New York State
POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE

ONONDAGA COUNTY

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Content Outline

Executive Summary

Text from Ryan / Text from Ben (or joint message)

Acknowledgements

The collaborative is driven by the dedication and commitment of community volunteers, civil leaders and key stakeholder who took time out of their lives to work toward building a safer, more fair, and equitable Onondaga County. These individuals along with other members of the Onondaga County Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative have worked diligently to improve their community and their home.

Thank you.

Introduction to the Collaborative Process

Similar to other communities in New York State, Onondaga County has combined with all municipalities within the county, to address a comprehensive plan for reform.

While this collaborative effort creates a baseline for all government entities within Onondaga County with a police agency operating with law enforcement officials, the Executive Order requires that each department develop its own plan for police reform. Prior to and leading up to 2020, voices of from citizens in the City, County and State have spoken-up, joining the national chorus, regarding the need for comprehensive police reform.

The summer of 2020 *accelerated* police reform efforts:

- National: George Floyd Justice in Policing Act (HR 7120)
- State: NYS Lawmakers pass 10 bills & Governor's EO 203
- Local: Syracuse Mayor Walsh issues Executive Order **(See Appendix A)**

- **Public Comments** (*presented* by InterFaith Works)
    - *See* Full Report **Appendix B**

The Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative ("PRRC") conducted six community forums in January 2021 to gather public comment about initiatives to be undertaken in Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse to address police reform pursuant to Executive Order No. 203, signed by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on June 12, 2020. The PRRC engaged InterFaith Works, a Syracuse-based human services non-profit agency, to gather all data based on public comments for each session and to develop this independent report.

The report qualitatively analyzes 211 public comments made by 375 participants about reforming and redefining the role of police in Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse. Seven overarching themes emerged, identified below. For ease of reference, the themes below serve as a table of contents for this report.

- **7 Themes From Public Comments**
    - Community Trust
    - Police Demeanor, Brutality, and Profiling
    - Mental Health/Alternatives to Police
    - Police Organization and Structure
    - Systemic Racism and Poverty
    - Schools and Youth
    - Recruitment and Training

- ## **Community Forums**

The dates of the forums were January 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, and 20. Each were held via a Zoom platform from 5:00 – 6:30 pm. The forums were initially designed for participants from specific geographic regions of Onondaga County and for the City of Syracuse.

Participants were asked to supply their zip code for later identification between the comment and the municipal police department. This report does not control for City and non-City recommendations due three reasons - inconsistent provision of zip codes, the appearance of geographic mixing for the sessions, and making "global" recommendations about police rather than specific to the commenter's location. More importantly, the themes that emerged from these sessions appear to be broadly applicable across municipalities within Onondaga County. There are specific references to certain municipalities which are identified in more detail below, but these are derived from the public comments rather than attributable by zip code.

Total attendance across the six Community Forums was 375 participants on a session-by-session basis. Multiple people attended multiple sessions and not everyone attended the entirety of their session. Attendance was determined by Zoom participant lists provided in Excel format, with duplicate names per session deleted. Duplicate entries appear likely due to connectivity interruptions requiring participants to reenter the meeting and thus be logged as a new participant by Zoom.

Table 1: Attendance by session

Date	Attendance
January 7, 2021	55
January 12, 2021	70
January 13, 2021	81
January 14, 2021	68
January 19, 2021	54
January 20, 2021	47
Total Attendance	375

The Community Forums were facilitated by Nodesia Hernandez and Pastor Dr. H. Bernard Alex, each of whom served as the lead facilitator for three sessions each. The sessions were opened by members of the PRRC by setting the framework for each discussion. The sessions were designed and initially conducted to be listening sessions for Collaborative and law enforcement members, but government leaders did address specific inquiries raised by public participants. It was common, for example, for City and County government leaders to indicate if a citizen complaint was received and was being acted upon.

There were a total of 211 separate suggestions made by the public during the six Community Forums, for an average of approximately 35 suggestions per Community Forum. Participants often made more than one suggestion.

- ## **Understanding the Public Comments Report**

Public participants offered an array of recommendations and suggestions, many of which were drawn from personal and professional experiences with police. There was a perceived need for and recognition of the importance of the police while expressing a simultaneous concern about poor demeanor and profiling, and lack of trust. We observe promise in the form of participant recommendations about building police-community trust and addressing organizational challenges that police departments face, such as responding to people in mental health crisis. We observe opportunities for the Collaborative and the legislatures across Onondaga County to address head-on the many shared stories of poor officer demeanor, profiling, and brutality by participants who identified as black or brown or persons of color.

The themes represent both frequency of their mention but also uniqueness of the theme. For the former category, the theme of "police demeanor, brutality, and profiling" was an obvious theme not just for the frequency but for the stories that were used to illustrate the theme. For the latter, the theme of "schools and youth" received relatively few mentions but is also highly specific. Additionally, it may be important to consider the age of the Community Forum attendees: there appeared to be few youth participants, so "schools and youth" might be a category that is underrepresented in terms of potential reform opportunities.

A different example is "systemic racism and poverty." Some could suggest that it was perhaps the major theme of all six sessions (many issues, like racial profiling and police demeanor and brutality, affect our black and brown neighbors the most). This is a valid point.

However, issues of demeanor, brutality, and profiling may be able to be addressed in specific ways by the Collaborative and by the legislative bodies that receive this report. For purposes of this report, "systemic racism and poverty," while referenced less frequently, still represents an important area of consideration that is more complicated: interactions across systems, different levels of government, and perhaps with entities outside the immediate authority of the PRRC and the legislative bodies within Onondaga County. An example of this is the members of the Onondaga Nation, sovereignty, and historical racism.

We encourage the reader to consider the totality of all suggestions made as important elements for addressing police reform and reinvention. There are clear themes that emerge, but we expect that meaningfully addressing police reform and reinvention requires equal consideration of all possible solutions put forth regardless of their frequency.

- ## **7 Themes Defined**

    - o **Rebuild community trust.** This is a complicated theme involving: (1) the recognition of the importance of the police role in our communities, (2) the need

for greater accountability structures and transparency of these structures, and (3) efforts to meaningfully rebuild relationship between police and community members.

- o **Address police demeanor, brutality, and profiling.** This is the most prominent theme mentioned during the Community Forums, and was communicated through many shared experiences by black, brown, and people of color of demeaning treatment, brutality, and profiling. No white participants were observed to share similar experiences. Solutions to these challenges will be difficult but may be addressed, at least partially, by the solutions offered in **rebuilding community trust**, above.

- o **Improve recruitment and training.** Addresses participant comments about fostering increasingly diverse police departments that meet or exceed minority representations in our municipalities and our County or about fostering, in the words of one participant, "a diversity mindset" around new hires and trainings.

- o **Engage mental health / alternatives to police**. There was resonance across the Community Forums for the need for expanded mental health services to augment, or perhaps replace in certain instances, police interactions with people in mental health crisis.

- o **Enhance police organization and structure**. This category reflects the "business process" aspects of policing – numbers and allocations, response times, call response, programs like gun reduction, and the ability to access police records. Good policing models were referenced and positive interactions with police were noted.

- o **Address systemic racism and poverty**. The theme of systemic racism and policing could be interpreted to be the major theme of across the Community Forums. This category is best understood as being multi-disciplinary and intergovernmental, at the very least, with "solutions" being ones that are less obvious that other ones addressed more specifically above.

- o **Engage schools and youth**. Schools and youth may represent a unique opportunity across the Community Forums: there was very little observed input from youth about their experiences generally and in their schools. As such, the PRRC and the various legislative bodies in Onondaga County may wish to consider a specific engagement of youth perspectives.

- **Gov. Executive Order 203** (*14 Areas of Focus*)

Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 203: (See Full Order at <mark>**Appendix C**</mark>)

"Each local government entity **which has a policy agency operating with police officers** as defined under 1.20 of the criminal procedure law must perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and practices, and **develop a plan to improve** such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of **addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement** to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and **to address** any **racial bias** and **disproportionate policing** of **communities of color."**

- Use of Force Policies
- Procedural Justice
- Restorative Justice
- Problem-Oriented Policing
- Hot Spots Policing
- Focused Deterrence
- Implicit Bias Training

- Model Policies & Guidelines
- Systemic Racial Bias in Policing
- Violence Prevention / Reduction Interventions
- De-escalation Training / Practices
- Community-based Outreach
- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Programs
- Crime Prevention by Environmental Design

Accountability Goals

After this plan is ratified or adopted by your legislative body:

- We will need to implement the plan & communicate progress reports/metrics to the public.
- We will need continuously to monitor and respond to community concerns with the police.
- Public engagement will not end on April 1st, 2021.

Note: This Collaborative is an important step in the continual process of building, maintaining, and strengthening the relationship between our police department and our community.

POLICE STRUCTURE SUB-COMMITTEE
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- **<u>Use of Force Policy</u>**: ***See Appendix D*** *(City of Syracuse Model)*
  - The Use of Force Policy provides a guideline on the reasonable use of force for officers of the Department as part of their sworn duty to protect and serve the public. The policies set forth in this section are operational guideposts and the Department's policy shall also include the standard, techniques and requirements contained within the instruction provided to officers as part of their basic, in-service, and on-the-job training. While there is no way to specify the exact amount or type of reasonable force to be applied in any situation, every member of this department is expected to use these guidelines to make such decisions in a professional, impartial and reasonable manner.

  - The Department and this Policy recognize the value and sanctity of human life and the dignity to be accorded to the citizens the Department is sworn to protect. This policy equally protects the welfare and safety of the Department's officers who place themselves in danger on a daily basis. Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare and themselves requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of these interests.

- **<u>Body Worn Camera Policy</u>**: ***See Appendix E*** *(City of Syracuse Model)*
  - The purpose of this policy is to provide Officers with instructions on when and how to use body-worn cameras (BWCs) so that Officers may reliably record their contacts with the public in accordance with applicable law.

  - It is intent upon this policy that Officers shall activate the BWCs when such use is appropriate to the proper performance of the individual Officer's official duties and where the recordings are consistent with policy and law. This policy does not govern the use of surreptitious recording devices used in undercover operations.

- **<u>No Knock Warrant Procedures</u>**: ***See Appendix F*** *(City of Syracuse Model)*
  - This policy established guidelines for the planning and serving of arrest and search warrants by members of this department. It is understood that this policy cannot address every single or circumstance that can arise in the service of a search or arrest warrant, as these tasks can involve rapidly evolving and unique circumstances.

o This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with a Operations Planning and Deconfliction Policy, which has additional guidance on planning and serving high-risks warrants. This policy is not intended to address the service of search warrants on locations or property already secured or routing field warrants arrests by patrol officers.

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- ## Civilian Oversight and Other External Accountability
  (Model: Syracuse Citizen Review Board):

The City of Syracuse Citizen Review Board ("Board") is a hybrid oversight model[1] created through Local Law No.2011 ("Legislation") with jurisdiction over the Syracuse Police Department ("Department"). The Legislation states the Board shall have the power to investigate complaints of police misconduct independent of, and concurrently with, any investigations conducted by Office of Professional Standards. The Board has eleven (11) members appointed as volunteers by the City of Syracuse Common Council and the Mayor's Office (three Mayoral, eight District and At-large Common Council appointees). The day to day operations are managed by a Board appointed Administrator and Legal Secretary 1 hired through Onondaga County Civil Service Process with an operating budget of $131,281 ($100,636 staff salaries).

The Board is not limited to the allegations it can investigate. The complaints typically consist of allegations of excessive force, demeanor, failure to act, racial bias and profiling, unnecessary force, improper search and seizure, false arrest, false reporting, harassment, retaliation, witness

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[1] https://www.nacole.org

intimidation, falsifying police reports and property destruction. The Board has independent subpoena power, independent outside counsel, and independent private investigator authority afforded by Legislation.

The Administrator or its private investigator conducts an independent and concurrent investigation after reviewing the internal investigation completed by the Office of Professional Standards. Upon review of the information and evidence gathered during the independent investigation and documents provided by the Department, the Administrator makes a determination as to whether there is reasonable cause to proceed to a Board hearing on the allegations of misconduct in a complaint. The Administrator presents his/her report to the full Board and provides all Board members with access to the full Board and Office of Professional Standards case file.

Upon review of the report and recommendation from the Administrator, the full Board may either affirm or reverse the recommendation as to whether there is reasonable cause to proceed to a hearing. If there is reasonable cause to proceed, the Administrator shall schedule a hearing and notify the complainant and the Chief of Police. If there is not reasonable cause, the CRB Administrator shall notify the complainant and the Chief of Police of this determination. The Board shall convene a hearing panel that shall not be open to the public and shall follow the substantial evidence standard of proof. Decisions of the panel shall be made by majority vote and decisions shall include findings of fact and recommendations. If a panel finds that the misconduct has occurred, the Administrator shall notify the Chief of Police and the officer(s) who were the subject(s) of the complaint, in writing, of the panel's findings and recommendations by verifiable means. Such recommendations may include disciplinary actions including but not limited to counseling, reprimand, suspension, retraining, demotion or dismissal. The panel may also recommend restitution be paid to the complainant by the city for damage to real or personal property, costs related to medical or mental health treatment, or other losses causally related to the incident. However, the Chief of Police has the final authority over the imposition of discipline. If the panel finds that an Officer(s) may have engaged in criminal conduct, it may refer cases to the Onondaga County District Attorney Office and request that he/she initiate an investigation.

The Board may identify, analyze, and make recommendations about police policies, procedures, practices or other systematic concerns about police conduct to the Chief of Police, even without the existence of underlying complaints.

In the spirit of reimagining policing, accountability and transparency, the Board requires more funding, staff, and legislative power to discipline Officers to insure public accountability over the powers exercised by members of the Syracuse Police Department while preserving[2] the integrity of the agency that employs them. Some national best practices include a recommended budget of at least one percent (1%), excluding administrative salaries, of the departmental

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[2] Local Law No. 2011 City of Syracuse

budget the Oversight Agency oversees. Any Oversight Model requires adequate staff like those employed in the Department's internal affairs unit. In addition the Oversight agency should have direct involvement related to the development of policy, training, and recruitment of the Department personnel, a member of the force review board and officer involved shooting reviews of the Department subject to receiving all the pertinent investigatory documents related to the excessive force, along with unfettered access to Body Worn Camera footage.

A clearly established Mediation process would provide complainants with the ability to express their concerns to the specific police officer in a neutral setting while allowing police officers to better understand how the complainant felt about their interaction. The officers would gain a better understanding of how their words, behaviors and attitudes were received and perceived by the community.

The Oversight agency should be supported by the Administration both of the Department and municipality in order to ensure due consideration is given to any proposed decisions and recommendation provided by the agency. Civilian Oversight should be an open-citizen [3]controlled process for reviewing grievances and provide a non-exclusive alternative to civil litigation through a process that would maintain procedural due process safeguards to protect the rights of both police officers and individuals who come in contact with the Department. It is a first step [4]toward police accountability and transparency in our communities. These changes would foster a better working relationship between the community and the Department through shared understanding of principle seven of Sir Robert Peel[5]'s Nine Principles "Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence".

This subcommittee recommends that each police agency under the purview of the Collaborative explore the implementation of a civilian led oversight agency to increase and improve efforts to build trust and ensure enduring accountability.

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[3] Local Law No. 2011 City of Syracuse

[4] https://www.nacole.org/community_oversight_paves_the_road_to_police_accountability

[5] The Peelian Principles

- **Procedural Justice**

  Definition: Procedural justice refers to the idea of fairness in the processes that resolve disputes and allocate resources. It is a concept that, when embraced, promotes positive organizational change and bolsters better relationships. Procedural justice speaks to four principles, often referred to as the four pillars: **fairness** in the processes; **transparency** in actions; opportunities for **voice; impartiality** in decision making. (COPS.usdoj.gov/proceduraljustice)

  Model Example: Right to Know Law (City of Syracuse) *See Appendix G*

  Brief Description: The Right to Know Law institutes an affirmative obligation on law enforcement officers to inform the people of their privacy rights when being searched by the police, and to create greater transparency in law enforcement practices. This law aims to increase transparency in police practices and to build trust between police officers and members of the public by providing the public with notice of the reasons behind their encounters with the police, and a written record of their interactions with the police in situations that do not result in an arrest or summons. The intent of this law is protect the personal privacy of all people within its borders, to shield police officers from false claims of wrongdoing, to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of our criminal justice system, and to rebuild trust between the Police and the residents they are sworn to serve.

  o **Note From the Collaborative**:

The City of Syracuse has recently passed a "RIGHT TO KNOW" Law (General Ordinance City of Syracuse 19-9). The stated purpose of said law is to require law enforcement officers to "inform those people of their privacy rights when being searched by the police, and to create greater transparency in law enforcement practices."

It's the consensus of this Committee that each department, and each municipality, should determine the extent to which officers need to inform citizens about the nature of any given encounter. As a general rule, transparency in informing a citizen of the reason for a police encounter, or a police stop, is a good policy. "Why did you stop me?" or "Why was I pulled over?" are not onerous or unreasonable questions that would needlessly detract from the officer's efforts.

There are some areas of concern, however, in the City Ordinance. Among those are that while the statute seeks transparency, an unintended consequence may easily be a more rigid and formalized relationship between the officer and citizen. There are literally thousands of innocuous, friendly and fruitful interactions between police and citizens that would be strained by this unnecessarily formalized process. In addition several sections of the Ordinance do not

recognize the reality of police work where introductions are not possible because of the volatility of the situation or providing too much information to a person interviewed may compromise the integrity of a criminal investigation. Lastly, but not exclusively, the statute intrudes on questions of consent and search and seizure which are properly determined following Constitutional guidelines in a court of law.

Nevertheless, we do embrace the concepts of transparency, of civility and an informed populace. For that reason, we suggest that each police department and the legislative body of each municipality discuss and review the RIGHT TO KNOW Law and adopt all, some or none of the provisions therein depending on the needs of the particular agency and legislative body and the will of the people in each respective community.

- **<u>Violence Interrupters</u>** (Reduction Intervention):
    - Grief Support for Youth Through Art (model focus, City of Syracuse)

Context and Background

Syracuse, New York, had the highest rate of murders of cities in New York State in 2016, the violence rivaling that in large cities, like Chicago, Illinois, which are the focus of much attention in the media. We have documented the sources, patterning, and perpetuation of gun violence in Syracuse. Much violence follows from a form of feuding over neighborhood turf and over resources that have become limited by the decline of the economy and social supports in this rustbelt city, perpetuating patterns of structural violence. Murders and violence result in physical, emotional, and other psychological trauma among neighborhood residents.

The rate of murders in the city equals or surpasses the rate in many other U.S. cities. Although the specifics differ in important ways, in nearly all of the places experiencing gun violence the social patterning of that violence reflects tit-for-tat or retaliatory feuding. In Syracuse, this tit-for-tat activity revolves around rival neighborhoods. They are intense, deadlocked, and resistant to de-escalation or resolution. They tend to persist over time, with alternating periods of greater and lesser intensity. Intractable conflicts come to focus on needs or values that are of fundamental importance to the parties. The conflict pervades all aspects of the parties' lives, and they see no way to end it short of utterly destroying the other side. Each party's dominant motive is to harm the other. Such conflicts resist common resolution techniques, such as negotiation, mediation, or diplomacy (Coleman 2000, 428).

Many efforts to address these conflicts do so by engaging gun violence perpetrators directly. For example, in cities where gangs are a problem, by seeking to get gang members to give up gang membership and behaviors.

In this proposal, we argue that there is a significant gap in funding to address grief, loss, and trauma specific to gun violence in African-American and LatinX communities. We posit that this population needs a non-traditional approach to start the process of healing and raising awareness of the importance of mental health, self-care, and grief and loss management.

Recommendation

H.E.A.L. (Healing. Elevates. All. Lives.)

In the neighborhoods in Syracuse, that experience gun violence and homicides, adolescents and young adults participate in a number of memory work practices that help them to weave the symbolic meanings that enable individuals to feel as though they are participating in something greater than themselves (Rubinstein et al. 2018). These practices are directed toward creating legacies of, and communicating meaning for, the lives of those who have been killed, through artifacts, language, and rituals of mourning. The creative attention employed in making and disseminating the memorials pro- vides a focus for grieving, a way to psychologically manage the unremitting and unpredictable death. The memorial artifacts, and the process of creating, wearing, and honoring the dead through artifacts and language, give the youth a focus for their grief. Unfortunately, however, in some cases, the proliferation of such artifacts becomes the focus of plans for revenge and retaliation for previous acts of violence.

The H.E.A.L. (Healing Elevates All Lives) intervention model offers grief and loss through the expression of art which can help youth honor their murdered family members and friends but moves them from preoccupation with vengeance to a structured process of ways in which they are able to deal with grief. The goal of this non-traditional intervention is to develop a culturally appropriate model to reach urban youth with grief support and to help them develop resilience and coping strategies in an environment of ongoing violence and repeated homicides. This approach can be implemented for any age group throughout the community. This support system will be a safe place of expression. The process will be a multi-tiered approach. Specifically, the first tier is for participants to attend grief and loss sessions. At the end of each session there is a self-reflection activity provided by the facilitator requires participants to self-analyze and write down their thoughts and experience. The second tier requires participants to internalize their thoughts on a particular subject and express that thought in the form of art. The third tier allows the participant to select a form of art to express their feelings, thoughts, and emotions. In the past, participants selected projects such as poetry, painting, photography, and music to express themselves. Grief support through art has the potential to help young people communicate their feelings which can lead to giving them a voice in the midst of the violence and trauma.

We recognize that during the healing process there are memories that may cause program participants to rehash traumatic experiences that they may have suppressed as a coping mechanism. That said, the program will offer licensed mental health therapists available for the individual and family for advanced treatment should they deem it necessary.

In conclusion, data shows that youth who experience trauma induced by homicide attribute their success to self-identifying at least one adult who has been active in their life (Salaam Jennings, Bey 2015). This creative arts program is all-inclusive allowing mentorship in the form of Sponsors which is the foundation of the Street Addiction grounded theory. This theory shows that the streets have an addictive nature similar to cocaine, alcohol, and gambling. Individuals who are reared in and exposed to this dynamic are in desperate need of respite and rehabilitation.

- ## School Safety and Security:

This subject focuses on seven issues:
1. Choosing a Program Model
2. Defining Specific SRO Roles and Responsibilities
3. Recruiting SROs
4. Training and Supervising SROs
5. Collaborating with School Administrators and Teachers
6. Working with Students and Parents
7. Evaluating SRO Programs

Choosing a Program Model: In the basic School Resource Officer model, SROs enforce the law, teach, and mentor. The level of emphasis that SROs devote to each of these three roles varies considerably across and within programs (i.e. school demographics). As a result, it is more accurate to think in terms of where individual programs and SROs fall along a continuum between, at one extreme, engaging in mostly law enforcement activities and, at the other extreme, engaging in mostly teaching and mentoring, all are equally as important. There are several considerations that new—and existing—SRO programs should think about in deciding how their SROs can best allocate their time according to the three basic SRO roles, including the level of crime and disorder in a school and the wishes of the school administration. However, the personality and experience of the individual SRO each SRO's balance of activities falls. Defining specific SRO roles and responsibilities. When SRO programs fail to define the SROs' roles and responsibilities in detail before—or even after—the officers take up their posts in the schools, problems are often rampant—and may last for months and even years.

Successful programs have generally followed several steps in developing a list of SRO roles and responsibilities, including:

- Identify roles and responsibilities in writing agreeable via school districts, Police administration, and the school P.T.O. and local organizations;
- Avoid relying on a merely personal relationship, easy access, and a handshake between police and school administrators for establishing SRO roles;

- Involve the schools, PTO, and local civic organizations in developing the SRO roles and responsibilities;
- Distribute the roles and responsibilities, and periodically review them having the end goal of rebranding to meet the goals and objections of the SRO program; and
- Provide a mechanism for resolving disagreements between school administrators and SROs about the officers' responsibilities. In developing the written description of SRO roles and responsibilities:
  - Narrow the considerable leeway of what it means for SROs to engage in "law enforcement";
  - Make clear whether and how SROs will be responsible for enforcing discipline (if applicable);
  - Be specific about the SROs' teaching, and counseling and mentoring, responsibilities.
- Recruiting SROs
  - Carefully screening applicants and conscientiously supervising them are necessary to recruiting and retaining officers who are—and remain—well qualified by temperament and skills to be SROs.
  - It is especially important to develop written criteria for who can qualify as an SRO, including:
    - Likes and cares about students;
    - Educational background;
    - His or her involvement in civil organization working with kids in the school district.
    - Has the temperament to work with school administrators;
    - Has the capacity to work independently;
    - Is not a rookie; and
    - Knows the community in which he or she will be working.

Other keys to successful screening and recruitment include:
- Assigning officers with the right personality—someone, as one principal put it, with "an outgoing, caring, but no-nonsense personality";
- When there is a lack of qualified applicants, using incentives, such as take-home Cruisers (who live in the same Geographic area of employment) and a percent salary increment to help attract qualified candidates; and
- Involving school district, school PTO, civic organization, and school-level administrators in the screening process to increase acceptance of the SROs among school personnel.

Training and Supervising SROs, not many police agencies train SROs before they go on the job. Nevertheless, any delay in training can be a serious problem because SROs then must learn their jobs by "fend for yourself" mentality. There are out-sourced training programs that can provide in-service training, including sending SROs for advanced SRO training with reputable training organizations.

It is highly suggested that SROs and school administrators obtain SRO training as a team. Most programs fail to provide consistent or close supervision of the SROs' work. However, adequate supervision of SROs is important to make sure the officers are working to their full potential and are not experiencing unreported or unacknowledged problems. Collaborating with school administrators, PTO, local civic organizations, and Teachers. Perhaps the single most troublesome area for most programs has been establishing productive relationships between the SROs and principals and assistant principals, in large part because of a fundamental difference in the law enforcement culture and the school culture in terms of goals, strategies, and methods.

Administrators expressed three principal concerns about having an SRO in their schools:
•   Who is in Charge?
•   Who Makes the Decision to Arrest?
•   Why Isn't "My" SRO Available All the Time?

Nevertheless, over time, most administrators developed good working relations with their SROs and came to value the program highly. While sometimes this change in attitude involved just getting used to the program, many programs found they could expedite the process of improving working relationships by:

• collaborating with school administrators in planning, operating, and supervising the program;
• explaining program benefits to administrators;
• orienting school-level administrators to the program;
• training SROs before they go on the job; and
• addressing administrator concerns about the SROs' availability.

Gaining the support of teachers is essential if SROs want to improve or maintain kids' good perceptions about "cops" and taking advantage of a unique opportunity for motivating students to seek out the SROs outside of class when the youth are having problems. It is suggested that SROs on occasion invited by teachers to address their classes.

The purpose for this will be to:
•   Orient teachers, and students to the SRO's program;
•   Explain how SROs can improve student learning; and
•   Go beyond the normal SRO responsibilities to help teachers, and students.

Working with Students and Their Parents. Program coordinators, SROs, and school administrators all recognize the difficulty SROs experience trying to maintain authority as enforcers of the law while at the same time preserving a helping relationship with students as teachers and mentors.

Walking this fine line plays itself out in two areas:
1) Counseling and
2) Familiarity with students.

Especially when there is a poor or no relationship between the school guidance counselor and a student, the SRO often fills the gap. However, in addition to the serious risk of giving poor advice, SROs are exposed to the criticism—and even civil liability—of practicing psychological counseling without a license when they help students with personal problems unrelated to the law. Nevertheless, the vast majority of school administrators said they trusted the SROs' judgment to know when to refer a student for professional help with a personal problem and involve the parents. This way ongoing SRO training is paramount.

SROs can balance being supportive while remaining an authority figure by:
• Establishing specific guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behavior;
• Arranging to provide formal training for SROs on the topic; and
• Instructing SROs to act defensively—for example, never close their office doors when talking with a student of the opposite sex;
• Obtain intelligence reports from local Police agencies on trouble students; and
• Report all abnormalities to his supervisor and school administration Immediately

Some parents become concerned that an SRO's presence in the schools suggests their children's schools must be unsafe. Programs that used PTAs, other community meetings, newsletters, letters, and newspaper articles to inform parents about the program reported few or no objections from parents. In turn, parents who support the program often encourage their children to seek out the SRO for help and, in three different sites, have helped pressure city officials to reverse their plans to drop their SRO programs. It is also important that SRO's not wear combative looking uniforms such outer and visible police uniform that give the appearance of SWAT police wear.

SRO program evaluation is essential to learn whether and how the program needs improvement and to convince funding sources of the importance of continuing the program. The first step in any evaluation is to review the program's goals and then decide what questions to ask about each goal.

For example, if a program's goals include reducing truancy and improving kids' image of the police, the evaluation can ask:

• By how much have truancy rates changed since the program began?
• How have students' opinions of the police changed since the program began?
  • Does safety measurement need improvements?
  • Do students and staff members feel safe?

The second step is to identify the information to collect that will answer the questions, and the third step is to determine how to collect the information. The law enforcement agency and school system should collaborate on the assessment by interviewing or obtaining written

assessments from principals and assistant principals. One school district conducts annual focus groups of randomly selected students, designed to assess their opinions, and use of the program. Program supervisors need to circulate the evaluation findings to the chief or sheriff, the city manager or mayor, and the school board to bolster the case for continued funding. The program also needs to give the evaluation results to each SRO, local civic organizations, and schools for purposes identifying problem areas that need addressing.

- ## Diversity Hiring:
  - City of Syracuse / SPD (Model)

Background

The City of Syracuse has a demographic profile similar to many mid-size cities. According to the U.S. Census the overall population is 142,327 and the racial demographics are as follows: 30 % African American, 10 % Latinos, 6.5% Asian, and 55% White. Over 80% of the Syracuse residents that are 25 years of age or older are reported to have at least a high school education. However, Syracuse has the nation's highest rate of concentrated poverty with 31% of the residents and roughly half of the children experiencing poverty.

The Syracuse Police Department (SPD) has an active force of 396 members. Currently, 89% of the SPD officers are White which is in stark contrast to the racial make-up of the City of Syracuse.[i] There is also a disparity amongst genders with women only making up 12% of the population (K. Buckner, personal communication, Dec 1, 2020).
A multipronged approach to recruitment should be taken to address the identified gaps in diversity.

Barriers to Diversity:

On par with national trends regarding barriers to recruiting a diverse police force SPD faces the following recruitment challenges:

1. A lack of awareness of employment opportunities within the police department
2. A lack of awareness of the benefits of joining the Syracuse Police department
3. Mistrust within the minority community towards the police department
4. Competition for qualified candidates
5. Personnel Regulations

Recommendations:

Increasing awareness about opportunities and benefits of joining the Syracuse Police department

A digital campaign strategy should be implemented to spread awareness of about the benefits of joining the Syracuse Police department and highlighting employment opportunities with the

department. This can be best achieved by working closely with the marketing department to create a tailor communication plan that captures the target audience attention while simultaneously telling the story of the police department.

Suggested platform to use as the primary form of communication for the digital campaign strategy is the SPD Facebook page because the Facebook has a wider reach with 28,442 followers in comparison to the Instagram page with 4,021 followers, and Twitter with 2,739. In addition to the digital campaign strategy strong partnerships with local educational institutions such Onondaga Community College, Lemoyne College, Syracuse University, and surrounding area colleges should be created. These partnerships could aid tremendously in the dissemination of information about the department and help circumvent negative stereotypes about police officers.

Building Trust in the Community:

Many communities have deployed a strong community engagement strategy to help with identifying and lowering barriers to recruitment in minorities' communities. The most critical component of an engagement strategy is trust building. In effort to foster better community relations content should be regularly generated that focus on police community relations and provide citizens the opportunity learn about engagement such as ride along and police sponsored community events. Additionally, continuing and expanding existing opportunities for community engagement such as Shop with A Cop, *Coffee with A Cop,* community "giveaways". The public should be informed on how to participate in each of these opportunities for the purpose of relationship cultivation.

Research shows that engaging community residents can help lower obstacles to recruitment by creating champions that can assist with dismantling stereotypes and serve as resource for interested candidates to help usher them through the process. [1]Community focus groups could serve as a critical source of identifying barriers such as negative perceptions, cumbersome processes, misinformation about the recruitment process, and receive suggestions on how to overcome the identified barriers. Furthermore, the community focus groups should also be used as an opportunity to provide helpful information about the department and the recruitment process in an open and transparent manner.

Create a hiring committee that is comprised of officers and community members who are committed to advancing diversity and inclusion in the SPD. This will create community ambassadors who reassure the potential applicants that process is fair and transparent. Furthermore, these community members can also serve as a "mentor" to recruits through the entire process of recruitment and hire.

Lastly, the consent decree should be kept in place because it serves the dual purpose of demonstrating the department ongoing commitment to create and maintain a diverse workforce and provides the community an additional form of recourse if diversity measures are not met.

Personnel Regulations and Addressing Competition for Qualified Applicants

A detailed analysis of existing personnel practices to assess if the process creates unnecessary burden on the applicant is critical to reducing and/or removing barriers to hire. This analysis should be use an equity lens to critically go through each step of the hiring process to check for bias. The existing body of research on recruiting for diversity shows that screening tools such as background checks, fitness, and cognitive test have disparate impacts on underrepresented communities [iii]. This work should be done with a third party consultant.

If possible collaborate with other police department to reduce competition for qualified applicants. Creating communication channels between neighboring police departments and hosting joint employment affairs are some tentative examples that may create reduce competition.

Hire a full time employee for recruitment efforts: Although the recruitment process **should not** solely fall on person there should be a person who is the designated recruiter. This person should be provided resources such as training and best practice models for recruitment in addition to the full commitment of the department to advance diversity goals. If possible make this a civilian position (i.e. CSEA union).

The overall goal of recruitment should be a department that reflects diversity not only in the terms of race and gender but also age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious practices etc.

CRIME ANALYSIS SUB-COMMITTEE
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- ## Problem Oriented Policing:
  - o Definition: Problem-oriented policing (POP) is an analytic method used by police to develop strategies that prevent and reduce crime. Under the POP model, police agencies are expected to systematically analyze the problems of a community, search for effective solutions to the problems, and evaluate the impact of their efforts (National Research Council 2004). POP represents police-led efforts to change the underlying conditions at hot spots that lead to recurring crime problems. It also requires police to look past traditional strategies and consider

other possible approaches for addressing crime and disorder (Weisburd and Eck 2004). Today, it is one of the most widely used strategies among progressive law enforcement agencies (Weisburd et al. 2010). [National Institute of Justice]

- **<u>Hot Spots Policing</u>**:
  - o Definition: Hot spots policing strategies focus on small geographic areas or places, usually in urban settings, where crime is concentrated. Through hot spots policing strategies, law enforcement agencies can focus limited resources in areas where crime is most likely to occur. This practice is rated Effective for reducing overall crime and rated Promising for reducing violent, property, public order, and drug and alcohol offenses. [National Institute of Justice]

- **<u>Focused Deterrence</u>**:
  - o Definition: This practice (also referred to as "pulling-levers policing") includes problem-oriented policing strategies that follow the core principles of deterrence theory. The strategies target specific criminal behavior committed by a small number of chronic offenders, such as youth gang members or repeat violent offenders, who are vulnerable to sanctions and punishment. The practice is rated Promising for reducing crime. [NIJ] This crime reduction strategy that aims to deter crime by increasing swiftness, severity and certainty of punishment, this concept is usually directed at a specific crime problem such as gun violence and coupled between law enforcement and the Judiciary.

<u>Example</u>:

Focused Deterrence:

Focused Deterrence is utilized to support the Hot Spot Policing strategies as an independent strategy for response to Trigger Events in accordance with the National Network for Safe Communities (NNSC) model. Instituted in 2012, Syracuse TRUCE was a focused deterrence program based on Gun Violence Intervention guidelines from the NNSC. Initially organized by the Community Intervention Committee (CIC); participating agencies: Syracuse Police and School District, Onondaga Dept. of Social Services., District Attorney, Probation Dept., Upstate Medical Center, Onondaga Community College, Salvation Army, New Justice Services, the Trauma Response Team, the Center for Community Alternatives, and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Syracuse. The CIC strategy-working group meets monthly to coordinate and align gun violence reduction initiatives as directed by the oversight/Steering committee co-chaired by the Mayor of Syracuse and the Onondaga County Executive.

The Focused Deterrence (TRUCE) strategy implemented has shown some success as individuals on the CORE list receive custom notifications in accordance with the NNSC model. A small number of CORE persons have ceased to engage in gun and/or violent crimes. A modification to this strategy occurred as the data and Finn's research indicated the TRUCE strategy had a limited impact on gun violence in Syracuse. The level of effort to conduct call-ins is significant, and the partnership felt that more could be accomplished through custom notifications. Although the TRUCE model will is no longer utilized, Custom Notifications are still be delivered by the Salvation Army case workers in coordination with SPD, Probation, and Parole.

Street Outreach is an additional facet utilized in Focused Deterrence; Street Outreach operations are directed by CNYCAC. CNYCAC organizes bi-weekly meetings that include representatives of the Syracuse Police Department and Syracuse Cure Violence (SNUG). During these meetings, recent gun crime is discussed to include victims, individuals' arrested, and as appropriate, individuals or gangs/groups involved in fueling local violence. In addition to these meetings, an agenda that includes the above incidents, victims, and arrestees, as well as weekly city-wide, SNUG zone and GIVE zone gun crime statistics is provided to the group weekly. Maps of the entire city and the individual SNUG zones are also provided, in which the incidents are plotted and symbolized by the week of occurrence for the preceding month. CNYCAC regularly provides monthly statistics to DCJS for the SNUG and GIVE zones. CNYCAC shares the newest Top Offender ("CORE") list with the outreach group which includes each individual's gang/group affiliation, and addresses. If the top offender has not yet received a Custom Notification letter, one is drafted and provided to the Syracuse GIVE Custom Notification Coordinator at Salvation Army for delivery. A team comprised of The Salvation Army, County Probation, State Parole, and Syracuse Police then personally deliver these letters (in addition to monthly letters for other individuals at risk for being involved in gun violence). The individuals on the CORE list are frequently discussed at bi-weekly outreach meetings, as events or information arise.

The New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services and the United States Department of Justice continually monitor and evaluate the data methods, the concepts and the procedures used to ensure adherence to policy and regulations at both the State and Federal level.

Key Terminology:

CORE-   Chronic Offender Recognition Enforcement.
GIVE-   Gun Involved Violence Elimination Initiative.
SNUG-   Guns spelled in reverse. (Crime/Trauma Response Intervention Organization)

- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**:

  - Definition: Provides crime prevention methods to an area or specific businesses that deters offenders from attempting criminal activity by identifying and offering crime prevention strategies utilizing environmental design and physical factors. i.e. (placement of security cameras, lighting improvements, landscaping improvements. etc.)

Example:

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)/Hot Spot Policing
The CPTED strategy is closely aligned with Hot Spot Policing, while OCSO and other local police agencies have provided training to their members in this area the Syracuse Police department is at the forefront of this concept and maintains a Hot Spot Policing / CPTED plan. The plan describes OCAC's role in creating the Problem Orientated Police areas and the development of Sweep Areas. Officers assigned to several of the police department's bureaus and divisions are required to conduct an assessment of each of the Sweep Areas. This information is submitted to the CPTED commander, who creates a report that is presented to the Operations group for planning and action. The goal of which is to determine the causes of crime to include CPTED related issues directly from the community.

Community meetings are routinely held after the response phase of every Sweep to educate the community on what was accomplished during the initiative and to help form a neighborhood watch group to keep citizens engaged in their neighborhood. Commanders attend regular meetings of the Neighborhood Watch Association and communicate community concerns to the CPTED coordinator and report the results of CPTED operation to the community.

Each of the Sweep sights is evaluated by CNYCAC for gun and violent crime; in some cases the underlying issue is a quality of life complaint from the community or a non-gun violence crime problem such as burglary/larceny. Officers assigned to Community Policing within the Uniform Bureau conduct pre and post CPTED response surveys. CNYCAC conducts post response analysis to determine the long term impact(s) of each CPTED response. A Multi Agency Service Team (MAST) comprised of city departments such as Parks, Code Enforcement, Public Works and the local power provider National Grid are used to plan and execute the operation.

- **Role of Crime Analysis Center (CAC)**:
  - Brief Description: The Central New York Crime Analysis Center is comprised of members from the Syracuse Police Department, the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Police, the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, Syracuse University Department of Public Safety, and HIDTA, in addition to numerous highly trained analysts that provides data-driven and intelligence-led

policing efforts, as well as provide specific investigatory support for law enforcement in the counties of Onondaga, Oswego, and Madison.

Sub-Committee Report:

The Central New York Crime Analysis Center is comprised of members from the Syracuse Police Department, the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Police, the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, Syracuse University Department of Public Safety, and HIDTA, in addition to numerous highly trained analysts that provides data-driven and intelligence-led policing efforts, as well as provide specific investigatory support for law enforcement in the counties of Onondaga, Oswego, and Madison.

In addition to New York State and local resources, the CNYCAC partnership engages assistance from several federal law enforcement agencies to include ATF, DEA, FBI, US Probation and the United States Attorney's Office. To facilitate prosecutions the Onondaga County District Attorney's office and the United States Attorney have cross-designated assistant district attorneys to prosecute cases at the state and federal level.

New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services directs and monitors the Central New York Crime Analysis Center, which connects with 13 regional Crime Analysis Centers throughout the New York state. All of these centers provide investigative support and information to help police and prosecutors more effectively solve, reduce and prevent crime. Using data-driven processes approved by the New York State Department of Criminal Justices Services the Crime Analysis Center coordinates, expands, and enhances investigative services and provides real time investigative support to law enforcement agencies throughout Central New York.

The John F. Finn Institute routinely analyzes CNYCAC information collected for Public Safety; the FINN institute is the independent academic oversight partner that works with CNYCAC in two ways to advance public safety and security. First, FINN works with criminal justice agencies to organize and interpret existing evidence about what works, and translate that evidence into effective interventions in local contexts. Second, FINN conducts research on criminal justice strategies, programs, and practices to deepen our understanding of what works. The Institute works hand-in-hand with criminal justice agencies to bring social science findings to bear on the development of operational strategies, organizational structures, and management practices, to enhance the extent to which decisions are data-driven, and to conduct research that offers lessons about effective innovations to agencies across the country. This work is coupled with the institute's scientific expertise and their concern with the practical social issues at hand. The Institute's staff knows how to conduct research that meets scientific standards, and to adapt social research methodologies to real-world settings; they have designed and implemented studies of varying scales, from local to national, and that have employed a wide range of research methods, including surveys of various kinds, in-depth interviews, in-person observation, and statistical analysis of many types. In addition, the Institute's staff is committed

to putting its strong blend of theoretical knowledge and research to use in generating findings that are useful to policy-makers and practitioners, framing the issues that confront law enforcement and distilling implications for policy and practice. The Institute does not use criminal justice agencies as laboratories for research; the Institute uses research as a source of guidance for criminal justice agencies.

CNYCAC provides guidance on Offender Focused Deterrence consisting of directed deployment or saturation patrols made up of police officers from SPD, OCSO and NYS Police, these details are deployed, based on results of analysis conducted by CNYCAC on real time violent crime trends. The focus of these details is hot places and hot people. Offender focused deterrence details are selective enforcement details and are not zero tolerance oriented. The New York State Department of Community Corrections along with local federal agencies also participate in these details, by assigning members to various operations.

There are several key concepts utilized to identify, prevent and direct resources to effectively handle criminal activity and enhance public safety, consisting of Problem Orientated Policing (POP)/Hot Spot Policing, Focus Deterrence and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). These evidence-based New York Criminal Justice Service approved strategies are routinely combined to guide law enforcement departments to effectively improve public safety.

Conclusion:

Since 2008, law enforcement agencies in Onondaga County have formally partnered with the Central New York Crime Analysis Center to provide New York State assistance in developing policing efforts and strategies.

This continued partnership directly complies with the New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative, which suggests that agencies formally partner with NYS Crime Analysis Centers, to provide local law enforcement agencies with assistance, guidance and oversight to develop policing strategies led by data driven and intelligence based means.

Recommendation:

The practices, strategies and guidelines combined with independent academic review establish a strong basis for continuing these approved New York State Criminal Justice Service crime analysis methods and programs. The utilization of evidence based policing results in ability of law enforcement to focus on major crimes/criminal activity vs over addressing minor offences that can alienate residents within a community. However, it should be noted that evidence based policing strategies are not the only means utilized in providing public safety. Law Enforcement agencies consider numerous other factors in deploying police resources, consisting of budget

allocations, call volumes, geographic area, agency abilities, and response to community complaints or complying with State/National anti-crime initiatives.

It should be the goal for law enforcement to work together with the community and community leaders to provide better service and promote public safety. Onondaga County Law Enforcement Agencies should make a coordinated effort to increase the community's knowledge and understanding of how and why police agencies deploy police services in the manner that they do by providing Information that is not sensitive in nature through community forums, neighborhood watch meetings, media, and agency web sites on a regular basis. This information should include but not limited to; crime data, deployment strategies, prosecutorial/judicial results and direct community concerns. The sharing of information would enhance transparency, improve public safety and increase community involvement.

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- **<u>Racial Bias in Policing</u>**:

  o Purpose:
  - The Training sub-Committee of the Collaborative was tasked to explore Racial/Implicit Bias Training and how to implement that into police training for County law enforcement agencies.

Additionally, EO#203 requires a review of studies addressing systemic racial bias or racial justice in policing. Overlapping topics include recommended training on Implicit Bias and Procedural Justice Programs and Police Culture.

In May of 2015 The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing studied best practices in policing with efforts to promote effective crime reduction strategies while building public trust. The study provides six pillars:

- Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy

- Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight

- Pillar Three: Technology and Social Media

- Pillar Four: Community Policing and Crime Reduction

- Pillar Five: Training and Education

- Pillar Six: Officer Wellness and Safety

While addressing systematic bias or racial injustice, agencies should review and potentially adopt the concepts of Pillar One.

Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy and nurturing legitimacy on both sides of the police/citizen divide is the foundational principle underlying the nature of relations between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Decades of research and practice support the premise that people are more likely to obey the law when they believe that those who are enforcing it have authority that is perceived as legitimate by those subject to the authority. The public confers legitimacy only on those whom they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. In addition, law enforcement cannot build community trust if it is seen as an occupying force coming in from outside to impose control on the community.

Agencies should focus on building these relationships. Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian rather than a warrior mindset to build trust and legitimacy both within agencies and with the public. Toward that end, law enforcement agencies should adopt procedural justice as the guiding principle for internal and external policies and practices to guide their interactions with rank and file officers and with the citizens they serve. Law enforcement agencies should also establish a culture of transparency and accountability to build public trust and legitimacy. This is critical to ensuring decision making is understood and in accord with stated policy. Law enforcement agencies should also proactively promote public trust by initiating positive non-enforcement activities to engage communities that typically have high rates of investigative and enforcement involvement. Law enforcement agencies should also track and analyze the level of trust communities have in police just as they measure changes in crime. This may be accomplished through consistent annual community surveys. Finally, law enforcement agencies should strive to create a workforce that encompasses a broad range of diversity including race, gender, language, life experience, and cultural background to improve understanding and effectiveness in dealing with all communities.

- o **Brief Overview**: The committee has determined that local law enforcement officers and leaders must continue to be trained and resources allocated to implement racial/implicit Bias.

  1. One of the most common interactions between citizens and law enforcement is the traffic stop. Emphasis and training needs to be implemented for a consistent approach during these types of interaction, providing for a fair, sale, and just outcome for all.
  2. Educate the community through outreach and dialogue on the expectations of police and motorist interaction during traffic stops.
  3. Provide area law enforcement with the opportunity to attend in person implicit bias training by a vetted, nationally recognized subject matter expert.
  4. Establish a database for local law enforcement with information and listings of commercially available on-line training regarding but not limited to: Implicit bias training; Confronting Bias in Law Enforcement; Fair & Impartial Policing; Managing Implicit Bias.

Sub-Committee Report:

The Training Sub-Committee of the Onondaga County Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative was tasked to explore Racial/Implicit Bias Training and how to implement that into police training for Onondaga County law enforcement agencies.

The committee has determined that local law enforcement officers and leaders must continue to be trained and resources allocated to implement Racial/Implicit Bias Training. Focus has been on the below outlined issues with 4 recommendations of address offered to Onondaga County law enforcement agencies for consideration.

1) **One of the most common interactions between citizens and law enforcement is the traffic stop. Emphasis and training needs to be implemented for a consistent approach during these types of interaction, providing for a fair, safe, and just outcome for all**.

Committee Recommendation:
- a) In the course of newly hired police officer's field training, provide the officer with training from the Verbal Judo Institute on the tactical 8 step traffic stop approach.
- b) Provide all Field Training Officers (FTO) with the same training so that they can reinforce the use of the tactical 8 step traffic stop approach.
- c) Train all other department members involved in traffic stops in the tactical 8 step traffic stop method.

2) Educate the community through outreach and dialogue on the expectations of police and motorist interaction during traffic stops.

Committee Recommendation:
a) Create listening opportunities with the community. Have open discussions on the basic principles of a traffic stop in an attempt to identify biases that are present, learn what behavior citizens expect from police during a police traffic stop and as well the behavior police expect from citizens during a stop.

3) Provide area law enforcement with the opportunity to attend in person implicit bias training by a vetted, nationally recognized subject matter expert.

Committee Recommendation:
- a) Allocate department resources to allow for each department member to attend a biennial, in-person implicit bias training session with a nationally recognized speaker.
- b) Encourage the Onondaga Chapter of Chiefs of Police to research and select the speakers. Cost share with each department based on the number of personnel that attend.

4) Establish a database for local law enforcement with information and listings of commercially available on-line training regarding but not limited to:

- ➢ Implicit Bias Training
- ➢ Confronting Bias in Law Enforcement
- ➢ Fair & Impartial Policing
- ➢ Managing Implicit Bias

Committee Recommendation:
a) Encourage the Onondaga Chapter of Chiefs of Police to research and recommend additional commercially available on-line or web based interactive implicit bias training for all local law enforcement to choose from.

- ## **De-escalation Training**:

  - o Definition: Communicating, verbally or non-verbally, or through physical contact or action in response to a potential threat in an attempt to stabilize the situation or reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation.

    De-escalation may include the use of such techniques as command presence, advisements, verbal commands or warnings, verbal persuasion, tactical repositioning, or any tactic or force option that in the officer's reasoned judgment is likely to result in a lower level or force being used to accomplish the object at hand. When reasonable and safe under the totality of circumstances, officers should attempt to de-escalate potential threats. Officers should use de-escalation techniques consistent with his/her training whenever feasible and appropriate. Officers are not expected to compromise personal safety in order to de-escalate a situation if it is likely to result in harm to the officer or others. (*SPD Use of Force Policy; sect. 3.13*)

  - o Brief Summary: The foundation of de-escalation is grounded in five cornerstones of trust, respect, empathy, ethics and solidarity, as well the universal truths that all people want:
    - to be treated with dignity and respect;
    - to be asked rather than told to do something;
    - to be told why they are being asked to do something
    - to be given options rather than threats
    - a second chance

Sub-Committee Report:

Introduction

In August of 2020, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo directed law enforcement agencies from throughout New York State, to explore and develop plans for police reform and reinvention through a collaborator approach with members of the community. Town of Manlius Police Chief Michael Crowell, president of the Onondaga County Chapter of Chiefs of Police was asked to chair a committee focused on police training, and in turn asked Town of Geddes Police Chief John Fall to engage community members in a focused area of police training around "de-escalation".

Key Pillars of De-escalation Training
- Use of force by police is reserved as an action of last resort. If use of force is necessary to achieve a lawful objective, immediate efforts at de-escalation are critical once the objective has been met.

- The foundation of de-escalation is grounded in five cornerstones of trust, respect, empathy, ethics and solidarity, as well the universal truths that all people want:
    - to be treated with dignity and respect;
    - to be asked rather than told to do something;
    - to be told why they are being asked to do something
    - to be given options rather than threats
    - a second chance

  (NOTE: Also, Onondaga County Sheriff's Chief Custody Deputy Esteban Gonzalez reviewed our material and suggest we add S for Solidary to TREE… stating "TREE (Trust, Respect, Empathy and Ethics) can grow and become TREES (add solidarity) if all of these efforts are executed correctly and consistently into the future. One TREE becomes many TREES with the Solidarity that will naturally evolve between the police and the community." I think "solidarity" is a great principle as we think about connecting to and sustaining relationships with the community.)

- There is no hierarchy of safety as a priority, so officers must approach every situation with their own safety, the safety of their fellow officers, community safety, victim/survivor safety and suspect safety as equally important. The primary mission is to end an incident with no one being injured.

- Today's suspect is a community member who may be tomorrow's victim.

- With post-traumatic stress disorder being so prevalent in today's community, persons formerly identified by law enforcement and through police dispatch as "Emotionally Disturbed Persons" should now be referred to as "Emotionally Impacted Persons" or "Trauma Impacted Persons" in an effort to reframe mental models held by officers responding to call involving person so impacted.

Recommended De-escalation Training Plan

- De-escalation training is necessary:
    - at the recruit training academy
    - for periodic refresher in service training during an officer's entire tenure
    - a prerequisite for selection as a field training officer (at the same rigor as training provided at the recruit academy) and to be provided prior to the New York State (NYS) field training officer training certification program.
    - as a prerequisite for participation in the New York State (NYS) police supervision certification training course
    - use of force instructors and defensive tactics instructions must be cross-certified as de-escalation instructors and de-escalation trainer certification is a prerequisite for any new use of force and/or defensive tactics instructor.

- **Recommended general de-escalation training objectives**:
  - Understanding five cornerstones of de-escalation: trust, respect, empathy ethics and solidarity (TREES)
  - Understand and describe community expectations on police use of force
  - Uncover and rethink mental models
  - Identify theoretical basis for de-escalation and applying a practical application to police responses
  - Develop de-escalation skills and practices
  - Develop rapport building skills
  - Differentiate between the single officer response, the two-officer contact and cover response, and multiple officer response, and understand de-escalation approaches to each type of response.
  - Ability to describe methods of use of time and patience toward decompression
  - List and describe conflict resolution models and skills
  - Define officer awareness and outline its importance in de-escalation
  - Understand implicit bias and its potential for escalating police response
  - Through skills demonstration, evaluation of body-worn camera footage examples. and role play in reality-based scenarios, demonstrate full knowledge, understanding and abilities in de-escalation

- **Recommended components / topics of de-escalation training**:
  - Understanding community expectations around use of force, and the evolving community policing model:
    - emergence of public perception and conscience: from Rodney King to George Floyd
    - perceptions of police militarization
    - challenges with mentally ill in the community
    - key use of force case law
    - proactive police/community relationship building
    - Public understanding of why officers blade themselves, stand firm or portray themselves in certain situations
  - Mental models:
    - police perceptions of the public and community that they service
    - avoiding patterns of dehumanizing others and "us vs. them" approach to policing the community
    - avoid prejudging citizens on appearance, race, economic status
    - one community - trust, respect, empathy, ethics, and solidarity (TREES)
    - shift from "crime fighter" officer mindset to "peacekeeper/guardian" officer mindset (consider use of "Blue Courage" program curriculum – see https://bluecourage.com/).
  - Basic de-escalation skills:

- being centered, grounded and resourceful when approaching the scene
- size up upon initial scene approach, without prejudging prior to arrival
- basic interpersonal communication skills and strategies
- reflective and active listening skills
- rapport building
- use of "matching and pacing"
- influence/persuasion skills
- assertion skills
- Single officer response options and de-escalation tools
  - officer awareness and signs of escalation
  - use of listening and assertion skills
  - having self-control when provoked
  - retreat decisions vs. use of force decisions
  - use of force recovery and de-escalation
- Contact / Cover (two officer) response options
  - team approach, introductions, contact and cover roles and explanation of role to scene participants
  - self-awareness and stress tolerance techniques
  - balance with each other, awareness to body language
  - partner awareness and "tap out – tag in" de-escalation strategies
- Multiple officer responses
  - supervisory decisions on roles, deployment and call-off
  - understanding multiple units, officer may lead to escalation
  - understanding and managing "confirmation bias"
  - avoiding "group think"
- Use of time – decompression opportunities
  - patience and listening
  - however long it takes, no time restraint
  - considering options and resources for incident resolution
  - Identifying when/how to retreat
- Conflict resolution techniques
  - negotiation skills
  - referral options
- Officer awareness and readiness
  - enhancing officers' emotional maturity
  - avoiding hyper vigilance
  - understanding subject body language, as well as possible perceptions of officer body language
  - understanding the impact of implicit bias upon officer actions and reactions
  - becoming physical centered and grounded and emotionally/mentally centered and grounded
  - duty to intervene in officer initiated escalation / excessive force

- **Recommended training hours**:
  - Basic Recruit Academy (and new training initiative for existing officers) - 80 hours
    - Understanding community expectations around use of force, and the evolving community policing model – 4 hours
    - Mental models – 4 hours
    - Basic de-escalation skills – 8 hours
    - Single officer response options and de-escalation tools - 4 hours
    - Contact / Cover (two officer) response options – 4 hours
    - Multiple officer responses – 4 hours
    - Use of time – decompression opportunities – 4 hours
    - Conflict resolution techniques - 4 hours
    - Officer awareness – 4 hours
    - Reality-based de-escalation training and role play – 40 hours
  - Annual refresher in-service training - 8 hours per year
    - classroom refresher – 4 hours
    - practical reality-based de-escalation training and role play – 4 hours
  - Field training officer prerequisite training – same 80-hour program as recruits
  - Supervisor initial training – same 80-hour programs as recruits

Community Outreach and Messaging regarding De-escalation
- Create opportunities for "solidarity" with the community thought collective discussion and response using:
  - Community meetings
  - Public service announcements and video
  - Media outreach (e.g. Christy Casciano)

- Include the flowing themes in outreach:
  - interaction with police, key points or safety, rights and responsibilities for citizens, and rights and responsibilities for police officers
  - how to react to / stay safe during a vehicle and traffic stop by police
  - understanding officer reactions to your behaviors in an encounter with police

- Develop a plan to add curriculum to high school senior government, physical education and/or health classes regarding interaction with police, key points or safety, rights and responsibilities for citizens, and rights and responsibilities for police officers, to include case studies and videos.

Summary

- Timeline of next steps/actions:

  1. Finalize sample lesson plan regarding "TREES" (December 2020)

  2. Develop and conduct surveys at Westhill High School regarding student perceptions and understanding about law enforcement, police interactions, rights and responsibilities and to gauge understanding and determine any understanding gaps (January 2021)
     - The survey should explore the perceptions, expectations, and feelings in general about the police and specifically about any actual interactions they may have had with police.
     - The survey can serve as a template for surveys at other city, sub-urban and rural school districts
     - query school resource officer regarding perception of gaps
     - query Assistant Principal regarding perceptions and gaps
     - query de-escalation committee members regarding perceptions and gaps

  3. Plan and hold community stakeholder meetings to gain concurrence from community members on the overall plan for police de-escalation training, community and school outreach and curriculum for both. (January through April/May 2021)

  4. Submit amended (based upon survey data and community input) police de-escalation training curriculum to the Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC) for adoption into the Division of Criminal Justice Service (DCJS) police training programs (May/June 2021) for:
     - Basic police academy
     - In-service training update
     - Field Training Officer certification training program
     - Police supervisor course

  5. Establish a group of certified police instructors to develop police de-escalation training lesson plans. (April/May 2021)

  6. Establish a group of educators and law enforcement leaders to develop community and school-based education programs regarding police interaction. (April/May 2021)

7. Certified police instructors group develop police de-escalation training lesson plans for the four aforementioned groups under #3 above, based upon the final approved curriculum (6 to 8 months from approval of curriculum by MPTC/DCJS)

8. Educator and law enforcement leader group to develop community and school-based education programs regarding police interaction (May/June 2021)

9. Begin to deliver community and school presentations on police interaction to community groups and students (2022)

10. Begin to deliver police de-escalation training programs to the various police constituents (2022)

Training and continuing education for police officers is a critical component of ensuring competence and confidence in an ever-evolving field, with increasing demands for professionalism, compassion, and connections to the communities that police officers serve. These recommendations, for a comprehensive de-escalation training and education plan for police officers of all ranks and tenures is one of many steps toward the goal of enhancing trust between the community and the police, and minimizing the likelihood of tragic incidents involving use of force. Likewise, community and school-based outreach, focused upon understanding laws, rights and responsibilities related to interactions with police can be a critical component of improving the experience of citizens when they are stopped by police.

- **<u>Crisis Intervention</u>**:

o Overview: Law enforcement officers are often the first point of contact for someone who is experiencing a mental health crisis. Because of this, one of the solutions our county has implemented is the introduction of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training in our law enforcement departments. (Safety&Justice)

o Focus Model: Onondaga County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)
  - General Overview: The CIT Working Group works to improve public safety for community members with mental health issues and de-escalate crisis situations that put community and law enforcement in harm's way. Meeting monthly, the CIT Working Group is made up of local law enforcement agencies, New York State Office of Mental Health representatives, the Onondaga County Department of Adult and Long-Term Care, the City of Syracuse, and health-care agencies and community-based organizations that provide mental health and supportive services.

Sub-Committee Report:

Recommendations for Responding to Mental Health Crisis in Onondaga County

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify a Countywide Coordinator to implement CIT policy and training and facilitate countywide CIT Working Group
2. Support LE agencies as they develop/implement model CIT policy
   a. CIT Working Group Partners will provide feedback and recommendations to LE agencies on their model CIT policies based on best practices, current trends, and available resources
   b. CIT Working Group Partners will commit to meeting regularly to discuss countywide CIT efforts, bring in new partners and services, identify gaps in services locally, and share best practices
3. Develop a Partner Program between Law Enforcement and Mental Health Treatment Providers
   a. Formalize ride along policies & train more mental health providers in LE procedures
   b. Attend Roll Call to provide updated information on mental health resources in the community
   c. Explore the creation of a Co-responders Program/Response Team for Mental Health calls, modeled after CAHOOTS in Oregon. This program could utilize mental health providers to respond to 911 calls for service, working with law enforcement to de-escalate situations, provide alternatives to arrest, link community members to existing community resources, and provide field training to law enforcement officers.
4. Plan and Implement a 911 Diversion Program
   a. Dispatch Mobile Crisis Unit to calls identified as mental health crisis calls
   b. Develop a 988 call line
   c. Redesign 911 to flag calls for service as mental health crisis and divert as appropriate (in the works)
   d. Create Emotional Distress Call Assessment form
   e. Create Emotional Distress Caller Workflow
5. Create a Menu of Training Opportunities
   a. Continue to train LE officers from various county LE agencies on CIT
   b. Train 911 Dispatchers and additional LE support staff on CIT model
   c. Identify a "refresher" training program for LE officers who have already received CIT training to stay up-to-date
   d. Identify additional training opportunities for LE in the following areas:

      i.   Veterans/ those suffering from PTSD

      ii.   Elders and those suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia

      iii.   Cultural competency/ working in communities of Color

      iv.   Deaf/hard of hearing

      v.   English Language Learners

      vi.   People with intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities

      vii.   Co-occurring disorders (substance use disorder and mental health)

6. Identify community members who are high-utilizers of police, ambulance services, emergency medicine, crisis services, and emergency shelter services, and develop process for mental health treatment providers to reach out preemptively/ prior to LE contact

7. Continue to focus on utilizing the 211 and Crisis Connect hotlines to decrease non-emergency calls to 911, including outreach in the community, with other providers, and with LE

8. Formalize Law Enforcement Participation in the countywide Zero Suicide Program
    a. Adopt the Columbia Scale of Suicide Assessment or another risk tool
    b. Train LE on Zero Suicide

9. Develop Mental Health Supports for LE agencies to address issues of workplace trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide risk

Pillars

The Onondaga County CIT Working Group has identified three pillars that should guide all law enforcement protocols that seek to improve our work with community members who have mental health issues. These Pillars are:

- Empathy & Connection
  - Programs and policies should strive to deepen connections to community members in need, improve relationships between LE, service providers, and community members, and reaffirm our common humanity. We should strive to support community members in crisis and de-escalate situations that threaten the safety of community members and law enforcement.

- Community
  - Programs and policies should be designed, implemented and evaluated to understand how they impact all community members, with special attention paid to cultural differences, language barriers, disability, and systemic racism. Programs should be designed and implemented with the goal of improving public trust in institutions and incorporating community feedback. Community-based organizations and law enforcement should strive to link communities in crisis to familiar systems, so that

community members recognize programs, people, and process and engage with those services. ● Accountability

Programs and policies should be regularly evaluated to understand how they work and where challenges exist. Evaluation must incorporate feedback from the community, service providers, and law enforcement agencies. Emphasis should be placed on incorporating programs and policies that are evidence-based, research-supported, collaborative in nature, and applicable to all community members. Service providers and law enforcement agencies should be prepared to hold each other accountable and identify gaps in services, with an emphasis on finding solutions together.

ALTERNATIVES TO POLICE RESPONSE SUB-COMMITTEE
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- **Proper Response to Non-Criminal Calls**: (Alternatives to Police Response)
    - o Brief Overview: There needs to be strengthened collaborations between law enforcement and mobile crisis teams. Several models of response should be explored including:
        - ▪ Case Management Model where within the Police department a unit is trained to determine an appropriate response to a call
        - ▪ Co-Responder Model which require partnerships between the the police and mental health/addiction professionals
        - ▪ CAHOOTS model out of Eugene Oregon which is community based. Dispatchers are trained to recognize non-violent situations with a

MH/addiction component and divert those calls from the 911 system. They are available for onsite consultation.

Sub-Committee Report:

Research has shown that a large percentage of non-criminal calls to Police are related to mental health and substance abuse. Other communities in New York and nationally have developed programs to address this fact. Our committee has looked at these programs as well as exploring services currently available in Onondaga County. The following represents our recommendations for a framework to begin to address this issue.

County and State governments are responsible for funding mental health and addiction services. The County is responsible for the coordination and delivery of such services. To that end our broad recommendation are:

 - CIT training of County Sheriffs, City, Town and Village Police be should ongoing.

 - There needs to be strengthened collaborations between law enforcement and mobile crisis teams. Several models of response should be explored including:

- Case Management Model where within the Police department a unit is trained to determine an appropriate response to a call
- Co-Responder Model which require partnerships between the the police and mental health/addiction professionals
- CAHOOTS model out of Eugene Oregon which is community based. Dispatchers are trained to recognize non-violent situations with a MH/addiction component and divert those calls from the 911 system. They are available for onsite consultation.

 - A specific group at the County level should be created and tasked with continuing this discussion, collecting data and evaluating the progress made through the partnerships that will be created and making recommendations for continued improvements.

A 2016 study presented in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine estimated that 20% - 50% of fatal encounters with law enforcement involved an individual with a mental illness. In our community, CPEP (Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program) reports that 23% - 27% of patient presentations are via police. Our County's Emergency Communications Department (911) reports an average of over 7,000 mental health related calls per year. The DeWitt Police Department reports that over 70% of their calls are non-criminal in nature. During our County's public comment meetings, area citizens commented on their concerns about the intersection of individuals with mental illness and police, as well as police response time to criminal calls.

While we explored a number of ways this issue is being addressed in communities across the nation, and might be in Onondaga County, **we have chosen to recommend** a broad model of enhanced collaboration between Law Enforcement and Mental Health Professionals.

In Onondaga County, several mobile mental health/substance use crisis teams already exist and operate out of different agencies. This January, Liberty Resources, Inc. Regional Mobile Crisis Team launched a Countywide 24/7 response team. They have a number of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with area Police, homeless shelters and a specific one to serve the City of Syracuse. **We are recommending** a program be developed that will coordinate these various mobile teams, perhaps even considering a unified MOU which includes all County and Local Police Departments, and which utilizes our County Emergency Communications Department (911).

Regionally, Broome County has developed and implemented a 911 Diversion Program since 2017. 911 dispatchers now have a protocol to assess a caller's risk by asking a series of questions and following a flowchart to determine acuity. If the level of harm to the caller is high, law enforcement and EMS will make direct contact with the caller and transport them to an emergency room. However, if the caller's need is assessed as a non-imminently life threatening mental health crisis, dispatchers can deploy a mobile mental health crisis team, rather than law enforcement. The flowchart also directs certain scenarios to deploy both law enforcement and mental health professionals together. **A pdf explaining this model is attached to this report.** (**See Appendix H**) We have learned that Broome County is offering training on this model to other Counties in New York State.

Over the past several decades, it has been widely noted that persons with mental health diagnoses make up an increasing percentage of incarcerated individuals, both in penitentiaries and prisons, as well as in jails awaiting adjudication. A call to 911 might be the beginning of that journey. When these individuals become part of the justice system, they lose some of their ability to receive the mental health/substance abuse treatment necessary to lead them towards a path of healing. **Our recommendations** in the service of interrupting that first contact with the criminal justice system are as follows:

 - Recognize Onondaga County as responsible for the coordination of a collaborative plan to enhance the relationships and communication between Police Departments and mobile mental health crisis teams. A committee associated with County Mental Health Services would be responsible for overseeing the transition to this model of diversion services. The oversight committee developed for this endeavor shall include, at a minimum, a representative from law enforcement, a licensed mental health professional, a substance use professional, a medical professional, and a public representative. The mental health and/or substance use professional should also represent an area mobile crisis team. Such oversight committee should convene quarterly, at a minimum.

-Critical to this endeavor will be the collection of data as to the efficacy of this model, as well as overseeing the funding streams involved. It will be important to track the number of individuals served and the savings that will accrue to police agencies as they can more effectively focus on responding to serious crimes and on crime prevention (which would serve to address the public's concerns of police response time). Furthermore, as mobile crisis teams aim to prevent unnecessary hospitalizations and arrests, cost savings of those outcomes should also be analyzed.

- **This oversight committee will explore** the Broome County 911 Diversion Program and arrange for training of relevant individuals in law enforcement, mental health and 911 dispatchers in anticipation of implementation in Onondaga County.

- County Law Department will oversee the legal liabilities of all individuals involved in the implementation of such a diversion program, particularly the 911 dispatchers.

- It is further recommended that any mobile mental health professionals involved in this law enforcement/mental health collaboration, be required to arrange for 'ride-alongs' with the goal of cross sharing critical aspects of both jobs with each other. We feel this is a necessary step to the mutual understanding of, and respect for, the skill sets necessary in each profession.

-The oversight **committee should also develop a regularly occurring** high risk/high utilizer review meeting to identify individuals who frequent the 911/law enforcement/mental health/substance abuse systems **and attempt to develop** comprehensive plans to wrap necessary services around these individuals to prevent their need to rely on aforementioned systems.

These recommendations are only the beginning and the result of only a few meetings which included community member, representatives from Liberty Resources, Dewitt Police, CPEP, NAMI, Emergency 911 and clinical staff from Auburn Prison. Much more work needs to be done to fully explore this critical aspect of police reform.

- ## <u>Diversionary Programs and Courts</u>:

Brief overview: When working to develop and implement successful strategies specific to diversionary courts and programs, for the purpose of diverting offenders out of the court system. As well as identifying potential and future criminal behavior, we must first ask ourselves a few questions. What drives criminal behavior? What types of crimes are being committed most frequently and by whom?. What types of crimes have the highest recidivism rates? How do we get current and more specifically repeat offenders out of the system?. And more importantly, how do we identify and prevent criminality before is starts. All aspects as well as each department within the criminal justice system must work together to continue to

and improve our diversionary court success and do our very best to stop crime before it happens.

Sub-Committee Report:

This report will focus on the necessity to provide increased resources to help our mentally ill, chronic substance abusers and our at risk youth. Also, provide some ways to expand on and improve our current diversionary courts (City & Family).

When developing strategies to focus on diversionary programs we need first realize who to target. I believe the primary focus must be on our youth.

Police, juvenile detention, Family court, District Attorney's, social workers, etc. must continue and or adopt a mindset that the most important thing for juveniles and youthful offenders is to prevent them from getting into the criminal justice system as well as to divert them out of the system at every stage and every way if possible. It is absolutely imperative the need to identify and rehabilitate potential at risk youth as early as possible. A well-funded collaborative between many different but yet related parties working as one cohesive group is ideal. Invest in our youth by investing in a program where groups including but not limited to Probation (specifically PINS or juvenile delinquents), social workers and case workers that focus on adolescent behavioral problems, delinquency and conduct disorders, Family counseling, Center for Community Alternatives, Syracuse City School District, Substance abuse and drug and alcohol counselors, School resource officers, etc.... all work in collaboration and in constant communication to divert youth away from criminality.

Additionally, perhaps we can bring some people from each group together under one roof as a Juvenile Assessment and Resource Center. Many communities are creating such centers where law enforcement can bring youth with low level offenders and behavioral problems as an alternative to incarceration. We can utilize our trained experts and community partners to assess the causes of the criminal behavior and proved rehabilitation services as an effective diversionary strategy. Once identified, at-risk youth should ideally also be provided with programs within their respective schools which would be tailored to diverting them from the criminal justice system. For examples, programs such as Cadets at School, ROTC, etc.

Recommendations:
1. Each agency should consider conducting studies on who are the at-risk youth.
2. Each agency should consider conducting studies on the feasibility of a Juvenile Assessment and Resource Center.
3. Each agency should consider conducting studies on developing programs similar to ROTC but specific to the local agency.

- ## **Community Court**:

Brief Overview: Employing a model of restorative justice, community courts seek to counteract the harm done to the community by these low level offenses through having defendants work to strengthen the communities in which the offenses were committed. Community courts can offer pre-arraignment diversion from the criminal justice system, as well as post-plea alternative sentences including community service, participating in counseling, education and social services.

Sub-Committee Report:

There are more than 14,000 criminal cases filed in Onondaga County each year, over 12,000 of which are misdemeanors. Only a small portion of these cases are eligible for the various problem-solving courts (drug court, mental health court, veteran's treatment court, etc.). Judges, prosecutors and defense attorneys need alternative sanctions besides jail and fines to dispose of these cases.

The majority of these cases consist of property crimes (petit larceny, possession of stolen property, vandalism), drug possession, and DWI. Other common offenses include minor assaults, disorderly conduct, prostitution, trespassing, resisting arrest, and loitering. The effect of these low-level crimes is community disorder, reduced quality of life, poor public perception of community safety, and low levels of public trust in the justice system.

Employing a model of restorative justice, community courts seek to counteract the harm done to the community by these low level offenses through having defendants work to strengthen the communities in which the offenses were committed. Community courts can offer pre-arraignment diversion from the criminal justice system, as well as post-plea alternative sentences including community service, participating in counseling, education and social services.

The sub-committee is discussing how the current community court model in Syracuse City Court could be grown and strengthened to include the ability to handle additional offenses, including misdemeanors, and geographically expanded to work with suburban and exurban Town and Village Courts. Through providing opportunities for community service, and meeting needs such as GED classes and mental health counseling, we envision using the community court process as an opportunity to change the direction of an individual's life, avoid costly and unnecessary incarceration, reduce recidivism, and build public confidence in justice.

The prosecutors, defense lawyers and judge on our committee have begun discussions of ways to use community court to divert low level offenders from the justice system, providing services to both participants and the community, while stream-lining the District Attorney's discovery obligations on these low level offenses. The savings in costs, time and resources, and the benefits of potentially keeping thousands of individuals out of the criminal justice system while strengthening the community, creates the opportunity for a win-win situation.

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E

Appendix F

Appendix G

Appendix H

Appendix I & I.2