



Subject: Proposed Community Policing Recommendations	
Meeting Date: September 28, 2021 Report Date: September 20, 2021	Staff Member: C. Olushola Taylor, Management Analyst Facilitators: Bill de la Cruz, Lillian Tsai & Tara Cooper Department: City Manager’s Office
Action Required <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Agenda	Advisory Board/Commission Recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Denial <input type="checkbox"/> None Forwarded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable Comments:
Staff Recommendation: Direct staff to move forward with presenting proposed recommendations at the community policing dialog wrap-up event.	
Recommended Language for Motion: Not applicable	
Project / Issue Relates To: Community Policing Dialog	
Issue before Council (Highlight Policy Question): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Goals/Priorities <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted Master Plan(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL

Council discussion and direction to staff regarding proposed community policing recommendations.

BACKGROUND

On June 22, 2021, facilitators and City staff presented findings from the community policing dialog that took place during the spring. The outreach process focused on feedback from three viewpoints:

- 1) Overarching Community Perspectives and Interactions: 86% of focus group and survey participants feel comfortable calling the LOPD when needed, and 74% of all participants believe that Lake Oswego police are trustworthy. Of the 85% of survey participants who have interacted with the LOPD, 80% reported having positive experiences.

Although community members noted varying experiences with the LOPD, 98% of all survey respondents said they feel safe in Lake Oswego. Low crime rate, good neighborhoods, a close-knit community and the police were listed as factors contributing to an overall sense of safety.

- 2) Perspectives of Lake Oswego Community Members of Color: As part of the data analysis process, all survey and some focus group responses from community members of color were compared to white community members to identify potential patterns in sentiments about policing in Lake Oswego. Both groups report a similar level of satisfaction with policing in Lake Oswego, as 63% of Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) participants positively described policing in Lake Oswego compared to 61% of white respondents. White survey respondents have a more positive perception of Lake Oswego police officers, a more satisfactory opinion of community-police relations (61% in comparison to 37% of BIPOC survey participants), and would feel more comfortable calling the police when needed.

Overall, community members of color have a lower sense of trust and safety in Lake Oswego due to interactions with officers and other community members about race.

- 3) Policing in Lake Oswego-An Internal Perspective: Some of the community-based practices reported as working well for the LOPD are being reasonable during every interaction, treating each call uniquely, and seeking to exceed community expectations of law enforcement services as summarized by the “no call too small” motto. Officers also mentioned non-enforcement opportunities such as community events as a positive avenue for community interaction. Dispatchers noted that while police officers do not have as many opportunities for engagement, customer service is integral as they are the first point of contact in assisting the community.

When asked how to better interact with community members who have varying experiences with law enforcement, LOPD members discussed non-enforcement interactions without wearing uniforms. Officers observed that the department could do more to inform the public about what their jobs entail and how they can assist and respond to the community’s needs.

DISCUSSION

Based on the information collected from the community kickoff event, focus groups and surveys, facilitators propose recommendations to directly address themes presented to Council this past June. The recommendations seek to provide an outline of *what* next steps should be to strengthen the LOPD and its relationship with the community. Items listed after each recommendations section are specific examples of implementation to help guide Council discussion.

Theme I: Communication and Reporting

The data from the survey, focus groups, and community dialogs reveal a disconnect between community perceptions and current day-to-day policing practices. This includes what is expected of officers in terms of duties and staffing, training, and other resources allocated to the LOPD. Similarly, there was feedback from both inside the LOPD and from the community about the lack of information being communicated from the police department. LOPD focus group members stated concerns about insufficient presence on social media as an effective avenue for the department to share their own stories.

The LOPD motto “no call too small” was brought up in many focus groups. Community perceptions were varied, with some focus group members believing some calls are too small while other focus group participants view the motto as an appropriate approach to policing.

Recommendations for LOPD Communication and Reporting

- 1) Provide a report to Council at least once per year that includes:
 - Use of force data
 - STOP data
 - Crime rates and trends
 - Complaints
 - Department demographics
 - Changes in policies, practices, or laws

- 2) Develop and execute a communications plan that:
 - Is integrated with the City’s communications plan
 - Educates community about department practices, positions and activities
 - Shares information about crime in Lake Oswego
 - Shares stories of positive outcomes

While the LOPD regularly uses social media, there is no formal communications plan about sharing information related to policing practices and community interactions. There should be ongoing discussions within the department to identify best practices with the goal of informing and educating the public through social media and other platforms.

Theme I Implementation Example: Lead community discussions about expectations for varied law enforcement responses to calls for service.

Theme II: Opportunities for Engagement Between Community Members and Police Department

There were a number of comments about the community's desire to get to know officers as human beings and members of the community. Police officers also wanted more opportunities and multiple avenues to speak and engage with community members.

Recommendations for LOPD Community Engagement

- 1) Further develop community engagement activities by:
 - Reassessing existing LOPD sponsored events to determine opportunities for engagement with diverse community members
 - Continuing to proactively seek community partnerships with local businesses and community-based organizations

- 2) Create a culturally responsive public engagement plan for the LOPD leadership team

Theme II Implementation Example: Explore use of alternative uniforms for community engagement events.

Theme III: LOPD Training and Development

Three primary observations emerged related to training and development. First, police focus group participants stated that the bias trainings were relevant and interesting but did not necessarily lead to changes in practices or policies, as officers reported already interacting with the community in a manner that does not perpetuate bias.

Second, female LOPD officers noted being perceived as less competent or less confident by their male colleagues. There was a desire for officers to have expanded bias awareness training and workshops about gender microaggressions with the goal of creating awareness and understanding about the roles and experiences of women in law enforcement.

Lastly in surveys and focus groups, community members discussed the need for variations in law enforcement responses to calls that involve youth and mental health incidents.

Recommendations for LOPD Training and Development

The City led with race during the community policing dialog by seeking input from all who live, work and recreate in Lake Oswego, especially the voices of people from racially underrepresented groups. This lens was used to identify how systemic racism affects policing in Lake Oswego. Community members of color provided valuable feedback about how to better engage with BIPOC, whereas internal LOPD focus groups highlighted the need for ongoing professional development opportunities and continued workplace support for female officers.

LOPD should adopt a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that fosters gender equity within the department. The majority of police officer positions in the United States are filled by men. In Oregon, approximately 11% of officers are women according to a 2018 [report by the Federal Bureau of Investigation](#); 13% of Lake Oswego's sworn officers are women. By integrating gender equity into hiring and promotion, training, internal practices and department discussions, the LOPD will be able to:

- Further examine how gender biases found within American law enforcement structures impact the department
- Sustain the culture shift necessary to create a safe environment for all its employees
- Attract diverse candidates
- Better reflect the demographics of the Lake Oswego community

Approaches implemented to address gender equity should be inclusive of people who are non-binary.

The recommendations outlined below will help LOPD: 1) identify barriers to recruiting, retaining and promoting women and BIPOC officers, and 2) provide diversified responses to calls for service.

Hiring and Promotions

- 1) Update recruitment and hiring practices to be more fluid and adaptable to hire diverse candidates
- 2) Cultivate retention strategies for underrepresented groups already in LOPD
- 3) Analyze hiring data to inform strategies to increase diversity of applicant pool
- 4) Examine current practices in developing more diversity (women and BIPOC) in the leadership pipeline

Training

- 1) Incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) topics into a mandatory training program that includes:
 - Meeting a minimum number of hours per year
 - Use of experiential exercises and case studies to demonstrate integration of knowledge into roles, practices, duties and routines
 - Evaluating effectiveness and saliency of current training
 - Updating current training for relevance
 - Continuing training that supports dispatch practice of questioning callers to prevent law enforcement response to lawful behavior

Practices

- 1) Provide contextualized responses appropriate for different calls using staff who are:
 - Non-sworn

- Behavioral/mental health trained
- Youth-trained

2) Deploy body cams

Theme III Implementation Example: Offer cultural awareness education inclusive of the racial context and history of BIPOC and its impact on current law enforcement policies, practices and protocols.

Theme IV: Community Engagement and Community Bias

While outreach intentionally centered around the experiences of interacting and working for the LOPD, both internal and community-based focus groups noted that many of the calls and experiences related to racial profiling came from Lake Oswego community members as opposed to data revealing negative profiling by Lake Oswego police officers. While ongoing implicit bias training for Lake Oswego police officers is recommended, the entire community would benefit from more community dialog about implicit bias.

The facilitators support the recommendations related to the Equity Program Manager position as described by the Lake Oswego Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force recommendations and outlined below. The duties for this position provide the foundation necessary to move forward both the LOPD and the City as a whole in its efforts to become increasingly inclusive and welcoming.

- 1) Continue to operationalize DEI Task Force Recommendations with a law enforcement lens.
 - Establish relationships with existing community-based organizations that are women, BIPOC, people with disabilities, veteran and LGBTQ+-focused, which will:
 - Provide feedback and insights to City Council, the Mayor, City Manager, LOPD and other stakeholders about the shared vision of DEI in Lake Oswego
 - Create opportunities for community members of color and other marginalized groups to take part in decision making processes that impact City services
 - Be a resource to the Equity Program Manager and DEI Advisory Board
 - Develop strategies for ongoing community dialog
 - Foster partnerships with businesses and organizations that connects the City with underrepresented groups and communities
 - Establish recruitment and retention strategies to increase the diversity of the City's workforce
 - Provide consistent and ongoing internal and external community messaging about DEI

- Share achievements, areas of improvement and best practices related to DEI implementation strategies across City departments
- Develop a comprehensive training and development program that supports implementation of DEI strategies

Theme IV Implementation Example: Collaboration between City Council and community partners to offer facilitated conversations about bias and its impact in Lake Oswego.

Next Steps

After feedback from Council at the September 28 meeting, the proposed recommendations will be:

- Presented to the public for feedback in October
- Revised based on input received from the community wrap-up event
- Presented to Council again for approval

Once recommendations are finalized, Staff will create an action plan for implementing recommendations, which will include timeframe and fiscal impact.