21st Century Policing

**Materials**

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<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>“LMPD realigning staff; creating full-time SWAT and Community Policing divisions,” City of Louisville, KY, September 16, 2016.</td>
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Ivory Hecker, “‘Pathways to Policing’ adds diversity to Twin Cities law enforcement,” KARE11, July 7, 2017.

Speakers

Brandon del Pozo is the Chief of Police at the Burlington Police Department in Burlington, Vermont. Prior to coming to Burlington, Chief del Pozo was a deputy inspector in the NYPD for nearly two decades. Chief del Pozo earned a bachelor’s degree from Dartmouth College, and master’s degrees from Harvard University, John Jay College and the City University of New York Graduate Center, respectively. Chief del Pozo came to Burlington with a desire to improve police services in the city as a model for progress in the profession. In May 2016, the PERF awarded Chief del Pozo its Gary Hayes Memorial Award for his innovation and leadership. Chief del Pozo is an advocate for greater transparency in policing and government, as well as confronting the widely spread opiate addiction.

Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson was sworn in as Mayor of the City of Toledo on February 17, 2015, following the passing of D. Michael Collins. Mayor Hicks-Hudson took the oath of office once again on November 24, 2015 after the voters elected her to the post for at least two more years. During a 35-year professional legal career, Mayor Hicks-Hudson has worked as assistant Lucas County prosecutor, assistant public defender and assistant state attorney general. Mayor Hicks-Hudson was chief legal counsel to the Ohio Office of Budget and Management under Governor Ted Strickland. Mayor Hicks-Hudson is dedicated to providing her constituents with clean drinking water, safe and livable neighborhoods, a diverse economy and an efficient and transparent City Government.

Chuck Wexler is Executive Director of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), an organization of law enforcement officials and others dedicated to increasing professionalism in policing. Currently, Wexler is leading a project to reform police agencies’ policies, training, and equipment regarding police use of force, based on the core principle that the sanctity of human life is at the heart of the mission of policing. As part of this effort, PERF has released a set of Guiding Principles on Use of Force, as well as a Training Guide to help police agencies put the principles into effect. PERF also has taken leading roles on setting policies for the use of body-worn cameras by police officers, the heroin epidemic in the United States, the role of local police in immigration enforcement, cybercrime investigations, improving the police response to sexual assault crimes, and other issues. In addition to national policy and practice studies, Wexler has directed projects with local police departments in Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Los Angeles, as well as internationally in Jamaica, Tanzania, the Middle East, Scotland, and London to develop violence reduction strategies and improve the delivery of police services. Prior to joining PERF, Wexler worked as an assistant to the nation’s first Director of the Office of National Drug Control
Policy. A native of Boston, Wexler held a number of positions in the Boston Police Department, where he was instrumental in the development and management of the Community Disorders Unit, which earned a reputation for prosecuting and preventing racially motivated crime. In 2016, Wexler was named one of the “Politico 50,” which the magazine describes as its “guide to the thinkers, doers, and visionaries transforming American politics.” Wexler earned an undergraduate degree from Boston University and a Ph.D. in urban studies and planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 2006 he was awarded an OBE (Order of the British Empire) for his work with British and American police agencies.
Moving from Recommendations to Action
Introduction: President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing

On December 18, 2014, President Barack Obama issued an Executive Order appointing an 11-member task force on 21st century policing to respond to a number of serious incidents between law enforcement and the communities they serve and protect. The President wanted a quick but thorough response that would begin the process of healing and restore community trust.

The mission of the Executive Order was clear: *The Task Force shall, consistent with applicable law, identify best practices and otherwise make recommendations to the President on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust.*

In 90 days, the task force facilitated seven hearings with 140 witnesses and reviewed volumes of written testimony submitted online by additional witnesses and the general public. The testimony and hearings were organized around the following six pillars:

1. Building Trust and Legitimacy
2. Policy and Oversight
3. Technology and Social Media
4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction
5. Training and Education
6. Officer Wellness and Safety

The task force generated 59 recommendations with 92 action items. Each recommendation was developed, vetted, and approved by the task force by consensus. The task force comprised leaders from law enforcement, police unions, academia, and civil rights organizations as well as community members.

The task force insisted that the recommendations be anchored in measurable and behavioral change and not in abstract theory around policing. The report that was submitted to the President in May of 2015—*Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing*—created a road map for the future of policing and provides clear direction on how to build trust with the public.

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The plan will also require attention to resource allocation. What will it cost to implement a specific recommendation?

**Example**

**Recommendation 4.4** Communities should support a culture and practice of policing that reflects the values of protection and promotion of the dignity of all, especially the most vulnerable.

**Action Item 4.4.2** Law enforcement agencies should develop programs that create opportunities for patrol officers to regularly interact with neighborhood residents, faith leaders, and business leaders.

This recommendation and its action item may seem like a low cost/high impact proposition; however, it requires the allocation of officer time and the development of specific strategies. Recognize that good community policing should reduce calls for service and increase public safety and public satisfaction.

**Implementation**

Moving from planning to action will require a mechanism for implementation. This can be a short-term working group or a longer-term, more formal body with a charge from either local government or law enforcement to manage the follow up activities.

Be sure that the implementation mechanism adequately represents groups most affected by law enforcement and those who have the capacity, authority, and resources to make the changes proposed happen. Err on the side of inclusion when designing implementation strategies. Local officials and law enforcement leadership must ask who makes lasting change in the areas being addressed. Failure to include the right participants can sabotage your plan.

Set up a method to measure and monitor what is taking place. Be sure to include a feedback loop that can identify unintended consequences in order to be responsive to community concerns. Transparency and regular communication are essential to this process. Keeping the community and all key stakeholders informed about progress and key learnings can build trust and increase collaboration.
Five Things Local Government Can Do

Local governments (municipalities and counties) are essential to the implementation of the task force recommendations. Local government officials (elected and appointed government leaders) bring their relationship with the community to the process. People who have been elected and have earned the trust of citizens in that process represent their communities. Local government officials should honor their commitment to safety and security for their constituents by being involved in every phase of design and implementation of the task force recommendations.

Specific action steps

1. Create listening opportunities with various areas and groups in the community. Listen and engage in a dialogue regarding concerns or issues related to trust.
2. Specifically allocate local government infrastructure and IT staff expertise to support law enforcement reporting on activities related to implementation of the task force recommendations. These should include making public all relevant policies and procedures, records, and open data sets. Let the community know what you have done and will be doing.
3. Conduct community surveys on community attitudes toward policing, and publish the results along with associated data. Establish baselines and metrics to measure progress, and use the results as a means to engage the community in dialogue.

The Fresno (California) Police Department developed a community survey to measure community attitudes about local law enforcement and established a baseline and plan to administer the survey on an annual basis to monitor improvements or changes in perceptions.

4. Define the appropriate form and structure of civilian oversight to meet the needs of the community.

Many cities have established an independent citizen oversight board to review complaints of police misconduct. The National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) brings together individuals and agencies working to establish or improve the oversight of law enforcement officers in the United States. The continuum for civilian oversight ranges from limited authority to reviewing and making recommendations to boards that have investigative and subpoena powers. Each community establishes its own local parameters for independent citizen review.

5. Recognize the correlation between poverty, urban decay, and unemployment to quality of life, the breakdown of community cohesion, and the increase of crime. Link economic development and poverty reduction to longer-term problem-solving strategies for addressing crime.
Practical Next Steps to Get Started

So how do we get started? The following suggestions focus on practical things that law enforcement organizations, communities, and jurisdictions can jointly undertake immediately to begin addressing the final report itself and the specific recommendations in each of the six pillars.

Establish a mechanism to address the final report and its recommendations

Each community should use the final report as a tool to review the current status of their own law enforcement organization and to identify ways to strengthen police-community dialogue and collaboration.

- Formally appoint a new or existing task force or working group including law enforcement unions and community representatives to review and address the recommendations contained in the report.
  - External approach: Appointed by local government to include law enforcement and community representatives
  - Internal approach: Appointed by the law enforcement organization to review the report and recommendations
- Review the report and assess current status, identify gaps or areas for improvement, identify budget implications, and recommend priorities for next steps.
- Provide the findings to the community, local government, and law enforcement organization for discussion and action.

In New Orleans, Louisiana, the mayor’s office, superintendent’s office, Police and Justice Foundation, and faith leaders meet monthly to discuss further implementation of report recommendations.

The Spokane (Washington) Police Department set up an internal process to review the task force recommendations and to identify areas for improvement.

Communities can use the task force recommendations as a guide for discussions with local government and local law enforcement agencies about the status of police-community relations and areas for dialogue.
Value and respect diversity in the community and on the force

We are becoming a nation of diversity, from racial and ethnic diversity to diversity in religion, culture, language, gender, sexual orientation, housing status, income, disabilities, and more.

- Ensure that officers have the knowledge and skills to be culturally responsive and to treat each person with dignity and respect.
- Train officers to recognize factors that may affect how best to treat a community member or suspect while protecting officer and community safety.
- Involve the community in the recruitment, selection, and hiring of officers and incentivize multilingual officers through changes in pay, hours, or other means.
- Recognize and seek to better understand people with mental and physical disabilities.
- Recognize that LGBT and gender nonconforming populations often experience extreme discrimination, sexual harassment, and assault. Adopt policies and practices that encourage true dialogue, dignity, respect, and an understanding of the factors that affect these populations when they are involved in the criminal justice system.

Local government bodies can set policies that promote fair and just policing practices that protect and monitor the rights and treatment of all residents.

The Palos Park (Illinois) Police Department reviewed all the task force recommendations and made a number of commitments including adopting policies recommended to improve the fair and just treatment of LGBT populations.

LGBT and community advocacy groups can seek a constructive dialogue with law enforcement to build an understanding of the unique needs of this population by forming an advisory group to meet with law enforcement regularly as now exists in Baltimore, Maryland.
CRITICAL ISSUES IN POLICING SERIES

Guiding Principles
On Use of Force

SANCTITY OF LIFE • PROPORTIONALITY • DUTY TO INTERVENE • DE-ESCALATION
• OFFICER SAFETY • DISTANCE + COVER = TIME • CRISIS INTERVENTION • CRITICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL • CONTAIN AND NEGOTIATE • TIME IS ON OUR SIDE • TACTICAL COMMUNICATIONS • CHALLENGING CONVENTIONAL THINKING • TACTICS • SCENARIO-BASED TRAINING • LESS-LETHAL OPTIONS • ETHICS • AGENCY VALUES • RENDER FIRST AID • OFFICER WELLNESS • TRAINING AS TEAMS • PERSONAL PROTECTION SHIELDS • SUPERVISORY RESPONSE • SLOWING THE SITUATION DOWN • TACTICAL REPOSITIONING • COMMUNITY-POLICE TRUST • POLICE CULTURE • SAFE ZONE • CALL-TAKERS AND DISPATCHERS • TRANSPARENCY • ACCOUNTABILITY
Why We Need To Challenge Conventional Thinking On Police Use of Force

By Chuck Wexler

Ultimately, this report is about the sanctity of all human life—the lives of police officers and the lives of the people they serve and protect. The preservation of life has always been at the heart of American policing. Refocusing on that core ideal has never been more important than it is right now.

American policing is at a critical juncture. Across the country, community members have been distressed by images of police officers using deadly force in questionable circumstances. These incidents are an infinitesimal fraction of the millions of interactions that take place between the police and the public every week. Most police officers never fire their guns (except during training) throughout their entire careers, yet they face enormous challenges and risks to their own safety on a regular basis and they perform their jobs admirably. But police chiefs tell us that even one bad encounter can damage trust with the community that took years to build.

Others tell us that there is an upheaval within the policing profession itself. Officers who in the past exuded great pride in wearing the badge now feel underappreciated by some members of the public, who seem to question their every move and motive.

PERF members also tell us that there is a crisis of public safety and officer safety. Violent crime shot up in many U.S. cities last year—the result, some have said, of the so-called "You Tube effect," with some officers hesitant to police proactively for fear of becoming the subject of the next viral video, and residents who have grown reluctant to partner with the police in community policing efforts. At the same time, violence against police officers, including attacks on officers just for being police officers, seems to have become more brutal and senseless.

As a research organization of law enforcement executives, PERF hears from police chiefs and other officials every day. And what we are hearing is that the policing profession must take the initiative and address the serious challenges confronting it today. That means rethinking some of the fundamentals of policies, training, tactics, and equipment regarding use of force. We need to challenge the conventional thinking on how the police approach some potential
use-of-force situations, in particular those that involve people with mental illness who do not have a firearm.

Many of the strategies recommended in this report, such as Crisis Intervention Team training and de-escalation, are already in place in many police agencies, and have been for years. Other strategies, such as the Critical Decision-Making Model, are just beginning to be adopted by leading police agencies.

This report reflects the latest thinking on police use-of-force issues from the perspective of many of the nation’s leading police executives. These leaders are quoted in this report and in four previous PERF reports on these issues, three of which were released within the last year.1

A Focus on Mental Illness and Non-Gun Incidents

This document details 18 months of intensive work on the issue of police use of force and its impact on community-police relationships and on officer safety and public safety. PERF members and other experts provided the information and insights that are the foundation of this report. Our work has centered on how the profession can improve in the key areas of use-of-force policies, training, tactics, and equipment.

We have focused especially on two types of police encounters:

1. With subjects who have a mental illness, a developmental disability, a condition such as autism, a drug addiction, or another condition that can cause them to behave erratically or threateningly; and

2. With subjects who either are unarmed, or are armed with a knife, a baseball bat, rocks, or other weapons, but not a firearm.

It is these situations—not incidents involving criminal offenders brandishing guns—where we see significant potential for reducing use of force, while also increasing officer safety.

It is important to note that in nearly all of the use-of-force incidents that have proved controversial, the officers should not be faulted, because their actions reflected the training they received. What PERF and leading police chiefs call for in this report are changes in policies, training, tactics, and equipment that provide officers with better tools for handling difficult situations. And we recommend discontinuing outdated concepts, such as use-of-force continuums, the so-called “21-foot rule,” and the idea that police must “draw a line in the sand” and resolve all situations as quickly as possible.

In short, this report attempts to move policing to a higher standard when it comes to how and when officers use force in situations where they and the public are not threatened with firearms. By adopting the Guiding Principles and other approaches presented in this report, police agencies can make policing

1. Re-Engineering Training on Police Use of Force; Advice from Police Chiefs and Community Leaders on Building Trust; Defining Moments for Police Chiefs; and An Integrated Approach to De-Escalation and Minimizing Use of Force. http://www.policeforum.org/free-online-documents
safer for officers and the public they serve—and, in the process, restore public trust and advance as a profession.

**What Use-of-Force Statistics Tell Us**

As PERF began examining this issue in depth, we discovered what many police chiefs, criminologists, federal officials, and others have been noting for some time: There is a lack of complete and reliable national data on police use of force. The FBI currently reports justifiable homicides by law enforcement officers, but those figures are limited to cases in which the subject was killed while committing a felony, and they rely on voluntary reporting by individual police agencies. From 2010-2014, the FBI reported approximately 428 such cases a year.²

At PERF’s Town Hall meeting in October 2015, FBI Director James B. Comey acknowledged that current data collection systems are unacceptable, because they fail to provide a full picture of how often, and under what circumstances, police in the United States use force. Director Comey has announced that the FBI is launching a major initiative to collect more detailed information on police use of force and to report it in a more timely manner.

“We hope this information will become part of a balanced dialogue in communities and in the media—a dialogue that will help to dispel misperceptions, foster accountability, and promote transparency in how law enforcement personnel relate to the communities they serve,” Mr. Comey wrote in a special message that accompanied the release of the 2014 Uniform Crime Reports data.³ Reporting of the new use-of-force data is not expected to begin until 2017, however.

In the meantime, two news organizations—The Washington Post and The Guardian—have undertaken major projects to gather police use-of-force statistics. Using open-source data from news reports and other resources, these news outlets have begun compiling data on civilians who die during encounters with the police. The Washington Post reported that 990 people were shot and killed by police in 2015.⁴ The Guardian, which counts both fatal shootings and other in-custody deaths, reported 1,134 deaths last year.⁵

Having to rely on unofficial data is hardly ideal. However, the numbers provide important context and point to areas where, through improved policy and training, police agencies can look to reduce deadly encounters.

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For example, the Washington Post data show that in 28 percent of the
fatal shootings, the person who died was shooting at officers or someone
else, and in 31 percent of the incidents, the person was pointing a gun.6

These cases are not the focus of PERF’s work. When a criminal suspect is
threatening an officer or a member of the public with a firearm, the officer
generally has limited options besides deadly force for stopping the threat.

Several Hundred Officer-Involved Shootings Last Year
Did Not Involve Subjects with Firearms

Regarding non-firearm encounters, the Washington Post data indicate the
following:7

- In approximately 25 percent of the 990 fatal officer-involved shootings in
  2015, the subject displayed signs of mental illness.
- In 16 percent of the cases, the subject was armed with a knife.
- In 9 percent, the subject was unarmed.
- In 5 percent, the subject was “armed” with a vehicle.

It is in these types of cases, representing as many as one-third of the
annual total of fatal officer-involved shootings, that leading police execu-
tives believe there is significant potential for de-escalation and resolving
encounters by means other than the use of deadly force.

To mention one type of case as an example, family members sometimes
call police when they need to have a loved one with mental illness transported
to a treatment facility, and the person, typically “off his meds,” does not want to
go. In some of these cases, police have perceived a threat when they arrived and
found the person holding a knife, screwdriver, or other implement. In some
instances, the officers have used deadly force, resulting in tragic news stories
in which the family members say they called the police because they needed
help, not because they ever expected that police would use deadly force against
their loved one.

Of course, there will be some non-firearm situations in which officers
face an immediate and severe threat to themselves or others. In these circum-
stances, officers may have little choice but to take immediate steps—up to and
including the use of deadly force—to mitigate the threat. Such was the case in
October 2014 when a man wielding an 18-inch hatchet suddenly charged four
New York City Police Department officers on a street in Queens. One officer
was struck in the head and another in the arm before other officers drew their
firearms and shot and killed the attacker.8 The entire incident occurred in seven
seconds, police said.9

attacked-officer-with-a-hatchet.html
10/24/us/new-york-police-attacked/
But in other cases when police respond to non-firearms cases, the threat is not immediate and the officers will have options for considering a more methodical, organized approach that may involve bringing additional personnel and resources to the scene. By focusing efforts on those cases, there is a potential that hundreds of lives per year might be saved. And for each life that is saved, there is a police officer who will not have to endure the emotional trauma and professional turmoil associated with being involved in a fatal shooting.

This aspect of officer-involved shootings is rarely talked about but is widely known among police executives. Officers who have to use deadly force often face serious challenges for the rest of their lives, including legal issues as well as possible emotional, physical, and psychological issues. Rethinking use-of-force policies and training can not only save lives but save careers as well.

The Research and Conferences Of Police Officials Behind This Report

PERF has been studying use-of-force issues for decades. In 1992, we published “Deadly Force: What We Know,” a comprehensive police practitioner’s reference on police-involved shootings. In 2005 and 2007, PERF released two Critical Issues in Policing reports on reducing use of force. In 2005 and again in 2011, PERF worked with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) to develop guidelines on Electronic Control Weapons. And in 2012, when the term “de-escalation” was still relatively new in policing circles, PERF published “An Integrated Approach to De-Escalation and Minimizing Use of Force,” which provides guidance on minimizing use of force in situations involving mental illness and other conditions that can cause erratic behavior.

These and other efforts have helped to inform and shape our most recent work on use of force.

Following is a summary of the major elements of research over the past 18 month underlying this report:

“Defining Moments” conference and report: In the summer of 2014, several controversial uses of force and resulting protests generated headlines nationwide and around the world. At that time, PERF was planning to hold

a national conference in September 2014 on “Defining Moments for Police Chiefs”—the types of incidents that put a police chief’s judgment and skills to the test. The police chiefs on PERF’s Board of Directors agreed that PERF should lengthen the Defining Moments conference from one to two days, in order to allow for a full day of discussion of the events in Ferguson, Missouri as “A National Defining Moment for Policing.”

On September 16–17, 2014, approximately 180 police executives and others met in Chicago for this discussion. Specifically, the police chiefs and other participants discussed three major topics: (1) whether and how police agencies should publicly release the name of the officer and other critical information following an officer-involved shooting; (2) perceptions of “militarization” of police in response to large-scale demonstrations; and (3) de-escalation strategies, particularly new concepts for reviewing the moments before a use of lethal force, to see if officers missed opportunities for de-escalating the situation, rather than focusing solely on the moment when lethal force was considered necessary and was used. The report on the “Defining Moments” conference was published in February 2015.14

**National survey on use-of-force training:** One of the key issues to emerge from the “Defining Moments” conference was the need to rethink the training that police officers receive on use of force, specifically on de-escalation strategies and tactics. So in the spring of 2015, PERF conducted a survey of PERF member agencies on the training they provide to new recruits in the police academy and to experienced officers during in-service training.15 The survey found that while agencies spend a median of 58 hours of recruit training on firearms and another 49 hours on defensive tactics (much of it state-mandated), they spend only about 8 hours of recruit training each on the topics of de-escalation, crisis intervention, and Electronic Control Weapons (see page 10). A similar imbalance was noted with in-service training.

PERF also has noted that officer training on use of force should be more integrated and scenario-based. Often, police academies begin with training officers on the mechanics of using firearms, and the legal issues governing use of force, de-escalation and crisis intervention strategies, and other related topics are not covered until weeks later, usually in separate sessions. PERF has called for integrated training that combines these related topics in scenario-based sessions. Officers should be trained to consider all of their options in realistic exercises that mirror the types of incidents they will encounter, such as persons with a mental illness behaving erratically or dangerously on the street.

**“Re-Engineering Training” conference and report:** With the survey and other information in hand, PERF convened another national conference on May 7, 2015, to elicit more specific ideas on new approaches to training on

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use of force. That conference, in Washington, D.C., brought together nearly 300 police chiefs and other law enforcement executives, federal government officials, academic experts, and, importantly, representatives from policing agencies in the United Kingdom. Because the vast majority of police officers in England and Scotland do not carry firearms, agencies there have developed innovative ways to train their officers on how to deal with suspects armed with knives, baseball bats, and other weapons besides firearms. The dialogue and findings from the conference were captured in PERF’s August 2015 report, “Re-Engineering Training on Police Use of Force.”16 The “Re-Engineering Training” report includes discussions by police chiefs and others about many of the concepts in this report.

“Building Police-Community Trust” conference and report: Recognizing the importance of community-police relationships and trust to both public and officer safety, PERF organized a conference in Washington, D.C., on July 10, 2015 that brought together the police chief and one respected community leader from each of 75 cities across America. The chiefs and community leaders engaged in a candid discussion of the state of community-police relationships, how recent use-of-force incidents have impacted those relationships, and the strategies they have found most effective for building trust with each other. The report from that conference, published in March 2016 as part of our Critical Issues in Policing series, presents 18 specific suggestions on strengthening community-police relationships.17

Field study at Police Scotland: Next, PERF arranged for police chiefs and other high-ranking executives from 23 American police agencies to travel to

16. Ibid.

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**Recruit Training: Hours Spent on Use-of-Force Topics (median values)**

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<td>Firearms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defensive Tactics</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Con Law/Legal Issues</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>UoF Scenario-Based Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic first-aid</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
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<td>UoF Policy</td>
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<td>De-escalation</td>
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<td>Crisis Intervention</td>
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<td>Baton</td>
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<td>ECW</td>
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<td>OC Spray</td>
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This chapter presents 30 Guiding Principles for policies, training and tactics, equipment, and information issues with respect to police use of force. These Guiding Principles are the result of 18 months of research, field work, and discussions by hundreds of police professionals at all ranks.

These Guiding Principles are particularly relevant to situations that involve subjects who are unarmed or are armed with weapons other than firearms. The Guiding Principles also are relevant to police encounters with persons who have a mental illness, a developmental disability, a mental condition such as autism, a drug addiction, or another condition that can cause them to behave erratically and potentially dangerously.

There will always be situations where police officers will need to use force, including deadly force, to protect the public or themselves. Nothing in these Guiding Principles should be interpreted as suggesting that police officers should hesitate to use force that is necessary to mitigate a threat to the safety of themselves or others.

The policies, training, tactics, and recommendations for equipment and information exchange that are detailed in this chapter amount to significant changes in a police agency’s operations and culture. It is important that these changes be undertaken in a comprehensive manner, and not in a piecemeal or haphazard way. Policy and tactical changes must be backed up with thorough retraining and equipping of all of an agency’s members. We caution against announcing and implementing changes on this scale before all of the relevant policies, training, tactics, and equipment are in place. Simply issuing a new directive without the training, tactics, and equipment to back up the policy change would be ineffective and counterproductive.
Guiding Principles: Policy

POLICY

The sanctity of human life should be at the heart of everything an agency does.

Agency mission statements, policies, and training curricula should emphasize the sanctity of all human life—the general public, police officers, and criminal suspects—and the importance of treating all persons with dignity and respect.

Examples

Following are some agencies that currently stress the sanctity of human life in their mission and policy statements:

- **Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**[^44] — “It is the policy of this department that officers hold the highest regard for the dignity and liberty of all persons, and place minimal reliance upon the use of force. The department respects the value of every human life and that the application of deadly force is a measure to be employed in the most extreme circumstances.”

- **Philadelphia Police Department**[^45] — “It is the policy of the Philadelphia Police Department, that officers hold the highest regard for the sanctity of human life, dignity, and liberty of all persons. The application of deadly force is a measure to be employed only in the most extreme circumstances and all lesser means of force have failed or could not be reasonably employed.”


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Montgomery County, MD Police Chief Tom Manger:
Officer Safety Is Very Important,
And So Is Everyone Else’s Safety

Wexler: Tom, what was your takeaway from the Scotland trip?

Chief Manger: It made me realize a couple of things. One was that our use-of-force training, our defensive tactics training, are so wrapped around one issue—the fear of the gun, and the gun culture we have in the United States—that it permeates everything we do in terms of training.

It also made me realize that there are some cultural issues in American policing that we may need to rethink. All of us have heard a sergeant tell us in roll call, “The most important thing is that you go home safe today.” And when you hear that over and over again, it almost gets to the point where we are thinking that our safety is more important than anything else, or that other people’s safety is not as important as ours.

In Scotland, the culture is that the police officer’s safety is in fact very important, but it’s no more important than the safety of everybody else.

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Agencies should continue to develop best policies, practices, and training on use-of-force issues that go beyond the minimum requirements of *Graham v. Connor.*

Discussion

The U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark 1989 decision, *Graham v. Connor,* holds that police use of force is to be judged against a standard of “objective reasonableness” under the 4th Amendment ban on “unreasonable searches and seizures.” Specifically, the Court stated:

> The “reasonableness” of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight.... The calculus of reasonableness must embody allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments—in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving—about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation.

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In *Graham v. Connor*, the Supreme Court outlines broad principles on how police use of force is to be considered and judged. But the Court leaves it to individual police agencies to determine how best to incorporate those principles into their own policies and training, in order to direct officers on how to perform their duties on a daily basis.

*Graham v. Connor* is the common denominator across the United States, and all police agencies must have use-of-force policies that meet *Graham’s* standards. But many police departments have chosen to go beyond the bare requirements of *Graham*, by adopting more detailed policies and training on issues such as shooting at moving vehicles, rules on pursuits, guidelines on the use of Electronic Control Weapons, and other use-of-force issues, that are not mentioned in or required by *Graham*.

Similarly, many police agencies have policies, practices, and training on issues such as de-escalation and crisis intervention strategies, while others do not. *Graham v. Connor* allows for significant variations in police agencies’ individual policies and practices.

This guiding principle does not suggest that agencies should somehow disregard *Graham v. Connor*; that would be impossible. Rather, it encourages agencies to build on the legal foundation established by the Supreme Court and implement best policies, practices, and training that provide more concrete guidance to officers on how to carry out the legal standard.

In this report, PERF recommends a number of policies that, while not currently required by the Supreme Court’s standard, should be considered nonetheless, in the view of leading PERF chiefs. Many of these polices have already been adopted in some departments, including a duty to intervene if officers witness colleagues using excessive or unnecessary force; requiring officers to render first aid to subjects who have been injured as a result of police actions; prohibiting use of deadly force against persons who pose a danger only to themselves; and specific limits on shooting at vehicles. By adopting these and other policies, departments can take steps that help prevent officers from being placed in situations where they have no choice but to make split-second decisions that may result in injuries or death to themselves or others.

**Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta:**

*There Is a Mismatch Between Legal Requirements And What the Community Expects*

I think it’s revolutionary and transformative to be talking about going beyond current understanding of what is “objectively reasonable” per *Graham v. Connor*. There is a real mismatch between what community standards are, what the community expects, and what they think the law should be, as opposed to what the law allows for.

At the Civil Rights Division, we have criminal prosecution authority as well as civil “pattern or practice” authority. We know that the public truly doesn’t understand what the floor is vis-a-vis *Graham v. Connor*. What PERF is putting out there is changing the paradigm about different expectations for police officers, different ways to rebuild trust, different ways to go above
what the Supreme Court jurisprudence requires, that ultimately may be
much better for officer safety, much better for public safety, and much better
for the kind of mutual understanding between the community and law
enforcement.

I think there is a setting of standards within the profession, and that
the courts eventually will catch on. Or the definition of what is objectively
reasonable will begin to change over time, because of the work that the
profession is doing on these issues. It’s not going to happen overnight, but
I think that what is happening right now in the country, in meetings like this,
is in fact changing some of the terms of what is reasonable.

But it can’t be up to police departments alone to do that work. Courts
will be wrestling with these same questions as well. Across the country,
people are watching these videos and feeling that a police shooting may
be legal but it’s wrong, or at least it doesn’t feel right. The profession is
setting different standards that ultimately may change the way that the 4th
Amendment is understood.

Vanita Gupta continued

Milwaukee Police Chief Ed Flynn:
We Must Start Holding Officers Accountable
For Creating Jeopardy that Ends in Deadly Force

Chief Flynn discussed his handling of Officer Christopher Manney’s fatal shooting
of Dontre Hamilton, a man suffering from mental illness who was sleeping in a
park.47 The incident occurred on April 30, 2014.

In this incident, the officer confronted a mentally ill man in a public
space, and in the course of the confrontation was disarmed of his nightstick
and was assaulted with it, at which time he drew his weapon and shot the
man 13 times, killing him.

Within the confines of that use of deadly force and in the context of
that physical encounter, it was clear to me immediately that the officer had
no options at that point, and ultimately that’s what the District Attorney
and the U.S. Attorney would rule. But there was a great deal of community
consternation about this case. What troubled me about it was that before
he confronted this individual, two of our officers had been dispatched,
unbeknownst to this officer, on a separate channel. They had handled the
encounter peacefully and left the scene without any police action.

What I couldn’t quite understand is how that had come to be. Either this
fellow was a menace that needed to be confronted, and the situation ended
up with a use of deadly force, or he was someone who could have been
negotiated with to a peaceful resolution.

The more our Internal Affairs people looked into the case, it became
clear that the first two officers used their crisis intervention training to

47. “Complete Statement: Police Chief Ed Flynn addresses firing of officer in Hamilton case.”
ed-flynn-addresses-firing-of-officer-in-hamilton-case/
Police use of force must meet the test of proportionality.

In assessing whether a response is proportional to the threat being faced, officers should consider the following:

- Am I using only the level of force necessary to mitigate the threat and safely achieve a lawful objective?
- Is there another, less injurious option available that will allow me to achieve the same objective as effectively and safely?
- Will my actions be viewed as appropriate—by my agency and by the general public—given the severity of the threat and totality of the circumstances?

Discussion

How members of the public will react to an officer’s use of force is one part of the equation on proportionality. However, this consideration should be approached from a broad perspective and should take place before an officer reaches the instant where a use of force may be necessary.
The concept of proportionality does not mean that officers, at the very moment they have determined that a particular use of force is necessary and appropriate to mitigate a threat, should stop and consider how their actions will be viewed by others. Rather, officers should begin considering what might be appropriate and proportional as they approach an incident, and they should keep this consideration in their minds as they are assessing the situation and deciding how to respond.

Officers already make these types of judgments all the time. For example, officers would not respond to a noise complaint at a pool party with their firearms drawn, because members of the public would view that as excessive and inappropriate. However, officers might respond with their firearms drawn if there was a report of shots fired at a pool party. In that case, the public would view their actions as appropriate and necessary.

Proportionality also considers the nature and severity of the underlying events. There are some incidents that are minor in nature, but for whatever reason, the mere presence of police officers may escalate the situation. Under the concept of proportionality, officers would recognize that even though they might be legally justified in using force as the situation escalates, given the minor nature of the underlying event, a more appropriate and proportional response would be to step back and work toward de-escalation.

The assessment of how the public will likely view police actions is not meant to be a “check-the-box” step taken immediately before an officer uses force. Rather, it is meant to be one factor that officers should consider throughout their decision-making on what a proportional response would be to the situation they face and the totality of the circumstances confronting them.

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**Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Chief Cathy Lanier:**

*Here’s What Proportionality Means to Me*

In the training of our officers and our policy, we have to be able to give officers options. For example, in a traffic stop that starts to go really wrong, like the Sandra Bland case,48 once you get into that confrontation to enforce an arrest, when things are that excited, the chances for things to go wrong in that arrest scenario are pretty high.

So we need to teach officers that it’s OK in a scenario like that to step back. You’ve got the person’s information, you have the driver’s license, you have the tag number, so you can get a warrant and make an arrest later. There’s no reason to rush into that heightened environment and make an arrest and pull someone from a car. If the situation is tense, and there’s no immediate threat to the public, step back, get the warrant, and go make that arrest later when there’s not so much tension.

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Noble Wray, Chief, COPS Office
Policing Practices and Accountability Initiative:

*The First 3 Principles Are Questions of Humanity*

As I look at the 30 Principles, I see that the first three, on the sanctity of life, professional standards, and proportionality, are issues of the heart, and where we are as a profession in terms of what we think about humanity. We need to start thinking more in our profession about practical wisdom. How do we develop our people to make decisions that reflect critical thinking? There are times you have to make the right decision for the right reason, and you’re not going to have a bright line rule. The other 27 Principles are easier to grasp, because they are things we can just do, and we need to get working on them.

Police Scotland Sergeant Jim Young:

*Why Use a Sledgehammer to Crack a Nut?*

Proportionality can be thought of as, “Why use a sledgehammer to crack a nut?” The way we view it is, “Was there another force option that could have been used? Why was that force option not used?”

In the end, the question is, “Was the force used the minimum amount or least injurious to achieve that lawful aim?” And if that’s not the case, then we would judge that not to be proportionate.

**POLICY**

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**Adopt de-escalation as formal agency policy.**

Agencies should adopt General Orders and/or policy statements making it clear that de-escalation is the preferred, tactically sound approach in many critical incidents. General Orders should require officers to receive training on key de-escalation principles. Many agencies already provide crisis intervention training as a key element of de-escalation, but crisis intervention policies and training must be merged with a new focus on tactics that officers can use to de-escalate situations. De-escalation policy should also include discussion of proportionality, using distance and cover, tactical repositioning, “slowing down” situations that do not pose an immediate threat, calling for supervisory and other resources, etc. Officers must be trained in these principles, and their supervisors should hold them accountable for adhering to them.

*Example*

- **Seattle Police Department**\(^{49}\) — “When safe under the totality of the circumstances and time and circumstances permit, officers shall use de-escalation tactics in order to reduce the need for force.”

Policy on use of force should be based on the concept of officers using a decision-making framework during critical incidents and other tactical situations. Departments should consider adopting the Critical Decision-Making Model (CDM), which PERF has adapted from the United Kingdom’s National Decision Model. The CDM provides officers with a logical, easy-to-use thought process for quickly analyzing and responding appropriately to a range of incidents. The CDM guides officers through a process of:

- Collecting information,
- Assessing the situation, threats, and risks,
- Considering police powers and agency policy,
- Identifying options and determining the best course of action, and
- Acting, reviewing, and re-assessing the situation.

For additional information, see “PERF’s Critical Decision-Making Model,” pp. 79–87.

COPS Office Director Ronald Davis:  
We Are Creating Professional Standards

We’re talking about building trust, because we’re not just changing the practice of a police officer; we’re changing the culture, the mentality and the philosophy of policing. So for me, this is truly a defining moment. We’re setting the bar at a much higher standard—a professional standard—one that takes into account community expectations and priorities. This is not just about use of force; it applies to everything we do.

Policy

Duty to intervene: Officers need to prevent other officers from using excessive force.

Officers should be obligated to intervene when they believe another officer is about to use excessive or unnecessary force, or when they witness colleagues using excessive or unnecessary force, or engaging in other misconduct. Agencies should also train officers to detect warning signs that another officer might be moving toward excessive or unnecessary force and to intervene before the situation escalates.

Examples

- Phoenix Police Department — “All sworn employees will intervene, if a reasonable opportunity exists, when they know or should know another employee is using unreasonable force.”

• **Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**\(^{51}\) — “Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, safely intercede to prevent the use of such excessive force. Officers shall promptly report these observations to a supervisor.”

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**NYPD First Deputy Police Commissioner Benjamin Tucker:**

*Duty to Intervene Goes to the Heart Of Why We Become Police Officers*

We added a “duty to intervene” in our policy. We underscored this because—and you all relate to this in this day and age with respect to videos—everybody is photographing us and the work that we do. One of the things I’m responsible for is the discipline in the department and the processing of our discipline cases. We see examples of this as they come through, as we’re making recommendations to the Police Commissioner. We have instances where multiple officers are at a scene standing around and not taking action, but they witness events that take place by fellow officers.

And so this is a reminder to the officers that this goes to the heart of why you became a police officer. We talk about the foundations of policing, and this notion comes out of the desire to have officers uphold the oath that they took, and to act accordingly. So it’s real simple in that respect.

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**San Francisco Police Chief Greg Suhr:**

*When an Officer Intervenes to Stop Misconduct, That Can Increase Community Trust*

We’ve all been there, where a suspect is really getting to another officer, but they’re not getting to you. And you know your partner, or your brother or sister officer, so you basically tap them on the shoulder and tell them to stand down.

If they’re really amped up, they might not stand down easily. But last year when we had the PERF meeting with community leaders in this same room, and we watched that Texas video at the swimming club.\(^{52}\) I remember that a community leader said that obviously what the one officer did was shocking, but it was equally upsetting that the other officers missed the window to intervene. Nobody told the one officer to stand down.

On that video we just saw of the sergeant who intervened when an officer was pointing his firearm at Ferguson protesters,\(^{53}\) did you hear what

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\(^{53}\) “Officer points gun at me and other media on W. Florissant.” Caleb-Michael Files. YouTube, August 19, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jx3WLnt6Q8
Seattle Police Department Data Demonstrate How Crisis Intervention Training Reduces Use of Force

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) is becoming a national leader in successfully using Crisis Intervention training and related strategies to respond safely and effectively, with very low rates of using force, to incidents involving persons with a mental illness, drug addiction, or other conditions that can cause them to behave erratically and threateningly, according to a report by the monitor charged with evaluating the department’s compliance with a Justice Department consent decree.67

“The Monitoring Team has been impressed with SPD’s efforts to … create a structure that supports an effective strategy to engage individuals in behavioral crisis,” Monitor Merrick J. Bobb said in a February 16, 2016 status report to a federal judge. “The Department should be applauded for [its] efforts to ensure that specialized, highly trained officers respond to crisis intervention incidents.”

The Seattle Police Department entered into a consent decree with the Justice Department in 2012 regarding its use-of-force policies and practices. The agreement included provisions to begin gathering information about how often Seattle police officers encounter persons in crisis, and how they handle those incidents.

In May 2015, Seattle officers began using a three-page form called the “Crisis Template” to capture data on every contact police make with someone in crisis. In the first three months, from June to August, there were 2,516 such contacts.

Subjects Were Disorderly, Belligerent, Had Knives and Other Weapons

Many of the incidents involved “significant challenges ... posed to officers,” the Monitor’s report noted. Of the 2,516 incidents:

- 823 involved persons who were “disorderly disruptive.”
- 590 were “belligerent uncooperative.”
- 611 of the persons made a suicide threat or attempt.
- 96 had a knife.
- 16 had a gun.
- And 109 had other weapons.

Police Used Force in 2 Percent of the Encounters

Despite those serious challenges, the Monitor found that officers used force in only 51 of those incidents—2 percent of the 2,516 incidents. Furthermore, of those 51 uses of force, 42 were classified as Type I, the lowest level, which includes “soft takedowns, open or empty-hand strikes or other disorientation techniques, and wrist lock with sufficient force to cause pain or complaint of pain.” The other uses of force were Type II, which includes use of OC spray, a beanbag gun, or an Electronic Control Weapon. None of the 51 uses of force in the 2,516 incidents were Type III, the highest level, which includes deadly force or any use of force that causes loss of consciousness or substantial bodily harm.

“These numbers suggest that the SPD is using significant and appropriate restraint in difficult situations, making decisions that preserve safety and reduce use of force,” the Monitor’s report to the court said.

The Monitor also noted that “to our knowledge, SPD is the only agency in the nation that is currently tracking this statistic [use of force in crisis intervention incidents] with any level of detail.”

The Monitor’s report also cited anecdotal reports, such as the following:

“Officers AA and BB were dispatched to the scene of an intoxicated individual in crisis, holding two large butcher knives in each hand. The officers withdrew from the entrance of the apartment, creating distance, and developed a rapport with the individual. The subject later complied with the officer’s instructions and was taken into custody without further resistance.”

**High Levels of CIT Training Are Essential**

The Monitor also credited the Seattle Police Department with “creat[ing] a full-fledged crisis intervention program that is successfully being woven into the SPD organization.” Since 2014, all officers have received 8 hours of basic crisis intervention training, and as of December 31, 2015, 550 of the department’s officers—40 percent of the entire force—have completed a 40-hour advanced crisis intervention training and 8 additional hours of advanced training.

As a result of this comprehensive training effort, officers with the highest level of training were able to respond to 71 percent of the 2,516 incidents studied—a statistic that understates the progress, the Monitor noted, because in some cases, incidents were determined to be critical incidents only after officers arrived, so the CIT officers had not been requested by dispatchers in those cases.

The Monitor concluded:

**SPD has made great strides toward implementing a very successful CIT program.... It appears that reforms ... have had a significant impact on how the SPD engages with those in crisis. SPD officers and community members are increasingly giving the SPD positive marks for dealing with those in crisis and not escalating incidents into uses of force. ... The tremendous work of the Department in this area is to be commended.... [T]here has been a real, tangible, and objective change in the way Seattle police are interacting—compassionately and with an eye towards treatment—with those in crisis.”**

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**Seattle Chief of Police Kathleen O’Toole:***

*Our Officers Use Crisis Intervention Skills To Calm Down People in Mental Health Crisis*

Like most police agencies, the Seattle Police Department provides aid and service at a far greater frequency than engaging in enforcement. For instance, the SPD recognizes the need to harness community resources to address the complicated issue of behavioral crisis. The SPD partners officers with mental health professionals in the field and provides department-wide training on crisis intervention and tactical de-escalation.

Seattle police officers handled nearly 10,000 crisis interventions last year, and very few resulted in enforcement or use of force. Most were routed to community mental-health service providers, few subjects were arrested, none of the incidents required lethal force by police, and less than 2% of incidents involved de minimis or less-lethal force. The department has developed a streamlined referral system, allowing officers to easily divert those in crisis to important services provided by partner agencies.

I recall an incident just last month when police responded to a man with a knife at a laundromat. Officers recognized that the man was experiencing a mental health crisis, possibly exacerbated by the consumption of drugs. They talked to the man, calmed him down, and took him into custody, without jeopardizing their safety, his safety, or that of the public.

I’m proud the SPD has made great strides in this important area. We will continue to work with our community partners on innovative, multidisciplinary approaches to service the most vulnerable in our city.
Tactical training and mental health training need to be interwoven to improve response to critical incidents.

As noted above, strategies for dealing with people experiencing mental health crises should be woven into the tactical training that all officers receive, with a strong emphasis on communications, de-escalation techniques, maintaining cover and distance, and allowing for the time needed to resolve the incident safely for everyone. Officers who respond to scenes involving people experiencing mental health crises should be directed to call for assistance from specially trained officers and/or supervisors (e.g., CIT-trained) if possible. Officers should be trained to work as a team, and not as individual actors, when responding to tense situations involving persons with mental illness. Much like active-shooter situations, where working as a team is more effective than responding as individuals, mental health encounters are resolved more effectively when officers coordinate their communications, positioning, and tactics.
Laura, are CIT people trained in tactics?

Ms. Usher: There may be some misunderstanding about the verbal de-escalation skills taught in Crisis Intervention Team training. CIT teaches communications for officers who are interacting with people who are in mental health crisis, and those skills are transferable to all sorts of situations where people are escalated, where people are in distress.

CIT training doesn’t focus on hands-on techniques, because officers already have thorough training in those options. However, the communications skills are taught through scenario-based role plays, so instructors have an opportunity to help officers integrate communication with their tactical skills. In fact, verbal de-escalation allows officers to bring many individuals into voluntary compliance without ever having to go hands-on.

In addition, a true CIT program empowers the appropriately-trained CIT specialist to be the leader on scene during a crisis, creating a clarity and order when multiple officers respond – all of which help maintain officer safety.

Wexler: As we read about these incidents that upset our communities, often it says that the involved officers were trained in CIT. And we ask, how can this be? The big insight from our last meeting was that there’s a gap between CIT training and tactics. It’s like you have two different philosophies coming to the scene.

And the reason we went to see the Emergency Service Unit in New York City is that they have it all—eight months of training, hostage negotiation, crisis intervention, communication, tactics for everything that could possibly happen. So what we are saying now about CIT is that it’s necessary but not sufficient to deal with a lot of these situations. Communications are important, but so are tactics. You can’t expect an officer to do just one part and not the other.

The other issue is that the NYPD’s ESU can handle anything because it’s a specialized unit, but we are talking about bringing this to patrol. One of our goals today is to figure out how do we get the principles of what ESU does and Police Scotland does to patrol? That’s the challenge. How do we build teams to accomplish this?

TRAINING AND TACTICS

Community-based outreach teams can be a valuable component to agencies’ mental health response.

Where resources exist, agencies should partner with their local mental health service community to assist with training, policy development, proactively working with people with mental illness, and responding to critical incidents. Mental health street outreach and crisis response teams can provide valuable support to the police response to these incidents and assist with de-escalation strategies directed at persons experiencing mental health crises.
Burlington, VT Police Chief Brandon del Pozo:

Outreach Teams Reduce the Burden on Patrol
By Helping on Calls Involving Mental Illness

We have street outreach teams who work directly with our police officers. They have police radios; they are on our frequencies. So they hear the calls and they are authorized to respond in tandem with, or in advance of, uniformed officers.

So this way, there's two folks on the scene, the officer who can be there with force, if need be, and you also have these specially trained outreach personnel. They are civilians who know the people, especially those who generate repeated calls for service.

The job of the outreach personnel is to engage in dialogue, and sometimes they'll actually handle the calls before the officer even gets there, which is a real advantage. They'll get a call and say, "I know this guy; I know what he needs, and I can handle it." It's just really a very positive thing. There was a trust issue at first; sometimes officers don't want civilians with a police radio handling police calls for service. But once they realize this is great for de-escalation and excellent for relieving the radio run burden, they're all for it.

TRAINING AND TACTICS

| 22 | Provide a prompt supervisory response to critical incidents to reduce the likelihood of unnecessary force. |

Supervisors should immediately respond to any scene:

- Where a weapon (including firearm, edged weapon, rocks, or other improvised weapon) is reported,
- Where persons experiencing mental health crises are reported, or
- Where a dispatcher or other member of the department believes there is potential for significant use of force.

Some departments have trained their dispatchers to go on the radio and specifically ask the patrol supervisor if he or she is en route to specific high-risk calls, such as a person with mental illness threatening his family.

Once on the scene and if circumstances permit, supervisors should attempt to “huddle” with officers before responding to develop a plan of action that focuses on de-escalation where possible. In the case of persons with mental illness, supervisors who are not specially trained should consult and coordinate with officers on the scene who are specially trained.
A Strategic Resource for Mayors on Police-Involved Shootings and In-Custody Deaths
The protocol is organized to present recommended steps mayors, city leaders and police chiefs can consider taking to respond to police-involved shootings or deaths in custody as well as preventative steps that can be taken to address the underlying issues that contribute to these incidents.

**Actions That Can Be Taken Before a Critical Incident**

This section outlines recommended steps to take now, with the ultimate goal of preventing incidents of police-involved shootings and deaths in custody from occurring.

1. **Build and Strengthen Relationships of Trust with All Communities**

   As the White House Fact Sheet on Community Policing states¹, "Recent events in Ferguson, Missouri and around the country have highlighted the importance of strong, collaborative relationships between local police and the communities they protect. ...Trust between law enforcement agencies and the people they protect and serve is essential to the stability of our communities, the integrity of our criminal justice system and the safe and effective delivery of policing services."

   As leaders with hopeful visions for the health and safety of their respective cities, mayors and police chiefs are best positioned to build bridges and strengthen relationships between communities, law enforcement and other city government institutions. While persistent and complex issues, such as racial and economic inequity, necessitate comprehensive and long-term solutions, the following immediate and actionable steps are recommended to tackle the challenge of community trust.

   **Spotlight²** A simple idea conceived during a routine haircut, the Cops & Barbers initiative has grown into a tool that is helping the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) better engage its community. The North Carolina Local Barbershop Association partnered with CMPD to host 13 coordinated monthly town halls with the African American community in different parts of the city in 2015. Charlotte Mayor Dan Clodfelter worked with CMPD to obtain a $10,000 grant from Foundation For The Carolinas (FFTC) to help expand the Cops & Barbers initiative.

   **Steps:**
   
   - **1.1** / Regularly host town hall meetings and other community events with active participation and input from young people as well as law enforcement and other city departments to engage community members in dialogue and exchange. Police officers and other city leaders can also participate in existing community and neighborhood forums and activities.
   
   - **1.2** / Measure and track community sentiment and attitudes toward city government and law enforcement through engaging and interactive polls or surveys.

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¹ https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/12/01/fact-sheet-strengthening-community-policing

² Throughout this document we have featured Spotlights to provide concrete examples of city policies and practices, including cities not within the Cities United network. We recognize city policies and practices change over time and featuring a spotlight in this resource does not constitute an official endorsement of city policy by Cities United.
• 1.3 / Implement or strengthen community policing efforts, and add or expand innovative programs and partnerships between community members, particularly youth, and law enforcement and other city agencies. Be mindful of tone and approach when interacting with community, recognizing the first 45 seconds of an interaction can set the tone.

• 1.4 / Identify and build relationships with trusted community leaders who can serve as messengers in their respective communities during moments of crisis.

• 1.5 / Identify and build relationships with trusted community leaders who can serve as messengers in their respective communities during moments of crisis.

• 1.6 / Create a youth council, made up of youth from across the city, to regularly meet with leadership, including the police chief.

• 1.7 / Together with community members, address concerns by developing new or expanded initiatives that tackle persistent challenges including poverty and limited opportunity.

2. Rethink Use of Force and Reform Police Officer Trainings to Emphasize De-Escalation

Use of force, especially in proportion to the threat faced by officers, has emerged as a critical issue in the wake of police-involved shootings and in-custody deaths. According to an examination by The Washington Post, about 30 percent of 990 fatal police shootings in 2015 did not involve someone with a gun; in 9 percent of the shootings the subject was unarmed, while 16 percent involved the use of a knife. One quarter of shootings involved a fleeing victim, while, in another quarter of cases, mental illness played a role.

In light of such findings, cities and police departments across the country are rethinking and reengineering how and when force is used in order to preserve the lives of residents as well as police officers, and ensure stronger relationships with communities.

Key elements in this process are reforming use of force policies to go beyond the “objective reasonableness” standard set in the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Graham v. Conner, enhancing officer training to emphasize de-escalation and addressing and eliminating bias.

Spotlight: In 2015, Philadelphia invited the Department of Justice’s COPS Office to review the police department’s use of force policies under Collaborative Reform. An uptick in police-involved shootings sparked then Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey’s request. The department shifted its use-of-force policies to require de-escalation to prioritize the preservation of life, with bans on choke holds and similar

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3 https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/police-shootings-year-end/
4 http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/collaborativereform
5 https://www.phillypolice.com/ois/
practices that contribute to asphyxiation or death. Officers who witness inappropriate or excessive use of force by a fellow officer are duty-bound to report it.\(^5\) The policy shift has contributed to a drop in police-involved shootings.\(^6\)

**Steps:**

- **2.1** Define and establish a use-of-force policy and training procedures for officers that prioritize sanctity of life.

- **2.2** During trainings, emphasize diffusion and de-escalation tactics, particularly in situations where an edged weapon or no weapon is involved, such as utilizing verbal skills to slow events down and establishing “buffer zones.”

- **2.3** Train police officers on how to respond to individuals with mental health issues. Instead of using police officers as first responders in instances where individuals are experiencing mental health issues, establish or expand the use of crisis intervention teams and other mechanisms.

- **2.4** Diversify staffing of police and other public safety agencies to ensure they reflect the communities they serve.

- **2.5** Partner with community leaders to create and implement implicit bias and cultural competency trainings to equip officers to better serve diverse communities.

- **2.6** Offer opportunities for community members to review and provide feedback on trainings.

- **2.7** Publicly report all uses of force to a database with information on related injuries and demographics of the victims.

**3. Establish a Mechanism for an External and Independent Investigation and Prosecution**

Establishing a mechanism for an external and independent investigation and prosecution of police-involved shootings and deaths in custody is recommended.

The primary demand by affected family members and community residents in the aftermath of a police-involved shooting or a death in custody is for an independent investigation to be conducted into the incident and the police officers involved as well as independent prosecution, if charges are filed. The family and community want to know what happened and why it happened to ensure that the officers involved are held responsible for their actions, if these actions are found to be unjustified.

\(^5\) [https://www.phillypolice.com/ois/](https://www.phillypolice.com/ois/)

This is also a key recommendation of President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing as well as Campaign Zero, a policy group focused on police reform. The Task Force recommends external and independent investigations and the use of external and independent prosecutors to “demonstrate the transparency to the public that can lead to mutual trust between community and law enforcement.”

External and independent investigations and prosecutions are key to building community trust and showing that the city is committed to holding its police officers accountable for their actions. An independent prosecution mechanism is critical as city and county prosecutors often rely heavily on close working relationships with their respective police departments to conduct day-to-day criminal investigations, making it difficult to appear or to be impartial in the case of alleged police misconduct.

If the investigative process is seen as transparent, fair and impartial, family and community members will be more likely to trust the outcome of that process, even if a shooting or death is found to be justified. Many cities have established external and independent investigative processes that mandate the creation of a multi-agency task force that comprises state and local investigators. Others have established an investigative process that mandates a role for the next higher level of government, such as a having a state agency handle the investigation.

Spotlight: In April 2014, Wisconsin passed a first-of-its-kind law impacting cities like Milwaukee and Madison that mandates outside investigation into deaths in police custody, which includes deaths from police-involved shootings. The law requires a team of at least two investigators who are not employed by the law enforcement agencies involved to lead the investigation. The law also mandates the public release of the investigative report if criminal charges are not filed against the officers in question.

Steps:

- 3.1 / Establish a clear and transparent mechanism for determining an external and independent investigation and prosecution prior to an incident that can be initiated in its immediate aftermath.

- 3.2 / Determine whether the mechanism should include an external investigation, such as an FBI probe, a state investigation or inviting DOJ investigation. Draw on expertise from state and federal agencies to develop the mechanism, including the DOJ’s Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office.

- 3.3 / Be flexible about updating the mechanism in the aftermath of an incident, e.g. if a city has established a role for an independent state investigator, but the community calls for a DOJ investigation.

- 3.4 / Where possible, incorporate the role of an independent medical examiner review to the investigative process.

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7 See http://www.joicampaignzero.org/investigations
• 3.5 / Review police union contracts to reduce barriers to effective misconduct investigations and civilian oversight.

• 3.6 / Determine whether officers receive paid leave or remain on desk-duty either during an investigation into a shooting or other use of deadly force or if charged with a felony offense because of a shooting or other use of deadly force. If officers continue to receive paid leave or remain on desk-duty, be transparent with family and community members about why that decision was made.

• 3.7 / Establish an effective civilian oversight structure, e.g. a civilian review board, that has the power to investigate alleged police misconduct, including subpoena power, and makes its disciplinary and/or policy recommendations publicly available.10

4. Use Broader Focus in Police Response to Demonstrations, Beyond Simple Crowd Control

How cities respond to demonstrations, protests and other gatherings after police-involved shootings or in-custody deaths has also emerged as an important issue. Often, police response to crowds can escalate or help to diffuse the situation. It is recommended that mayors work closely with their respective public safety agencies to prepare for effective responses to such events in advance, establishing and implementing crowd management policies and training all officers. Rather than focusing simply on crowd control or dispersement, many cities train officers to balance the need to protect safety and property with the need to respect residents’ constitutional right to assemble peacefully.

**Spotlight:** After two police encounters during sports celebrations resulted in deaths in 2004 and 2008, the Boston Police Department reformed its crowd control and management policies to more effectively serve the community. The department shifted away from outfitting their officers in riot gear in situations requiring large-scale crowd management, including sports celebrations and street protests, and increased its reliance on officers on bicycles, holding additional officers in reserve as needed.11

**Steps:**

• 4.1 / Engage community leaders in advance to listen to community concerns to help de-escalate situations during demonstrations.

• 4.2 / Make safeguarding the constitutional right of people to gather peacefully a core principle to crowd management.

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10 https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/08/16/chicago-s-civilian-review-board-will-the-new-one-be-better#.BbJqX5TrF

A Strategic Resource for Mayors on Police-Involved Shootings and In-Custody Deaths
• **4.3** / Put a regional response plan in place that uses a graded intervention approach rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, and includes use of appropriate equipment, protocols for videotaping and photographing, as well as communication and negotiation. A helpful tool can be the National Incident Management System, in particular when multiple agencies are involved.

• **4.4** / Ensure all officers are trained on effective crowd management.

• **4.5** / Understand that optics are important; a large showing of police in riot gear can incite confrontation rather than prevent it.

### 5. Have Plans in Place to Communicate with Each Key Constituent

In the aftermath of a crisis, mayors must keep in constant communication with a number of different stakeholders:

- The affected families, to whom communities and the media turn as leading spokespeople and advocates after such incidents
- Police rank and file, who should hear a message that signals support while explaining the need for accountability
- Police unions, who may take strong positions against efforts to reform police departments while acting in the best interest of the officers they represent
- Other city, county, state and federal leaders, who need to be kept continually informed and engaged for guidance and collaboration
- Community and faith leaders, who can play an important role in rebuilding trust with respective communities
- Youth and school officials, including youth organizations, high schools and colleges, who may exercise their right to demonstrate and speak out
- Business and philanthropy leaders, who can help resource rapid response or other efforts and help serve as spokespeople

Putting plans in place to communicate with each key stakeholder category in advance is recommended. Communications strategies will range from one-on-one meetings in-person or by phone to community listening sessions. We also recommend making sure mayors’ teams are prepared to implement the plan.

**Steps:**

• **5.1** / Have an updated contact list of each key community, city, county, state and federal leader at the ready; distribute among team members.
• 5.2 / Create a protocol for communicating with each stakeholder category and ensure that team members also are ready to implement the plan.

• 5.3 / Establish a process for having community listening sessions in the aftermath of such incidents, including location, timing and appropriate community leader to engage as a partner.

6. Make Transparency and Release of Information a Top Priority

How and when should cities release critical information, such as names of officers involved, existing footage or incident details, after police-involved shootings and in-custody deaths? A lack of consistency is prevalent when it comes to release of information by police departments across the country, with some cities releasing information immediately while others wait months.

Traditionally, police departments have erred on the side of not releasing information in the interest of safety or an ongoing investigation. But a report by Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)\textsuperscript{12} emphasizes that: “Police chiefs told us they are finding that approach is no longer viable, because a narrative is created within a few hours of a critical incident happening, and the narrative is written whether or not the police contribute any information to the story. Too much damage can be done if police miss their chance to explain what happened and correct wrong information that can spread in the immediate aftermath of an incident.”

Given how quickly news spreads today via social media, it is recommended that cities prioritize transparency and rapid response to curb mistrust and misinformation by presenting an accurate and complete picture.

Spotlight: The Sunlight Foundation – a national, non-profit organization focused on government transparency and accountability – has touted the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) as being “ahead of the curve” when it comes to making criminal justice data available and easily accessible to the public.\textsuperscript{15}

Steps:
• 6.1 / Assess existing state law or police union contracts regarding release of information.

• 6.2 / Determine protocol for how quickly different pieces of information will be released, including name of officer(s) involved, available video, 911 tape, details of the incident that are available at any given time and results of investigations.

• 6.3 / If city has rolled out the use of body-worn cameras, have a protocol in place for release of footage. Ensure the protocol is part of a broader body-worn camera policy that clearly defines the purpose of its use and recording, retention and access of its footage.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} http://www.policeforum.org/assets/definingmoments.pdf
\textsuperscript{13} https://sunlightfoundation.com/blog/2015/04/01/opening-criminal-justice-data-what-we-learned-from-louisiana/
\textsuperscript{14} http://www.civilrights.org/press/2015/body-camera-principles.html

A Strategic Resource for Mayors on Police-Involved Shootings and In-Custody Deaths
• 6.4 / Before information is released to media, inform affected family members as well as select community and city leaders.

• 6.5 / Communicate quickly, frequently and openly. According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police\(^{15}\) “Quality communication requires that police leaders must fully engage, give as much information as possible and take responsibility for actions that may have contributed to issues or incidents of concern.”

• 6.6 / Publicly share any protocols in place to respond to police-involved shootings or in-custody deaths, e.g. body-worn camera protocol.

• 6.7 / Review police union contracts to determine whether officers’ disciplinary history can be made accessible to police departments and the public.

• 6.8 / Publicly report all deaths in custody—including suicides and deaths linked to natural causes—to a database, in accordance with the Death in Custody Reporting Act.

### 7. Embrace 21st Century Media Relations that Incorporates Social Media

Today, more than ever, cities and law enforcement agencies must be prepared to communicate quickly and accurately using social media and traditional media channels. Social media has become an important organizing and information-sharing tool during these incidents. In addition, once a local story escalates to a national story, the situation on the ground can escalate as well.

Traditional media can be a partner in keeping key audiences informed; however, traditional media relations tactics are no longer enough. A growing number of cities and law enforcement agencies are embracing the use of social media as part of core strategies to engage audiences directly. According to the fifth annual Center for Social Media Survey completed in late 2014\(^{16}\), “95 percent of law enforcement agencies surveyed stated they were using some form of social media. Of those using social media, 78.8 percent indicated social media had helped to solve a crime in their jurisdiction and 77.5 percent stated that social media had improved police community relations in their jurisdiction.”

Well before an incident occurs, it is recommended that mayors, city leaders and law enforcement officials establish a protocol for media and social media as part of an overall communications strategy, ensuring adequate staffing for those functions, and building relationships with media outlets as well as establishing an active presence on social media channels.

**Steps:**

• 7.1 / Recognize social media as an integral part of a city’s traditional approach to media, and be prepared to communicate accurately, transparently and in a timely manner through traditional and new media channels.

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\(^{15}\) http://www.thelacp.org/Portals/0/documents/pdfs/CommunityPoliceRelationsSummitReport_Jan15.pdf

\(^{16}\) http://www.iacpsocialmedia.org/Portals/1/documents/2014SurveyResults.pdf
• 7.2 / Establish clear communications roles for mayors and police chiefs, and deliver a consistent and unified message.

• 7.3 / Carry out messaging that acknowledges loss of life and the dignity of life; highlights need for collective healing; is transparent; engages family and community voices; lifts up importance of trust and relationships and shows lessons learned.

• 7.4 / Provide media training to all public safety agency leaders who will serve as spokespeople or visible leaders; ensure that the media team includes members trained in the use of social media.

• 7.5 / Create a media and social media protocol for proactive and reactive communications well in advance of an incident to guide response.

• 7.6 / Establish a routine practice of monitoring social media and traditional media coverage, using these tools as an opportunity to listen to communities.

• 7.7 / Establish timing on organizing press conference after an incident, with the understanding that, in today’s social media driven news cycle, the narrative is cemented within a few, short hours.

8. Incorporate Mental Health and Trauma-Informed Practices Into Approach

Addressing mental health is critical to building safe, healthy and hopeful communities. That is why more cities are adopting trauma-informed practices that extend beyond health departments to inform multiple city agencies, including police departments. Individuals with mental health challenges accounted for one-quarter of deaths in police-involved shootings in 2015 according to The Washington Post\textsuperscript{17}, while suicides (or apparent suicides) accounted for 31% of in-custody deaths in the one-year period between July 2015 and July 2016 following Sandra Bland’s death in Texas according to Huffington Post\textsuperscript{18}

Core areas of focus include an overarching trauma-informed approach to city services as well as Crisis Intervention Team trainings and Mobile Crisis Teams that guide law enforcement interactions with the communities they serve. A trauma-informed approach means taking the motivating factors behind an individual's behavior—including trauma—into account along with the behavior itself and asking deeper questions about the lives of community members. In cities with this model, the recognition of how trauma informs each individual's life and behavior is woven across city agencies, from health to education to law enforcement so that a holistic perspective is used to more effectively approach policies and programs. This approach also recognizes the mental health strain on police officers themselves.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trainings are aimed at assisting police officers to understand how mental health challenges can impair an individual in their interactions with law enforcement, including impairing

\textsuperscript{17} https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/national/police-shootings/
\textsuperscript{18} http://data.huffingtonpost.com/2016/jail-deaths
their capacity to follow orders. These trainings are most effective when designed and carried out by experienced mental health professionals. Mobile Crisis Teams pair police officers—often those who have undertaken CIT trainings—with mental health professionals to respond to situations where individuals have mental health needs.

Research into in-custody deaths has found mental health challenges to be a primary cause contributing to suicide, with at least a third of these deaths occurring within the first three days in custody. In partnership with health departments, law enforcement agencies are employing mental health professionals, known as assessors, who can speak with individuals flagged as being potentially suicidal.

**Spotlight:** In May 2016, the San Jose Police Department became one of a handful of police departments in the nation to adopt mandatory 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team trainings for all of its police officers. Already, 350 out of its 900-officer police force have been trained. The SJPD announcement came on the heels of two state Senate bills passed in California in 2015 that require police academies and police departments across the state to adopt minimum mental health training standards.

**Steps:**

- **8.1** Incorporate trauma-informed practices into law enforcement’s approach to community policing. Recognize that underlying factors such as trauma may contribute to difficult interactions between the community and the police. Weave these practices into a broader trauma-informed approach to all city services.

- **8.2** Make 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team trainings mandatory for police officers and hire experienced mental health professionals to co-design and conduct the trainings.

- **8.3** Establish a Mobile Crisis Team that pairs mental health professionals with police officers to respond to incidents where the police have been called and mental health, emotional crisis or substance abuse challenges are suspected to be at issue.

- **8.4** Assign mental health professionals, or assessors, to jails and police lockups to be able to respond when individuals in custody are flagged by jail staff as being potentially suicidal. Train jail staff in recognizing the signs of suicidal behavior.

- **8.5** Prioritize officer safety and wellness and provide officers with access to mental health services to address the high-stress demands of the job. Enact limits on the length of continuous shifts worked within a 24- to 48-hour period.

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7 Ways City Leaders Can Address Racial Inequities

Leon Andrews
Director, Race, Equity and Leadership (REAL), Race, Equity, and Leadership (REAL)

July 08, 2016

City leaders must step up to take the lead with their police departments and community members to address racial inequities in their respective cities and towns.

Last year, NLC launched the REAL (Race, Equity And Leadership) initiative to equip its membership with the capacity to respond to racial tensions in their communities, identify the systemic barriers that sustain racial injustice in our nation’s cities, and build more equitable communities. (Jason Dixson Photography)

The events of this week serve as a horrific reminder of how important it is for cities to acknowledge and take meaningful action on racial injustice. In the days following our country’s collective celebration of Independence Day, two black men were killed by police in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Falcon Heights, Minnesota, and white police officers were targeted, wounded, and killed in Dallas, Texas, as they were serving and protecting peaceful protesters. Racism is killing us.

The National League of Cities (NLC) strengthens the capacity of local elected officials to build racial equity. For example, in response to the tragic events that occurred recently in Baton Rouge, Falcon Heights, and Dallas, NLC hosted a webinar to help cities deal with the challenges of race and equity in their communities – and commit to solutions. The webinar shares ideas for city responses, highlights what’s working in several cities, and offers tools and resources from both NLC and the federal government that are available to all cities.

I encourage municipal leaders across the country to engage with their communities on racial equity issues and make smart policy decisions that can reduce racial inequities in policing and restore police–community trust. Do not wait for a tragedy to occur in your city to address these pressing issues.

Last year, NLC launched the REAL (Race, Equity And Leadership) initiative to equip its membership with the capacity to respond to racial tensions in their communities, identify the systemic barriers that sustain racial injustice in our nation’s cities, and build more equitable communities. REAL provides training and resources to prepare city leaders to apply a racial equity lens to policies, initiatives, programs and budgets.

What City Leaders Can Do

City leaders must step up to take the lead with their police departments and community members to address racial inequities in their respective cities and towns. City leaders have a greater capacity to create real, tangible changes in policing than the federal government will ever have. Municipal leaders are in a unique position to be trailblazers in building and strengthening relationships between police and the people they serve.
1. **Build trust.** Actively build trust between police and communities of color in your city. (See *Project Peace* in Tacoma, Washington as one example.)

2. **Get the facts** about racial disparities in your city. Numbers get attention. Do you know how many arrests, fines, tickets, violent encounters, and citizen complaints are issued to or by each racial group in your community? Getting real data on police-community interactions disaggregated by race is an important first step to developing solutions that will work for your community. See this [upcoming webinar](#) from our partners at the Government Alliance on Race and Equity.

3. **Listen.** A frustration I hear from communities of color is that their voices are silenced, and that leaders often try to make policy solutions without engaging in meaningful dialogue around the issue. Now more than ever, this is important because folks have a lot to say and great ideas for addressing these complex issues in their communities. See examples of community dialogues on race in [New Orleans](#) and [Charlottesville, Virginia](#).

4. **Lead.** Be a vocal proponent in your community for racial equity policies, programs, and practices. Here is a [resource guide](#) for government officials and [lessons learned](#) from community leaders.

5. **Change.** Consider [policy reforms](#) that could work in your city. Apply a racial equity lens to your broader policies, initiatives, programs and budgets. [Here is a toolkit](#) to help you get there.

6. **Provide Training.** Training can and should be implemented in every department to understand and recognize explicit and implicit bias and de-escalate crisis moments. [Click here](#) for an NLC guide to police training programs. Register to attend the leadership training on racial equity at NLC’s [City Summit](#) in Pittsburgh this November.

7. **Prioritize Accountability.** Reframe how police departments are held accountable. Departments across the country can track quality of interactions and other outcomes in addition to numbers of arrests and tickets, particularly in communities of color. For example, the Gainesville, Florida, Chief of Police instituted an additional level of supervisor review when officers chose to arrest a youth who was in fact eligible for an [alternative statewide civil citation program](#) – and this resulted in an immediate increase in the number of citations issued to non-white youth in lieu of arrest. Similarly, how and when police use their weapons is something for which city leaders can hold police departments accountable on a consistent basis – not just when the media brings attention to a particular incident.

I commend Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden for his leadership during this difficult time. Mayor Holden has promised the citizens of Baton Rouge excellence, integrity, and transparency in the investigation into the shooting death of Alton Sterling. He has also welcomed the support of state and federal law enforcement to ensure his citizens get answers and accountability. Mayor Holden acknowledged the deep pain felt in his community and the need for healing. “We have a wound right now. But we’ll be healing and making this city and parish whole again,” he said. (View his press conference in its entirety [here](#).)

I could not agree more with Mayor Holden that our communities must heal from trauma caused by institutional and structural racism in our country. I see wounds like this in communities divided by race and hurt by racism all over the country. The REAL initiative is just beginning its work on racial healing with the support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s [Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Enterprise](#). We look forward to working towards the goal to “bridge deeply embedded divides and generate the will, capacities and resources required for achieving greater equity across the nation.”
Mindful Policing: The Future of Force

With police violence in the news, and public scrutiny on the rise, cities turn to mindfulness to help officers deal with the stress of the job.

By Barry Yeoman | June 14, 2017

Lieutenant Fred Dauer of the Emeryville Police Department Field Services Division, after a patrol. Emeryville, a commercial hub located between Berkeley and Oakland, California, is one of many urban communities bringing mindfulness training to its first responders.

You guys ready for a technique?” the trainer asks. “Everybody, sit up straight. Uncross your legs. Just look straight ahead.”

Eric White gathers his 6-foot-8 frame and straightens his back in the conference-room chair. Instead of his usual police uniform, he wears a blue polo shirt and jeans. The trainer, Don Chartrand, is visiting Emeryville, California, to talk with officers here about how to reduce their stress and build resilience with exercises like intentional breathing. “This is not anything weird,” he promises. “This is absolutely science-based.” Cops appreciate evidence, he knows, and so Chartrand has come equipped with PowerPoint graphs and lessons about heart-rate variability, the stress hormone cortisol, and how to keep the autonomous nervous system in balance.

Chartrand reassures the 18 officers that his goal is practical: boosting their performance on the beat. “It’s not about going to your happy place. This is not la-la lightweight nonsense,” he says. “I’m serious: This is blood and guts, sometimes life and death.”

He directs them to place their hands over their hearts. Some comply more eagerly than others. “Use your imagination,” he says. “It’ll sound weird. Pay attention to your breath. And imagine that the breath is flowing into your heart through your hand. Deep breaths. It’s a little odd. Now I want you to imagine that the breath is flowing through the back, the bottom, and the top of your heart, and the sides of your heart. Air is coming into your heart from all sides, 360°.”

Later, some of the officers will privately make wisecracks about the exercise. Not Officer Eric White, though. The 51-year-old former professional basketball player, a soft-spoken man with a shaved head, tries to visualize his heart receiving oxygen. And he feels it: a clean breath, carrying his stress away.

Emeryville police officers meditate following a yoga class at department headquarters.

Studying Police Trauma and Mindfulness

Working in law enforcement can be life-threatening, and not just because of violent encounters. Researchers have linked policing careers to high rates of depression, PTSD, and substance abuse,
along with physical ailments like sleeplessness, diabetes, and sudden cardiac death. Officers are more prone to attempt suicide than the general population, and more likely to kill themselves than get killed on duty. Plus, because police culture values stoicism, officers are often reluctant to seek out mental-health treatment.

One study of almost 2,800 white male police officers in Buffalo, New York, found their average life expectancy to be 22 years shorter than their civilian counterparts. The authors, from the University of Buffalo and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, suggested that stress, trauma, obesity, shift work, and exposure to toxic chemicals might all contribute to the early deaths.

The consequences go beyond the occupational hazards. When police suffer from debilitating stress, they are more likely to exhibit problems at work, “including uncontrolled anger toward suspects,” researchers at Oregon’s Pacific University noted in a 2015 study.

Little surprise, then, that over the past few years, the United States has been rocked by repeated news reports of police killings of civilians. The highest-profile victims have been African-American men and boys: 12-year-old Tamir Rice, shot while playing with a toy gun in a Cleveland park; Eric Garner, a sometime vendor of untaxed cigarettes who died in a police chokehold in Staten Island, New York; Philando Castile, a school cafeteria worker shot during a traffic stop in Falcon Heights, Minnesota; Freddie Gray, who suffered a fatal spinal injury while shackled in the back of a Baltimore police van; and most famously, 18-year-old Michael Brown, shot six times in Ferguson, Missouri, during a tense street encounter. Castile had notified police that he legally possessed a gun; none of the rest were carrying rearms.

According to Washington Post databases, 963 people were shot dead by police in the United States in 2016, and 991 in 2015. Some of the recent killings have triggered large protests and helped give rise to the Black Lives Matter movement.

“It’s a reasonable question to ask: What is going on?” says Matthew Hunsinger, an assistant professor of psychology at Pacific University and an author of the 2015 study. “How are officers coming to make this decision to use their firearms when the black male turns out to be unarmed?”

It’s a vexing question that doesn’t lend itself to simple policy solutions. But some experts are suggesting that one way to help reduce unnecessary police violence is by improving officer wellness. “If I’m clinically depressed [and] undiagnosed—which I would argue many of us are—and I’m struggling to even regulate my own space, how the hell do I have the capacity to have empathy?” asks Richard Goerling, a police lieutenant in Hillsboro, Oregon. “How are we supposed to navigate someone else’s suffering if we can’t even navigate our own?”

Goerling is the founder of the Mindful Badge Initiative, a consultancy that provides resilience training to first responders. (See “To Pause and Protect,” Mindful, October 2013.) He’s one of the leaders of a growing movement to introduce mindfulness practices to police departments—and, in the process, to cultivate compassion toward the communities they serve. Goerling is working with law-enforcement agencies around the country, participating in research, and helping develop a set of best practices for the young field.

“We believe this [mindfulness] training will build resilience—our ability to bounce back from stress—and resilience is going to have all sorts of downstream consequences in the community,” —Matthew Hunsinger, an assistant professor of psychology at Pacific University
Some initial findings look promising. The Pacific University study, in which Goerling took part, led 43 officers through a curriculum called Mindfulness-Based Resilience Training (MBRT), which includes meditation, martial arts, and breath- and body-awareness. (It’s a police-friendly version of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.) At the end of the eight-week program, the researchers found “significant improvement” in health outcomes like stress, fatigue, and sleep quality.

“Fatigue and sleep disturbance are predictors of dysregulated mood, particularly anger,” says lead author Mike Christopher, an associate professor of clinical psychology. “And we know that anger is a big predictor of negative outcomes for police officers on the force.”

Newer, unpublished data from Pacific show a second group of officers drinking alcohol less frequently, feeling less burned out, and having fewer aggressive feelings and behaviors after undergoing training.

What remains to be learned is how these early results translate to the street. The Pacific team tried to measure whether mindfulness training can reduce implicit racial bias—“that level of bias we all have at an unconscious level,” says Christopher. They used a simulation game in which officers had to make snap decisions about whether people of different races were holding weapons (as opposed to, say, soda cans). But the officers performed so well before the training, Hunsinger says, that researchers could not measure improvement.

Still, Hunsinger feels optimistic. “We believe this [mindfulness] training will build resilience—our ability to bounce back from stress—and resilience is going to have all sorts of downstream consequences in the community,” he says. One measure psychologists use is “response inhibition,” the ability to suppress a kneejerk urge to do something harmful like reach for a gun unnecessarily. “The more resilient someone is, the better their response inhibition is going to be, because they’re going to have more cognitive resources.”

While researchers like Hunsinger and Christopher test that hypothesis in controlled studies, it’s playing out elsewhere as a natural experiment—in places like Emeryville (population 11,700), a former steel town adjacent to Oakland, where an innovative police chief is bringing some hard-earned wisdom into the workplace.

**Building Resilience and Compassion on the Force**

By the time Jennifer Tejada took charge of the Emeryville Police Department in September 2015, she had weathered her share of personal and professional challenges. They began during her initial police training, which she says was deliberately high-pressure. “You learn that this is part of the job: the state of being stressed, whether it’s because your uniform is not quite pressed correctly, or you weren’t able to complete your mile in six minutes,” explains the 53-year-old Ireland native. “What was missing was the coping with the stress.”

Added to that was the way officers were evaluated in the 1990s: on a “male model,” she says, that valued brawn over compassion. During her first year on the job, “I recall my sergeant calling me into the office and berating me because I would not be able to succeed in a fight with a 200-pound man in an alley,” says Tejada, who is compact and slender. With a 300-pound suspect, he told her, “you’re definitely a liability.”
Emeryville Police Chief Jennifer Tejada, who joined the department in 2015, works late at home. The workload and stress of her job extends far beyond office hours.

Plus, there were the daily ordeals all cops face. “We see the most horrible images of people in real time,” Tejada says. She would come home from work, still reeling from her day, struggling to be a fully present mother. She felt depressed and fatigued, unable to sleep through the night. Her body was in a constant state of agitation.

Three years ago, Tejada endured a personal trauma, the details of which she doesn’t discuss publicly. She continued to function at work but would fall apart at the end of her shift. She lost weight and suffered panic attacks. Therapy didn’t help. Looking for a way to calm her mind, Tejada combed the internet and stumbled on mindfulness meditation. She tried some random online resources, then found the Headspace and 10% Happier meditation apps.

The results were profound. “It gave me back my sense of self, my sense of worth,” she says. “It allowed me to breathe.” The weight returned. She started to sleep. She felt whole, and hopeful, again.

When Tejada became Emeryville’s police chief, the department was still coping with the fallout from a recent fatal police shooting. The killing of Yuvette Henderson, a 38-year-old armed woman suspected of shoplifting and attempted carjacking, had sparked protests that briefly shut down both City Council and the Home Depot where the incident began. But things were quieter inside police headquarters. “No one talked about it,” Officer White recalls. “No one said, ‘Hey, how are you doing?’”

Shortly after arriving in Emeryville, Tejada attended a three-day Resilience Immersion Training led by Goerling—her first exposure to mindfulness that didn’t involve an app or the internet. Impressed by the workshop, she began to think about how to introduce culturally appropriate mindfulness practices to her department. She began by bringing in a former police officer, Michelle Garcia, to teach her employees yoga.

“It’s really beneficial for us to have someone who can walk in and say, ‘I’m one of you,’” Tejada says. Reactions to the class were mixed, but Captain Dante Diotalevi (the department’s second-in-command) says it flushed out some closet enthusiasts: “You look across the room, and this guy’s doing a crazy stretch, and he’s a lot more limber than you, and he says, ‘Yeah, I do it with my wife.’ You didn’t hear that before.”

Next came the breathing workshop with Don Chartrand, who used a curriculum developed by the nonprofit Institute of HeartMath. At the end of the two-hour session, officers received new iPhones loaded with both the HeartMath self-monitoring app and the 10% Happier app that had rescued Tejada.

The chief has other plans in the works, including a recovery room where officers can escape during a stressful day. She wants this calming inner work to reinforce a more compassionate, less confrontational, style of policing.

She gives the example of a bicyclist who curses out an officer and flees after being stopped for riding without a headlight. “Do we really need to have a pursuit?” Tejada asks. “And when we catch up, do we really need to grab them on their bike, take them to the ground, and handcuff them? It doesn’t fit into what we are trying to achieve in the community.”

What Does Mindful Policing Looks Like?

How might this training play out, step-by-step, in the field? Goerling imagines a scenario in which police are called to a tense situation. Maybe there’s a mass protest that’s turning violent.
“Before we deploy, there’s a self-awareness check,” he says. “We’re going to take a moment to do some deep breathing. We have to be aware of how we feel; we’re going to embrace the fear. We’re going to embrace, maybe, the anger at the injustice that’s occurring. But we’re not going to let those emotions interfere with our tactical, cognitive decision making.”

That’s the theory. Researchers are now trying to determine whether, in the real world, this could actually work. At the University of Wisconsin’s Center for Healthy Minds, psychologists and neuroscientists are working with the Madison Police Department to gauge the impact of an eight-week modified version of MBRT. The scientists are looking at physiological measures like heart rate and breathing, along with computer tests that measure the ability to inhibit automatic responses in the face of emotional distractions. (Think about the impulse to reach for a gun in a highly charged, but not life-threatening situation.) They are also interviewing officers about how the training affects their relationships with family members, coworkers, and the communities they serve.

“The goal is not just to help police officers have happier and healthier lives,” says assistant scientist Dan Grupe, who is leading the study. “Nationally, we have a crisis in policing, and we have a complete breakdown of trust. It’s one of the core issues that is tearing our country apart. I don’t have any wild delusions about what we can do with this research. But the idea that we may be able to contribute, in some way, to address these larger issues is what drives me.”

Captain Oliver Collins, a participant in the EPD pilot program, decompresses in the on-site Training Room, used daily by pilot program participants for meditation and rest.

Grupe says it’s too early to share results. And he warns that mindfulness training, even in a best-case scenario, won’t solve the problem. “If it gets us five percent of the way there, that’s a huge impact,” he says. But note the word if: “We’re not taking for granted that this is going to work, or that it’s going to work in a particular way. As scientists, we try to be agnostic about that. We have to look at the data and see what it shows.”

Other research has offered encouragement. In a Canadian study published last year, police were taught visualization, focused attention, and controlled breathing—then thrown into tense, lifelike scenes involving a fleeing murder suspect, a fist fight, a hostage-taker, an impending assault with a wrench, and a bystander holding a radio. “You have to stress them out in reality-based scenarios, where you increase the speed and complexity while they learn to control their stress and threat responses,” says study author Judith Andersen, an assistant professor of psychology at the University of Toronto, Mississauga. “They then gain the confidence that they can do the right thing, even under the most highly stressful situation.”

Andersen found that the trained officers made better use-of-force decisions than an untrained control group. They also had slower maximum heart rates and quicker recoveries. A fast-beating heart, the study noted, can cause irrational behavior.

Like many of her peers, Anderson believes more research is needed before police departments institute costly programs. “I do believe mindfulness and meditation have the potential for people to perceive the world in more humane ways,” she says. “You still need a rigorous study to show that translates into performance under stress.”

What’s more, a lot of factors contribute to the shootings of unarmed civilians, and some of these factors are institutional rather than personal.

“When you think about police culture at the organizational [level], there’s no wonder you have excessive uses of force,” says former federal prosecutor Kami Chavis, director of the criminal-
justice program at North Carolina’s Wake Forest University School of Law. “Violence is an accepted way of dealing with certain situations. There’s also this group loyalty: This is your brother, your sister, and you have to protect them at all costs.” That loyalty can be beneficial, she says, until it interferes with better judgment.

Mindfulness could reduce unnecessary violence, Chavis adds—by helping officers self-regulate, or by serving as a check against implicit bias. To prove it, though, “we’re going to need time and longitudinal studies.”

Some departments are already starting to change their cultures. De-escalating conflict, for example, is becoming a higher priority. Mindfulness training could help reinforce this, says Alex Vitale, a sociologist who coordinates the Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College—for instance, if officers learn to carve out a few extra seconds to assess potentially dangerous situations. But it needs to be paired with that cultural shift. “Any discussion about mindfulness, about teaching officers techniques,” he says, “requires you move away from the dominant command-and-control approach: see a threat, neutralize the threat.”

The Future of the Mindful Police Movement

If mindfulness training for cops was viewed as a fringe idea just a few years ago, it’s definitely starting to gain traction now. Last year Goerling taught 670 first responders, most of them in law enforcement. In Ontario, Canada, employees of the York Regional Police are learning tai chi, journaling, and mindful leadership. The Baltimore city public schools hired the Holistic Life Foundation, a local nonprofit, to teach its police breathwork, chair yoga, and meditation during weekly drop-in sessions. In California, Menlo Park City Council spent $59,000 this year to send 29 police employees to a three-day retreat that included meditation, breathing techniques, and the neuroscience of stress.

In Tempe, Arizona, Police Chief Sylvia Moir dispatched two of her defensive-tactics trainers last year to a mindfulness retreat; they are now developing ideas for integrating what they learned into the department’s training. “I believe we will have more of our people engaged with intensive sessions,” says Moir, who this year provided her officers with meditation apps on their iPhones.

The US Secret Service and Federal Bureau of Investigation, along with police departments in cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, have used the services of Blue Courage, a training company that partners with HeartMath and incorporates elements of mindfulness into its lessons. The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission now provides all basic law-enforcement recruits with 16 hours of Blue Courage training.

And back in Emeryville, Tejada says her early offerings are just a prelude to a more significant shift. “One of things we’re going to do with our defensive-tactics training—where the officers are learning all the tactics they need—we are going to formally introduce the concept of mindfulness-at-the-moment,” she says. “We’re not just having conversations about it; we’re actually incorporating mindfulness meditation into the training.” It might still seem odd to some of her officers, but the chief is standing firm. “This is not a suggestion at this point,” she says. “This is what we’re doing from here on out.”
What does actual police reform look like? More training and more oversight

BY CHARLES BLAIN, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR - 07/05/17 02:20 PM EDT

There are few policy reform areas under more public scrutiny these days than law enforcement.

It’s one of those topics that permeates the activist and lawmaker layer and engages the broader community at-large, but too often the discussion focuses on surface-level reform items while doing a disservice by not broaching deeper issues.

Community policing and body cameras are “go-to” reform items, and those are steps in the right direction but there’s much more that needs to be addressed and the best place to do that is on the local level. The saying “all politics is local” lends itself to well policing.

America’s cities and towns are wildly different in size, population demographics, culture, and socioeconomic standards, so overarching top-down policing policies from D.C. aren’t as impactful as those that stem from city hall. Low-income and inner-city communities — often with large minority populations — often suffer from systemic fear and distrust of police, and it’s not entirely irrational.

These communities often find themselves over-policed over minor, economic crimes. With many departments facing quotas — officials or unofficial — and an abundance of ticketable offenses in lower income communities than in wealthier ones, it’s no surprise that these communities feel constantly targeted by law enforcement.

On the other hand, years of dealing with resentment and discontent in these communities has perpetuated a culture within many departments where officers feel disconnected and, quite frankly, uncomfortable policing many of these areas. This factor contributes to officers second-guessing their actions or just not acting in many instances. Officers need more purposeful training.

In some states, like New York, California, and North Carolina, obtaining a barber’s license requires more hours of training than to become a sworn officer. In Louisiana becoming an officer takes less training than becoming a manicurist.

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission trains incoming recruits on how to better be “guardians of democracy”, to serve and protect, rather than being “warriors” looking to conquer and control, which is what they say standard law enforcement training is.

Coupled with retraining, local governments should fully embrace independent police oversight boards giving civilians a voice in policing.

Out of 18,000 police departments in the country, only about 200 have an independent or civilian oversight board. Most major cities have one to review civilian complaints against officers and recommend disciplinary actions to administration officials or the chief, but not all are provided the same scope or authority.

Independent oversight boards are valuable, public trust in the outcome of investigations on officer-involved shootings directly impacts the community’s response. All too often internal investigations result in justification for a shooting and communities are left feeling as though justice was not served.
Two persistent problems on many oversight boards are the scope of authority entrusted to them and the requirements for civilians to participate.

In Texas alone, the scope of authority for boards in major cities spans across the spectrum. In San Antonio, the Chief’s Advisory Action Board has the ability to interview officers before making a recommendation for disciplinary action to the chief.

Dallas’ review board is authorized to hire investigators, take sworn testimony, and subpoena witnesses. Houston’s operates largely in private and only takes cases referred to them by the internal affairs bureau of the department. Many of the boards require members to have extensive background in policing, law, or criminal justice, which excludes much of the community whose concerns they are meant to address.

Civilian boards need power, resources and autonomy to be as effective as possible.

There are few arguments against the effectiveness of police cameras, but the difficulty comes with drafting language acceptable to the department and governing body, getting consensus, and passing.

Policies determine when the officer has the discretion to turn the camera on or off, how regularly it must be charged, if the data on it is subject to public information, the officer’s ability to review it prior to making a statement on an incident, chain of custody for the camera, and policy regarding data retention and manipulation just to name a few.

Without a sound policy, body worn and dash cameras don’t serve their intended purpose.

Departments are welcoming other technological advances as well. MobilePD is a customizable app that departments around the country are embracing. The app allows for public engagement with law enforcement. MobilePD Connect and the premium version, MobilePD engage, offers alerts, tips, and two-way communication between civilians and a department. They also offer crime mapping, crime stoppers, photos, videos, and local crime news.

ShotSpotter — another tool growing wider in use by police — allows for real-time gunshot detection and alerts. Through sensors they deploy throughout the jurisdiction they are able to triangulate a gunshot origin, within 10 feet and in as little as 30 seconds.

After identifying the location, they digitally notify law enforcement and first responders.

Many problems and impediments to advancements in a police department stem from funding. When not fully funded, they often look elsewhere to pad their budgets.

Former Harris County District Attorney Devon Anderson, head of one of the nation’s largest district attorney’s offices, said her department relied on civil asset forfeiture funds to purchase office supplies and toiletries.

This creates a perverse incentive, no department should rely on fines and fees to fill budget gaps.

Local governing bodies ought not rely on the federal government to lead on criminal justice or police reform. If the federal government does want to be involved in policing, its role should be limited to facilitating the discussion.

By giving a platform to local criminal justice and policing reform leaders to communicate reforms to a broader audience, exchange ideas with counterparts they might not otherwise interact with, and to collectively build on the reforms already being made.

Local officials are best equipped to direct policing resources and should take up that helm to bridge the divide found in inner-city policing.

Charles Blain (@cjblain10) is the executive director of Restore Justice USA, a criminal justice reform project of Empower Texans. He campaigned for Texas Gov. Greg Abbott in 2014 and has a background in public policy.

The views expressed by contributors are their own and are not the views of The Hill.
Police Chief Brandon del Pozo has prioritized building a diverse police force, saying it's about effectively policing the community. Having a department that reflects the makeup of the city is the foundation, he said. "I've said this many times — the people in need of police services are oftentimes the most vulnerable communities, or are oftentimes New Americans, or people of color, so we need to not just to point at our diversity percentage and say, 'Look, it's a mirror of the city,'" del Pozo said at a December police commission meeting.

It's important to have officers who can speak the various languages spoken by Burlington residents and who possess firsthand knowledge of different cultures and religions, del Pozo said this week.

Burlington's newest recruits — Ronald Kikoyongo, 22, Erin Bartle, 33, and Kyle Yeh, 26 — have spent their first weeks as Vermont residents going on ride-alongs with police, meeting mental health practitioners, getting their physical fitness up and otherwise preparing for their roles.

They will be joined in late January by another new recruit, del Pozo said, an Ecuadorian-American.

According to a diversity and recruitment report prepared by the Burlington Police Department's data analyst, Eric Fowler, people of color were underrepresented in the police force compared with the makeup of the city. (The report was prepared prior to the four new hires.)

Prior to the new hires, 92 percent of the force was white, compared with 88 percent of the city. Two percent was African-American, compared with 3.9 percent of the city at the time of the 2010 census. Two percent of the force was Hispanic, compared with 2.7 percent of the city.

However, Fowler also noted that a quarter of the people moving into Burlington are people of color, meaning the city will become increasingly diverse.
Bartle, Yeh and Kikoyongo all moved to Vermont from out of state, though Yeh and Kikoyongo have spouses with ties to the Burlington area. Bartle, coming to Burlington from Virginia via New Jersey, was drawn to the department because of the emphasis on community-focused policing.

"Burlington is so diverse," she said. "It really takes a lot of interaction to manage it."

Yeh, who transferred from the transit police in Washington, D.C., applied to the department at the urging of his wife, who attended Champlain College. He first bumped into del Pozo on Church Street while visiting the area and was drawn to the chief's background policing New York City. Yeh felt that his D.C. background would fit in best in Burlington, he said.

While Kikoyongo was visiting Vermont, he said del Pozo approached him about applying. Born in Uganda, he came to the United States at age 10 and settled in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Kikoyongo chose Burlington, one of two offers he received, because he felt it would be a more community-oriented job, he said.

The recruits are the first to take part in a training initiative designed to ensure Kikoyongo and Bartle succeed when they go on to the Vermont Police Academy in Pittsford. (Because Yeh is a transfer from another agency, he does not have to go through the full course.)

As part of the diversity and recruitment report, Fowler analyzed the Burlington police's recruitment process during the past six years. He found that minorities were slightly over-represented in the pool of applicants, but white applicants were more likely to be hired than black or Hispanic people.

Fowler’s analysis concluded that for Hispanic applicants a tendency to "never follow through in the recruitment process past the application process" was behind the lower hire rate.

For black applicants, Fowler found a considerably higher failure rate on both the Vermont state written entrance exam for the police academy and the state physical fitness exam.

Del Pozo is working with the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council to take a deeper look at the test questions, he said.

Rick Gauthier, the council’s executive director, said Burlington’s analysis was at odds with what their own analyst had found — that the test isn’t flawed— but they are going through the questions to see if disparities pop out.

This story was first posted online on Dec. 28, 2016. Contact Jess Aloe at 802-660-1874 or jaloe@freepressmedia.com. Follow her on Twitter at @jess_aloe.
Community Conversations and Other Efforts to Strengthen Police-Community Relations In 49 Cities

August 10, 2016
• **Independent Police Auditor**—Police Auditor Phillip Young conducts outreach about the police complaint process and the services his office provides. He also serves as an independent location for filing a complaint against an Akron police officer, monitors and audits APD complaint investigations, and makes policy recommendations for improvement.

• **Body Worn Camera Program**—In partnership with the community, the department has engaged in the development of the department's body worn camera program and policies.

• **Interfaith Council**—Chief Nice and other police executives meet quarterly with leaders of faith based organizations to discuss issues.

• **You and the Law program**—Uniformed members of the Akron police department make presentations to members of the community informing them on what they should do in the event they are pulled over by the police.

• **Akron Peacemakers**—an anti-crime/youth civic program designed to engage Akron's youth about their government, community organizations, and police.

• **Officer trainings**—Over the past three years, officers have begun receiving training on the following topics: implicit bias, de-escalation techniques, constitutional policing, and police legitimacy, to name a few.

• **Mayor's Office of Community Relations**—Assistant to the Mayor, Billy Soule, leads the Police...Community...Together Initiative.

In addition, Mayor Horgan participates in a monthly town hall, each held in a different neighborhood, and this year there will be 15 different National Night Out events through the City's Hands Across our Neighborhood effort.

**Toledo, OH**

**Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson**

**COMPREHENSIVE POLICE-COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

Toledo has been engaged in several activities to promote positive dialogue and facilitate peace. The City was plagued with a feud between two families, each of which lost a child to gun violence. There were a number of shootings, and these had the community worried about their safety. Mayor Hicks-Hudson reached out to the City's clergy and activists. She asked the clergy to meet and discuss what they could and would do. For three Saturdays, pastors met in different parts of the city and, joined with officers from the Toledo Police Department and members of Toledo’s Board of Community Relations, walked the neighborhoods – meeting people, talking with them, and praying with them.

At the direction of the Mayor, Toledo Police Chief George Kral hosted a “summit” with representatives from both families, other law enforcement officers, and a faith-based leader to discuss the feud and develop a plan to stop the violence. The effort was successful and resulted in the families participating side by side in a press conference to show the community that they wanted closure. Since this meeting there has been no additional violence or property damage incident from either family.

Since becoming Mayor last year, Mayor Hicks-Hudson and Chief Kral have been working to ensure a strong connection with Toledo’s minority communities. The city is now planning a
communitywide event to celebrate our diverse community and stress the need for education, respect and understanding.

Mayor Hicks-Hudson has reinstituted an independent 13-member police civilian review board, which had been dormant for over a year. The board will review charges of police misconduct after internal affairs has reached a decision. The Mayor wants the board to explore its role and determine if there is anything additional that can be done to strengthen the Department's community policing activities.

Two years ago, Chief Kral formed the Chief's Advisory Board. This dynamic group of faith based, community, and private sector leaders meets monthly to review policy, plan community events, and discuss any issues that might be happening in Toledo's many diverse neighborhoods.

Chief Kral has held four Town Hall Meetings where he and the Chief's Advisory Board solicit suggestions from the community, specifically aimed at determining how the police and citizens can work together to improve the trust factor between the police and Toledo's citizens. A fifth meeting is scheduled for August 29.

Every Toledo Police officer, from Chief Kral to the newest probationary officer, has been trained in procedural justice, constitutional uses of deadly force, and de-escalation techniques.

TPD currently has 58 body worn cameras deployed, with plans to equip all officers with this technology by June of 2017. This technology provides a measure of security for the public as well as for the officers.

All Field Operations officers must, at least one time each shift, park their vehicles and walk their beats. This will break down the barriers between the citizens and the police and fosters face-to-face communications.

When President Obama's 21st Century Policing Final Report was published in May of 2015, Chief Kral at the direction of Mayor Hicks-Hudson formed an Ad Hoc committee of police officers from all ranks of the department. This committee was tasked with reviewing each law enforcement recommendation to determine if TPD was already implementing them, and to evaluate what additional methods were feasible. Eighty-three percent of the recommendations were already in place and plans are in the works to incorporate several others.

In order to increase confidence and trust, TPD is working toward moving its Internal Affairs Section out of Police Headquarters. Many times people fear coming to a police building to complain about officers. This new off site location will help alleviate this apprehension.

TPD has held accredited agency status from the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) for 13 years, and has just received its complete compliance with the State of Ohio’s Collaborative, which established certain standards for Ohio’s law enforcement agencies. These two accolades show Toledo’s citizens that their police department is measured against departments across the nation and internationally and follows best practices.
The Toledo Police Department makes its commitment to positive community engagement real by working throughout the year in the following highly successful initiatives:

**Block Watch**
The Toledo Neighborhood Block Watch Program is a community-based partnership involving neighborhood volunteers, law enforcement, and other community services. The program serves to make neighborhoods safer and more wholesome. Police officers are available to Block Watch leaders between monthly meetings and also attend these meetings to provide information and address neighbor's concerns.

**Brains & Body**
The Toledo Police Department's Police Prevention Team (PPT) sponsors a summer fitness program that is held at Robinson Elementary School. The program lasts five weeks, is for students in grades 3 through 10, and is designed to enhance math skills and promote physical health. Toledo Police officers participate with youth in side-by-side physical challenges. The program is designed to encourage positive relationships between police, youth, and families within the community and to enrich learning during the summer months. This program provides a safe environment for youth, promotes education and physical fitness, offers vital information about the dangers of drugs, deters violent behavior, and develops expanded thinking.

**Candy from a Cop**
The purpose of the Candy from a Cop campaign is to build and foster positive and respectful relations between officers and the city's youngest residents. Officers will interact with young children and provide them with a small bag containing a piece of candy, a badge sticker, a positive message, and a temporary tattoo.

**Citizens Police Academy**
The Toledo Citizen Police Academy is a 25-hour block of instruction, taught over the course of 10 weeks. It's a miniature version of the Toledo Police Academy where participants receive training in subjects that vary from criminal law to the use of deadly force. It's designed to give the public a better understanding and knowledge of the functions of the Toledo Police Department. The instruction is comprehensive and each week different topics and areas of the police department are covered.

**Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)**
The Toledo Police CIT program is a community partnership involving law enforcement, the community and mental health care agencies. The purpose of the program is to assist in providing the best possible service to mentally ill individuals and their families.

**Explorers**
This organization gives youth hands-on experience in law enforcement and related fields of interest in a structured and supervised after-school program. All training is in accordance with guidelines established by the Toledo Police Department, and volunteer advisors meet with the young members twice a month.

**IGNITE Team**
The Ignite Team meets with the Chief every other month to discuss the betterment of the Department. The goals of the meetings include:
• Garnering patrol officer and civilian employee input regarding potential policy changes;
• Bringing non-contractual issues to the attention of the police administration;
• Increasing employee morale.

PAL (Police Athletic League)
Toledo's Police Athletic League is a non-profit, delinquency prevention program that works to prevent juvenile crime and violence by building the bond between police officers and kids through athletics. The program focuses on serving youth in the underserved areas of the community. This positive influence can counter the gang influence, substance abuse and potential violence that youth deal with in those areas. With the help of volunteers and several partner organizations, children are able to participate in various activities that they may not have had the opportunity to be involved in if it weren't for the PAL program.

Mountain Mentors
Mountain Mentors is a not-for-profit, faith-based mission program committed to impacting the lives of at-risk youth in our community. Adult role models serve as advocates for teens in the areas of education, work, family and court. Coupled with a wilderness experience, this yearlong mentoring program helps young people see themselves and society in a more positive light.

PPT (Police Prevention Team)
The Police Prevention Team program is a community-based diversion program designed to give juveniles a chance to avoid prosecution for minor violations of the law and status offenses. Juveniles enter the program through officer referrals. Upon successful completion of the program, pending charges will be dismissed. However, failure to complete the program as prescribed will result in charges being filed for the original violation(s).

RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol)
The Toledo Police Department and the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio formed a partnership to develop the Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol Program. (RSVP) This program was developed to foster a relationship between volunteers representing the Toledo Police Department and community members. Volunteers make regular visits to homebound citizens and act much the same way that a good neighbor would. Volunteers also perform house checks at the request of citizens that will be away from their residences for extended periods of time.

Safe-T-City
Safe-T-City is a child pedestrian and traffic safety program combined with a life safety course. The program includes both classroom work and outdoor practice in a miniature city, complete with streets, sidewalks, traffic signals and miniature buildings. The children prepare for the real world in their special kid-sized environment through hands-on and “drive-around” activities. Over 500 pre-kindergarteners graduate from the Safe-T-City program yearly.

S.T.R.I.V.E. (Success Through Review Incentive Vision Effort)
The S.T.R.I.V.E. Program was developed to assist high school students who struggle with passing the required Ohio Graduation Test. The program is designed to prepare students in the areas of math, science, and social studies. It is a fast-paced, highly structured tutoring program that provides students who complete the sessions an opportunity to take the Ohio
Graduation Test. Students must complete at least 20 hours of class time and complete homework assignments daily in order to be eligible to take the OGT test through S.T.R.I.V.E. The classes are taught by individually selected and caring teachers from the Toledo Public School System.

TCIRV
The Toledo Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (TCIRV) is a citywide initiative to reduce gun violence. TCIRV is designed to partner members of the community with service providers and law enforcement agencies to deliver its key message, which is:

- The Violence Must Stop
- Law Enforcement has new rules
- The Community is here to help

To do that, TCIRV engages in a coordinated three-pronged approach with Law Enforcement, Social Services and Community. Respectively, these groups apply pressure, deliver services, and provide support through group dynamics.

School Resource Officers
Toledo has a six-week recreational/educational/nutrition program using its city parks to bring Toledo assets to youth in the neighborhoods where they live. Toledo Police has school resource officers who spend time with the youth throughout the summer to reinforce the relationships they cultivate during the school year.

Continuing Police-Community Interaction
Members of the Toledo Police Department also stay actively involved in the community through informal programming such as Coffee with a Cop and Police in the Parks, and meet with Toledo Public School Children during lunch periods in what they call the “Blue Light Special.” Specifically:

- There has been at least one Coffee with a Cop event held each month, in a variety of neighborhoods in Toledo since January 2015. Community engagement in these events has been extraordinary. Local businesses continually call in to be put on the list of venues for these community-building events.
- Every Saturday in the summer, TPD conducts Police-in-the-Park Events. Similar to the Coffee with a Cop event, Police-in-the-Parks invite neighbors to come meet their district police units, the chief, and other police and community partners in order to build relationships.
- While school is in session, on Friday’s TPD holds the Blue Lunch Specials. The chief, and senior command officers, along with district units and the School Resource Officers, visit local elementary schools and eat lunch with the children.

Mayor Hicks-Hudson hosts several Town Hall meetings in each area of the city during the year to provide opportunities for ongoing dialogue with citizens so that we can hear their priorities, answer questions, and develop strategies to work together to address areas of greatest concerns. Directors from all city departments are available to provide detailed responses to citizen questions and take back concerns to follow up after the meetings. These have no scripted agenda, but naturally reflect the top issues of the public. These meetings provide an excellent format for open dialogue between our citizens and the Mayor and her administration.
Policing the Police: Get to Know Your Civilian Police Review Board

By Sean Nestor, April 18, 2017.

After attending a meeting, former Toledo City Council member Theresa Gabriel (center) discusses the issues with board members and other attendees. (Photo Credit: Crystal Jankowski)

A common policy goal for civil liberties advocates and Black Lives Matter organizers, a Civilian’s Police Review Board acts as an independent agency for reviewing allegations of police abuse.

Toledo City Council first established such a board in 1991—but like many volunteer city boards, its tenure over the years has been dotted with intermittent periods of inactivity. Due to ongoing public concerns surrounding police accountability raised by the Black Lives Matter movement, Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson revived the Review Board in July 2016.

Who makes up the board?

Comprised of 13 unpaid volunteer members representing different key constituent groups—three from law enforcement, one from the NAACP, one from the Hispanic community, one attorney, one with a background in human relations and one from each of the six city council districts—interested civilians complete an application and may be appointed by the Mayor to two-year terms (except for city council district representatives, who serve one-year terms).

Board Chair Lou Vasquez, a retired Toledo Police Sergeant, takes time to reflect. (Photo Credit: Crystal Jankowski)

What can the board do?

The board is empowered to conduct investigations and hold public hearings that include any written or oral statements volunteered by the complainant, citizens, or officers involved, as well as recordings of witnesses, made by the police. The board provides its findings to the mayor and police chief, who then decide if and how to discipline the subject officer(s).
How does someone who alleges abuse at the hands of police engage the board?

Individuals seeking redress from claimed incidences of police abuse must first file a complaint with the Toledo Police Department’s Internal Affairs Office at 525 N. Erie Street. If the Department of Internal Affairs finds no wrongdoing, the complainant can file an appeal with the Civilian Police Review Board within 14 days. The appeal must include the complainant’s name, address, and telephone number, a copy of the Internal Affairs finding. The appeal should also include contact information for any witnesses the complainant believes the board should hear from, and a stated reason for the appeal.

Room for improvement

While many activists have praised the establishment of the board, others have suggested that it could be better. For example, right now, complainants must file their appeal to the board at the same Internal Affairs Office whose findings they wish to dispute. As a result, some are calling for the filing location to move to a more accessible, and perhaps less intimidating, site.

Another criticism is that because the board lacks subpoena power, participation in hearings conducted by the board is voluntary to all except Toledo Police Department’s internal investigators. Cities that grant subpoena power to police review boards typically use salaried independent investigators to sit on the Board, instead of volunteer citizens. With the City’s well-known budget woes, that approach seems unlikely.

As for the makeup of the board, Chair and retired Toledo Police Sergeant Lou Vasquez says he welcomes further diversity. “I think the Black Lives Matter movement is important. Like anyone else, if an officer messes up, there has to be some kind of response. I would not be opposed to having a representative from the Black Lives Matter movement on the board.”

Where do they meet?

The Civilian Police Review Board meets at 6pm on the fourth Tuesday of every month in a conference room on the first floor of One Government Center. While these meetings are generally open to the public, certain segments involving the details of ongoing investigations may be closed.
Mayor Brown Launches BPD21C

A new Police Academy Scholarship program designed to revolutionize community-based policing in the City of Buffalo in the 21st Century

Will offer an avenue for career opportunity, community engagement and a pathway for participation in our City’s revival

October 19, 2015 - Today Mayor Byron Brown and Police Commissioner Dan Derenda, joined by Erie Community College President Jack Quinn, members of the Buffalo Common Council, local and state legislators, members of the Concerned Clergy Coalition of Western New York and other interfaith-based community leaders, Peacemakers, Buffalo Office of New Americans, Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority, Buffalo Employment and Training Center, National Federation for Just Communities, community-policing advocates and many other stakeholders, gathered at Mt. Olive Baptist Church today to unveil ‘Buffalo Police Department: 21st Century’ (BPD21C). BPD21C is an innovative, ‘first of its kind’ in the nation, police pre-employment scholarship program designed to provide scholarship opportunities for city residents who want to pursue a career in law enforcement. Up to 50 successful City of Buffalo residents may receive full scholarships to the Erie County-Erie Community College Central Police Services Law Enforcement Training Academy for the spring semester, beginning on January 18, 2016.

“BPD21C is a bold, creative and unique, first-of-its-kind program, that will foster an even stronger guardian mindset of our police in Buffalo,” said Mayor Brown. “This value-driven program has the potential to become a national model for other municipalities to follow. We believe the results of BPD21C will revolutionize community-based policing and we intend to utilize all of our resources to recruit and educate a diverse and talented group of future police officers who reflect our City’s demographics.”

Buffalo Police Commissioner Dan Derenda stated, “We believe the BPD21C initiative will allow us to make the Buffalo Police Department more reflective of the community and look forward to the opportunity it will provide to our city residents.”

“Policing is a tough job, and our officers do a great job protecting and serving city residents in the best manner possible,” said Buffalo Common Council President Darius Pridgen. “Mayor Brown’s innovative BPD21C program moves policing into the 21st century, strengthening the police force by adding more diversity but also fostering an even greater respect between the community and police.”

Reverend William Gillison of Mount Olive Baptist Church, said, “We continue to work closely with Mayor Byron Brown and the Buffalo Police Department on community-police relations and this creative, non-traditional way to attract police recruits from our city is another great step in our continued effort to diversify the police force and further enhance community-police relations.”

Erie Community College President Jack Quinn said, “Erie Community College enjoys an extremely good relationship with Mayor Brown and Buffalo Police Department. Dozens of our current instructors at the Police Academy are Buffalo Police Officers and, over the past eight years, 33% of our total graduates from the police academy are now on the Buffalo police force. The BPD21C program will only make our relationship stronger.”

“Through the creation of the BPD21C Scholarship Program, we’re opening up opportunities for individuals all across Buffalo who are interested in serving on our city’s police force, with the goal of creating a more diverse department,” said Senator Tim Kennedy. “I applaud the Mayor and city leaders for working together to help position these selected scholarship graduates ahead of the curve, and for continuing to invest in our community as a whole.”
“There’s been a lot of national dialogue about building trust, improving police practices and addressing racial and economic disparities in the workforce and I applaud Mayor Brown for developing the BPD21C initiative,” said State Assembly Member Crystal Peoples-Stokes. “When it comes to role models, it would certainly be valuable if the police force could reflect our communities, not just in Buffalo or in cities across New York State but throughout our country.”

BPD21C is a culmination of many important Brown Administration achievements, which combined, will have an historic impact and continue Mayor Brown’s mission to produce a more diverse workforce and well-trained workforce in Buffalo, while fostering a mutual dynamic that every citizen should be treated with respect and that every citizen should treat police with respect.

Recent reforms include:

- A landmark Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Police Benevolent Association (PBA), requiring a 7-year residency requirement for new hires – the first of its kind in any major city in the State of New York, changing the makeup of the BPD of the future by requiring new hires to be stakeholders in the Buffalo community
- In 2010, we re-established community policing to improve dialogue between the community and police officers
- We dedicated funding to the Buffalo Peacemakers
- We created the Game Changers program
- We collaborated with Say Yes Buffalo
- We ensured that students had the opportunity to become Buffalo Police Explorers
- We provided over 21,000 employment opportunities through our Summer Youth Employment program since 2016
- We accepted the challenge of President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper Initiative
- We opened the City of Buffalo Office of New Americans
- We partnered with NextDoor
- We launched the Buffalo Opportunity Pledge
- And, we developed an ongoing, regular dialogue with the Concerned Clergy Coalition of WNY

Today’s announcement came less than a year after Mayor Brown and the City of Buffalo hosted an important forum on community-police relations at Mt. Olive Baptist Church. BPD21C incorporates recommendations from that discussion as well as recommendations for best practices from President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the United States Conference of Mayors.

Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, said: “Earlier this year the Conference of Mayors Working Group of Mayors and Police Chiefs issued a set of recommendations for strengthening police-community relations in America’s cities. One of those recommendations calls on police departments “to use non-traditional means to attract recruits who are representative of the diversity in the community.” Mayor Brown’s Police Academy Scholarship Program, which emphasizes recruitment of minorities, women and new Americans, is just such an effort. We applaud Mayor Brown and the City of Buffalo for developing this initiative and look forward to being able to share information on it with other mayors and their cities.”

"NYCOM is proud to have one of its member cities introduce such a unique and innovative police department recruitment program," said Peter A. Baynes, New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM) Executive Director. "The importance of diversity in law enforcement cannot be emphasized enough and clearly Mayor
Brown understands this. By introducing the BPD21C initiative, he is taking a bold step toward enhancing and improving police-community relations in the City of Buffalo. We hope that other local governments will be able to replicate what we believe will be an effective minority recruitment strategy.”

“On behalf of the Executive Board, chapters, and members of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), we applaud and support the efforts of the city of Buffalo to further strengthen its Police Department by launching its 21st Century Police Academy Scholarship Program,” stated Gregory A. Thomas, NOBLE National President.

Clotilde-Perez-Bode-Dedecker, President/CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, stated, “I thank Mayor Byron Brown for launching this initiative, reinforcing that every sector of our community must continue to work toward fostering an inclusive workforce.”

Donna C. Ross of The National Black Police Association stated, “Diversity in a police force increases the department’s credibility with its community. Creating the BPD21C initiative is a significant achievement. We applauded Mayor Brown and the Buffalo Police Department on introducing this important initiative.”

Duane Diggs, President of Voice Buffalo, said, “We want to commend Mayor Brown for launching this police academy scholarship program, a pro-active step that will transform the tapestry of what local law enforcement looks like. We believe BPD21C is going to be a significant force that will lead to an even stronger relationship between the community and police.”

Eva Hassett, International Institute of Buffalo Executive Director, said, “Providing access to the Police Academy for the immigrant and refugee communities in Buffalo is vital to helping them trust police and feel safe. We applaud Mayor Brown for launching this initiative and the International Institute looks forward to working with Mayor Brown on BPD21C by identifying potential candidates for the police academy.”

Jessica Lazarin, Buffalo Office of New Americans Director, Director stated, “Members of Buffalo’s growing immigrant and refugee communities see Mayor Brown’s BPD21C initiative as an important step in opening doors for them to fully participate and integrate in the City of Buffalo.”

Lana D. Benatovich, President of NFJC of WNY, said, “Having just returned from the 2015 NFJC National Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas where I sat on a community-police relations panel, I’m so proud to be able to report back to our affiliates across the country about Mayor Brown’s BPD21C initiative that will diversify law enforcement and further enhance community-police relations in Buffalo.”

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for a BPD21C scholarship, City of Buffalo residents must complete and submit applications to the City’s Department of Human Resources by November 13, 2015. There are NO FEES for application or participation in this program. Complete application packets will be available at City Hall, at each District Police Station, at recruiting events throughout the City, and via the City’s website (www.city-buffalo.com) by downloading and printing an application, or by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Human Resources Department.

The WRITTEN ASSESSMENT will be administered on SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2015. Registrants will be assigned a city school location for the screening upon submission of their application. Preparation Guides for the Screening will be included in the application packet and PREPARATORY CLASSES will be offered to all registrants at the Buffalo Employment Training Center (BETC) and the Adult Learning Center.

BETC

- Friday mornings (TIME – To be determined)
- Four weeks - beginning 10/30 – 11/20
Adult Learning Center

- Four weeks - beginning 10/30 – 11/20
- DAYS OF WEEK – To be determined

Registrants must present a current NYS Driver’s License to sit for the Assessment on Saturday, November 21. The screenings will be held at 8:30 AM and will take several hours to complete.

After the written assessment has been scored, the top candidates who pass the assessment will be scheduled for PHYSICAL AGILITY TESTS, which will be administered according to the standards set by the Municipal Police Training Council of NYS and scored according to their methodology. After meeting the physical requirements, candidates will be scheduled for ORAL INTERVIEWS.

Upon the successful completion of all three of these components, and the verification that all of the QUALIFICATIONS have been met, up to 50 CITY OF BUFFALO RESIDENTS will be selected for a full scholarship to the Erie County-Erie Community College Central Police Services Law Enforcement Training Academy, which will commence on January 18, 2016. This is a full-time, 20 week commitment that requires candidates to attend the training academy at ECC North Campus. Scholarships will include: full cost of tuition, uniforms and books.

Qualifications for applicants include:

- CITY OF BUFFALO RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT / PROOF OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP
- VALID AND CLEAN DRIVER’S LICENSE
- AGE REQUIREMENT
  - APPLICANTS MUST BE AT LEAST 19 YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE THE DATE OF THE WRITTEN ASSESSMENT SCREENING
  - APPLICANTS WHO WILL BE 35 YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE JUNE 18, 2016 ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO PARTICIPATE
- CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK
- EDUCATION (High School Diploma / GED / Equivalency)

Candidates who successfully complete the program will receive 30 College Credits and a Certificate that deems them eligible for appointment as an officer in any peace or police department in New York State within two years from the date of graduation. Additionally, graduates will have acquired invaluable leadership training, life skills and readiness for careers in public safety and public service.

BPD21C TIMELINE

- October 17  Application Period Begins
- November 13  Application Deadline
- November 21  Written Assessment Screening
- December 8-10 Scholarship Finalists Notified
- December 11-14 Physical Agility Tests for Finalists
- December 16-22 Oral Interviews
- January 4-6  Scholarship Winners Notified
- January 18  Police Academy Begins
- June 3  Police Academy Ends

For more information, call the Civil Service Office at: 851-9614
On May 7, 2015, several leaders in the African American community met with city leadership and the Tacoma News Tribune to discuss concerns that the unrest that occurred in other cities could happen in Tacoma.

City leadership is committed to proactively addressing historical and present day sources of distrust and concerns about inequity and racism in the criminal justice system. Project PEACE (Partnering for Equity and Community Engagement), arose out of those discussions. City leadership then convened a planning committee of diverse members to guide the work.

Staff used the President's 21st Century Task Force Report as a model in developing the project. The primary focus was Pillar 1: Build Trust and Legitimacy, although the recommendations from community fell into every one of the pillars.

The Mission

The mission of Project PEACE is to build a foundation of trust between historically marginalized communities and law enforcement. Project PEACE was both a dialogue to understand the issues and a research project to inform Tacoma Police Department’s Strategic Planning Process. Some of the Project’s goals include:

- Fostering relationships between the Police Department and local community
- Providing transparency about policing processes and practices, and about ways of engaging the public; and
- Allowing the public to provide feedback to be considered during the Tacoma Police Department Strategic Planning Process.

Common themes emerged from the data and were categorized using the six-pillar framework from the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

The Partners Involved

Six Community Conversation sessions were hosted. Each session included a discussion of race issues, small break-out groups in which attendees shared their experiences with law enforcement (negatively and positively), and development of recommendations for Tacoma Police Department and the community.
In addition to community members, those involved included staff from the City of Tacoma’s Office of Equity & Human Rights and the City Manager’s Office, police officers, volunteers who served as small group facilitators, members of the Tacoma/Pierce County American Leadership Forum, note-takers, two consultants, and whole host of community members. Commissioned officers of all ranks also participated in the small break out discussions sharing their perspectives with the community.

Final Report

The Project PEACE final report took all the comments from the Community Conversations and categorized them using the six pillars. Tacoma Police Department’s Chief Ramsdell’s action plan was formatted using the pillars.

Advice for Other Communities

Tacoma’s approach could be replicated by other communities seeking to involve the public in strategic planning. Some lessons learned and thoughts to consider:

- At the onset of the planning stages with the various stakeholders, identify who the “right people” are so that strategies can be put into place to get the right folks there through a grassroots approach.
- When planning a project of this magnitude, always include a diverse group of community members.
- Be prepared to encounter disagreements and expect to make timeline adjustments (you can’t rush this process if you want it to be successful).
- Be transparent about your ability to implement the communities’ recommendations. Make sure your policymakers are involved, but let community drive the process.
- For law enforcement agencies, encourage officers to attend and participate in the conversation.
- Develop a communication strategy to keep the community informed of the progress and action items being implemented.

The Tacoma Police Department has created several action items from Project PEACE and plans on following them in order to build and maintain better relationships with the community, enhance their policing methods, increase quality of life, and prevent crime and disorder.

This blog post is part of a series highlighting best practices in advancing 21st century policing as part of the IACP Institute for Community-Police Relations (ICPR), particularly those that address recommendations from the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing final report. The Institute is funded through the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the Motorola Solutions Foundation.
LMPD realigning staff; creating full-time SWAT and Community Policing divisions
September 16, 2016

Changes meant to enhance public safety, boost community relations

In an effort to strengthen efforts to reduce violent crime, Mayor Greg Fischer and Louisville Metro Police Chief Steve Conrad today announced a realignment of LMPD personnel, including the creation of two new police divisions.

“The desire to live in a safe and peaceful community is universal, and the increase in crime that we and cities across the country are seeing is unacceptable,” said Mayor Fischer. “We’re taking short- and long-term steps to reduce violent crime, and these changes are part of that.”

Specifically, LMPD is:

- Creating a full-time SWAT Division, which will consist of approximately 20 officers trained as SWAT operators. Previously, the department relied on a part-time team consisting of officers, detectives and commanding officers who were also assigned to other duties in the department. With an uptick in the number of SWAT calls that was becoming increasingly inefficient, Chief Conrad said, noting that team members were frequently pulled from their normal duties, creating more work for other officers and detectives in the units where they were assigned and making it difficult to properly serve citizens. Establishing a full-time division also “allows us to more quickly deploy the officers who are most highly trained at handling the most volatile situations,” he said.
- Using a federal Community Oriented Policing (COPS) grant to hire 10 new officers and create a separate Community Services Division, which will be focused on building relationships with citizens, particularly in the highest crime communities. This division will include the existing School Resource Officer Program, Special Event Unit and Traffic Unit, as well as a new Community Policing Unit – which will focus efforts in building trust and legitimacy in the city’s most troubled neighborhoods. The new Community Services Division will be led by Major Curtis Flaherty, who for the past three years has served as the 7th Division commander.
- “I see these officers as allowing us to be more proactive about problems,” the Chief said. “I want these officers to truly be a resource for the community, and through partnerships with other service organizations in our community, I am looking to them to become a conduit of information for community resources.”
- Adding approximately 16 officers to create two new squads of detectives in the Narcotics Division. “We believe narcotics’ trafficking is connected to a significant part of the violent crime we have experienced this year, which warrants the additional personnel,” the Chief said.

Beyond the hires covered by the federal COPS grant, the staffing realignment announced today will not require additional funding.
Training Advisory Board

Also on Friday, the Chief outlined details about formation of a Training Advisory Board for LMPD’s Training Division. He said the board will consist of 12 civilian volunteers and four members from the LMPD, who will be invited to offer recommendations regarding various aspects of the LMPD training provided to recruits and sworn members.

“This board is another effort by LMPD to let citizens have a role in determining how they are policed and to build trust,” the Chief said.

Anyone interested in joining this board should go to the LMPD website to review the application and qualifications: http://www.LouisvilleKy.Gov/Government/Police.

21st Century Policing Community Forums

Chief Conrad also announced plans for several community forums designed to fully explain the six pillars of President Obama’s 21st Century Policing Guidelines, from which LMPD plans to build its community policing efforts. The first forum will be at 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22, 6 p.m. at the Louisville Urban League. It is open to the public, and the Mayor and Chief encouraged anyone interested to join in.

Mayor Fischer said today’s announcement is the first in a series that community leaders will be making over the coming weeks about steps being taken to make Louisville’s streets safer.

“While LMPD is very much focused on the challenges on our streets today, we have many people and partner agencies focused on helping us prevent the crimes of tomorrow by providing opportunities and hope where it sometimes seems lost,” the Mayor said.

Public Safety Website

Citing the administration’s commitment to transparency, the Mayor also reminded the community of a new web page that offers a comprehensive listing of the city’s public safety programs and updates. It can be found at louisvilleky.gov/government/public-safety-holistic-approach.

“We’ll be adding to it and updating it as needed,” he said. “Our goal is to make it as easy as possible for citizens to access and understand all the work that our police officers and Metro Government are doing to make our streets safe.”
Police social workers? Salt Lake City’s unusual program has scores of success stories

By MATTHEW PIPER | The Salt Lake Tribune

First Published Mar 28 2017 05:00AM • Last Updated Mar 28 2017 11:39 am

Community connection » A program that focuses on helping its clients resolve their issues and stay away from jail has drawn attention from other cities’ police departments.

First, Salt Lake City’s police department gave Eric Bird a citation. Then the department gave him a list of felon-friendly apartment complexes, two bus tokens and an affirming fist bump.

"Let's talk about some of your barriers to housing," said police social worker Debbie Davis in the department's inconspicuous Community Connection Center (CCC), not far from where Bird had been caught smoking spice on a downtown median. Bird is one of more than 3,200 walk-in clients seen at the center since it opened in July — many of them, like Bird, referred by officers policing the Rio Grande district’s homeless population.

Area law enforcement agencies made headlines in October with three sweeps they branded "Operation Diversion," in which 132 offenders were given a choice between treatment and jail. Of 68 who chose treatment, 51 absconded. The greater success story, says Salt Lake City Police Chief Mike Brown, is what the department’s newly hired social workers have accomplished through their daily work — straightforwardly termed "Operation Voluntary Clients." Of 320 people who’ve received a full assessment at the one-of-a-kind Community Connections Center since the end of Operation Diversion, 93 remain in treatment, while 92 await treatment availability. Other clients have been pointed toward resources for housing and employment, or sent on a Greyhound bus to families who are willing to help end their homelessness. The department pitched in to obtain supportive housing for one mentally ill man who had stayed at the 210 S. Rio Grande St. shelter on and off for 15 years and secured a housing voucher for another man who had slept at the shelter 1,000 consecutive nights. On a mid-February day, Bird spoke freely to Davis about his 2-year-old son, his ambition to return to school in the summer and his struggles staying clean — "I'm hot stuff in rehab," he said, regretfully.

Afterward, jittery and in need of a cigarette, Bird said his past history led him to doubt whether he'd ever fully address his mental health and substance abuse problems. Still, he said, "I'm glad this place is here."

"It's good to have someone that has all that stuff organized."

Triage • Lana Dalton's thin blinds do little to obscure her view of the bustling drug market at the corner of 200 South and 500 West. Instead, she focuses this afternoon on a gregarious man named Rodney, who has paid her a visit because, he says, "I've got some things I've got to talk about, and we don't have nobody to talk to."

Dalton is frank and unfiltered. One among an array of offbeat motivational materials in her office reads: "Sometimes life sucks ass, no matter how much love, light and patchouli you throw in its face."

The Community Connections Center's mission is short-term triage, not shooting the breeze, and while nearly a dozen people wait in the lobby, Dalton persuades Rodney to schedule an appointment before he returns. Next, she must inform a woman sent to Salt Lake City from Evanston, Wyo., that SLCPD will not be able to put her on a bus to stay with an Oregon friend until it clears an outstanding warrant with a prosecutor in Washington state.

"She's not going to be happy," Dalton predicts correctly.

It is Dalton's show. The City Council first budgeted for police social workers in 2015 at the insistence of now-Chairman Stan Penfold, and Dalton was hired that November to build a program that would be unlike any other in the nation.

Although many cops work alongside social workers, it is highly unusual for a police department to actually employ those social workers. In most comparable models, county health departments embed with police units.

"To do research on this is nearly impossible," Dalton said, "because it doesn't exist."

She added, laughing, "for good reason."
Some clients are victims or perpetrators in active cases. And while walk-in clients don’t get the federal privacy protections they would at a hospital, Dalton’s social workers adhere to their own ethics and licensing guidelines, she said. Brown said there was some internal frustration about that early on.

"Lana said, 'Look, we're social workers, and we're going to find out information about people that we can't share with you.' Cops were like, 'We need to know everything,' and Lana was like, 'No, you don't. Just trust us.' "

Soon, they said, the frustration gave way to gratitude. Dalton's staff is more qualified to solve many of the problems that officers encounter on calls in the area. About a quarter of the clients need treatment for substance abuse or mental-health problems, a fifth require housing and another fifth require transportation. One in 10 needs help finding employment. And one in 20 just wants to use a phone or computer.

"We're freed up a lot more," said homeless outreach Officer Michael McKenna. Added partner Brandi Palmer: "We'll have clients who we're trying to reach out to and they're really police-resistant." Social workers, she said, often have more luck. Davis said some clients will look over their shoulders in the bare-bones office to see who's listening, but "we really assure them that we are not police officers."

And while there may be complications about sharing information, there are advantages to having social workers attached to the department — like rapid deployment. "The window for providing help to some of these people is sometimes open for a very short time," Brown said. In one example, Dalton talked down a young man who had threatened to jump off an overpass. When he was released from supervised treatment, an internal report said her office planned to buy him a Greyhound ticket to attend his father's funeral.

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Rock bottom • Not everyone in the Rio Grande district is ready for that kind of help. Palmer, who has made outreach rounds with McKenna for 20 months, said that with some drug users, "You can tell them almost exactly what's going to happen, and they do it anyway." On a gusty day in late February, the duo was called to speak to an unkempt man loitering outside an apartment complex. "Daniel," shirtless beneath an unzipped Starter jacket, staggered and stared at the ground as though lost in thought or looking for something as the officers told him about the Community Connections Center.

The behavior is common with spice users, Palmer said. Free to go, Daniel stopped a few paces away to inspect some cigarette butts. "With just straight-up drug use, [a CCC visit] has to be something they want to do," Palmer said.

They have to hit bottom, McKenna said. "And rock bottom is relative," Palmer added. "Like, that's pretty rock bottom to me," she said, pointing to Daniel, "but he's cool."

Davis said the first thing the department’s social workers do is determine whether there’s a crisis that requires immediate treatment. They then assess a client’s housing situation, and then try to resolve lingering criminal and legal problems. Most have challenges that can't be worked through in a single conversation. Dustin Garcia, originally from Seattle, agreed to let The Salt Lake Tribune observe as he told Davis that he thought he’d finished a detox program with an understanding that officials would find an apartment. But there had been a disagreement about his treatment obligation, he said, and now he had nowhere to go. A return to the shelter would bring the inescapable temptation of heroin, he said. Among Garcia’s barriers to housing: a previous eviction and $17,000 in unpaid rent.

"I feel like I’ve got to take care of so many things," he said, pleading for motel vouchers that CCC didn't have to spare. "I’m not sure we have a solution for you today," she said. "Let’s come up with a plan for tonight, because I really want you to work on your sobriety." Dalton said many people have the misconception that homelessness is about “getting a job,” but it’s "way more complex than that." "If you ask anybody down here, 100 percent would say it wasn't my intention to become homeless, shooting up heroin on [a traffic] island."

Her staff members "have to be flexible, innovative, and willing to throw out their day plans and just roll with what's going to happen next," she said, "because they just don't know." Last week, she hired a fourth social worker. The office also includes a therapist, two part-time drivers and two office technicians. The department has hosted visits from the City University of New York and police departments in Anaheim, Calif., and Mesa, Ariz., with interest also expressed by Physicians for Criminal Justice Reform, based in Atlanta, and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, based in Houston. Anaheim police Lt. Bob Dunn said Salt Lake City's department was already reputed to be one of the nation's best at homeless outreach, prompting his visit late last year, and he found the nascent caseworker program "really cool."

Though it’s "not all rainbows and unicorns," Dalton said, she was surprised that officers have greeted them with the same camaraderie that they afford one another. "They're tired of being the default social worker," she said, "because that is not their job." Not anymore, at least.
In a city reeling from 200 killings, a Baltimore police fortress gets a makeover

By Steve Hendrix

July 26, 2017

Maj. Sheree Briscoe welcomes residents to Baltimore’s renovated Western District police station for a July community meeting. (Kate Patterson/for The Washington Post)

Maj. Sheree Briscoe stood at the front of her police station like an armed hostess at a housewarming party. “Welcome, welcome,” she said holding the door for a group of older neighborhood women coming up the stairs of Baltimore’s Western District police station, past the new burbling fountain and the outdoor phone charging stations, over the Thurgood Marshall quote carved into the pristine cement. “Here comes Miss Pearl. Oh my gosh, you brought your mama with you? I’m so glad you’re here.”

On a sweltering July evening, the women were arriving for a community meeting, one of the first since workers completed a $4.5 million renovation — largely privately funded — meant not only to update the 1950s-era building, but also to transform the city’s most beleaguered police station from fearsome to friendly.

“It’s a blessing to be able to welcome people back to the Western District,” said Briscoe, the station’s commander, as she directed residents to the former courtroom that has been converted into a high-tech (and heavily air-conditioned) community collaboration room. “We want everyone to feel comfortable coming here.”

Devastated by riots in 2015 after the death of Freddie Gray, Baltimore is grappling with a record-setting spike in homicides — 199 so far this year, with what appeared to the 200th Wednesday afternoon, compared to 62 in slightly larger Washington — and a massive overhaul of the department under a Justice Department consent decree. Amid the relentless violence and internal turmoil, Baltimore is joining a growing list of cities betting that a better police station can lead to better policing.

From Brooklyn to Los Angeles, cities are folding the ideals of community policing into station blueprints, hoping their design can help close the growing divide between the people who work in the buildings and those who live around them.
“We’ve been hearing from chiefs and mayors all over the country,” said Leigh Christy, an architect at Perkins and Will, who has worked on station renovations in Los Angeles.

The West Baltimore outpost that reopened earlier this month features a public garden, free WiFi and — a rarity in this neighborhood — a pair of public restrooms. For their part, police have a state-of-art fitness center and spacious locker rooms, along with a lactation room and a place to launder the uniforms that are routinely soiled by urban police work.

The visitors admired the bright lobby and noted the uplifting sentiments embedded in the winding garden path (“Trust,” “Rebirth,” “Unity.”)

“It really doesn’t even feel like a police station,” said one of the meeting attendees.

But outside the station, where the city is reeling from one of the country’s highest per capita homicide rates, it was easy to find skeptics.

“All the things going in West Baltimore, and they decided what they really needed to do was make the police feel more comfortable?” asked Ray Kelly, a longtime Sandtown activist and president of the No Boundaries Coalition. “It’s going to take a lot more than a pretty building to make people around here want to go talk to the police.”

William Brown doesn’t begrudge the officers a few amenities in their workplace. “When you come in from the battlefield, you need a place to decompress,” said Brown, 60, as he sat on the stoop of his house across from the station, where he has lived for 36 years.

But he doesn’t expect the friendly public face to last. think they did this with goodwill, but it’s not going to stay this way, it never does,” he said. “In a few months the ‘No Loitering’ signs will go up.”

‘They shut the place down’

For years, the Western District station has squatted on Mount Street, a bunker in the middle of a troubled city’s most violent precinct. With blacked-out windows and high walls, the station had hardened into a symbol of police isolation well before the police van carrying the fatally injured Gray pulled up in 2015.

After the riots that followed Gray’s death, even starker barriers went up between the cops and the community. Jersey walls and fences blocked access to the station. The community council meetings that had been regularly held at the station were moved to a nearby Baptist church and residents of Sandtown-Winchester felt even more cut off.

“They just shut the place down,” said Elder Harris, the longtime pastor of Newborn Community of Faith Church who remembers when the station was opened in 1958 at a time when residents knew all the officers by name. “It became a gated community.”

Now police are hoping that a brighter, more open building will bring a dubious neighborhood back in.

“The idea is to create a place where citizens feel welcome and where cops want to work,” said Scott Plank, brother of Under Armour chief executive Kevin Plank and the founder of War Horse Cities, a nonprofit development company. The Baltimore Ravens donated to the effort (the
community room is painted Ravens purple in recognition), along with other local businesses and philanthropies. The city reportedly put up about $1.5 million of its own.

The station’s once forbidding entrance has been stripped of the opaque window screens that blocked all views into the station. A high wall has been replaced with wide front steps that are emblazoned with Thurgood Marshall’s exhortation to recognize “the humanity of our fellow beings.” A freshly planted garden path fills one half of the entry lot; a competitive Zen fountain sits on the other and behind the garden bench a cellphone charging station is meant to invite passing residents to stop and take advantage of the free WiFi.

A neighborhood group meets inside the Western District police station, which got a $4.5 million makeover designed to ease tensions between the cops and the community. (Kate Patterson/for The Washington Post)

The back-of-the-house features a state-of-art fitness center with yoga pads, medicine balls and free weights. The decrepit bathrooms with lead pipes and undrinkable water have been replaced with bright stone-lined showers and LED lighting.

In a converted cell block are spacious locker rooms modeled after those used at Under Armour’s corporate campus. The new lockers include gun safes and — in a nod to the unrest that gripped West Baltimore two years ago — enough room to store riot gear. The wall between the men’s and women’s locker room is movable and can be adjusted to fit the gender balance at the station, which is about 20 percent female in the Western District.

“We also added a small bunk room that will double as a lactation room,” said Ana Castro, the Baltimore architect who worked on the design.

There is still a clear divide between the public and police sides of the building. While the lobby is as spacious and sun-filled as one of Under Armour’s retail stores, the sergeant’s desk has been placed behind a thick sheet of plexiglass, a move to help officers feel secure in part of the city where hostility toward police remains strong.

“It’s still a dangerous place,” Castro said. “Policing is still a dangerous business.”

‘Hard to measure’

The balance between access and safety is one police departments across the country are trying to strike. In Chicago, the architectural firm led by MacArthur “genius” grant recipient Jeanne Gang has championed the concept of the “polis station,” a mixed-use facility of gyms, housing and green space for use by cops and residents alike.

Few cities are as far along as Los Angeles, where the 1992 Rodney King riots eventually led to a $600 million bond measure devoted to rehabbing — and rethinking — police stations. The chief imperative was busting the fortress-forms that had dominated public safety architecture in the city since the 1950s, particularly in the violence- and scandal-plagued Rampart Division, west of downtown Los Angeles.

L.A. officials sought to convert a bunker that was a effectively a no-go zone for many residents into a welcoming neighborhood entity. Foreshadowing the choices Baltimore designers would
make years later, designers replaced walls and barriers with lawns and landscaping and filled the interior with light.

“In the old Rampart station, the only public space was about 300 square feet right in front of the desk,” said Los Angeles Police Department Chief Charles Beck, who was captain of the Rampart Division at the time of the redesign. “The new one has about an acre of lawn that is used by the public every day. You’d see people sitting on blankets there right now.”

Whether the changes actually improve police-community relations or lower crime is a hard question, even for supporters of the approach. Beck, who thinks the changes have helped in Rampart, said architecture is an invaluable chance for a department to express its values in concrete-and-glass form. But there is little research to test the role of station design in policing.

“Is there a statistic that says opening up the front entrance produces a 10 percent reduction in crime?” Christy asked. “No. Some of this is hard to measure.”

In Baltimore, activists say they are less concerned with the research than with ongoing violence crisis.

Harris, who lived near the station for more than 30 years, said he was glad to hear about the free WiFi and happy the officers had better working conditions. But he would rather see money spent on the neighborhood’s dire need for addiction treatment.

“This is window dressing,” he said.

Kelly, too, said the new station was far down on his list of priorities. But he expressed confidence in Briscoe.

“If this helps her do her job, fine,” Kelly said. “But I don’t see it.”
Columbia’s Beyond the Badge – Community Engagement through Community Service

Posted on September 16, 2016 by iacpblog

The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing offers several recommendations for building better relationships between law enforcement officers and the community that they serve, including:

- initiating positive nonenforcement activities to engage communities
- embracing a guardian mindset
- working with community members to produce meaningful public safety results

The Columbia, South Carolina, Police Department’s Beyond the Badge program is an excellent example of many of those recommendations at work. The Beyond the Badge program is an effort to help new Columbia police officers connect and create meaningful relationships with the community that they will serve. The program was developed and implemented earlier this year by Deputy Chief Melton Kelly. This program is an opportunity for recent training academy graduates to help those in need in the Columbia community. Before kicking off their law enforcement careers, the officers spend a week serving food, assisting at a food bank, reading to students, preparing food for the homeless, playing BINGO with the elderly, and mentoring children. The Department collaborates with several different service locations in the area to set up the opportunities.

The Beyond the Badge program gives each officer exposure to the hands-on service and outreach approach that the Department takes to community policing. Officers gain an appreciation and an understanding of the various community services and resources available. Through this opportunity, officers can better determine which program or service location can best assist citizens with their respective needs. Officers also learn that there is much more than law enforcement involved in the job, including public service, compassion, and goodwill.

The community, especially the community involved with the service locations, have had a very positive response to the program. Each of the individuals involved with the program come away with a different, positive outlook on community policing. The community members enjoy getting to know the officers in a nonenforcement setting.

Thirty-seven officers have gone through the community service week since it began, and the Department hopes to continue the program for every graduating officer from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy headed to the Columbia Police Department. Beyond the Badge has been well received by the officers, the community, and the media. The Department will continue its great community service work by expanding the service locations that are included in the program.

This blog post is part of a series highlighting best practices in advancing 21st century policing as part of the IACP Institute for Community-Police Relations. Columbia is one of fifteen sites selected for participation in the Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative, a joint project of the COPS Office, CNA, and the IACP to highlight agencies who are actively embracing the principles in the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.
'Pathways to Policing' adds diversity to Twin Cities law enforcement

Metro area police departments recruiting non-traditional officers

Ivory Hecker, KARE 7:20 PM. CDT July 07, 2017

SAINT LOUIS PARK, Minn. -- Six Twin Cities police departments are thinking outside the box when it comes to recruits. They're putting extra attention on hiring a police force that matches the demographics of the community it represents, and they're removing barriers that could keep some non-traditional officers from joining the force.

The new program is called "Pathways to Policing." The Bloomington and Saint Louis Park police chiefs say they first began working on a new recruitment program in early 2016 after struggling to find enough recruits of diverse backgrounds.

"A police department that reflects its community demographic will get more trust from its community," said Bloomington Police Chief Jeff Potts.

He and Saint Louis Park Police Chief Mike Harcey modeled it after a program offered by the Minnesota State Patrol. Four more metro police agencies joined the program, including Eagan, Metropolitan Airports Commission, Maplewood and Hastings.

It came to fruition last month when 12 new recruits began the intensive training program offered through "Pathways to Policing" at Hennepin Technical College.

The program condenses two years of training into four months of long training days. The police trainees end the program in October, and those who complete the program successfully will join the police force, said Chief Harcey.

Police trainees are paid wages and benefits during the training period.

"For myself, I couldn't afford it at the time so for this program to pay for the schooling -- pay us while we're going. We have a guaranteed job as long as we complete everything successfully -- it's a phenomenal program," said Saint Louis Park Police trainee Maurice Lashawn Smith, Jr.

Candidates must have a minimum of a two-year associate of arts degree and many are transitioning from another line of work.

Chief Potts says 67 percent of the new recruits through "Pathways to Policing" are racially diverse.

The Minnesota State Legislature approved funding for this and future "Pathways to Policing" programs. Chief Potts says so far a date has not yet been set for the next round of "Pathways to Policing."