOURCES

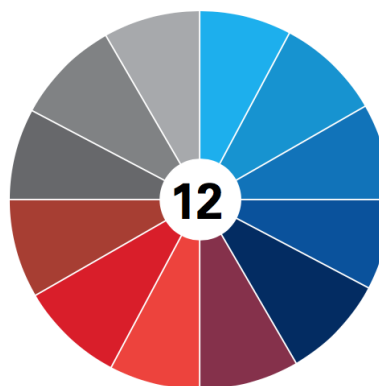
Adequate Budget and Staffing

8. PUBLIC REPORTING/TRANSPARENCY

80% of Auditor/Monitor agencies publish public reports/ 85% of Investigative agencies publish public reports/ 69% of Review Focused agencies publish public reports

9. USE OF STATISTICAL PATTERN ANALYSIS

Pattern Analysis: Analysis and reporting on aggregate patterns in relation to complaint handling processes, officer involved shootings, in custody deaths, police data relating to stops, searches and arrests.



10. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Publicize the different processes for handling complaints; Outreach out to disenfranchised members of the community who might be fearful or distrustful of the police; Talking with the community about police policies, procedures or training; and gathering input from a range of community members and groups.

11. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Involving community stakeholders in the process allows the oversight agency to identify and address the key accountability issues the jurisdiction is facing.

12. RESPECT FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

The ability of a civilian oversight agency to be effective in its work will depend, at least in part, on its ability to respect confidentiality rules. Failure to respect state statutes relating to confidentiality may constitute a serious violation of professional ethics, undermine trust between the oversight agency and the local police department and may cause the oversight agency to lose access to confidential records.



Experience with the Austin Police Department

Change Office of Police Monitor's name to the Independent Office of Police Accountability.

- Mitigates fear of things “getting back to APD” by showing immediately that the Office is independent, represents public (and not just citizens)
- Puts Police Department's goal to have a more accountable, trusting relationship with the community front and center
- Other options: Civilian Office of Accountable Policing, Civilian Office of Police Accountability, Public Office of Equitable Policing, Public Office of Empathetic Policing

“The name of the monitor. Having police in the name, are they the police? I have issues with the name.”

- Member of the public

“Police is in the name of Office of Police Monitor, people don't want to engage”

- Equity Office

“ARCH has a bank of services by the phones. I saw promotional materials for the Austin Travis police monitor. I've heard people mention it, but we don't normally go to the police.”

- Vulnerable member of the public

“Personally, if something happens with police, even I would think twice before calling Office of Police Monitor. I would be scared that my name would go up to the police and I would be targeted.”

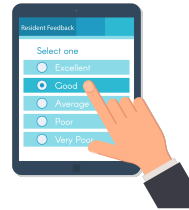
- Community Advocate

2

Asking for Feedback & Discovering/Submitting Form

Send a simple feedback poll to collect public feedback every time they have a police interaction

- Shows Austin Police Department cares about public feedback, pushes members of the public who've had good or bad experiences immediately to the Office of Police Monitor website
- Already underway by Austin Police Department



"I told the police [about robbery]... they never followed up"

- Vulnerable member of the public

"A police officer tackled me on the ramp. I was drunk when I was arrested so I didn't notice the pain in my hip till the morning. I had so much pain I had to crawl out of my cell and ask them to call an ambulance. I now have a chronic hip problem."

- Vulnerable member of the public

Make the complaint/feedback process as accessible as possible by making intake **available online, or via phone/in person with community locations** where members of the public are already comfortable. Current [complaint form prototype](#).



- This takes advantage of trusted community relationships that already exist, doesn't force community leaders who are weary of "betraying" their constituent's trust by referring them to the complaint process to turn over feedback
- In short: You can complain anywhere. From your home on the phone/online, or where you feel comfortable, with whom you feel comfortable, and you can be assured a certain level of customer experience and counsel whichever method you choose

“It would be nice to have semi satellite offices: So I go and talk to the people in the community centers etc. We can be out there spreading the word.” - Office of Police Monitor staff	“Office of Police Monitor doesn’t really have any strong relationships with the community. We need community organizations to have trust in us.” - Office of Police Monitor staff “Digital page for Office of Police Monitor would be easy. Less hostile, less fear.” - Vulnerable member of the public
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Set expectations, demystify the process, **a decision tree tool/quiz that matches public expectations, needs, and fears, to the options available.**

- This sets expectations early on about what the potential outcomes of a category of complaint could be, and proactively respond to public preferences including their fears and time commitment

“Specialists give a really abbreviated idea of what to expect. They say, this’ll take 180 days, if you want something faster, here’s a supervisory. Obviously, they’ll pick that one, but that doesn’t necessarily meet the end goal. If you leave that out, they feel like you robbed them of the opportunity to get what they need, and they feel like nothing happened.” - Office of Police Monitor Staff	“I’m unimpressed with your agency’s responses to my nearly 10 police complaints. Complaints that were all closed for no good reason. Allowing these badged criminals to remain on the streets under colour of law.” - Member of the public
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Remove the three kinds of complaints. Have **one online complaint form** that captures what’s important in the supervisory referral and formal complaint processes (citizen concerns becomes redundant).

- **Get rid of the affidavit**, make everything except the narrative of the complaint optional
- Makes option to talk to a supervisor about a complaint a check-box. So that no matter what the complaint has the potential to lead to discipline, but could also be mediated through the conversation

- Available in different languages, with checkbox option to ask for a **translator** in your language (including sign language, and not just American) in all future interactions

“The three types of complaints is super confusing. It probably deters a lot of people from complaining at all, especially if the first thing you see is the overwhelming amount of info on the website... Not worth the trouble.” - Content Strategist “I tried once before and I never knew that you had an option other than talking to a supervisor. So that’s where mine ended. The supervisor dissuaded me from filing a formal complaint. Seemed like a mess.” - Member of the public	“Folks don’t feel safe about it. They’ve heard about other people’s experiences to make a complaint. They could go to jail if they commit perjury!” - Community advocate
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Set expectations, demystify the process, a **“pizza-tracker” and confirmation number** received upon submission that allows you to see what stage in the process your complaint/feedback is at, and how long it will take at each stage

- Members of the public can call with their confirmation number, which on the back end is their case number
- The stages of the process are in plain language and explanatory, while not giving away the particulars of the individual case. The member of the public gets some transparency without compromising confidentiality.

“The average complainant will never know if their complaint was resolved through training or de-escalation, so it makes it hard for Office of Police Monitor to provide closure.” - Office of Police Monitor staff	“They didn’t provide any timeline or plan for how to move the case forward. They said to wait and they would call back.” - Vulnerable member of the public “Give some confirmation so you have paperwork to prove you filed. You can’t be sure they took down what you said. There should be follow up instead of just archiving the issue.” - Vulnerable member of the public
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3

Follow up, Interview, & Checking-In

During the investigation process, **Office of Police Monitor** has direct access to ICMS and can pull relevant materials without asking Internal Affairs for it. Rather than discussing analysis ad-hoc, each record their notes separately, and have regular **consensus meetings** where they can discuss their respective analysis.

- Ensures there's a **paper trail of analysis** that could be important if there are disagreements that persist
- Ensures there aren't **delays** for a complaint because Office of Police Monitor's review is contingent on receiving materials from Internal Affairs

"Big discrepancy between police and police monitor data. If I'm going to recommend discipline I need to see other cases/data for consistency. If I'm going to recommend discipline I need to see other cases/data for consistency."

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

Sometimes everyone entering information into ICMS creates tension b/c it's not just admin staff entering information, it's also supervisors. It throws off the flow of information."

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

Interviews are scheduled using a **tool that considers everyone's schedule, questions are determined collaboratively in advance** at a consensus meeting.

- Avoids last minute scheduling of interviews, complaint specialists not being prepared for an interview with all the materials necessary in advance
- Gets around some of the tension with Office of Police Monitor specialists needing to ask their questions via a sergeant to officers

“Scheduling for Internal Affairs interviews is indeterminate. Can go a handful of weeks, with a few. Then three a day for a week. We don’t have control of that product.”

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

Office of Police Monitor is the touchpoint between the public and the investigation process. Internal Affairs Sergeants don’t call members of the public directly.

- Office of Police Monitor calls to schedule interviews with a complainant or witness (any civilian), sets expectations
- Reduces intimidation factor. It feels like you’re in trouble when you get a call from the police.

“Cultural fear in the asian community, keep your head down, do the right thing, cops here means you’re in trouble, you’re not on the same side.”

- Community advocate

“I would like a safe place to be at when things aren’t pleasant...a place where I don’t have to worry about cops or other people messing with me”

- Vulnerable member of the public

“In the community, people aren’t even clear if they want the police”

- Member of the public

Investigation interviews can happen in accessible locations where members of the public are most comfortable, and likely not at Office of Police Monitor/Internal Affairs building.

- When Office of Police Monitor calls to schedule an interview, they offer to **come to the public** where they’re comfortable:
 - Library conference rooms
 - Community centers
 - Community organizations
 - Homes

- Maybe there are confidentiality requirements for the location (i.e. needs to be quiet, where others won't overhear etc.)
- Bring a **translator** if they opted in, and make sure locations are accessible
- Ask whether they prefer or are more comfortable being interviewed by a particular gender

"I didn't understand 70% of what the woman told me. I didn't know how to find the building, and once I got there, handicapped spots were taken by cars without hangtags. Once I entered no one knew where the Office of Police Monitor office was. I'm a permanent resident, so I don't have a TX ID and they wouldn't let me in. The elevator wasn't working, and I can't take the stairs since I'm disabled."

- Vulnerable member of the public

After interviews, each (Office of Police Monitor and Internal Affairs) document their own rationale for their determination of the classification of the case. They discuss their respective analysis at another **consensus meeting**, and document agreements/disagreements.

- Ensures there's **documentation** on both sides specifying the rationale behind classification
- Documentation could be used by the Police Monitor and/or Chain of Command in the future as they make and take recommendations into consideration

"Another thing that was always difficult was the number of times Internal Affairs would get a complaint and classify it as something that was not a policy violation even if we felt it was. Showed that Office of Police Monitor had no teeth. When complaints don't go anywhere, you stop getting really good complaints."

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

After investigation on a particular case is completed, all the notes on both sides (Office of Police Monitor and Internal Affairs), from reviewing the video footage and case file, through notes from interview and classification go to both the Police Monitor and Chain of Command.

- During twice a month meetings, each will have the materials necessary to make recommendations, and justify decisions.
- Cases where there's disagreement are flagged early, and the Police Monitor can take discretionary actions (i.e. meeting with police chief) in advance of writing a recommendation memo.

“Here’s the challenge, we can write memos as complaint specialists. I’ve been here through 4 police monitors, and it depends on who that is if the memo is going to go anywhere. Some won’t do anything. Others will say they are sent to the chief and then we find out later that the memo was not sent.”

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

4

Close-Out

Once a case is closed, complainant receives an **email letter** reviewing the content of their complaint, mapping that content to relevant policies, specifying whether any violations were found, providing the classification of the complaint, and bringing back the decision matrix to show what the possible outcomes were (assuming it wasn't a suspension and you couldn't point to a disciplinary memo)

- **Improves transparency** without compromising confidentiality
- Any relevant recommendations by the Police Monitor and responses by the Chief would be public upon closing the case, and the complainant would be pointed to these in the letter

“Even if the complaint contact form is filled out as unsatisfactory, unless the complaint results in formal discipline the complainant is never notified of anything”

- Internal Affairs Staff

Complainant has the opportunity to attend a close out meeting with the Police Monitor, a complaint specialist, an Internal Affairs officer out of uniform, and potentially a translator to explain the process and outcome.

- There are strict parameters established for what can and can't be discussed at these meetings
- Meetings can again take place anywhere where the complainant is comfortable and meets confidentiality requirements
- When Office of Police Monitor calls to schedule the meeting, they set expectations about what can and can't be discussed

“In past, Office of Police Monitor would have a close out meeting or conference at end of case, where we provide complaining more info other than 4 final outcomes. However APA said it was not allowed.”

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

After the close out meeting, the complainant receives a feedback survey asking about their experience with the complaint process.

- Complainant feels heard, and like they have the opportunity to improve the process
- Office of Police Monitor and Internal Affairs get valuable data on how complainants feel, and what parts of the process need to be tweaked

Observation:

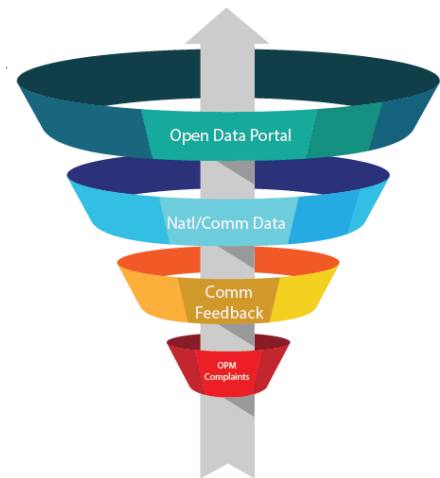
When contacting former complainants to give us feedback, we received vehement responses that people wanted to contribute and give us feedback. There's clearly a satisfaction factor when people have the opportunity to affect change themselves based on the problems they see.

5

Pattern-finding and trust building

There is a public **Police Accountability Open Data Portal** that contains Austin Police Department data, Office of Police Monitor complaint data, community data, other city oversight data, and other relevant national, community data sets that might be useful.

- Members of the public and organizations can pull data directly, and use interactive front end visuals to explore different data sets
- Office of Police Monitor can use the complaint data (if it's only limited to that) to generate trend reports and annual reports
- Other organizations can use all the data to push for necessary policies



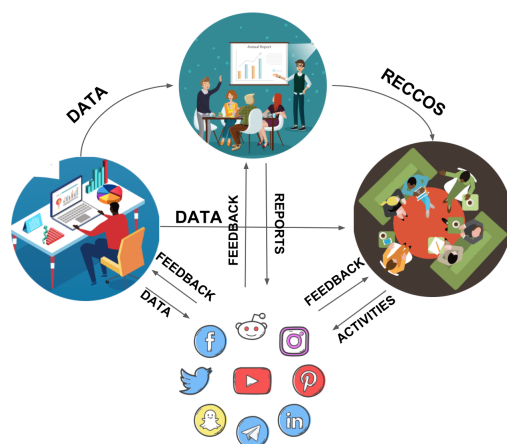
“Some of the most simple data has been ignored. How many repeat officers have had complaints filed against them that ended up being unfounded. But that's simple data we haven't analyzed and used.”

- Office of Police Monitor staff

“We need the data on what zip codes is negative contact happening, to whom, why, who's their attorney. All this data helps us see trends and helps us with how we go about educating people and how we address the filing.”

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

Cohesive cycle of pattern finding, recommending, educating, and publicizing with new full time employees



Office of Police Monitor Research Analysts, data analyst interns comb through the open data portal regularly looking for trends, and regularly generate numbers on trends of interest.

- For example, providing monthly reports on racial profiling, generating maps on police presence overlaid with race, income, etc.
- This data informs Office of Police Monitor’s regular reporting

“There was one research analyst, she would identify something, the APD would pick it apart, we would get lost in the shuffle. Politically motivated stuff would depend on what side politicians fell on.”

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

“The end goal is to ID/pattern practices that are detrimental to community. Those ID are also worth noting to the dept. If certain officers are doing things repeatedly APD should know.”

- Office of Police Monitor Staff

Office of Police Monitor Policy Analysts take the data generated and cross reference it with national best practices to write policy recommendations, both in the form of memos for the chief, and in the form of reports, infographics etc. for the public.

- The Police Monitor compiles these memos at appropriate times and brings them to the Chain of Command, and community partners for review.

"I would like Office of Police Monitor to be proactive instead of reactive, meaning being able to document and send to APD policies they might want to consider." - Office of Police Monitor Staff	"Criminal side taken to DA. But the vast majority are not that, they might be a violation of policy but if you have crap policies..then...??" - Community Advocate
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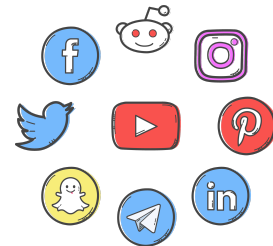
Office of Police Monitor's Community Liaison uses the same data and recommendations to pursue proactive education and engagement opportunities in the community and within APD to stop bad experiences from happening at all.

- Educating new immigrant populations on how to interact with police officers during traffic stops
- Providing "I don't speak English, I need a translator" cards to non-English speaking populations
- Working with complaint specialists to train community members to intake complaints/feedback
- Educating police officers on the context particular communities bring to interactions

"Over the years, we just take complaints, and that's been less than fruitful in my opinion." - Office of Police Monitor Staff	"I want us to play a bigger part in educating the community, educating the police force, information, easily accessible, shouldn't have to know where to look for us, should just know how to find us. Shouldn't be a best kept secret." - Office of Police Monitor Staff
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Office of Police Monitor's Communications Manager works with the team to publicize reports on social media, forges relationships with community partners, and answers public questions about the office online and in the community.

- Publicizing office activities and events on social media
- Answering questions from the website
- Hosting “Ask-me-anything”s on Reddit
- Regularly checking in with existing community partners and searching for new ones
- Updating Office of Police Monitor’s online content according to feedback
- Bringing any broader feedback gathered online to the rest of the team



“People say things on social media they won’t tell the police.” - Community Advocate	“We’re living in the stone age, we can’t use social media.” - Office of Police Monitor Staff “Open up to intake for multiple channels. Instagram users, etc. whatever channel that is it should be readily available to report and share.” - Community Advocate “The most impactful thing would be to have access to tech, social media” - Office of Police Monitor Staff
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Office of Police Monitor generates **different forms and frequencies of reports** using data and policy recommendations.

- For example, Office of Police Monitor might release a weekly data visualization tweet on use of force by zip code, monthly flash trend infographics with data around a specific trend they've noticed, a quarterly report and presentation of all their recommendations to community organizations and chain of command, and an annual report that focuses on evaluating the impact of Office of Police Monitor's activities that year compared to other city oversight agencies.

"Who's gonna read our annual report?"

- Office of Police Monitor staff

Next Steps

Current interactive [complaint form wireframe prototype](#).

What's next:

1. **Usability testing** of the complaint form with the public
2. Providing **interactive wireframes** of the complaint form to the Office of Police Monitor
3. Relevant **recommendations integrated** into City Council recommendations
4. Office of Police Monitor **working internally** to create new policies, staff new positions, form partnerships necessary to make recommendations reality

What we (Office of Design and Delivery) completed. Recommendations provided.

The image displays three wireframe prototypes of the 'Police Oversight and Accountability Form' on the ALPHA.AUSTIN.GOV website. Each prototype shows a different stage of the form's development and user interaction.

Prototype 1 (Left): The form is titled 'Tell us about your experience with the Austin Police Department'. It includes an introductory paragraph about the Civilian Office of Police Oversight and Accountability, followed by a section 'You have four ways to share' with options for 'Online', 'In person', and 'Over the phone'. The 'Online' option is highlighted with a blue button that says 'Fill out the online form'.

Prototype 2 (Middle): The form is titled 'Police Oversight and Accountability Form' and 'Tell us what experience you would like to share'. It includes a section 'I'd like to:' with radio buttons for 'Submit a complaint' and 'Send a compliment'. Below this is a 'Still have questions? Contact:' section with contact information for the Civilian Office of Police Oversight and Accountability. At the bottom, there is a 'Check out related services' section with four cards: 'STEP-UP STOP', 'FORM', 'SERVICE', and 'SERVICE'. A feedback section at the bottom asks 'How satisfied are you with this page?' with a row of five smiley face icons.

Prototype 3 (Right): The form is titled 'Police Oversight and Accountability Form' and 'We're sorry you had a poor experience with the Austin Police Department'. It includes a section 'Here's what to expect during the complaint process' with sub-sections for 'Process', 'Timeframe', and 'Outcomes'. At the bottom, there is a 'Check out related services' section with four cards: 'STEP-UP STOP', 'FORM', 'SERVICE', and 'SERVICE'. A feedback section at the bottom asks 'How satisfied are you with this page?' with a row of five smiley face icons.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Links

- Current [complaint form prototype](#)
- Full set of [data points](#)
- Visual [service blueprint](#)
- Detailed data point breakdown of [service blueprint](#)
- Preliminary Police Oversight Analysis [Report](#) (from which “Core Elements of Successful Oversight” were pulled)

Appendix B: Other Findings

Members of the public who have serious complaints are often the ones with the most fear of retribution. They don’t seek personal vindication, they seek to change the system.

“I didn’t feel like anything would come of it. God forbid if I actually did need the police they might not come.” - Vulnerable member of the public	“Personally, if something happens with the police, even I would think twice before calling Office of Police Monitor. I would be scared that my name would go up to the police and I would be targeted.” - Community Advocate “We’ve known lots of friends who have had to call police, and they end up in trouble. No trust with police.” - Vulnerable member of the public “A lot of (immigrants) people are laying low. They aren’t going to make a complaint. They are not going to be visible.” - City Council Member
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Members of the public who are currently complaining are not representative of everyone who's having negative interactions with officers.

"The majority of complaints we get right now are from middle aged white women." - Office of Police Monitor Staff	"The complaint process is not laborious. All you have to do is pick up the phone. The majority of the complaints are just phone calls. You don't even have to give me your name. Tell me your story. The complaint specialist is going to do all the work for you. We are asking those behind the scenes questions. If you don't complete the form, we type the information." - Office of Police Monitor Staff
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Community leaders are weary of betraying the trust of vulnerable community members by referring them to the complaint process.

Observation/Trend: Multiple staff members who do encourage others to file complaints, including community advocates, complaint specialists, and City of Austin employees mentioned that they themselves would never file a complaint for fear of retribution.

"Someone told me the other day they are sitting on 500 complaints, because they don't trust us with them." - Office of Police Monitor staff	"There's really no such thing as an anonymous complaint. If IA starts investigating it, even if it's internal, they'll know who it is." - Office of Police Monitor Staff
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Public pressure is the Office of Police Monitor’s “teeth.” When there isn’t transparency, it therefore doesn’t have teeth.

“It would be nice if the Panel was required that they MUST include our recommendations in what they send to the Chief. Because it’s possible for the Chief to never see our recommendations otherwise.” - Office of Police Monitor Staff	“Public would never know we fought for that and that’s disappointing. We really can’t quantify some of the stuff we do. We fought 6 times for this policy. [And it wasn’t until community organizations got involved independently that it became a policy].” - Office of Police Monitor Staff “People don’t see what’s going on behind the scenes, so they say Office of Police Monitor isn’t doing anything... In their eyes it’s a million dollar paper pushing office.” - Office of Police Monitor Staff
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Office of Police Monitor and Internal Affairs operate under a **“closed by default”** philosophy, rather than “open by default.”

Some things that are closed:

- Case files, Office of Police Monitor isn’t allowed into ICMS independently
- Social media not permitted
- Complainant isn’t allowed to hear details of their case
- Citizen review panel can’t review footage outside of the physical building, can’t question
- Complaint specialists can’t ask officers questions
- Memos, recommendations are closed
- Outcomes of complaints are closed
- Content of complaints is closed

Appendix C: Ideas

How might we make it easier for anyone to complain?

Top Ideas:

Everything is multi-language *

Community places around town (church/service centers/arch/schools/nonprofit orgs/Hospital)**

Recruit empathetic cops ***

Online form**

Miscellaneous ideas:

Change the name of OPM

Ai Robot : How can I help you, Basic Q&A

Telephone complaint/email complaint/ in person complaint (community)

Back of APD ticket has OPM information

Everything is multi-language *

Complain anywhere

Community places around town (church/service centers/arch/schools/nonprofit orgs/Hospital)**

Community center with set hours

Rec center

"I don't speak English" cards

Messaging ideas:

Ads on billboards for OPM

Educate police / Build trust/ APD attends community events

Police brotherhood Decreases / Police feel like "good guys" in community

Back of APD ticket has OPM information

Community Advocate Ride-Alongs

Recruit empathetic cops ***

Information in communities on what to do when interacting with an officer, (what to do when pulled over)*

Officers involved in community activities

Everything is multi-language ***

Cultural training for APD

Translators on hand @ intake

Outreach training to community groups

City council training

Form ideas:

Online form**

Step process 1-2-3- Done

Path with no investigation

Feedback>complaint>investigation>Data

Data shows complaint > outcome

Limit interactions w police: Remove quotas, tickets = city revenue

Youtube submissions

How might we make the complaint process more transparent to the complainant and the public?

Top Ideas:

Facebook: Q/A*

Reddit AMA: Meet office of police monitor**

Social media ***

What happens during an investigation? 1-2-3 *****

Close out conference *

Outreach ideas:

CRP Conduct outreach

City Space

Facebook: Q/A*

Reddit AMA: Meet office of police monitor**

Community focus volunteers (help out in community centers)

Social media ***

Educate police on new policy

Map showing city with states of racial profiling complaints/sexual harassment etc by zip code

FTE ideas:

Additional staff for research

Data Analysts

Content ideas:

What happens during an investigation? 1-2-3 *****

1-2-3

1 page of data stats

Provide intake # to reference stage in investigation not last name

Post "How to" 1-2-3-4

Better closing of loop w/complainant

Provide workflow for complaints

Updates on a complaint (status of complaint)

Close out conference *

Results of investigations online

Phone for tracking status of complaint with #

Closing/Data Capture ideas:

Complaint#/summary of complaint/finding/policy violation/ recommended policy change
 Police Accountability Portal Complaint/com feed/national data /PD
 Annual reports in bite size chunks: trend report/ tweets
 OPM Portal Include Recs publicly
 Help us find trends (trend hackathon)
 Policy implemented check / number of officers completed training 23
 -Portal
 Recommended accepted
 Check mark X
 One shared spot for data consumption: OPM/APD/local org/state data/national data
 #/theme/outcome/opm-rec

How might we formalize and open (by default) interactions between the OPM and the Police Department?

Top Ideas:

Let us (OPM) conduct the investigation *****
 We get the game-here's how you play the game *
 Case # Review has checkpoints 1-2-3*
 Have C.M. release OPM/IA findings ***

Other Ideas:

Minutes from PM and PC interactions: Open linked to recs
 We want to solicit complaints
 Auditor is independent
 Certified Peace officers
 You can analyze all the data, find complaints
 OPM has access to full PD database
 Let us (OPM) conduct the investigation *****
 We get the game-here's how you play the game *
 Case # Review has checkpoints 1-2-3*
 All case related materials open to OPM (review /Questions)
 Google Docs/Slack/Box (internal communication)
 Share point for complaint
 Minutes from 1x month meetings public
 If it goes to CRP, everything is in file is open
 Have C.M. release OPM/IA findings ***
 Release redacted case file
 All hearing etc, open by default after close
 Meetings OPM /APD open to public when possible
 OPM note taking always allowed

Insert an equity office as third party in process at a point
Balance the relationship that allows you to get stuff done w/transparency

How might we encourage APD to act on OPM recommendations consistently?

Top Ideas:

OPM press release goes to press about recommendations made and why*
Define impact if this policy is effective/track against **
City Council Reviews can force changes- report to city council *
Require city council involvement*
APD officer discipline should include community service instead of day off. *****
Working group: Look @ recommendations **

Other Ideas:

Lawsuit
Make findings/discipline: public Post on website
OPM press release goes to press about recommendations made and why*
Change from recommended to requirement
Mechanism for filing litigation
FTE: OPM Staff are data scientists
Citizen Impact Evaluators
Define impact if this policy is effective/track against **
Tie it to evidence, engage

Data

Run predictive models
OPM has all APDs data @ disposal to evaluate
Make the norm, we follow. When we don't it's an exception.
Lost of process
APD has more personal trainings
Ticker on OPM website
Add CRP Agenda
Tie APD to council resolutions? :(
Policy review > Policy change recommendation > update policy > Publish
Discipline should equal discipline
Accountability = Trust
APD officer discipline should include community service instead of day off. *****
Tie follow thru to \$ SSPRs - Stipends
Create stipend for OPM- approved officers
Mechanism for filing litigation
Public Safety Meetings

City Council Reviews can force changes- report to city council *

Require city council involvement*

Happy hours :)

of recommendations should be reasonable

Press release @ time of closure

Solicit what they want to see from OPM

Address CRP (chief of police)

Make expectations public

Make city manager sign off on them after chief?

How might we encourage APD to act on OPM recommendations consistently?

Workshops @ office or webinar

Publish policy change to reddit/ Facebook/ Social media (feedback response is captured data)

Partner w institution of higher learning neighborhood association

Community to engage with

Share out come from chief in agreement of policy change

Working group: Look @ recommendations **

Create Opps for some to “Intern” w/ us.

The end.

