



# CITY OF PLAINFIELD

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY HALL  
515 WATCHUNG AVENUE  
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07060  
(908) 753-3310 (OFFICE)  
(908) 753-3634 (FAX)

Email: [adrian.mapp@plainfieldnj.gov](mailto:adrian.mapp@plainfieldnj.gov)



**Adrian O. Mapp**  
Mayor

**Media Contact:**  
Jazz Clayton-Hunt  
908-226-2507

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **George Floyd Police Reform Commission (GFPRC) Submits Report on Police Reform in Plainfield**

Plainfield, NJ – October 23, 2020 – In June of this year, Plainfield Mayor Adrian O. Mapp formed a police reform commission. The George Floyd Police Reform Commission was considered a need in the charged racial and political climate following the death of George Floyd. He was killed by a police officer in Minneapolis who knelt on his neck for over eight minutes as Floyd repeated that he could not breathe. This act resulted in Mr. Floyd's death.

Following the unjust nature of his death and that of others who have died at the hands of law enforcement, the George Floyd Police Reform Commission was deemed a necessary, proactive measure. Comprised of Plainfield residents, the Commission analyzed the Plainfield Police Department's current practices and researched ways to improve upon outdated practices. The GFPRC submitted their recommendations to the Mayor, the State Attorney General, and the Governor. The ultimate goal is for the Plainfield Police Department to continue to serve Plainfield residents without prejudice, minimize the probability of fatal encounters between police and residents, and make recommendations to address any areas currently needing improvement.

As their source, the GFPRC used documents submitted by the Plainfield Anti-Violence Coalition, Policies and Procedures of the Plainfield Police Department, publications on policing, the New Jersey Attorney General's Use of Force Policy, and Plainfield residents' comments during public hearings. The GFPRC held private and public hearings during which they recognized repeated themes in the suggestions from the commission members and city of Plainfield residents.

Through these research methods, the Commission found five areas of focus upon which they based their recommendations. Following is a summary of each:

- 1) **Increase Opportunities for Community Engagement in Policing** – This recommendation suggests a) officers spend increased time on foot patrol within the community, b) officers should be encouraged to continue and build upon their engagement in civic activities, c) all policies should be available for review by the community on the Plainfield Police Department website, d) the Plainfield Police Department should continue the practice of hiring residents within the City of Plainfield, and e) that the City of Plainfield review the budget and identify resources that can be reallocated to Health and Social Services which could reduce the need for Police Intervention.
- 2) **Tailor Attention to Residents with Special Needs** – This recommendation suggests a) guidance for interacting with children, elderly residents, pregnant women, physically and mentally disabled individuals, and individuals with limited English proficiency, b) Police training should be improved for

managing situations involving persons with disabilities, c) Plainfield should create a Crisis Intervention Team to respond to complicated/ unique situations, d) jargon addressing Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder should be consistent with health care terminology, and e) The policy titled Emotionally Disturbed Persons is outdated and inaccurate in its use of psychiatric terms and diagnosis. the Police Department and the NJ Attorney General's Office should engage The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), specifically the NJ chapter in an overhaul of the document.

- 3) **Increased Transparency in Instances of Use of Force** – This recommendation suggests a) the creation of a citizen review commission which would review all use of force instances, b) persons filing a complaint should have access to police video with promptness, c) a review of the final recommendations by a citizen review board and expedited approval and implementation of those recommendations once completed, d) Plainfield should continue to enter all officers into the portal of the Attorney General's Office for real-time communications, and e) annual reporting should be enhanced to include detail specific to demographics to allow better understanding by the public of the policing in their community.
- 4) **All Policies and Training to Use Consistent Language in Each Document** – This recommendation suggests a) consistency in training documents pertaining to the use of "chokeholds," b) the removal of passive language throughout documents, c) clear definitions of when force may or may not be used, and d) inconsistencies in the policy on the use of deadly force or serious bodily injury should be corrected. **To view the recommended changes in the Use of Force Policy, please view page 7 of this document [here](#).**
- 5) **Police Officer Training Should be Revamped** – This recommendation suggests a) continued development, approval, and implementation of the New Jersey Attorney General's Proposal for Police Licensure and the integration of Continuing Education Units as part of that process, b) new mandated trainings, and c) soft skills development trainings.

The GFPRC Report on Police Reform is a 10-page report which contains the full details on the above recommendations. To view the full report, which includes a general statement, fundamental principals, process, summary of recommendations, entire recommendations, and conclusion, click [here](#).

The George Floyd Police Reform Commission is dedicated to pursuing the implementation of all suggestions in the report, ultimately resulting in safer, more compassionate policing in the City of Plainfield. Additionally, the Commission acknowledges that this final report's recommendations are only the beginning of a long process in reforming past and current practices in law enforcement. The GFPRC hopes that the results will be longstanding and will inevitably trickle outward into other municipalities throughout the United States and beyond.

“I am extremely proud of the job done by the George Floyd Police Reform Commission. The time and attention they gave to preparing the report is invaluable to our community and demonstrates how passionate our residents are about this issue. Although there are areas of concern regarding policies dealing with mental issues etc., overwhelmingly, their findings point to the fact that our police force is doing an outstanding job. Although there is always room for improvement, the policies are strong, and we have received great feedback from the AG's office – with mention of the fact that they commend our Police Department. The intent of the commission was always to be proactive and not in response to any incident that occurred here in Plainfield. I personally believe that we have one of the finest Police Department's in the country and I am gratified that the report confirmed that. My heartfelt thanks to the members that served on the GFPRC “~ *Mayor of Plainfield, Adrian O. Mapp*

“The George Floyd commission sets forth a blueprint for our community to reimagine what policing looks like in our immediate and distant future. For some, the recommendations may go too far towards disrupting the status quo. For others, the report will fall short of dismantling the police. Yet, while change is urgently needed, intelligently balanced decisions must be made as we navigate towards the Plainfield in which we desire to live. I urge these recommendations to be adopted and implemented in every instance possible.” ~ ***City of Plainfield Council President, Steve Hockaday esq.***

“The Plainfield Police Department takes pride in earning our accreditation in October 2018 under Director Carl Riley. We are proud of the sound Policy and Procedures that our agency is governed by and the use of Best Practices. We welcomed working with the Commission and having their input to continue bridging the gap between the community and the Police Department. This year has been very challenging in Law Enforcement across the country. I am very proud of the men and women of our department as they continue to make sacrifices every day to keep the City of Plainfield Safe.” ~ ***Police Director, Lisa Burgess.***

I am grateful that Mayor Mapp placed me on the Commission. The Commission is made up of thoughtful, great people with an open mind. I found that Plainfield is far ahead of the rest of the country regarding police involvement in the city and community recruitment and inclusiveness. The current state of Plainfield's Police Department surpassed my expectations. In addition, Director Burgess was very thoughtful and involved, which I greatly appreciated.” ~ ***GFPRC Commissioner, Mr. Bobby Gregory***

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