



## OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JOHN KELLNER, DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
18TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
SERVING ARAPAHOE, DOUGLAS, ELBERT AND LINCOLN COUNTIES

6450 S. REVERE PARKWAY  
Centennial, CO 80111  
720-874-8500  
FAX 720-874-8501

---

July 25, 2022

Chief Dan Oates  
Aurora Police Department  
15001 E. Alameda Parkway,  
Aurora, Colorado 80012

**RE: February 11, 2022 shooting of Luis Enrique Parra-Ramirez by Aurora Police Officers Alex Vaughan and Garrett Strode**

Chief Oates,

The 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Critical Response Team has completed their investigation into the fatal shooting of Luis Enrique Parra-Ramirez, also known as Jose Ramirez-Parra, by Aurora Police Officers Alex Vaughan and Garrett Strode. Arapahoe County Sherriff's Investigator Charles Kelley and 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Investigator Brian Ahlberg conducted the investigation under case numbers AC22-2533 and CIRT 22-02. Below is my summary of the facts, investigation, legal analysis, and conclusion.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 11, 2022, around 4:30 a.m., multiple residents of the LaFontaine Apartments called 911 and reported a young male with a gun was knocking on apartment doors. Aurora Police Officers Alex Vaughan, Garrett Strode, and Coleman Sloan responded to the call. The officers approached the apartment building and contacted Luis Enrique Parra-Ramirez, date of birth [REDACTED] walking outside the apartment complex. The officers repeatedly ordered Mr. Parra-Ramirez to show his hands. Mr. Parra-Ramirez initially raised his hands but then pulled a handgun from the pocket of his hooded sweatshirt. Officers Vaughn and Strode fatally shot Mr. Parra-Ramirez as he was raising his handgun.

Based on my review of the investigation conducted by Investigators Kelley and Ahlberg, I find that Officers Vaughan and Strode reasonably feared that Luis Enrique Parra-Ramirez posed an imminent threat of danger or serious bodily injury. Officers Vaughn and Strode justifiably used deadly physical force against Mr. Parra-Ramirez based on their reasonable belief that he was about to use deadly physical force against them.

## **THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR INVESTIGATIONS INTO OFFICER-INVOLVED SHOOTINGS**

C.R.S. § 16-2.5-301 governs investigations into peace officer-involved shootings. This statute provides, in relevant part:

Each police department, sheriff's office, and district attorney within the state shall develop protocols for participating in a multi-agency team, which shall include at least one other police department or sheriff's office, or the Colorado bureau of investigation, in conducting any investigation, evaluation, and review of an incident involving the discharge of a firearm by a peace officer that resulted in injury or death. The law enforcement agencies participating need not be from the same judicial district. C.R.S. § 16-2.5-301(1).

The 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Critical Incident Response Team (“CIRT”) investigated the fatal shooting of Luis Enrique Parra-Ramirez by Aurora Police Department (“APD”) Officers Alex Vaughan and Garrett Strode. Investigator Charles Kelley, Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office (“ACSO”), and Brian Ahlberg, 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney’s Office (“DA”), led the investigation with the assistance of law enforcement officers and personnel from the Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office, Douglas County Sheriff’s Office, Castle Rock Police Department, Glendale Police Department, and 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney’s Office.

C.R.S. § 20-1-114 provides, in relevant part:

The district attorney shall, if no criminal charges are filed following the completion of an investigation pursuant to section 16-2.5-301, C.R.S., release a report and publicly disclose the report explaining the district attorney's findings, including the basis for the decision not to charge the officer with any criminal conduct. The district attorney shall post the written report on its website or, if it does not have a website, make it publicly available upon request. C.R.S. § 20-1-114(1).

This document constitutes the report of the findings of the District Attorney for the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, and includes the basis of the decision not to charge the involved officers with any crimes.

### **MATERIALS REVIEWED AND INFORMATION CONSIDERED**

I have reviewed the following investigative materials:

- Reports completed by the Aurora Police Department and 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Critical Incident Response Team.
- Autopsy report completed by Dr. Kelly Lear, Arapahoe County Coroner’s Office, dated April 8, 2022.
- Aurora Police Department’s body-worn camera videos including those of Officers Dunston, Sloan, Strode and Vaughn.
- Photographs and three dimensional scans of the scene and physical evidence.
- Radio Traffic and Dispatch Recordings from the Aurora Police Department.
- Recorded Interviews of Officers Dunston, Sloan, Strode and Vaughn.

- Recorded interviews and written statements of civilian witnesses.

### SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

On February 11, 2022, at 4:34 a.m., Jorge Cruz-Ocana, a resident at the La Fontaine Apartments, located at 1325 Idalia Court in Aurora, called 911 and requested law enforcement respond quickly to his apartment because an unknown young male with a gun was knocking on his door. Mr. Cruz-Ocana and his family hid in the bathroom until law enforcement arrived. Investigators Derrick Stuckey and Matt Wittner interviewed [REDACTED] after the shooting. [REDACTED] reported that he lived on the fourth floor. He stated he does not feel safe at the apartment building due to violence, drugs and guns. Around 4:45 a.m., he was getting ready for work when he heard someone knock on his apartment door. He looked out the window and saw a young male he didn't know wearing blue pants and black hooded sweatshirt. He opened his door approximately ten minutes later and saw the same male on the third floor. The male ran up the stairs from the third floor toward [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] retreated into his apartment and locked his door. The male pulled a gun, scaring [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] saw the male walk down the hallway, knocking on apartment doors while holding the gun. [REDACTED] hid his family in the bathroom and called 911. He believed the male might be on drugs. He observed the police officers contact the male downstairs through a bathroom window. The male pulled a gun and pointed it at the officers. The police officers told the male two to three times to drop the gun before they shot him. [REDACTED] heard three gunshots and believed the officers shot the male in the head and body. After the shooting, the officers attempted to help the male.

[REDACTED], a juvenile, lived with her family in a third floor apartment at the La Fontaine Apartments. She called 911 at 4:39 a.m. and reported a male with a gun was walking around the apartment building knocking on doors. DA Investigator Robert Friel interviewed [REDACTED] after the shooting. In the afternoon, she saw her neighbor, later identified as [REDACTED] walking around "staring and being like really awkward and weird." That night, she woke to her dog barking. She woke her mother, [REDACTED] who looked out the living room window and saw the same neighbor walking around holding a gun. [REDACTED] told [REDACTED] to call the police and that the neighbor was trying to get into their apartment. They called 911. From their bedroom window [REDACTED] saw police officers contact the neighbor outside the apartment building. She heard yelling, although she could not hear what was being said, and then gunshots.

DA Investigator Garret Lord interviewed [REDACTED]. She reported that her daughter, [REDACTED] woke her around 4:30 a.m. and told her that their dog was barking. [REDACTED] looked out the window and saw a male pacing outside their apartment holding a black handgun. The male knocked on their door and tried to open the door but it was locked. Ms. [REDACTED] told her daughter to call 911. The male went up the stairs to the fourth floor. She recognized the male as living in the apartment building. She believed the male may have been "high on something." The police arrived and contacted the male and told him to put the gun down and to show his hands. She believed she heard three shots.

According to the Computer Aided Dispatch ("CAD") records, the Aurora Police dispatched officers to the call at 4:39 a.m. Officers Alex Vaughan, Garrett Strode, and Eric Dunston were

the initial responding officers. Officer Sloan was riding with Officer Strode although his name does not appear in the CAD record. The CAD report shows the following relevant times:

Agency	Unit	Offier ID	Offier Name	Dispatched	Enroute	Arrive	Clear
AP	314	315140	Dunston, Eric	2022-02-11 04:39:11	2022-02-11 04:39:20	2022-02-11 04:42:47	2022-02-11 08:46:46
AP	315A	316814	Vaughan, Alex	2022-02-11 04:39:12	2022-02-11 04:39:18	2022-02-11 04:40:51	2022-02-11 08:45:49
AP	312	315915	Strode, Garrett	2022-02-11 04:39:23	2022-02-11 04:39:27	2022-02-11 04:40:48	2022-02-11 08:39:26

The comments in the CAD notes detail the information provided in the 911 calls and available to the responding offices. The notes state:

Agency	Console	Operator Number	Operator Name	Time	Comment
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:38:07	KEEPS SAYING SEND POLICE NOW
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:38:07	MAN AT THE DOOR WITH A GUN, BANGING ON DOOR
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:38:07	SPANISH LL
	cadint1	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:38:09	** LOI search completed at 02/11/22 04:38:09
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:38:21	ONLY DESCRIPTION IS YOUNG MAN
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:39:26	MAN AT THE DOOR NOT SAYING ANYTHING JUST BANGING ON THE DOOR
	cad12	303612	Hooper, Joey	2022-02-11 04:39:50	315A-WILL DEPLOY RIFLE
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:40:07	RP HIDING THE BATHROOM
AP	cad12	303612	Hooper, Joey	2022-02-11 04:40:10	** >>> by: Joey L. Hooper on terminal: cad12
AP	cad12	303612	Hooper, Joey	2022-02-11 04:40:10	** LOI information for Event # P220040731 was viewed at: 02/11/22 04:40:10
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:40:29	RP NOT ANSWERING ALL QUESTIONS JUST KEEPS SAYING SEND POLICE
	cad13	318077	Hinsley, Nicole	2022-02-11 04:40:59	ANOTHER RP -- 720 298 6345 -- RP DOESNT KNOW AN EXACT APT NUMBER...SAID MALE IS WALKING AROUND THE COMPLEX DOOR TO DOOR WITH A GUN.... JUST HOLDING IT OUT
	cad04	313986	Torrez, Rashel	2022-02-11 04:41:15	NO LONGER HEARS BANGING ON DOOR
	cad13	318077	Hinsley, Nicole	2022-02-11 04:41:33	H/M EARLY 30s LSW: BLK HOODIE
	cad12	303612	Hooper, Joey	2022-02-11 04:41:46	315A-ON E SIDE
	cad13	318077	Hinsley, Nicole	2022-02-11 04:42:06	CT HEARD SHOTS FIRED
	cad15	308573	Ledet, Matthew	2022-02-11 04:42:12	*MLEDET
	cad12	303612	Hooper, Joey	2022-02-11 04:42:14	315A- LINE OF FIRE TO THE EAST.. SHOTS FIRED PARTY TIME
	cad12	303612	Hooper, Joey	2022-02-11 04:42:17	***SUSP DOWN

### Officer Garrett Strode

Officer Garrett Strode was interviewed by Investigators Kelley and Ahlberg on February 11, 2022. Officer Strode provided the following information. Officer Strode has been a peace officer with APD for almost four years. He works the graveyard shift, 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., patrolling District 2. On February 11, 2022, Officer Strode was wearing his police uniform and body-worn camera. He was armed with a Glock 19, Glock 26 and Taser. Officer Strode was driving a two-person unmarked Chevrolet Tahoe with Officer Sloan. Around 4:45 a.m., they were dispatched to the La Fontaine Apartments at 1325 N. Idalia Court, Aurora. His call sign was 312. Dispatch advised that a young male with a gun was knocking on the caller's door. As Officer Strode arrived at the scene, dispatch received a second call from another resident in the apartment building reporting a male with a gun on the fourth floor. Officer Strode reported that he has previously investigated gun, gang and violent crimes in the area.

Officer Strode parked on Idalia Street, south and east of the apartment building. He armed himself with a Smith & Wesson M+P 15 rifle due to the nature of the call. Officer Strode believed his rifle was loaded with 28 rounds. While Officer Strode was getting his rifle, Officer Sloan met up with Officer Vaughan, who was parked closer to the apartment building, and they approached the building from the east. Officer Strode approached the building from the south. As

Officer Strode approached the apartment building, he observed a male walking east on the south side of the building through the parking lot. Officer Strode believed the male was most likely the armed person knocking on apartment doors. Officer Strode ordered the male to “stop” and “show me your hands.” The male ignored Officer Strode’s commands and walked between Officer Strode and Officer Vaughn creating a crossfire situation. Officer Strode said “manos arriba,” Spanish for “hands up.” The male continued walking toward the sidewalk on Idalia street, stopped and turned and looked at the officers. The officers continued to give verbal commands but the male did not obey. The male moved his left hand towards his pocket but didn’t grab anything. He then removed a black handgun from his sweatshirt pocket with his right hand. Officer Strode recognized the object as a gun and believed the male pointed it at Officers Vaughan and Sloan. The male never said anything. Officer Strode believed the male knew they were police officers because they were wearing police uniforms and the male made eye contact with them. Officer Vaughan fired first and Officer Strode fired immediately after. Officer Strode fired his rifle to prevent the male from shooting Officer Vaughan and Officer Sloan. Officer Strode believed he was fifteen to twenty feet away from the male when he fired his rifle. Officer Strode did not know if the male fired his handgun. The male fell to the ground and the gun fell out of his hand. Officer Strode immediately notified dispatch that shots were fired, the male pulled a gun on the officers, and requested emergency medical respond to the scene. Officer Sloan placed the male in handcuffs and started cardiopulmonary resuscitation (“CPR”). Officer Strode heard agonal breathing from the male.<sup>1</sup> Other officers arrived and secured the scene and started the investigation. Officer Strode gave his rifle to a supervisor and waited in a patrol car until he was driven APD headquarters where he was examined, photographed and interviewed.

Officer Strode’s body-worn camera video begins at 4:39:14 a.m. when Officer Strode was driving to the scene. Officer Strode parked his patrol car on Idalia Court, south of the apartment building and parking lot. Officer Strode exited his patrol car at 4:40:47 a.m. He retrieved his rifle from the back of the patrol car. Officer Strode approached the apartment building from the south at 4:41:27 a.m. At 4:41:33 a.m., Officer Strode yelled “Hey, I’ve got someone walking this side.” Officer Strode immediately raised his rifle which was equipped with a spotlight. Officer Strode told the male “show me your hands” three times while approaching him. 4:41:40 a.m. Another officer said “crossfire.” The male walked from the edge of the apartment building to the sidewalk and then turned and faced the apartment building. Officer Strode told the male “manos arriba” (“hands up”), and then “cuestese boca abajo” (“lie on your stomach”). 4:41:46 a.m. The male’s hands are initially seen near his waist. Another officer yells “put your hands up” and “manos arriba.” 4:41:50 a.m. The first shot is fired at 4:41:53 a.m. Officer Strode’s body-worn camera video does not show the position of the male’s hands when the officers fired their rifles. Immediately after the shots, Officer Strode radioed “shots fired, shots fired, male grabbed a gun

---

<sup>1</sup> Webmd.com defines agonal breathing as:

Agonal breathing is when someone who is not getting enough oxygen is gasping for air. It is usually due to cardiac arrest or stroke. It's not true breathing. It's a natural reflex that happens when your brain is not getting the oxygen it needs to survive.

Agonal breathing is a sign that a person is near death. It's also a sign that the brain is still alive. People who have agonal breathing and are given cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) are more likely to survive cardiac arrest than people without agonal breathing.

... medics now.” 4:41:57 a.m. The video shows officers slowly approach the male and order him not to move. The officers handcuff the male and attempt medical treatment.

### Officer Alex Vaughan

Officer Vaughan was interviewed by Investigators Ahlberg and Kelley on February 16, 2022. Officer Vaughan provided the following information. Officer Vaughan has worked as a peace officer with APD for three years. He works the graveyard shift patrolling District 2. He was working his regular shift on February 11, 2022. He was dressed in his APD patrol uniform and wearing a body-worn camera. He was armed with a Gen 5 Glock 17, Gen 4 Glock 26, and taser. His call sign was 315A. Around 4:15 a.m., Officer Vaughan was dispatched to an unrelated call for service involving a suspicious vehicle. While responding to that call, he was re-directed to the call of a male with a gun knocking on doors at the La Fontaine Apartments. Officer Vaughan knew the area to be a high crime area based on previous investigations involving gunfire, motor vehicle thefts, drug use and gangs.

Officer Vaughan arrived first in his marked patrol car. He waited down the street from the apartment building until Officers Strode and Sloan arrived. Once they arrived, Officer Vaughan parked on Idalia Street on the east side of the apartment building. Officer Strode parked his vehicle south of Officer Vaughan’s vehicle. Officer Vaughan armed himself with his rifle due to the call involving a male with a gun. His body-worn camera activated when he obtained his rifle. Officer Vaughan approached the entrance to the apartment complex when he heard Officer Strode say that someone was walking outside the apartment building. Officer Vaughan believed Officer Strode was concerned about the male based on his tone of voice. Officer Vaughan believed Officer Strode and Sloan were approaching the apartment from the south side of the apartment building.<sup>2</sup> Officer Vaughan “started to get scared” fearing that he was going to be ambushed. He observed the male wearing a black hooded sweatshirt walk around the southeast corner of the apartment building. The male was the only person outside the apartment building. Officer Vaughan believed the male was the armed person who was banging on the apartment doors. The male walked between Officer Strode and himself, creating a crossfire situation. The officers changed their position and gave verbal commands to the male to put his hands up. The male did not respond. The male had his hands in his sweatshirt pocket and walked east to the sidewalk on Idalia Court; he then turned around and looked at the officers. Officer Vaughan told the male to put his hands up, the male partially raised his left hand and then lowered it into his sweatshirt pocket. Officer Strode gave additional commands in Spanish. The male looked at the officers and then removed a gun from his right pocket. Officer Strode recalled the gun briefly catching on the male’s pocket when he removed it. Officer Vaughan told the male to drop the gun. The male’s gun was pointed toward the officers. Officer Vaughan fired his rifle after the male pointed the gun in their direction. Officer Vaughan explained that the male never complied with their commands, instead he grabbed a handgun and pointed it at the officers. Officer Vaughan fired because he feared that the male would shoot him or someone else. Officer Vaughan did not use his Taser, believing it would not have been effective due to distance and the male’s clothing. Officer Vaughan believed he fired three rounds striking the male in the abdomen and torso. Officer Vaughan also heard other gunshots and saw muzzle flash. The male fell forward and the officers stopped firing. The male’s black gun was lying near the male’s head

---

<sup>2</sup> Body-worn camera video shows that Officer Sloan was following Officer Vaughan as he approached the apartment and behind him during the shooting.

and outstretched hand. The officers placed the male in handcuffs and Officer Sloan started CPR. Other officers arrived and Officer Vaughan gave his rifle to a sergeant. Officer Vaughan was transported to the APD Headquarters.

Officer Vaughan's body-worn camera video begins at 4:41:04 a.m. when he is outside his patrol car which was parked east of the apartment building. The video shows Officer Vaughn open his driver's side door and appear to press the door lock button. Officer Vaughan closes his driver's door, crosses the street, readies his rifle, and approaches the entrance to the apartment complex. 4:41:13 a.m. Officer Vaughan was near the entrance to the apartment complex when Officer Strode calls out "I've got someone walking this side." 4:41:35 a.m. Officer Vaughan acknowledges "ok" and walks south along the outside of the apartment building. Officer Vaughan radios "we are on the east side." 4:41:39 a.m. Officer Vaughn immediately saw the male walking east along the south side of the apartment.



Officer Vaughan raises his rifle and says "show me your hands" and "put your hands up right now." 4:41:40 a.m. The male continues walking east until he reaches the sidewalk on Idalia Court. Officer Vaughan also says "crossfire" and lowers his rifle to avoid shooting Officer Strode. Officer Vaughn repeats "put your hands up, police department, hands up." 4:41:45 a.m. The male reaches the end of the sidewalk and turns and looks at the officers.



The male raises his hands briefly but then quickly lowers them.





Officer Vaughan shouts “put your hands up” and “manos arribas.”



The male reaches into his pocket and pulls a handgun.



Officer Vaughan then fires his rifle. 4:41:54 a.m. Officer Strode calls out “shots fired, shots fired, man grabbed a gun.” 4:41:57 a.m. Officer Vaughan radios “shots fired, shots fired, male down, start EMS and a supervisor.” 4:42:00 a.m. The officers approach the male. Officer Vaughan radios “315A, we have shots fired, suspect is down, he pulled a gun on us.” 4:42:10 a.m. The male’s handgun is visible on the ground next to the male’s head. The officers place the male in handcuffs and start CPR.

## Officer Coleman Sloan

Officer Coleman Sloan was interviewed by DA Investigators Joe Hartley and Steven Santiago. Officer Coleman was hired by APD in April, 2021. He was riding in a two person patrol unit with Officer Strode when they were dispatched to a male with a gun knocking on apartment doors. They drove to the scene and arrived around the same time as Officer Vaughan. Officer Sloan joined Officer Vaughan while Officer Strode armed himself with his rifle. Officer Sloan drew his Glock 17 and not his Taser based on the information from dispatch that a male was armed with a firearm. When Officers Sloan and Vaughan approached the front of the apartment building Office Strode yelled that someone was coming. Officers Sloan and Vaughan walked south along the outside of the apartment building until they saw the male. The officers yelled at the at the male to show his hands but he did not respond. Officer Vaughan yelled “crossfire” because the male was between the officers. The male walked to the sidewalk and turned around facing the officers. The male was pacing and then pulled a black semi-automatic handgun from his right sweatshirt pocket and raised it. Officer Sloan believed the male was going to shoot someone and he feared for his life. Officers Strode and Vaughan shot the male. Officer Sloan did not fire his weapon. The male fell to the ground and dropped the black handgun. He observed the gun lying next to the fallen male. Officer Sloan approached the male, moved the gun for safety, handcuffed the man and began CPR.

Officer Sloan’s body camera video begins at 4:40:57 a.m. as he is walking on Idalia Court towards the apartment building. Officer Sloan follows Officer Vaughan to the front of the apartment building. 4:41:25 a.m. Officer Sloan is standing behind officer Vaughan when Officer Strode yells that someone was walking outside the apartment building. 4:41:33 a.m. Officer Sloan follows Officer Vaughan during the contact and shooting of the male. Officer Sloan’s body-worn camera video is the same as Officer Vaughan’s except he is behind Officer Vaughan and partially blocked during the shooting. After the shooting, Officer Sloan placed the male in handcuffs and began CPR.



## Officer Eric Dunston

Officer Dunston was interviewed by DA Investigators Derrick Stuckey and Matthew Wittner and provided the following information. Officer Dunston responded to the call at the La Fontaine Apartments but arrived after Officers Strode, Vaughan and Sloan. He parked near 13<sup>th</sup> and Idalia, exited his patrol car and armed himself with his rifle. He proceeded north on Idalia St. toward the apartment building and saw the suspect standing in the street. Officer Dunston didn't see the officers until he heard them yelling at the male to drop the gun. Officer Dunston observed the male look around, look down toward his hands, and then raise a black semi-automatic handgun. He could not tell if the male was holding the gun with his right or left hand. He did not hear the male say anything. Officer Dunston raised his rifle but realized officers were behind the male preventing him from firing his rifle. The other officers fired their rifles before he was able to move to a position that didn't endanger the other officers. Officer Dunston expressed fear for his life and the lives of the officers. The officers shot the male and he fell to the ground. Officer Dunston did not fire his weapon. Officer Sloan placed the male in handcuffs and the officers started chest compressions.<sup>3</sup>

Officer Dunston's body-worn camera video begins at 4:40:36 a.m. when he is driving to the scene. He parks his patrol car and shots are heard as he is getting out of his car. 4:41:54 a.m. The body-worn camera video does not capture the shooting. Officer Dunston runs up to the apartment building and the male was already shot and on the ground when he arrived.

The Aurora Fire Department ("AFD") responded to the apartment building to treat Mr. Parra-Ramirez. According to their records, AFD arrived at 4:46:04 a.m. Mr. Parra-Ramirez was not transported to a hospital due to his injuries, instead he was pronounced dead at the scene by Dr. Gilliam at University Hospital at 4:54 a.m. The Aurora Fire Department records read in part:

A- Pt was found laying supine with hand cuffs on. Officers were actively performing CPR. AFR members were used to replace APD members until a Pulse check could be completed. Pt chest was found exposed at that time. Pt was found pulseless and apneic. Pt had no signs of life, no agonal breathing, no spontaneous movement and fixed pupils. Head was found with Penetrating trauma to the Anterior portion of the head superior to the Right eye. Neck was found w/o DCAPBTLs. Chest was found w/o DCAPBTLs. Abdomen was found with penetrating trauma to right lateral of the umbilicus. Extremities were found w/o DCAPBTLs.

R- Pt had no changes in condition or mentation. The Penetrating trauma to the head was an un-survivable injury. Continuous Compressions was the care provided until Termination of Resuscitation effort was completed.

T- University Hospital was contacted for a termination of resuscitation. Dr. Gillim was consulted and gave the time of death at 4:54. Resuscitation efforts were dis-continued and Pt was left with APD.

---

<sup>3</sup> Officer Dunston previously contacted Mr. Parra-Ramirez for obstructing traffic on November 25, 2021, APD Go# AP 2021-45346. During that investigation, Officer Dunston requested Mr. Parra-Ramirez remove his hands from his pockets to which he temporarily complied. During the investigation, Mr. Parra-Ramirez told Officer Dunston that he understood a little English. Mr. Parra-Ramirez fled the officers when they attempted to pat him down for weapons. The officers were able to apprehend Mr. Parra-Ramirez. Officers located a two inch folding knife in the pocket of his hooded sweatshirt. Mr. Parra-Ramirez was charged in Aurora Municipal Court with Obstructing/Interference and False Statement to City Personnel.

Mr. Parra-Ramirez's body was transported by the Arapahoe County Coroner's Office. Dr. Kelly Lear performed an autopsy on February 11, 2022. At the time of his death, Mr. Parra-Ramirez was 21 years old, 5'10", and weighed 155 pounds. Dr. Lear observed nine gunshot wounds to Mr. Parra-Ramirez's body. Mr. Parra-Ramirez suffered two gunshot wounds to his head and seven gunshot wounds to his torso. Dr. Lear determined the cause of Mr. Parra-Ramirez's death was multiple gunshot wounds to his head and torso. Dr. Lear listed the manner of death as homicide. Toxicology of Mr. Parra-Ramirez's blood revealed methamphetamine metabolites.

### CIRT Investigation

The 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) was notified of the shooting at 5:18 a.m. CIRT Investigators and law enforcement personnel responded to the Aurora Police Department and were briefed about the incident. Investigators Charles Kelley and Brian Ahlberg were assigned as the lead Investigators.

Douglas County Sheriff's Office Crime Scene Investigators Derek Delve and Theresa Rhinehart and Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Crime Scene Investigator Christine Spiegel photographed, scanned, and documented the scene. Crime Scene Investigators located seven rifle casings, Winchester REM 223. Four casings (Markers 1-4) were located on the road at the curb south of the decedent. This is the approximate location of Officer Strode when he fired his rifle. Three casings (Markers 5-7) were on the east side of the apartment building northwest of the decedent. This is the approximate location of Officer Vaughan when he fired his rifle.



The crime scene investigators photographed and collected Mr. Parra-Ramirez's black handgun (Marker 8) on the sidewalk near Mr. Parra-Ramirez's body. The handgun was identified as a Lorcin L9mm, 9mm Auto, serial number 002988. There was a live round in the chamber but no magazine.



Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Criminalists Shelby Hovarth and Cheyanne Ivis photographed Officers Strode and Vaughan. Both officers were wearing APD uniforms and were not injured.



Officer Alex Vaughan



Officer Garrett Strode

Officer Vaughan's and Strode's rifles were photographed and examined by crime scene investigators. Officers Vaughan and Strode both fired Smith & Wesson M+P 15, AR-15 style semi-automatic rifles. Officer Vaughan's rifle had one round in the chamber and 24 rounds in the magazine. Officer Strode's rifle had one round in the chamber and 23 rounds in the magazine. Both magazines had a 30 round capacity. Neither officer fired their handguns.

The CIRT contacted residents in the La Fontaine Apartment and interviewed witnesses to the shooting. [REDACTED] was interviewed by DA Investigators Joe Hartley and Steven Santiago. He lived on the third floor of the La Fontaine Apartments. Mr. Parra-Ramirez was his roommate. He last saw Mr. Parra-Ramirez when he, [REDACTED] returned home from work around 6:40 p.m. Around 8:00 p.m., he heard Mr. Parra-Ramirez in the apartment but did not see him. [REDACTED] went to bed around 10:00 p.m. [REDACTED] believed Mr. Parra-Ramirez may have been smoking crystal methamphetamine on the night of the shooting because Mr. Parra-Ramirez was "spaced out" and wouldn't sit still. He did not hear anything until the police woke him after the shooting. [REDACTED] has never seen Mr. Parra-Ramirez with a firearm. Mr. Parra-Ramirez was recently fired from his job and had been upset and depressed. [REDACTED] previously caught Mr. Parra-Ramirez smoking crystal methamphetamine in the apartment. [REDACTED] was in the process of kicking Mr. Parra-Ramirez out of the apartment due to drug use.

CIRT Investigators also contacted [REDACTED] a resident on the second floor of the La Fontaine Apartments. She woke up to someone yelling "put your hands up" in English and

Spanish. She looked out her window and saw a male facing towards her window with officers nearby. The male had one hand in the air but reached into his pocket and pulled a grey metal object, she believed to be a handgun, from his jacket pocket. The male began to raise the gun and the police shot him in the head. The male fell to the ground. The officers called for an EMT and started CPR. [REDACTED] window directly faced the location where the shooting occurred.

CIRT checked Mr. Parra-Ramirez's criminal history and found no felony convictions.

### **APPLICABLE LAW**

The District Attorney's review of this event is guided by the following statutes pertaining to the use of deadly force by peace officers:

Deadly physical force "means force, the intended, natural, and probable consequence of which is to produce death, and which does, in fact, produce death." C.R.S. § 18-1-901(3)(d). Officers Strode and Vaughan used deadly physical force against Mr. Parra-Ramirez when they shot him, causing his death.

C.R.S. § 18-1-707 states in relevant part:

- (1) Peace officers, in carrying out their duties, shall apply nonviolent means, when possible, before resorting to the use of physical force. A peace officer may use physical force only if nonviolent means would be ineffective in effecting an arrest, prevent an escape, or preventing an imminent threat of injury to the peace officer or another person.
- (2) When physical force is used, a peace officer shall:
  - (a) Not use deadly physical force to apprehend a person who is suspected of only a minor or nonviolent offense;
  - (b) Use only a degree of force consistent with the minimization of injury to others;
  - (c) Ensure that assistance and medical aid are rendered to any injured or affected persons as soon as practicable; and
  - (d) Ensure that any identified relatives or next of kin of persons who have sustained serious bodily injury or death are notified as soon as practicable.
- (3) A peace officer is justified in using deadly physical force to make an arrest only when all other means of apprehension are unreasonable given the circumstances and:
  - (a) the arrest is for a felony involving conduct including the use or threatened use of deadly physical force;
  - (b) The suspect poses an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury to the peace officer or another person;
  - (c) the force employed does not create a substantial risk of injury to other persons;
- (4) A peace officer shall identify himself or herself as a peace officer and give a clear verbal warning of his or her intent to use firearms or other deadly physical force, with sufficient time for the warning to be observed, unless to do so would unduly place peace officers at risk of injury or would create a risk of death or injury to other persons.

(4.5) Notwithstanding any other provision in this section, a peace officer is justified in using deadly force if the peace officer has an objectively reasonable belief that a lesser degree of force is inadequate and the peace officer has objectively reasonable grounds to believe, and does believe, that he or another person is in imminent danger of being killed or of receiving serious bodily injury.

### ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

During the early morning hours on February 11, 2022, residents at La Fontaine apartments called 911 and reported that an armed male was knocking on apartment doors. Officers Strode, Vaughan, and Sloan responded to the La Fontaine apartments to investigate the call and protect the residents. Shortly after their arrivals, they contacted Mr. Parra-Ramirez. Believing he had a firearm, the officers ordered him to show his hands. Mr. Parra-Ramirez disobeyed their orders and, after turning and looking at the officers, pulled a handgun from his pocket and raised it. Officers Strode and Vaughan fired their rifles, striking and killing Mr. Parra-Ramirez. Both officers explained that they were afraid for their lives because Mr. Parra-Ramirez ignored their commands and pulled a firearm. Both Officers had to make split second decisions in response to Mr. Parra-Ramirez's threatening actions toward them. Mr. Parra-Ramirez would be alive today had he complied with the officers' orders and not threatened them with a firearm.

Both officers' fears were reasonable and justified under the circumstances. Pursuant to 18-1-707(4.5), Officers Strode and Vaughan were justified in using deadly physical force against Mr. Parra-Ramirez based on their objectively reasonable beliefs that they were in imminent danger of being shot and that a lesser degree of force was inadequate. Officers Strode and Vaughan acted in self-defense and did not commit a crime. The District Attorney's Office will not file criminal charges against them.



Jason Siers  
Chief Deputy District Attorney