

# For better policing, 'the time is now'

**P**olice use of force is at the forefront of the news these days. People across the nation are rising up, organizing and demanding change. We at Concerned Citizens for Justice (CC4J), like the rest of the country, were outraged by George Floyd's murder. Chico is not immune to the violence and unnecessary loss of life that has taken place in other parts of the country. We can do better, and the time is now.



by  
Jill Bailey

The author has lived in Chico for 32 years. She is the mother of three and a founding member of Concerned Citizens for Justice.

Desmond Phillips and Tyler Rushing, both young men experiencing mental health crises, died at the hands of Chico police officers in 2017. In October 2018, Butte County Sheriff's deputies handcuffed an 8-year-old boy with autism; the child was on the ground crying in terror, surrounded by several law-enforcement personnel including Chico police officers. In July 2019, Chico police officers dragged an 11-year-old girl to the ground in Bidwell Park in response to a call for a "welfare check."

CC4J was moved by these events to develop our

Action Plan to Transform Policing in Chico. These violent incidents could have had better outcomes if two aspects of the action plan had been in place: an emphasis on de-escalation/implicit bias training and the formation of a mental health intervention team. We are asking for a police culture that preserves human life, reduces use of force, values the dignity of all and includes citizen participation in determining the policing needs of our community. Transforming policing in Chico is essential, and the time is now.

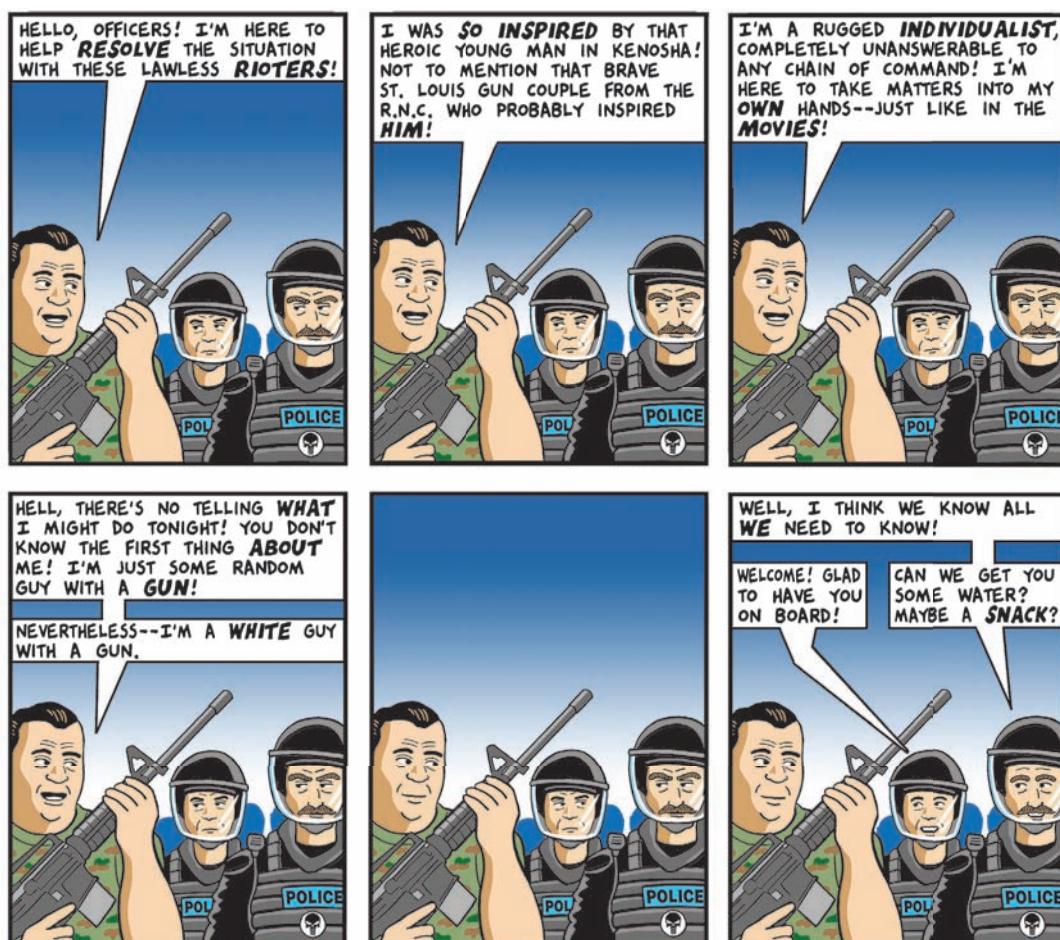
Countrywide, there are cries for police departments to be accountable and transparent. Cities that have established citizen oversight are safer and have far more effective policing. Chico needs citizen oversight, and the time is now.

Two weeks ago, the city appointed a new chief of police. In an interview with local media, Chief Matt Madden stated that one of the first things he's going to do is focus on building a strong relationship between the community and the department. We can and will do better, and the time is now.

If you have a story to tell about an encounter you've had with the Chico Police Department, visit the Story Project survey on the CC4J website at [cc4j-chico.wixsite.com/website](http://cc4j-chico.wixsite.com/website).

## THIS MODERN WORLD

BY TOM TOMORROW



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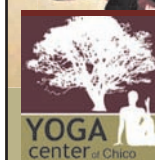
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