

The City of Falcon Heights Inclusion and Policing Task Force

Overview of Recommendations

Background and Overview of the Process

The Falcon Heights Task Force on Inclusion and Policing was charged by the City Council to articulate community values, identify community needs, and recommend programming and policies to be an inclusive and welcoming place for residents and guests of Falcon Heights.

The Task Force is comprised of 11 committed individuals with diverse experiences and perspectives. Since December, they have met for 13 regular task force meetings. To develop a set of recommendations on policing and second set of recommendations on inclusion, the task force deliberated thoughtfully, engaged extensively with the interested public through four community conversations (involving 142 individuals), consulted with subject matter experts in four priority areas (policing, police-community relationships, citizen oversight boards, and joint powers authorities), and had individual dialogues with other residents and guests of Falcon Heights.

The policing recommendations lay out a set of goals for policy implementation and change relating to restoring mutual safety and trust for community members and police. The final version of the policing recommendations was adopted by the City Council on May 24, 2017.

The inclusion recommendations provide a Statement of Community Values, and a series of recommendations on building a more inclusive Falcon Heights. The foundation of all of the recommendations is that fundamental issues of inclusion and exclusion have left many people feeling that they do not fully belong in our community. As we, as a community, pursue specific implementation actions, we need to sustain an all-encompassing commitment to fight racism and other kinds of discrimination and exclusion. We need to do relational, financial, legal, and occupational development work to address inequity and build trust so that everyone is included in our community. The final version of the inclusion recommendations was adopted by the City Council on June 14, 2017. At this time, the Council also unanimously agreed to seek grants and allocate funds in upcoming city budgets to dedicate skilled staff attention to sustaining this work.

In conjunction with the Task Force meetings, more than 140 people have participated in a series of Community Conversations. The dialogue and feedback has been used to develop and shape the recommendations. Full summaries of each community conversation can be found on City's website, www.falconheights.org.

- Conversation 1 - February 16, 2017: Conversations focused on personal and community values.
- Conversation 2 - March 2, 2017: Participants helped develop options for how the City can live out the Community's values in its activities, policies, and policing policies and practices.
- Conversation 3 - April 3, 2017: Participants reviewed and provided feedback on draft policing recommendations.
- Conversation 4 - May 1, 2017: Participants shared their thoughts on what is needed for transformational change to begin and each made a personal commitment.
- Conversation 5 - June 19, 2017: This conversation will focus on commemoration of the work accomplished and move towards next steps for the community.

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Statement of Community Values

We assert and uphold these values for our community, including residents and guests, in our relationships with one another and in city government services, leadership, and policies.

Leadership. We aspire to become known for our leadership in creating community relationships of mutual respect and welcome, for equity in service to the community, and for working to recognize and heal historic patterns of disparity and exclusion.

Trust, transparency, and accountability. We believe that mutual well-being is created through mutual trust. We value relationships of mutual respect, learning, and honesty in communication among community members and city government. We value transparency, communication, and respecting diverse perspectives in governance.

Equity, justice, and anti-discrimination. We value protecting and treating all residents and visitors equally and fairly under the law. We value equity in the provision of public services and in the city's response to concerns. We recognize the persistent work we must do, individually and collectively, to reject and remedy prejudice, bias, and discrimination within individuals, the community, and in our government and policing.

Welcome and inclusion. We value diversity, welcoming all people with respect and dignity, and creating authentic relationships that honor our shared humanity despite our differences. We aspire to harmonize the needs of all while understanding varied individual needs, across generations, across racial or ethnic or religious groups, and across other aspects of our rich identities. We recognize the need to work together to heal and overcome divisions in our community. We commit to work continuously to forge strong relationships and to be a place where everyone is recognized and welcomed as part of our community.

Awareness. We value seeking diverse perspectives, listening with an open mind, and taking time to learn from others. We commit to recognizing and working to address our individual and collective biases.

Courageous Action. We value taking individual and collective responsibility to uphold these values, including having the courage to name and confront problems and to pursue solutions and healing when these values are not upheld. We recognize that everyone has the responsibility for being engaged and challenge others when we see or hear hurtful actions or comments.

Safety. We value safety, including protecting residents and guests from personal harm and protecting groups from prejudice, discrimination, and hostility. Respect for life and minimizing harm to all are our highest priorities in public safety and policing. We believe that mutual safety is built through mutual trust.

Inclusion Recommendations

Created by the Task Force with Community Input

Adopted unanimously by City Council on June 14, 2017

Summary of Inclusion Recommendations

Below is the high level summary of the recommendations. Full details are provided in the following pages.

Recommendation: Sustain City commitment through: creating a Truth, Racial Reconciliation, and Healing Committee of some kind; dedicating substantial City staff time to this work; and re-framing existing City resources to bring attention to equity.

Recommendation: Invest significantly to address persistent sources of disparities and exclusion.

Recommendation: Promote reconciliation, healing, and inclusion through connecting Falcon Heights with community partners doing excellent work in these areas.

Recommendation: Support and sponsor events within the community to foster inclusion.

Overarching Value for All Inclusion Recommendations

Address the sources of exclusion. The context and premise of these recommendations is that fundamental issues of inclusion and exclusion have left many people feeling that they do not fully belong in our community. As we pursue specific implementation actions, we need to sustain an all-encompassing commitment to fight racism and other kinds of discrimination and exclusion. The following implementation suggestions are starting points for comprehensive work that needs to be done to build relationships across difference, to build trust in the community among those who have felt left out, and to work on building the financial, legal, and occupational resources of excluded groups.

Process for Implementation of these Recommendations

Across all of the full inclusions recommendations, these principles should be applied:

Create two special resources to mobilize implementation and accountability of these recommendations. Specifically, the Task Force strongly recommends that the City Council make a commitment to create and sustain these two structures, for at least 3-5 years. It is critical that the city make this commitment now to sustain the work over this period, to make sure that this work lifts off and is sustained.

- 1) Create a dedicated Truth, Racial Reconciliation, and Healing Committee of some kind to have responsibility for sustaining attention and accountability for these recommendations.
- 2) Dedicate city staff time (through reassigning existing staff time or expanding capacity through consulting or new staffing) to forge partnerships, find grants, and recruit and support volunteers to accomplish all of these efforts.

Make continuous efforts. Inclusion is never done. We need to be continually attentive to how accessible and inclusive we, as a city, are being, and keep recommitting ourselves to improvement.

Use what we have. Whenever possible, we recommend integrating these ideas into structures that are already in place. For example, we recommend enhancing the welcome packet for new residents to include resources for building connections across differences.

Inclusion is community-based work. City government and leaders have a key role to play, but the City is not the only source of leadership and action for community healing and reconciliation. We recognize and value the work of other community organizations and volunteers, and ask that the City Council commit city staff effort (through a reassignment or an expansion of staffing capacity) to build its own capacity to participate and to support these efforts.

Invest resources. In some cases, we are simply recommending that successful, existing programs and systems be sustained or re-framed. In other cases, we recommend new investments to leverage new opportunities. For example, the city could amplify the work of community organizations and volunteers by enhancing the city website, providing training or other support for community volunteers, or writing grants to expand partnerships with community institutions that have skill and passion for this work.

Provide a variety of options and avenues for people to get involved. Inclusion means providing variety in the types of activities to appeal to different people's styles, skills, and availability. Varying the times and locations, providing childcare, and minimizing cost will make opportunities more accessible.

Complete Inclusion Recommendations

Recommendation: Invest significantly to address persistent sources of disparities and exclusion.


- Provide workshops to support people to build their knowledge and resources for legal, financial, and occupational opportunities and rights. This is an important step to address inequity.
- Build up career pathways program for low-income or minority youth. Other communities have had success with a variety of models for summer employment, internships, apprenticeship, and small enterprise development programs through partnerships among local high schools, businesses, business associations, and city government.
- Invest in continuously sustaining and expanding affordable housing options.

Recommendation: Promote reconciliation, healing, and inclusion through connecting Falcon Heights with community partners doing excellent work in these areas.

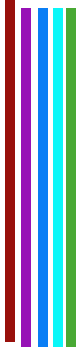
For example:

- Partner with the Science Museum of Minnesota, to expand Falcon Heights participation in their programming on race and our shared humanity.
- Work with the Minnesota Historical Society, Ramsey County Recorder’s Office and Registrar of Titles Office, or The Historyapolis Project at Augsburg College to support documentation and research to make visible historic policies and patterns, such as redlining and racially restrictive property covenants, that continue to shape our community.
- Partner with Ramsey County Libraries to launch a “book of the year” or ongoing book clubs for people interested in expanding their knowledge of diverse cultures and history.
- Recognize and promote the potential of local businesses to support this work. For example, encourage residents to hold community gatherings in their spaces, advertise that guests driving through the city can provide feedback on the community by stopping in local businesses, or involve local employers in youth development programs.
- Expand partnerships with the University of Minnesota to bring more attention specifically to these areas of work. The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, the Art of Hosting community of practice, and The Center for integrative Leadership have already supported this work, but there are many other options for partnership.
- Work with foundations that are committed to improving diversity and inclusion, restorative justice, police-community relationships, or related issues, to secure funding or direct technical assistance for the programming, training, or events listed here. The Task Force’s research suggests that the Wilder Foundation, Bush Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, JAMS Foundation and the St. Paul or Minneapolis Foundations may be interested. The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice has resources and toolkits.
- Work with existing organizations to provide support and training on how to build relationships across differences. Living Room Conversations provides tools and resources to allow people to connect and hear different perspectives in small group conversations. There are a number of training programs operating nationwide that have resources, including: Hope in the Cities; Sustained Dialogue; Alaska Native Dialogues on Racial Equity Toolkit; Training for Change; and Race Forward –Racial Equity Impact Assessment. Arts can be a way for people to connect; Intermedia Arts in the Twin Cities or Laundromat Art Project out of New York City do this kind of work.

Recommendation: Build commitment and capacity through re-framing existing City resources.

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- Use the city website and newsletter to emphasize the importance of this work and make it accessible. On the city website, ensure that information about our values, resources for community work on inclusion, and opportunities to participate are accessible, timely, and easy to find. Expand the newsletter to consistently include highlights on diversity and inclusion and push people to new opportunities and resources on the website.
 - Expand the city's information packets for block parties to include resources on how to build relationships across differences, from having courageous conversations to knowing where to turn for help with neighbor disputes.
 - Use the newsletter and website to support the related work that other community groups are doing, for example to promote events in the schools.
 - Use the neighborhood welcome packet to emphasize that all are welcome, and provide resources to new community members. Find a way to partner with landlords so they have the most up to date packets to share with new tenants.
 - Sustain and expand city trainings on implicit bias and de-escalation. We suggest that these be open not only to city staff, but sometimes also to residents and others who are interested. Other communities have very successfully strengthened their commitments and capacities by having diverse groups of people go through the training together. This could be an exciting programming opportunity to explore with foundations.
 - Embed diversity and inclusion awareness and skill development into the summer camps offered through the city.
 - Use the park and recreation event structure that is already in place to advertise opportunities to participate and to hire temporary employees support learning circles, book or movie clubs, or trainings on how to have courageous conversations.

Recommendation Support and sponsor events within the community to foster inclusion.

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- Continue to host the events currently in place (ice cream socials, block parties), but enhance them by having special activities, resource people, or information to engage people in building relationships across difference.
 - Keep the community conversations going, to intentionally bring people together but also allowing for organic relationship building. Foundation support may be available to support this.
 - Host book and/or movie clubs and discussions relevant to racial inequity and inclusion topics.
 - Connect events with the work the Community Engagement Commission is already doing.

Policing Recommendations

**Adopted by the City Council on
May 24, 2017**

Summary of Policing Recommendations

Below is the high level summary of the recommendations. Full details are provided in the following pages.

Recommendation: Police-Community Relationships

- **Mutual Safety is built through Mutual Trust.**
- **Ownership.** Falcon Heights needs to have appropriate authority with the police department serving our community, beyond annual reporting.
- **Community engagement.**
- **Creation of a Community-Police Work Group for trend monitoring, relationship building, and problem solving.**

Recommendation: Training and Capacity

- **Mental health care for people in crisis and officers, for mutual safety and well-being.**
- **Training, with a focus on de-escalation, cultural competency, and explicit and implicit bias.**
- **Hiring and workforce development to emphasize community relationship-building.**

Recommendation: Data and Transparency

- **Data collection, sharing, and monitoring to detect and respond to trends.**
- **Public Feedback: surveys, multiple feedback channels, and information/feedback cards.**
- **Prompt, thorough, and open communication in case of serious incidents.**

Recommendation: Priorities for Policing Activity

Respect for all is the foundation for policing in our community. The highest priorities for policing activity are:

- **Emergency response.**
- **Cultural competence and community engagement.**
- **Informative policing.**
- **In traffic policing, prioritization of serious moving violations.**

Adopted Guiding Principles for Implementing Policing Recommendations

Culture and Values

Anti-discrimination culture. Everyone – residents, city government leaders, police officers, and others - need to actively acknowledge the long history and current reality of racism and other forms of discrimination in our country. In City Council meetings, community conversations, and our Task Force meetings, many people have spoken to their lived experience of stereotyping and bias, yet privilege allows some people to even deny that stereotyping and bias exist and are problems. The Task Force was charged to look at policing. We recognize that policing reform is needed in our country. However, we emphasize also the need for work throughout the community to recognize and address inequity, injustice, and discrimination.

Respect for Life. Respect for life and minimizing harm to all are our highest priorities in public safety and policing. The mutual safety and well-being of the public and police officers are essential.

Community Values. Our community, including our public safety officers, should uphold and advance all of our community values. A statement of these values should be included in any contract for police services.


Anti-profiling. Policing patterns that are in effect profiling are contrary to our community values and damage community-police trust and the protection of everyone’s well-being. We strongly affirm the obligation to treat all people fairly and equally under the law, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, familial status, disability, public assistance status, age, or sexual orientation.

The following policing recommendations set forth goals and frameworks for strengthening the realization of community values for public safety and policing. We preface them with a few caveats about what they do not include:

- We recognize that some of the following practices are already common practice in some police departments, while others are quite new. Collectively, we believe these practices are good foundations for ongoing, continual improvement in policing.
- Our charge includes making recommendations on inclusion more broadly, as well as on policing specifically. In about a month, the Task Force will convey its recommendations for additional work on transforming our community to continually combat stereotyping and prejudice and advance mutually respectful relationships and inclusion of all.
- We recognize that there is much work to be done to spell out the operational details for implementing these policing recommendations. In some cases, we are able to convey some more detailed implementation suggestions based upon the input of our expert panels and our review of the literature, although generally such work probably exceeds our domain of expertise and our compressed timeframe as a Task Force comprised of community volunteers. Furthermore, the police department serving Falcon Heights should be involved in sorting out the finer aspects of implementation. Clearly, however, the Task Force is invested in the accomplishment of these goals, and we ask the City Council to commit to implementation. Specifically, we suggest the City promptly enter into an agreement with subject matter experts in equity, policing, and public policy to work with the City Council and police department to develop a 2-year work plan and a 5-year strategy to implement these recommendations.

Adopted Complete Policing Recommendations

Recommendation: Police-Community Relationships



Mutual Safety through Mutual Trust. We care about mutual safety of community members and officers, and feel this is enhanced through mutual trust. We want to know our officers, to have them know and be attached to our community, and for community members to feel protected by police and officers to feel that our community is a desirable and safe duty location. Falcon Heights should continue to have law enforcement officers who work routinely in Falcon Heights and get to know our community. The city’s website could include a link to photos and short introductions to officers working in Falcon Heights, to help residents and visitors become familiar with the officers serving our community.

Ownership. Falcon Heights needs to have appropriate authority with the police department serving our community, beyond annual reporting. This is a foundation for realizing all of the implementation recommendations we are making, particularly when it comes to building strong community-police relationships and trust, living our community values, and training. It is also an essential foundation to ensure that city leaders may respond in a timely and effective fashion if there is a serious (acute or persistent) concern about a public safety issue or policing performance.

Community engagement. We recommend several actions to build mutual trust and appreciation and to reduce separation between “the community” and “the police” and to break down “us vs. them” boundaries. Police supervisors’ and officers’ duties should include participating regularly in community conversations involving the interested public and police and other community events. We recommend that the city and police department regularly participate in workshops (with the public or with culturally competent liaisons who will work directly with diverse communities) to explain what people’s civil rights are, in the event that they should have an interaction with police. This is a relationship-building opportunity to build trust through positive interactions and very visibly demonstrating the police department’s commitment to civil rights. Similarly, we recommend that there be community-led and community-oriented trainings, for police officers and any interested member of the public, to familiarize officers with the challenges that residents and visitors face when it comes to public safety or policing. (Please refer to the full set of training recommendations, below.)

Community-Police Work Group. The City will promptly enter into an agreement with subject matter experts in equity, policing, and public policy to guide us on how best to bring these functions into effect. This is a structure, independent of the police department, to enable ongoing communication and relationship-building, timely response to emerging problems in public safety and policing, and advocacy for changes in policies and resources to advance continual improvements in public safety and policing. It is not a structure for performing investigations of complaints about police misconduct. While a majority of members should be from the community, we strongly encourage the involvement of a senior member of the police department and preferably at least one other police officer in every meeting, to facilitate mutual learning from one another’s knowledge and experiences about the contexts of crime and policing, to build relationships and trust, and to have shared ground for working together on culture change to improve mutual safety and trust.

The three purposes of the Community-Police Work Group are:

- To serve as a channel for community members to give positive or negative feedback or register complaints on police conduct. As an entity independent of the police department, this committee provides an alternative option for anyone who would prefer not to present their feedback directly to the police department. In addition, this provides a forum for conveying concerns that may not reach the threshold for a full investigation by the internal affairs unit of the police department, yet nonetheless deserve attention. This function of the Commission allows those issues to become visible and get attention. If the Commission detects a pattern in these reports, it should offer recommendations to respond to the problem.
- To support public safety by monitoring trends in public safety and policing. At least quarterly, the committee should receive and review the department's aggregate data on crime, enforcement activities, complaints, and critical incident reports. This provides a mechanism for timely detection of emerging trends regarding public safety, biases or other problems in enforcement, and other issues. If issues are found, the Community-Police Commission might respond by continuing to monitor or by recommending to the City Council that they negotiate with the police department to make changes – for example, in programs, training, staffing, equipment, or budgets – to improve public safety and policing.
- To safeguard the procedural integrity of the police department's internal affairs process for investigating and resolving complaints. We believe that it is in everyone's interest to have an investigation system that is trusted for investigating complaints in a timely and procedurally fair way; this is essential to trust in the police department and to the safety of the community and officers. At least quarterly, the committee should receive a report on all police conduct investigations, at a level of detail to protect confidential information and yet permit monitoring of the completeness and timeliness of police conduct investigations and yet with sufficient transparency to reveal any persistent pattern of complaints about particular types or locations of policing activity or officers. At least annually, the Community-Police Commission should make a written report to the City Council and police department about whether programs and resources for training and the complaint handling procedure should be sustained or changed.

The Commission needs to have teeth to accomplish any of these goals. The reviews it makes of complaints, trends, and the procedural integrity of the police department must be consequential for the Commission to have legitimacy and trust. That means that any recommendations that come of these reviews should need to be acted on with fidelity to the purposes they are meant to accomplish. It is hoped that direct communication between the civilian members and police department representatives would proactively and easily resolve any issues. However, the Commission might sometimes also report concerns or make recommendations – for example, for changes in community programs, training, staffing, equipment, or budgets – to City Council, in its capacity as a steward for the wellbeing of community members and employees (or contracted employees), authorizer of the policing contract, and decision-maker about policies and budgets. We request that the City Council support well substantiated recommendations made by the Commission. If the City Council subsequently acts on the Commission recommendations by making a request to the police department, and the police department does not respond by implementing the request or by explaining its inability to do so, the police department should be considered to be out of compliance with its contract with the City of Falcon Heights.

Recommendation: Training and Capacity

Mental health for mutual safety and well-being. The city could arrange to have, on call at all times, professionals with extensive training in social work or mental health to provide timely support for de-escalation of policing situations, support for the mental health of police officers, and mental health assistance to community members interacting with the police.

Training. Officers should have regular, high-quality training to build their capacity for de-escalation of themselves and others and for recognizing and preventing all bias (including implicit and explicit bias). As mentioned above, community-led and community-oriented training about the challenges that community members face in public safety and policing is a key component of strengthening community-police relationships generally, as well as for building police officers' skills for community engagement. The content of these workshops might include, for example, training on bias, matters relating to race, community-led guidance about cultural norms for interacting respectfully with diverse groups in Falcon Heights, or the historic origins of some persistent prejudices or disparities. We strongly suggest that these forms of capacity building should receive attention on a par with the more conventional forms of required training for law enforcement officers (e.g., on use of force or procedures for emergency vehicle operations). Training for what is sometimes called a "warrior" mindset does not serve our community values and the mutual safety and trust of the public and officers.

Hiring and workforce. The police department should continually strive to have a diverse workforce, preferably one that reflects the diversity of residents and visitors in Falcon Heights.

Recommendation: Data and Transparency

Data collection. The police department should collect comprehensive data on all police interactions and crime. Emerging research on best practices for building police-community trust suggest it is especially beneficial to collect these types of data: basic demographic information; the public safety concern, location, and context; the incident outcome (e.g., information given, warning issued, citation); and whether the suspect(s) had weapons. Summary reports should be made monthly to the City Council and published on the City’s website in as much detail as possible without violating privacy.

Public Feedback. The City of Falcon Heights should gather public feedback on policing through at least three mechanisms:

- In every interaction, police officers should give the person with whom they are interacting a card that identifies the officer by name and provides a phone number and website to submit feedback (positive or negative), questions, suggestions, or complaints. Assuming the Community-Police Commission is instituted, it should be listed as an option, independent of the police department, to provide feedback.
- On an annual basis, the city should conduct a survey of households to solicit feedback on policing.
- At least semi-annually, the City Council, police department, and public should hold community conversations to enable continued communication about community values, public safety issues, and positive or negative feedback on policing.

Serious incidents. To build community trust, if serious incidents occur (e.g., public safety emergency, officer-involved shooting, or a serious allegation of police misconduct), the police department and City of Falcon Heights should communicate as promptly, thoroughly, and openly as possible.

Recommendation: Priorities for Policing Activity

Respect for all is the foundation for policing in our community. The highest priorities for policing activity are:

- **Emergency response** to 911 calls and violent crimes are the highest priorities.
- **Community policing.** Officers need to get to know people. Some steps to engage with people in non-enforcement activities include getting out of their cars, participating in community events, etc.
- **Cultural competence and community engagement.** In an effort to build relationships, training for cultural competency must be linked with positive cultural and community engagement to build relationships.
- **Informative policing.** In enforcement-related interactions, officers should promptly inform the individuals(s) involved about why they are being stopped (e.g., to explain that they were observed running a stop sign). This should improve compliance with laws, the safety of the public and officers, and community-police trust.
- **Traffic policing.** Dangerous moving violations are high priority. Policing for other motor vehicle violations is a lower priority, and the policy for these could be to issue a warning. We recommend the City explore opportunities to proactively intervene in downward cycles associated with fines for minor violations. For example, the City might consider investing in a program -- like the Lights on! program found in several Twin Cities communities -- which provides drivers with financial assistance to take care of minor problems with vehicle equipment compliance.

Property crimes, although they are one of the most commonplace crimes in Falcon Heights, were not mentioned as a priority during community conversations. We do not assume that it is a low priority; possibly people did not mention it because they take this kind of policing for granted. This reinforces the value of our recommendations about data reporting and public safety trend monitoring to communicate and respond to public safety concerns and policing activities.

Recommendation: Ownership

Ultimately the City Council has authority and responsibility for keeping a contract with SAPD or moving to some other arrangement. In early April 2017, the City Council instructed the city administrator to begin a Request for Interest from other potential providers. As of June 14, 2017 the City Council is actively exploring options for a partnership with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office.

Many comments had been shared at the community conversations preceding the council decisions. Those comments were to the effect that increasing and ensuring ownership that the police department respects community values are more important than the specific structure of the arrangement.

When participants in the community conversations were asked to express and explain their preferences for different organizational arrangements for policing, the option of issuing a new Request for Proposals to contract a police department received much greater support than any other option. Two other options - renegotiating with SAPD (which received some support, while some people completely opposed it) or constituting a shared police department through a joint powers agreement – were less well supported. There was very little support for creating a police department just for Falcon Heights.

On the basis of our consultations with subject matter experts and the literature on organizational options for policing, we recommend constructing the contract to:

- Articulate community values as the foundation for public safety and policing.
- Emphasize mutual safety through mutual trust. Build structure and routines for regular communication, mutually responsive consultation and problem-solving, and ongoing relationship-building between the community, city leadership, and police department.
- Affirm the importance of ongoing, high-quality training – specifically including the forms of training on implicit bias, de-escalation, and community-oriented training on community experiences and to build cultural competence – and provide resources for this.
- Ensure mechanisms for data collection and sharing, accountability, and compliance.
- Provide clear and compelling consequences for non-compliance with the contract, which should be designed to incentivize a prompt remedy to problems, but if necessarily also provide an option to exit.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 1: February 16, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

Collated by: Elizabeth Dressel

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Background

On February 16, 2017 nearly 100 people attended the first of a series of five community conversations on inclusion and policing. Information gathered at the community conversations will inform recommendations that the Falcon Heights Task Force on Inclusion and Policing will make to the Falcon Heights City Council in the spring of this year.

These are frequently expressed statements, grouped by theme. They are not consensus statements.

First Circle: Participants shared why they came and their most important personal value.

Why did people come?

- Resident of Falcon Heights
- Out of love for the community.
- Participation is a way to be active and involved.
- Feel dismay, shock, outrage, anger, upset over Philando Castile's death
- Want to solve problems and see change

Personal Values

- **Compassion, Caring, Empathy, Love:** Treating others as you want to be treated. Caring for others. Being open to others perspectives. Some referred to their religious faith in this context.
- **Equality and Equity:** Ensuring all have equal opportunities and that laws apply equally regardless of race.
- **Honesty and Openness:** Being open, thoughtful, truthful, having difficult conversations.
- **Integrity**
- **Relationships, Community, Connection:** Building understanding through relationships. Being connected with others and sharing experiences.
- **Respect, Dignity, Tolerance, Inclusion:** Creating mutual respect. Honoring others. Treating people with dignity.
- Other personal values, not easily grouped with larger themes: Learning. Courage. Forgiveness. Professionalism. Hope.

Second Circle: Participants shared the value they would most like their neighbors and public officials to demonstrate, and why.

- **Educate Selves and Seek Diverse Perspectives:** Seeking out others perspectives and being genuinely open-minded. Listening to others, especially those we might not want to listen to. Recognizing our own individual implicit biases.

- **Embrace the Greater Good:** Creating a community beyond oneself and thinking beyond individual values. Working to harmonize the needs of all while understanding different individuals need different things.
- **Empathy and Compassion:** Upholding that we all want the same things as human beings. Insisting that officers need to engage and care.
- **Equity and Equality:** Fairness, inclusivity and equal justice.
- **Forge Strong Relationships and Have Meaningful Communication:** Creating a community by welcoming more diversity and welcoming new people into neighborhoods. Making all feel welcome and important regardless of race or age. Having honesty, creativity, and transparency in communication.
- **Honesty and Accountability:** Expecting honesty from elected officials. Holding everyone accountable for actions. Upholding honesty and transparent communication in all directions.
- **Honor Shared Humanity:** Having mutual respect. Recognizing the value of everyone and treating everyone as human beings. Finding a shared dignity and positive regard for neighbors and officials.
- **Take Courageous Actions:** Speaking up when we see something happening. Challenging others when we see or hear hurtful actions and comments. Being engaged and take action. Sensing that it is our responsibility to fix this.

Third Circle: Participants shared how they feel the community fails to live up to these values.

- **Complacency:** People not speaking up, asking questions, and taking action.
- **Lack of knowledge, understanding, and awareness in the community:** Privilege playing into not knowing that things were different for people of color and into feeling like things were great in Falcon Heights. Not seeing the disparities in traffic stops and acknowledging bias.
- **Lack of integrity and accountability; Eroded trust:** Breakdown in communication, transparency, and honesty from elected officials. Police who don't represent values.
- **Frustration, anger, and disappointment:** Feeling that police and officials have failed them, linked by some to disappointment in themselves for not looking and noticing.
- **Fear and lack of safety:** People of color fear for personal safety and security.
- **Police values:** Need to find ways to support police officers in living up to community values. Need to examine the goals of the police, the revenue streams of the police, and pay attention to abusive practices by police and damaging incentives from revenue structure.

Fourth Circle: Participants shared how they would like to see the City of Falcon Heights heal and how they would like to see themselves, their neighbors, and their public officials demonstrate the values.

- **Community Engagement, Conversations, Communication:** Conversations are important; these should be shared with the wider community. Let's get to know others and make time to connect. There should be diverse participation and events.
- **Measurements, Accountability, Transparency:** Make concrete decisions and have accountability and transparency. Leadership should be held accountable. Use statistics and feedback to create measurements.

- **Possible actions:** Something should be done with the police contract. There needs to be better police training. Let's explore restorative justice models. Police should be out of the cars and in the community.
- **Take Action and Build Trust:** There needs to be action and communication by Mayor/City Council/Police. The community also needs to take action. Police should be part of the conversation.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 2: March 2, 2017

PRELIMINARY Analysis of Key Themes

Collated by: Elizabeth Dressel

Master of Urban and Regional Planning student at University of Minnesota, Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Background

Nearly 100 people attended the second in a series of five community conversations on inclusion and policing. The theme of this conversation was developing options for how the city can live out the community's values in its activities, policies, policing, and other practices. Information gathered at the community conversations will inform recommendations that the Falcon Heights Task Force on Inclusion and Policing will make to the Falcon Heights City Council in the spring of this year.

Values identified at first community conversation (February 16, 2017)

These are frequently expressed statements, grouped by theme. They are not consensus statements.

- **Educate Selves and Seek Diverse Perspectives:** Seeking out others perspectives and being genuinely open-minded. Listening to others, especially those we might not want to listen to. Recognizing our own individual implicit biases.
- **Embrace the Greater Good:** Creating a community beyond oneself and thinking beyond individual values. Working to harmonize the needs of all while understanding different individuals need different things.
- **Empathy and Compassion:** Upholding that we all want the same things as human beings. Insisting that officers need to engage and care.
- **Equity and Equality:** Fairness, inclusivity and equal justice.
- **Forge Strong Relationships and Have Meaningful Communication:** Creating a community by welcoming more diversity and welcoming new people into neighborhoods. Making all feel welcome and important regardless of race or age. Having honesty, creativity, and transparency in communication.
- **Honesty and Accountability:** Expecting honesty from elected officials. Holding everyone accountable for actions. Upholding honesty and transparent communication in all directions.
- **Honor Shared Humanity:** Having mutual respect. Recognizing the value of everyone and treating everyone as human beings. Finding a shared dignity and positive regard for neighbors and officials.
- **Take Courageous Actions:** Speaking up when we see something happening. Challenging others when we see or hear hurtful actions and comments. Being engaged and take action. Sensing that it is our responsibility to fix this.

Circle: Participants shared barriers to honoring the values (above) in city and community activities and polices, and policing policies and practices.

These are frequently expressed statements, grouped by theme. They are not consensus statements.

- **Challenge of Sustained Change and Action:** New solutions and actions are needed to create change.
- **City Government Structures:** Policies within the city and a lack of mechanisms understand and monitor what is taking place within the community creates a barrier.
- **Complacency and Apathy and Inertia:** It can be easy to become tired, feel a lack of control, and not expend the energy to be involved. Change needs sustained energy and momentum and can be lost when people become consumed with daily lives. There is a long history of no change and status quo.
- **Fear and Discomfort:** Change can be scary and uncomfortable which can create resistance to moving forward.
- **Need for Accountability:** More accountability is needed for policy and city to realize values. There is blame being pointed at multiple people and groups.
- **Personal Responsibility to Get Out of Circles:** There is a need for personal action and desire to get to know other people when living out community values. Individuals need to interact and get to know others perspectives. Making the time and commitment to get out of personal circles often does not happen.
- **Policing Structures:** Current structure and values of policing stand in the way of living out the community values.
- **Privilege, Bias, and Racism:** Oppression, racism, white privilege, and biases must be recognized and addressed in order for the community values to be honored.

Circle: Participants shared ideas on what it would look like for the City of Falcon Heights to live out these values in city and community activities and polices, and policing policies and practices.

Strongest Themes

- **Community Based Policing:** Policies put in place to end stops for minor traffic offenses such as speeding and equipment malfunctioning and remove the monetary incentives for this type of enforcement. Move to a model of community policing where officers are out of their cars and engaging with community members. Police officers lead and organize neighborhood events where they can interact with community members and have a commitment to community involvement. Increase the communication between police officers and community members including ongoing listening sessions between the community and police.
- **Community Events and Activities that Foster Broadening Perspectives:** Numerous ideas shared for events to build community and foster learning about each other. Ideas included: community reading groups, workshops to explore cultural similarities and differences, inter-active culture sharing events that celebrate diversity, programs and

opportunities for mutually beneficial exchanges between community members of different ethnicities and on-going community conversations.

- **Training for Police, City Staff, and Community Members:** Increase the amount and types of training offered to police. Training topics included implicit bias, diversity, de-escalation skills, healing and restorative justice, trauma-informed services, and individual coaching. Comments also reflected the need to offer training to city staff and community members.

Very Strong Themes

- **City Accountability:** Accountability and honesty by decision makers. Encourage the City Council to clarify their expectations of police officers and resource allocation. Action encouraged by the City Council to establish a community board or task force that has ability review and monitor police and the power to affect change and create accountability for law enforcement officials. Create continued space for citizen voice and participation.
- **Collect, Share, and Utilize Data on Policing Practices:** Report on policing to community members to ensure the values are being met and action is being taken when necessary. The city should monitor police data and increase the timeliness and visibility of data on the city website.
- **Neighborhood Level Community Building:** Encourage community members to get know your neighbors' stories, say hello to one another, and care about the welfare of fellow neighbors. Ideas to create a neighborhood engagement toolkit to encourage citizen participation and a neighborhood welcome letter to new community members inviting them to be involved.
- **Policing Policies and Practices that Align with Falcon Heights Values:** Use of de-escalation tactics. Increased level of transparency. Recognize difficulties and dangers police face. Create a culture of reflection and compassion.

Strong Themes

- **Consider Alternatives to Contracting with St. Anthony Police Department:** End the contract with St. Anthony Police and consider contracting with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office or creating a small Falcon Heights only police force.
- **Forums for Truth and Reconciliation:** Council should publicly apologize and take responsibility for death of Philando Castile. A specific idea is to have the city council commission a writer to create a case study, story, or play about the killing of Philando Castile that becomes a part of school curriculum, and could be part of wider community events. Forums for police to hear about the experiences of people of color.
- **Hire Diverse and Reflective Police Officers**
- **Housing:** Create more affordable housing in the community and create opportunities for disparate groups to purchase homes in Falcon Heights.
- **Personal and Collective Commitment to Education, Reflection, Reflection and Dialogue:** Create opportunities for youth to learn about diversity and inclusiveness at a

young age. Individual and collective commitment to learn about each other and explore our own assumptions.

- **Utilize Terms of the Contract to Ensure that the City's Contracted Police Force Demonstrates the City's Values:** When considering future contracts, incorporate community values and create policies for steps to be taken when policing practices fail to meet these values.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

Collated by: Elizabeth Dressel, Master of Urban and Regional Planning student at University of Minnesota, Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Background

On April 3, 2017 approximately 70 people attended the third in a series of five community conversations on inclusion and policing. This meeting centered on reviewing and providing input on a set of draft recommendations created by the Falcon Heights Task Force on Inclusion and Policing. Information gathered will inform the final recommendations that the Task Force will make to the City Council in the spring of this year.

These draft recommendations are oriented towards the procedures, policies, and programs of law enforcement departments and officers. Residents, visitors, city leadership, and other community institutions also have responsibilities for public safety. Recommendations about those contexts and other measures to improve inclusion will be shared at the May 2017 community conversation.

The feedback below is drawn from frequently expressed statements, grouped by theme under the associated recommendation header. They are not consensus statements.

Community Input: Themes Cutting Across All Recommendations

Communicate Goals and Values: There was a strong desire that the City's goals and values be clearly articulated in any type of contract or arrangement for police services. The City must achieve clarity on those goals and values. Previous Task Force and community meetings have led to the draft statements of community values circulated at the meeting.

Community Responsibility: There is support for the community to continue to be involved and a sense that solutions are the responsibility of the entire community. There should also be structured review and space for continued public feedback on the values and next steps. Numerous comments addressed the ideas that "the police" and "the community" is a false dichotomy and that police should be a part of our community and vice versa.

Measurable and Actionable: Across all of the recommendations there was strong support for ensuring recommendations and expectations are measurable and actionable. There were some concerns raised that some recommendations are not measureable and specific enough.

Ownership: Support for stronger ownership of the police force was expressed relating to all of the recommendations - stronger ownership will be needed in order to set priorities for training hiring, policing activities, etc. The idea of having designated Falcon Heights officers was expressed frequently.

Positive Reactions: Many community members felt positively about the recommendations as a whole and felt that this was a good start. People were thankful of the work that had been put in and said it was nice to see the alignment of values and the recommendations.

Resources and Funding: Comments and concerns were raised about financial resources and revenue streams for policing and the resources needed to support the policing.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

Priorities for Policing Activity

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS¹

The highest priorities for policing activity are:

- **Response.** Responding to violent crimes and 911 calls.
- **Community policing.** Officers need to get out of their cars to engage regularly with people.
- **Cultural competence and community engagement:** Training for cultural competency must be linked with positive cultural and community engagement to build relationships.
- In traffic policing, **dangerous moving violations.** Conversely, policing for minor traffic violations are very low priority, and the policy for these should be to issue a warning.



Are there other areas or priorities to consider?

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Focus of Police Actions: There was support among groups that police should focus on critically important responses including 911 calls and emergency calls with less focus on or changes to traffic stops and equipment failure issues. Comments included seeing a stop to racial profiling stops and no more stops for “driving while black,” no more shootings, and ensuring safety and respect for all.

Support of Community Policing: There was support among groups that seeing police get out of their cars and interacting with residents and having officers designated to Falcon Heights so people can know and build relationships with officers is important. Clarification was requested for what officers getting out of their cars would look like and mean in practice.

Police Participation and Acknowledgement: Including police in the dialogue on establishing priorities for policing activities was raised to ensure the final recommendations are realistic and include the ideas of the police. There was a desire to have the police acknowledge that inequity exists in policing and that the police could improve. There was a desire for mutual learning.

Culture and Values

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Community values. Officers will uphold and advance our community values.

¹ The Task Force members supported with a high degree of unity all of the draft recommendations circulated at the community conversation except where a yellow star indicates that we were not in agreement and/or are seeking more information. Stars indicate areas where we especially invited additional input.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

Equity. All residents and guests of the city are to be treated fairly and equally under the law, across racial and ethnic groups, generations, places of origin, socioeconomic status, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.

Motivations. Revenue generation should never be a factor in law enforcement.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Comments on Values: There was support for ensuring the values can be measured and implemented. Concern raised by groups about the treatment of people of color and women and that life needs to be valued above all.

Equity: Equity was expressed as important but a group would like to see justice added to the statement. Desire was expressed for a stronger equity statement.

Healing: A need for a healing process was expressed.

Data and Transparency

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Policing data collection: The police department will collect comprehensive data on all police interactions and crime, to include: the impetus for the interactions (e.g., response to call for service), the nature of the interaction (e.g., vehicle and pedestrian stops, searches, citations, arrests); location; and any demographic information that the subjects offer.

Public Feedback: The City of Falcon Heights will gather public feedback on policing through at least two mechanisms. Annually, the city will conduct a survey of households to solicit feedback on policing. In addition, in every interaction, police officers will give the person with whom they are interacting a card that identifies the officer by name and provides a phone number and website to submit complaints, concerns, or questions about the policing interaction.

Reports and review: Reports on the data collected by the police department will be made monthly to the City Council and published on the City's website in as much detail as possible without violating privacy. These reports and synthesis of any public feedback collected will be reviewed by the Council, Police Chief, and Community Engagement Commission at least quarterly to identify and respond to concerning patterns regarding crime and public safety and/or biases and disparities in enforcement.

Serious incidents: When serious incidents occur, including use of deadly force, or incidence of possible police misconduct, the police department and City of Falcon Heights will communicate promptly, openly, and decisively, in a manner appropriate to the incident.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Data Collection: Overwhelming support around the importance of data collection and support for the recommendations on data collection. Data collection should include race and demographic information on officers and civilians. Strong request that there be clarity

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

around who collects, analyzes, and reports on the data so that the community can trust that information is unbiased.

Transparency and Accountability: There is consensus that transparency and accountability is important. Comments included the need for space and process for community input and grievances to be easily heard and concern about whether there is a way for residents' concerns to be heard.

Community Relationships

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Presence. We want to know our officers and have them know and be attached to our community. Falcon Heights should have law enforcement officers who work specifically and routinely in Falcon Heights and who get to know our community.

Community engagement. From initial training through their ongoing work, their duties will include participating in community-led trainings on interactions (before officers begin service in Falcon Heights), community-police mutual listening sessions, and other community events. The purpose is to build relationships and to be aware of and appreciate the diversity of our community.

Hiring and workforce. The police department will continually strive to constitute a workforce that represents the broad diversity of the community that interacts with the police. For example, the department could have a hiring priority for candidates who speak one of the top 5 non-English languages spoken in the Roseville school district, or for candidates with demonstrated experience with community service organizations or community engagement skills, as well as their formal prior training and policing experience.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Presence and Community Connection: There was very strong support of the recommendations of having Falcon Heights officers and having a relationship between the community and officers. Concern was raised that the recommendation does not do enough to address relationships with people who drive through Falcon Heights. There was a suggestion to make the profiles of officers' available online/social media so people can know their backgrounds and be more comfortable with those protecting them.

Hiring and Workforce: There was support for the focus on hiring and ensuring that officers are diverse and/or culturally competent. Comments also centered on the need education and training of the officers.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

Training and Capacity

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Training: Officers will have regular training to build their capacity for de-escalation of themselves and others, for interacting effectively and respectfully with diverse persons in our community, for recognizing and preventing bias (including implicit bias), and for minimizing the use of lethal weapons. Conversely, training emphasizing a “warrior” or similar mindset should not be permitted.

Mental health. A social worker or trained mental health professional will be on call at all times to provide on-site support for de-escalation and assistance to or with persons with mental illness.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Training: Overwhelming support training specifically de-escalation and a need to have experts in the field determining and leading training.

Mental Health: Groups expressed support for the focus on mental health training and social worker component. One group was split on roles of police and social workers where some wanted police officers who did not act as social workers and others in the group wanting officers to have social work-like training.

Oversight

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Oversight. Falcon Heights needs to have significant authority over our law enforcement officers and police department. The current situation of a brief annual report and review of an externally contracted agency does not provide sufficient oversight of a police department and its officers. The City needs to be able to respond in a timely and effective fashion if there is a serious (acute or persistent) concern, for example about police misconduct or a pattern of bias. If policing will be provided by an externally contracted agency, the city should have provisions for regular review and an out clause and/or penalty for non-compliance.



Civilian oversight: An entity independent of the police department will serve as a channel for community members to give feedback on police conduct. The existing Community Engagement Commission or an ombudsperson could accept and investigate complaints. This would require resources to conduct investigations and the buy-in of the police department. The Task invites community input about the *idea* and/or the *structure* of civilian oversight.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS²

Support for Civilian Oversight: There was general support for civilian oversight but lack of consensus on the form it should take.

Related Suggestions: Some ideas that were expressed include: A stand-alone review committee; a panel that meets on an on-going basis; in addition to residents include visitors to the community and membership should be diverse; ombudsperson role would need clear definition.

Ownership

TASK FORCE'S ORIGINAL DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Ultimately the City Council has authority and responsibility for keeping a contract with SAPD or moving to some other arrangement. Here are some of the major options being discussed in the community. They offer varying levels of direct control by Falcon Heights over the police department. All of these options would take time to implement, some probably more than others.

- **Renegotiate with SAPD** to implement changes that reflect community values and improve service and control.
- **Issue a new Request for Proposals to contract a police department.** The RFP would reflect community values and be a transparent foundation for negotiating the policing contract. One negotiable item would be having a Falcon Heights representative on the hiring panel for hiring officers serving our city.
- **Create a new Joint Powers Authority:** Falcon Heights *could* join with other small cities to create a police force over which Falcon Heights and others would have joint ownership and oversight. Saint Anthony and/or other cities might be a partner in a JPA.

The Task Force does not have a strong, unified opinion on this topic, and invites community input to inform our next steps:



1. How important is it to enhance the City's ownership of the police department?
2. Which options you prefer? **Why?**
3. If there are tradeoffs between acting quickly and accomplishing more systemic change, do you have an opinion about how to balance those tensions?

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON THESE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Importance of Ownership and Contract Language: There was consensus among groups that there is a need for greater ownership and control. Many comments signaled that the desire for

² Note from Task Force co-facilitators: Please keep in mind that additional input is being gathered beyond the community input from this conversation. The Task Force heard many comments about civilian oversight from the participants in the March 30 police specialists panel, and will have an additional resource person attend the April 11 Task Force meeting.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

ownership and ensuring our values were met was more important than the structure. Additionally, many community members stressed the importance of the contract language and detailed goals and values that should be included.

- **Issue a new Request for Proposals to contract a police department. *This option had the most and substantially more support from community members than any other ownership option presented in the draft recommendations.*** Comments expressed that this option allowed for our values and priorities to best met. Questions were raised about the number of responses the city would receive and what would happen if SAPD was the only bidder.

Renegotiating a contract with SAPD or creating a joint powers authority were roughly equally supported by participants. There was not strong support for a Falcon Heights PD.

- **Renegotiate Contract with SAPD:** Support was expressed from numerous community members that the focus should be to renegotiate the current contract. Some community members would like to see the community values expressed in the contract and if the renegotiation does not work then open up a RFP. A very small number of participants were completely opposed to renegotiating with SADP.
- **Create a new Joint Powers Authority:** There is split support for this option of ownership. There was some support among community members for exploring this option, but others felt that this was an unrealistic option as it is expensive, challenging, and takes time.

Tradeoffs between acting quickly vs. systematic change: Community members are split on this tradeoff. Some community members expressed a need for action to be taken now. There were also frustration and anger over the question because the city has already not taken quick action in the past nine months. Other community members expressed support for taking time to make systematic changes and that the task force should take its time and not make hasty or knee jerk reactions.

The most support was expressed for a combination of both short and long term actions and that there cannot be one over the other.

- Actions that were expressed as options for the short term include: change in traffic stop procedures; warnings vs. tickets; data collection; hear and valuing people.
- Actions that were expressed as options for the long term include: cultural change in police force; long term continuous improvement.

Other Community Input (not directly tied to recommendations)

Keep the Conversations Going: Some community members expressed support for continuing these conversations and ensuring conversation doesn't end with this process. There is a sentiment that there is still a long way to go and that hard conversations need to be continued.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 3: April 3, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

Anger and Frustration: Community members shared their stories of harassment and mistreatment, and expressed anger and frustration. There is anger and frustration around the lack of change and action.

Other Models/Ideas Proposed: Community members shared ideas for other recommendations or models to look to. Ideas include: bold action and real innovations including using the restorative justice process on all cases including police conduct review; Columbia Heights, MN – inviting everyone to be a part of the community and having officers visiting mosques and other things in the community; Camden, NJ – looking at their de-escalation techniques; considering the Department of Justice report and best practices; thinking about kids and arrest rates for kids; adding a statement to the values that includes “do no harm” policing.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 4: May 1, 2017

PRELIMINARY Analysis of Key Themes

Collated by: Elizabeth Dressel

Master of Urban and Regional Planning student at University of Minnesota, Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Background

On May 1, 2017, 56 people attended the fourth in a series of five community conversations on inclusion and policing. This meeting centered on discussions of transformational change. Information gathered will inform the final inclusion recommendations that the Falcon Heights Task Force on Inclusion and Policing will make to the Falcon Heights City Council at the end of May.

These are frequently expressed statements, grouped by theme. They are not consensus statements.

First Circle: Participants shared what they think it would take, beyond policing, for truly transformational change to take place in Falcon Heights and to genuinely fulfill community values.

- **Acknowledge Racism:** People expressed the need to acknowledge racism and understand white privilege. Comments ranged from addressing racism within systems to a personal level understanding of bias and privilege. Important for white people to understand their implicit bias and be aware of the experiences of others. People who have experienced pain and trauma need to be heard and supported.
- **Be Inclusive and Intentional:** This work needs to be inclusive and respectful of all. It is important to be intentional to make change, to be aware, and talk with people who are different from you. The values may change when you have conversations with people outside of your circle.
- **Events to Bring People Together:** A variety of events were suggested for building community and to better understand diversity.
 - **Some ideas included:** block parties; Night to Unite; events with food such as picnic in the park or a day of celebration highlighting ethnic foods; movie nights; book clubs; using the schools to engage youth and parents; documentaries of local citizens for cable TV; storytelling sessions.
- **Personal Commitment:** Many expressed a personal commitment to stay engaged, show up to events, and continue to have conversations at neighborhood or one to one level. Personal experiences telling personal stories can bring people together. A change in the community starts at the individual level.
- **Sustain the Work in the Future:** A desire to see this work continue beyond the Task Force and see it sustained and connections within the community strengthened. Many would like to continue having courageous community based conversations. There is a sense that this needs continue to feel urgent and community members need to stay engaged. It was also acknowledged that this work cannot be solved easily or immediately and must be in it for the long-haul.
- **Transparency and Accountability from the City:** There should be transparency from the city so people can hold institutions accountable. Comments shared to put pressure on the city council and mayor to make changes and address what has been discussed at the community meetings. People expressed a desire to see diverse perspectives in positions of power.

Second Circle: Participants shared ideas for what they think it will take to get more residents involved in the process of engaging in dialogue to explore values and how to improve the city.

- **Engage with Youth:** Start engaging youth and focusing on events and conversations at schools. Starting with youth can provide a path to engage parents.
- **Personalize Invitations:** The method of how people are invited to events has an impact on whether or not they attend. People suggested personal invitations, knocking on people's doors, and having a phone tree to alert people of meetings and events as a way to increase the number of people who attend.
- **Opportunities to Learn and Hear Others' Perspectives:** In order to understand the need for participating, people need more opportunities to realize that there are a variety of experiences and perspectives in our community. Provide opportunities to hear different perspectives and to learn different cultures from community members. Continue to have conversations with neighbors about race and inequity. Ensure there is a range of housing options in the community to strengthen the diversity within neighborhoods.
- **Ownership of the Problem:** People raised questions about how to make everyone feel like they have a stake in this problem. It is important to get everyone to understand their stake in the situation. White people need to speak up and take action when they see injustices occurring and stand up for people of color.
- **Results Orientated:** To keep people engaged, there needs to be tangible and measurable results to show community members that progress is being made. This includes putting energy into actions that can happen in the short term to show visible progress. Changing the dynamic of interaction and engagement between the police and community is important to getting residents involved.
- **Variety and Accessibility of Events:** Different types of events (intimate conversations, social gatherings, speakers, etc.), with different focuses (dialogue, decision making, education), with different hosts (city, commission, community) will appeal to different people. Look at making the conversations and events easier to access by providing childcare and food, holding them at different times of day, going to people versus having them come to you.

Third Circle: Participants shared specific steps or actions they plan to take to be a champion of the community values.

- **Personal Actions and Conversations with Neighbors:** People expressed a personal commitment to talk with neighbors and strangers and seek out diverse perspectives.
- **Plan and Participate in Events:** People made commitments to host events including block parties, reconciliation and healing events, and to attend community sponsored events.
- **Uncover Racial Covenants in Falcon Heights:** People are looking into the racial covenant deeds and redlining practices that relate to properties in Falcon Heights.
- **Write:** People committed to write op-eds for local papers, letters to officials, and blog about events and activities.
- **Speak Up Against Racism:** People are committed to speaking up against hateful and racist comments and actions they witness.

- **Advocate and Engage with City Council and Commissions:** People committed to being involved in local politics through showing up to council meetings and commission meetings and events. People also plan to support and encourage people to run for local office.
- **Engage with Youth and Schools:** People committed to engaging with schools and youth to be a part of the change process and build community.

Specific Commitments

Personal Actions and Conversations with Neighbors

- Have honest conversations even when they're hard. (Probably especially when they're hard.)
- Try to treat anyone I meet as if they might be family
- Always treat others as I want them to treat me
- Talk with a stranger
- Be intentional - seek diverse perspectives
- Seek out people with different perspectives from mine and listen
- Continue to inform myself and become more involved
- To share a value - step forward at opportunities to interact/participate with others who represent diverse characteristics - risk breaking the silence or differences, thereby expanding appreciation/acceptance on both sides.
- Continue to connect with others learn, engage, push for change
- Build my network with local activism groups focusing on equity and racial justice
- Invite people to my home to begin conversations
- Talk 1:1 with neighbors/friends about issues, instead of waiting for a "meeting" where people hold back their opinions.
- Continue to commit to equity and inclusion in daily life.
- Involve a friend
- Encourage others to learn about their neighbors' experience.
- Smile, sit by someone new, more out of comfort zone.
- Learn to confront more.
- Personal accountability
- Have more brave conversations when interacting with others that don't see their privilege or bias.
- Learn more about these issues so I can further these discussions in St. Cloud.
- Continue to take part in community conversations and forums that provide a venue for truth
- Continuing research on models for successful community change. I am more engaged and grateful for that. More information is needed.
- Listen carefully to people whose views make me uncomfortable and be willing to be transformed
- co-mingling with "others"
- Invite my neighbors to dinner
- I will discuss these values with 20 neighbors and ask how they will help promote them
- I plan new conversations with neighbors about these values - white and people of color
- To listen and actively participate in the conversation
- I will continue to work with "We Can Do Better" on a variety of activities
- Remain Engaged in the Community
- I value/believe in the usefulness of one to one conversations especially when difficult. I lie in wait for these opportunities.
- Tell my neighbors what is going on in this discussion group - spread the word

- Try to list some feedback information that would help people move to more equity and justice - on of the community values
- Engage with individuals/groups about our own biases or experiences as object of bias
- Talk to my neighbors
- Connect with neighbors
- Talk in depth with ten neighbors
- Talk to my neighbors at least two people in the building where I live
- Talk to my employer and coworkers re: living wage/eliminating tipping. Theme: eliminating wage discrimination that is largely racialized with increasing?
- Invite Randy (neighbor) to neighborhood gathering
- I will host a neighborhood discussion on this topic
- Continuing research on models for successful community change. I am more engaged and grateful for that. More information is needed.
- I can't think of anything I could do that I'm not already doing! I need more time.
- I'm stumped. I've been working at these issues for decades.
- Unbusy myself so I can participate more in these activities
- Share a positive example of a good experience that is happening in Falcon Heights.
- Falcon Heights is an island community. People drive through.
- commit to social justice and equity work
- Engage with individuals and groups on our own bias
- "I'm already doing what I can to call people out. We need to try to get more people engaged."
- Hit a wall... Not sure how to show up in community. Listen to others whose views make me uncomfortable and be transformed by views.
- Talk to everyone that I see... Things won't change until people come to things and share.
- Society of storytellers and story listeners
- We need to learn to love one another, no matter the color, creed, etc.
- Long term... Not an instant switch, solution
- Invite neighbors into home for hard conversations, help end complacency
- Ask neighbors to help promote Community Values
- Invite City Council Members to dinner
- Talk 1:1 with neighbors/friends about issues, instead of waiting for a "meeting" where people hold back their opinions
- Talk to a stranger

Plan and Participate in Events

- To collaborate (work together) with others to plan the California Block Party (national night out) with the people at it so happen time (room relationships developed beforehand) -food- engaging with others
- Invite families at Larpenteur and Snelling to CA Avenue block party in August
- Front Yard Patio Party
- Since my neighborhood is pretty close - everyone knows each other- I think it would be important to encourage my neighbors to participate in activities that already exist in Falcon Heights
- Look for gathering places and plan events where people can come together. Events around food would be good.
- Find the movie "Do not resist" and share it
- Participate in city activities (volunteering)
- Participate in community engagement activities and community engagement commission

- Promote involvement of libraries
- Organize training or conversations at my church to encourage cultural competence and awareness of systematic racism
- Implement events for reconciliation and healing
- Continue to advocate for restorative justice
- Show up to local government events. Vulnerability... Not forget that I am white, have biases, be open, can help invite people into conversation, might be less afraid to engage.
- Offer by member in the group who is professionally trained to help in de-escalation training for police. Questions arose on cost, making these mandatory, and other barriers to training.
- Invite people from other backgrounds and cultures to local block parties

Uncover Racial Covenants in Falcon Heights

- Participate in the history of racial covenants and redlining project
- Working to gather info on early history of Falcon Heights housing patterns, racial covenants, redlining
- Encourage city to make a map of the areas of diversity in the city - so we can be more welcoming and inclusive
- Learn more about the racial covenants and redlining

Write

- Write about events, activities etc. blog, letters to officials, notices of meetings etc. re: value of justice
- Write op-eds for local papers to raise awareness and direct action
- Write and communicate about things done, things going on. Government task force law-enforcement and community engagement. Intend to keep writing.

Speak Up Against Racism

- Speaking out against hateful speech
- Call out hateful speak when I hear it
- Continue to speak out against any form of racism
- Be more observant of interactions that suggest that people of color are treated less respectfully or safely than white folks
- Show up - with my body, mind, voice, heart, spirit. Stand on side of oppressed.
- Speak up when/if I observe someone not being treated fairly
- Communicate with others the progress I have seen in this area
- Use my voice and share my own personal expertise and opinion
- Actively praise people who have become more inclusive in their lives
- "I didn't create it or was a part of it. You step up. I've always been there. Allowing selves to be vulnerable.
- Continue conversations in organic settings and where people already are - churches and schools. Taking ownership and responsibilities as allies and leaders"
- Need for bias awareness
- Seek training on active bystander intervention/protection
- To never give up
- To never give up. We all have great resiliency, we forget that we have grit, need to be reminded. I will never give up.
- Stick up when someone is treated unfairly
- Call out my fellow white residents on their bias

- Those who are deeply racist are cowards and bullies and will back-pedal quickly if they are challenged
- Continue to be observant, when you see a person of color being mistreated, step in and call it out
- Challenge self and neighbors on racism
- support and praise other people doing this work

Advocate and Engage with City Council and Commissions

- Go to Falcon Heights community meetings.
- Follow-up on task force recommendations
- I will check out the final taskforce recommendations and do what I can to see that the council adopts those recommendations
- Advocate for measurable actions/outcomes within the task force recommendations
- Continue to participate in Falcon Heights political structure
- Continued involvement with city-policing
- Continued involvement
- Continue participating with Falcon Heights We Can Do Better and following city council as it moves forward with new policing. Community interaction yields actions.
- Form and content exhibition immigrant status
- Bring idea of intra-city meal gatherings to council committee
- Understand Minneapolis Police Structure
- I will do the same with every city council candidate at election time
- Act at a Minneapolis (my city) level and state level to support policing reform, economic justice, focus on racial inequality. Tell the story of my experience in Falcon Heights as a positive example of community engagement
- Push City Council and Mayor to ensure that all police/public encounters and their outcomes (e.g. traffic ticket vs. warning) are recorded in a permanent public data base (computerized)
- Talk to a council member
- Visit SAPD
- Lobby city council for more transparent and inclusive process in recruiting/appointment commission members
- Elect some new leaders
- To city council meetings. Serve on Community Engagement Commission.
- Talk up at council meetings
- Invite progressive candidates to apply or run for political office, or serve on local government commissions
- Actively participate in city government
- Solicit minority input to the facts
- Go to meetings of my local governing bodies to voice concerns and demand changes
- Lobby for more inclusive, welcoming, fun council meetings
- Keep the pressure on political leadership
- Participate in civic activities more often
- Ask council about affordable housing.
- Advocate for housing equity
- Trust, transparency, accountability. Provide data. Look for improvement.
- Follow city council evolution—there has been some movement
- Support individuals to run for office

- Keep pressure on our politically elected leadership. Racism wins if we lose attention on these issues and don't reform.
- Take a more active role in letting leaders know about problems we see and experience
- Maybe we should form another community Task Force to stay engaged with a new set of people who were not previously engaged.
- Continued involvement behind the scenes of police-community relations.
- Have been involved in many city commissions through the years and will continue to be involved
- Participate in community engagement events. Use the community engagement events for more than they are used for now...use it as a vehicle for community to address community concerns.
- Read Task Force recommendations and ensure that those changes are adopted. Especially civilian review board. Follow-up on Task Force recommendations, hold self and city accountable.
- Stay involved in City Council campaigns
- Task Force and residents should follow-up with Michelle Gross of Communities Untied Against Police Brutality. Ms. Gross has data on police brutality and information on insuring police.
- Elect some new leaders
- Push the city council to record not only police encounters but outcomes

Engage with Youth and Schools

- Call my son's school and ask them what efforts have they taken or plan to take to become change agents in keeping the community inclusively safe.
- Raise my daughter to be aware of systematic racism and of her privilege. Teach her to stand up for others
- Ask for more opportunities for parents from diverse backgrounds who attend the same school to develop more "community"
- Safety: Work with schools and young people to educate them on how to interact with law enforcement to stay alive.
- I would like to take St. Anthony High Schools "Dare to be real" conversation content and model to my community (i.e. State Fair)

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 5: June 19, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

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Background

On June 19, 2017, nearly 100 people attended the community conversations on inclusion and policing. A total of 184 unduplicated individuals, plus dozens of volunteer facilitators, attended at least one of the five conversations. This final meeting centered on processing the events of the past year and work that has been accomplished thus far. Time was also spent discussing next steps for action and commitment for members of the community. The final inclusion recommendations and policing recommendations as adopted by the Falcon Heights City Council on May 24 and June 14, posted on the City's webpage, were shared with participants.

These are frequently expressed statements, grouped by theme. They are not consensus statements.

Reflections (first circle): Participants reflected on their feelings and personal journey given the events of the last year: the death of Philando Castile; the response including the Task Force and community conversations, and the acquittal of Officer Yanez.

- **Commitment to moving forward and making changes.** Participants expressed their commitment to moving forward, connecting with others in the community, and becoming a part of the solution. There is a desire to not lose the urgency of this work.
- **Feelings of pain, sadness, anger, frustration, and loss of trust.** Participants shared a range of personal emotions. Some people expressed shock over the verdict, while others were not surprised. Many people are struggling and processing the emotions of the past year. Others did express feelings of hope and gratitude from the community conversation process.
- **Reflections on racism and white privilege.** Participants shared personal experiences as a person of color and the need for white people to address privilege and the racial disparities that exist. Many shared that racism is being shoved under the rug or denied and that there is a need to bring it to the forefront of discussion and the need for white people to take this on.
- **Reactions to officer Yanez's actions and police accountability.** Participants are concerned with the language that the officer had no choice and feel that prejudice feeds unwarranted fears. There is a desire for accountability for his actions and future accountability for police officers.
- **Systematic concerns within the justice system.** Participants shared a range of feelings and conflicts about the legal process. People expressed that there are a national and systematic inequities that need to be addressed across the country.

Personal Next Steps (second circle): Participants shared their next steps, given the events of the past year.

- **Address racism, bias, and discrimination.** People asserted their commitment to work on speaking up against racism, bias, and discrimination within the community. Some made a personal commitment to address internal bias and continue to talk about race.
- **Advocate for changes in laws and policies.** Some participants plan to become more politically active and working to change laws related to policing and officer training.
- **Continue to connect with others through conversations.** Some participants expressed an interest in continuing conversations across various ideologies to build relationships and a stronger community.

Falcon Heights Community Conversation 5: June 19, 2017

Analysis of Key Themes

- **Engage with the community in personal and professional roles.** Some participants shared commitments to get involved within the community and their personal networks to be a part of the solution. Some specific commitments shared were: hosting a block party; being involved in the church; connecting with community outreach groups.
- **Engage youth.** There is concern for children; people want to work more with youth.
- **Focus on accountability from the city and implementation of the Task Force recommendations.** Participants plan to pay attention and work to ensure these recommendations are implemented and enforced by the City Council.
- **Mourn, heal, and process emotions.** People want to take time to mourn, process emotions, and heal as individuals. Some expressed a desire to not forget and to create a monument to facilitate remembering, mourning, and healing.

Thematic Resource / Action Circles: Based on the commitments shared in the fourth community conversation, this meeting concluded with five circles focused on specific topics for follow-up action. Invited resource people assisted the discussion. Participants joined the topic area they were most interested in to discuss actions to move forward on.

- **City Involvement and Implementation Committee.** This group discussed the need for resources and staff time to be invested to ensure implementation of the recommendations. Ideas were shared to get feedback from people on costs for implementation and to lay out the financing options visually to allow people to understand the costs and tradeoffs of different actions.
- **Courageous Conversations: Talking about race and privilege.** This group shared ideas on having conversations on race and learning how to listen and learn with openness, vulnerability, and non-judgement.
- **Educational Programming.** The following specific ideas were shared:
 - Host a public showings of documentary films on bias and racism at a library or other suitable location, with a community discussion following.
 - Engage youth through positive interactions and trips with police officers to humanize each other and remove fear. Match young and old, interactive multi-generational activities.
 - Record community member stories and reactions and post videos on city website.
- **Engaging Youth.** This group talked about ways to listen and engage young people. Some of the ideas they discussed include:
 - Have circle conversations for kids to discuss racism.
 - Promote ethnic studies and diversity curriculum within the schools.
 - Promote learning about racial equity across ages and with parents. St. Paul and Roseville schools have a model.
 - Coordinate with other programs and initiatives in the Twin Cities.
- **History Project.** This group reflected that history is not only in the past and that actions, such as redlining, effect the current reality. The group shared ideas for the next steps that include:
 - Encourage history in art, such as a competition that involves schools and youth or a play.
 - Do projects mixing policy and history, for example with a theme, “Why are we so white?”
 - Document the popup peace gardens and other things that have been put together since Philando Castile’s death.
 - Make an educational presentation or website.
 - Use Ramsey County Historical Society as a resource and venue.