

Eric Sano, Sergeant  
East Precinct  
Seattle Police Department  
1519 12th Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98122

Tuesday, October 11, 2022  
Re: Electronic Reporting System

Dear Sergeant Sano,

A recent online visit to the Trust and Safety Dashboard of the Seattle Police Department indicates that Sector E of the East Precinct is being neglected both in safety and in trust.

Precinct & Sector	Safety	Trust
All Precincts	60	58
East Precinct	59	54
E Sector	57	53

As I am not familiar with the internal operations of the Seattle Police Department, I will not pretend to understand that I know the reason why. Certainly, I have worked very closely with the SPD and King County District Court in the prosecution of an assault crime in my own regard and have realized from this experience that there are serious problems both in law enforcement and criminal adjudication that could well explain why all of the above scores are weak. My specific concern is, of course, my own sector, and I would like to offer some assistance in regard to all precincts and sectors in this regard.

The Cabrini • Suite 603  
909 Boren Avenue  
First Hill • Seattle • Washington  
United States of America (USA) 98104

Mobile: +1 (206) 291-8468  
[admin@nudge.online](mailto:admin@nudge.online)

Before moving to the issue and proposed solution please allow me to make a brief comment about the overall picture.

In America the first duty of government at any level is the defense of its citizens' property and person. With public safety ranking a very weak third in our city's operating budget — only 13.6 percent of total expenditures — it is obvious that our municipal government is preoccupied with itself and playing the role of provider rather than that of the defender. After all, being a policeman, prosecutor, and judge is a difficult task. One can easily be viewed as some sort of cruel bully rather than a responsible officer of the state seeking to preserve the social order. Indeed, it is much easier for a politician to gather votes when he is taxing the productive and providing free services to the general public and his or her preferred *entitlement* groups.

Now, this is not to say that local government should ignore other matters vital to the well-being of a densely populated area, but when the city so flagrantly ignores its primary duty there is something seriously amiss with its theory of, and approach to local governance. Now to the issue at hand and the proposed solution.

It would appear that in the absence of political support you must depend on the active participation of the local citizenry of each community to help you accomplish your mission.

Waiting for a crime to be reported is often too late to avert the harm and damage of the criminal act, and allowing minor asocial behavior to go unattended in a neighborhood can only nurture more serious asocial behavior and eventually criminal acts. In effect, there are a lot of asocial activities that transpire in a neighborhood that are left unchecked for a variety of reasons.

Unfortunately, the only mechanism currently available to local citizens to interact with the SPD from a distance and in the moment of occurrence is 911 and 206-625-5011. The latter number is often unavailable or the waiting time is so long that the asocial behavior has come, done its damage, and gone by the time it can even be reported, let alone be acted upon. The number 911 is reserved for real time, life-threatening emergencies and is inappropriate.

What I am proposing is an electronic reporting system that could be monitored in real time by the SPD and available to all citizens on their mobile or other electronic devices.

The Cabrini • Suite 603  
909 Boren Avenue  
First Hill • Seattle • Washington  
United States of America (USA) 98104

Mobile: +1 (206) 291-8468  
[admin@nudge.online](mailto:admin@nudge.online)

This mechanism would provide the user with a brief, but comprehensive list of common categories of asocial behavior with an option to provide a brief text, oral, or even video message, if this latter would not result in more trouble than it solved, that provides a description of what is observed. The minimum data received by the SPD would be one of the aforementioned categories of behavior and the GPS location of the device from which the report is produced. Each time this data were received by the SPD a data point would appear on a screen that displays a map with the specific location of the reporting device. The color of the datapoint would indicate the nature of the category of asocial behavior. When data points from multiple devices from the same general location appear on the electronic map the location would become more brightly lit, and would indicate to the SPD the severity of the activity as judged by the number of affected citizens making the electronic reports. The officer monitoring the screen could then alert a dispatcher of the approximate location of the activity, and if someone were available he or she could be sent to the scene, assess the problem, and engage in a manner appropriate to the behavior.

Given the department's current online technology such an electronic reporting system would appear fairly easy to achieve.

The reporter would be anonymous, but his device and location at the time of reporting would be known, and if false reports from the same device were to occur repeatedly the device could be removed from the reporting system or even acted upon, if the reporting behavior were deemed unlawful. In this way the abhorrent behavior of snitching for the purpose of causing harm to a known other could be purged from the system.

The anonymity of both the individual or group of individuals reported and the individuals reporting would make the system impersonal, objective, timely, and prioritized. It would also alleviate the perceived need to collect meta-data. Such a system would also take advantage of the familiarity of authority and thereby mitigate direct confrontation between complete strangers. In this regard, the potential for interpersonal conflict would be mitigated.

The Cabrini • Suite 603  
909 Boren Avenue  
First Hill • Seattle • Washington  
United States of America (USA) 98104

Mobile: +1 (206) 291-8468  
[admin@nudge.online](mailto:admin@nudge.online)

In the end, I hope that I have been of some help. Certainly I have grown tired of what I am observing in my own neighborhood and have experienced in my interaction with the city's and county's law enforcement and judicial system. I would like to avoid having to find the need of moving to a different neighborhood or leaving Seattle and King County altogether. I am 72 years old.

Sincerely,

Roddy A. Stegemann, A.B., M.A., M.A.  
Founding Director  
[kiausau@me.com](mailto:kiausau@me.com)

cc: Matthew Hickman, Chairman, Department of Criminal Justice, Criminology & Forensics. eMail: [hickmanm@seattleu.edu](mailto:hickmanm@seattleu.edu). Telephone: (206) 296-2484

Links: <https://openbudget.seattle.gov#!/year/2023/operating/0/service>  
<https://www.seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/trust-and-safety-dashboard->

The Cabrini • Suite 603  
909 Boren Avenue  
First Hill • Seattle • Washington  
United States of America (USA) 98104

Mobile: +1 (206) 291-8468  
[admin@nudge.online](mailto:admin@nudge.online)