

Report of the August 25–26, 2015  
**Strategy Summit on Future  
Local Government, Police, and  
Community Relations**

Hosted by the Major Cities Chiefs Association and  
ICMA, International City/County Management Association

Submitted December 2015



**ICMA**  
*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

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*“For transparent conversations to occur, established trusting relationships have to be in place and maintained over time.”*

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# Strategy Summit on Future Local Government, Police, and Community Relations

August 25-26, 2015, Washington, D.C.

**Hosted by** the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) and ICMA, International City/County Management Association, with convening partners National Civic League and National League of Cities

**Funded by** the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, Houston, Texas

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<sup>1</sup> On first mention in text, participants are identified by their title and full name, followed in parentheses by the city/state or the name of their organization. All subsequent mentions are referred to by surname only.

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## Executive Summary

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On August 25, 2015 in Washington, D.C., the Major Cities Chiefs Association and ICMA convened the **Strategy Summit on Future Local Government, Police, and Community Relations**, bringing together thought leaders and practitioners to probe select recommendations of The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing.

Participants of the Strategy Summit were charged with the goal of (a) engaging in thoughtful discussion about how cities can implement specific President’s task force recommendations and (b) identifying community-based approaches that will improve trust in public institutions. MCCA Executive Director Darrel W. Stephens opened the gathering by noting the importance of the recommendations to policing in America. He shared the simple example he heard at a meeting in Tucson, Arizona, of a ground-breaking meeting between the Aurora, Colorado, chief of police and nine African American professional women, a meeting that gave voice to the women’s concerns about the treatment of their own sons and other black youth by police—and an early indication, Stephens suggested, that the recommendations are already working their way into the fabric of the community.

ICMA Executive Director Robert O’Neill observed that rebuilding trust in community institutions will require a larger range of stakeholders to take part in ongoing, constructive conversations. He challenged the convened group to help develop new approaches to the issues identified in the President’s task force report and suggest ways to widely communicate examples of approaches that are working.

The ensuing day and a half of Strategy Summit dialog helped develop a common understanding of components of the President’s task force recommendations while suggesting ways in which police departments, local governments, and communities can work together to improve community relations.

Underpinning the next-step recommendations was the consensus opinion that convening a diverse group of decision makers, as was done for this summit, is a powerful engagement tool that minimizes defensive posturing and sparks innovative thinking by making possible authentic conversations around often difficult-to-discuss issues. Participants were adamant in recognizing that one size does not fit all in terms of the recommendations and that strategic conversations cannot take place in silos—that implementation of recommendations is the responsibility and opportunity of all community stakeholders, including mayors, council members, local governments, police, community organizations, business entities, and other groups.

Strategy Summit participants recommended these next steps:

- Encourage all Strategy Summit participants to work with their mayors, councils, managers, and police chiefs on the recommendations of The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing and with that document in hand, identify what these community stakeholders are going to do with the recommendations. The participants recognized that ICMA, the National League of Cities, the Conference of Mayors, the National Civic League, and like groups can proactively reinforce the value of the recommendations of the President’s task force and impart the expectation that there is a collective obligation to do something concrete with the recommendations. Equally important, leaders of these organizations can look for opportunities to communicate the impact of the recommendations and their implementation.
- Encourage local government officials to enlist community organizations as conveners of cross-discipline conversations that involve not just the police and the public but also mayors, council members, local governments, community organizations, and other community stakeholders.
- Encourage ICMA and the other local government organizations to work with their members to identify leading practices for initiating community conversations around community values and community engagement, and to include the discussion of race issues in these conversations. This

recommended step acknowledges the responsibility to build on a shared understanding of successful police–community–local government relationships and to disseminate that knowledge as widely and quickly as feasible. It was noted that committees of the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors are currently working on providing guidance on leading practices.

- Encourage police departments to participate in the White House [police data initiative](#) by contributing their city’s data online in 10 selected areas.
- Suggest that police and mayors move forward a process for analyzing how implementation of the President’s task force recommendations will impact CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) and its credentialing program.
- Develop a strategy to replicate this Strategy Summit conversation—pulling together leaders of diverse stakeholder groups—at a regional level.

As the Strategy Summit conversations revealed and these recommended actions suggest, problem solving around issues of community engagement and trust in law enforcement benefits immensely from the collective consideration of and ownership by police, local government, and community stakeholders. Additionally, Strategy Summit participants agree that solid relations between a community and its police department only thrive when there is a foundation of trust and transparency, and sound policing practices stem from respectful, community-based, and constitutionally sound policing strategies. It is under these conditions that police departments can keep the communities they serve, including their own officers, safe.

# Recommendations of The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing

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In the wake of multiple incidents, nationwide, involving police use of deadly force against unarmed African-Americans and subsequent citizen outcries, in December 2014 President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing The Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. He charged the task force with identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can both promote effective crime reduction and build public trust.

The President’s task force came to its recommendations, published in May 2015, by convening diverse stakeholder “listening sessions” in three cities—Phoenix, Arizona; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Washington, D.C.—and collecting written testimonies. The resulting recommendations were organized around six topic areas, or “pillars,” and two overarching recommendations concerning criminal justice reform and community-based initiatives to address such core issues as poverty, education, and health and safety.

The six pillars of the task force recommendations are building trust and legitimacy; policy and oversight; technology and social media; community policing and crime reduction; training and education; and officer wellness and safety.

Participants in the Strategy Summit were invited to focus on the recommendations of two of the pillars—building trust and legitimacy and policy and oversight—with the recognition that successful implementation of the President’s task force recommendations will require the integrated and sustained efforts of police, local government, and the community.

Deadly-force incidents and outraged citizen reactions neither began nor ended with creation of the President’s task force and its subsequent recommendations. The continuing succession of widely publicized deadly-force incidents in, among other cities, Staten Island, New York (July 2014); Ferguson, Missouri (August 2014); and Baltimore, Maryland (April 2015), along with the assassination of two New York City police officers (December 2014), are as complex as they are tragic. They exist at the intersection of such issues as broken community relations, police officer training and safety, mental health challenges, lack of understanding of local police strategies and tactics, race relations, and poverty.

With this as context and with a focus on the pillars of building trust and legitimacy and policy and oversight, the Strategy Summit participants began to examine the labyrinth of issues that all communities and all sectors of the community need to examine.

## Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy

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To quote from the *Final Report of The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing*, May 2015, pp. 1-2:

*People are more likely to obey the law when they believe that those who are enforcing it have the legitimate authority to tell them what to do. . . . The public confers legitimacy only on those they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. . . . Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian—rather than a warrior—mindset to build trust and legitimacy. . . . Toward that end, law enforcement agencies should adopt procedural justice as the guiding principle for internal and external policies and practices. . . . Law enforcement agencies should also establish a culture of transparency and accountability [and] track and analyze the level of trust communities have in police.*

In regard to Pillar One, Strategy Summit participants were asked to address **recommendation 1.2** (“Law enforcement agencies should acknowledge the role of policing in past and present injustice and discrimination and how it is a hurdle to the promotion of community trust.”); **recommendation 1.8** (“Law enforcement agencies should strive to create a workforce that contains a broad range of diversity including race, gender, language, life experience, and cultural background to improve understanding and effectiveness in dealing with all communities.”); and **action item 1.5.1** (“In order to achieve external legitimacy, law enforcement agencies should involve the community in the process of developing and evaluating policies and procedures.”)

Leading questions used to jump start the conversation included these: How do you build trust in police and other government institutions? How does a police agency acknowledge the role of past police injustice and discrimination? What role do local government and communities play in addressing this recommendation? What steps should be taken to provide the opportunity for community input into policies and procedures? What are the key policies that should be a part of this process?

## Acknowledging the Past and Moving Forward

We look at past injustices through the lens of today, noted Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey (Philadelphia, PA), and “it’s important for the police to recognize we do carry baggage.” Police enforcement of the laws has not always been on the right side of justice as we view it today, Ramsey continued, and “we really can’t move forward until we understand that history—especially since it isn’t only in the past that injustices have occurred.” Together the police and the community can use a glimpse of the past to talk about what can be done to move forward together in constructive ways. Chief Art Acevedo (Austin, TX) advised that police officers have to conduct themselves in ways that overcome the past, such that their current actions are what a person judges. [See “Understanding the Community’s Culture” sidebar.]

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### Understanding the Community’s Culture

Ways in which law enforcement is addressing its role in shaping the community’s culture include

- Recognizing that the police, like citizens, have been traumatized too
- Acknowledging that there are trust issues
- Learning about the community’s policing history
- Convening joint conversations with all community stakeholders about how to move forward
- Showing change and progress through your actions
- Recognizing that your path moving forward is unique to your community, as will be the solutions.

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Commissioner Kevin Davis (Baltimore, MD) described how the history of Baltimore is part of police and community training: “It presents the opportunity to put both the good and the bad into context and opens the door to conversations about race relations, poverty, and related issues.”

Director of Public Outreach Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo (Maricopa Community College) added that the path moving forward is unique for each community. Chief Robert J. Tracy (Chicago, IL) agreed: “You can’t generalize about ‘the black community,’ ‘the Mexican community,’ and so on. The community isn’t just one or two large groups.” Given that each community’s history and needs are unique, it follows that the solutions may be equally distinctive. And the responsibility for moving forward, said City Manager Patricia Martel (Daly

City, CA), is as much the responsibility of the city as it is of the police. The manager's job, Martel noted, is to "help police and policy makers convene community conversations. In the end, if people don't trust the police, they also don't trust local government or elected officials." That means, "we're in it together," emphasized Martel.

City Manager Marc Ott (Austin, TX) put it to the group: Police officers are traumatized too. Most Americans don't know the police are concerned about the history, the now, and the future. Would it make a difference if they did? Ott asked, "Are the police prepared to be vulnerable so that the community knows how they feel?" The answer, he believes, is that the depth of authenticity would elevate the level of trust and legitimacy.

## Community Conversations and Listening Tours

Trust issues, said Ramsey, are in the black community, and that needs to be overtly acknowledged and addressed. City Manager T. C. Broadnax (Tacoma, WA) noted that equity is also a big deal: "It's about past neglect and those who haven't had the voices to get the resources." At the same time, one Strategy Summit participant observed that while race issues are a significant focus of any institutional self-examination, it's also about generational diversity. The conversations have to address both. Director Alberto Olivas (MCCCD Center for Civic Participation, Maricopa Community College, and National Civic League board member) added that the conversations have several purposes including allowing the community to vent and express its concerns. If the police have established relationships with community organizations, they have a platform for saying "we don't do that anymore," and they can give the community a specific person to whom the public can go for information. In other words, Olivas emphasized, "how you manage the venting process starts with individual relationships that must be sustained over time."

**Value of training.** Chief Kimberley Jacobs (Columbus, OH) and others added that building trust takes time and understanding, achieved in part by educating both the police and the public. Conversations about race relations and other sensitive issues, noted Olivas, are an opportunity for the public to describe how policing practices and priorities impact their lives. Council Member Matt Zone (Cleveland, OH) told the group about Cleveland's police and elected officials' "listening tours," which have helped "release steam and relieve pressure." Now, too, elected officials are invested in making sure that agreements made with the public are followed up on.

Tracy said that the police in Chicago also do listening tours with 20 to 30 selected stakeholders from each community. A different narrative—different communications and different strategies—may be appropriate for each group, so it's important, Tracy emphasized, to know your audience. And to ask the stakeholders how to move forward in a way that sustains transparency and credibility. Mayor Wayne M. Messam (Miramar, FL) concurred, noting that you have to "ask who in the community distrusts the police and why; otherwise, you may inadvertently overlook and therefore not deal with the root issues." [See "Policing Programs That Are Working" sidebar.]

As a result of listening, Chicago has embraced a community policing strategy that involves officers walking the beat, reaching out to young people to help them get to know who the officers are. "The pairing of working police officers with people from the community changes people," Tracy reported. Chicago's support of beat officers has seen positive results based on independently administered citizen satisfaction surveys. Messam described how In Miramar the police have assigned community resource officers to each of Miramar's constituencies—including, for example, home owners associations. Miramar also provides school resource officers in every charter and public school so that children can begin to self-identify with a police officer, someone who teaches them how to make the right decisions.

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### **Policing Programs That Are Working**

Strategy Summit participants mentioned a number of activities in their communities that are producing positive results. They include

- Shifting resources to a community policing strategy (Chicago)
  - Educating police and the public about the history of the city (Baltimore)
  - Listening tours (Cleveland and Chicago)
  - Assigning communication resource officers to each constituency (Miramar)
  - Using a police and fire academy as a teaching tool (Miramar)
  - Training people to serve on a community commission (Cleveland)
  - Starting a youth initiative against crime (Cleveland)
  - Creating a nonprofit collaborative of many community organizations to help triage provision of services (Daly City)
  - Convening an umbrella group to address issues of social equity and justice (Cincinnati)
  - Using established and available community centers to shorten the lifecycle of delivering services (Miramar)
  - Deploying “community cabinets” (police, fire, economic development, city library) into neighborhoods to convene conversations (Denver)
  - Starting up a book club for gang members (Denver).
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[Getting on the same page](#). CEO/Executive Director Clarence Anthony (National League of Cities) added that leadership at the top of the organization is also important, especially on the communication side and particularly when there may be a “close call” in terms of understanding the circumstances of a police-involved incident. One value of training, a participant explained, is to help mayors better understand the issues of race and equity. Once they are on the same page as local government managers and the police, mayors are well positioned to reach out to the business and for-profit community. It was noted that the National League of Cities has an initiative called [REAL](#) (Race, Equity, and Leadership), designed to equip NLC members with the capacity to respond to racial tensions in their communities and address the historical, systemic, and structural barriers that further inequity and racism in the nation's cities.

### **Building the Foundations of Trust**

As relationships are developed, levels of trust and legitimacy grow. Consistency, fairness, and procedural justice are all elements of good relationships. Such tactics as listening tours and deployment of “beat cops” appear to help sustain transparency and credibility. Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson (Gary, IN) noted that when the public talks about transparency, it is often talking about the simple opportunity to provide input. The challenge is to use a sufficient variety of ways of gathering input to reach the full diversity of the community. As Broadnax observed, today’s social media environment is such that “people see things in the moment and what happens in one venue is experienced nationally.” Assistant Chief Patrick Burke (Washington, DC) concurs: “What happens nationally impacts all police.” The advantage and the burden of social media is that it makes even the remote feel personal.

Strategy Summit participants agreed that smartly using social media and other electronic forms of communication is important and can be effective in reaching youth, but it’s not sufficient. While it’s true that some of the public might not even want face-to-face meetings and would prefer electronic communication, others, especially the elderly and those in poor communities, may not even have online access. And as successful as police presence throughout the community can be, it can be difficult to accomplish when

resources are strained. Another aspect of educating the public about police policies, strategies, and tactics, said Retired City Manager Joni Pattillo (Dublin, CA, and National Civic League board member), is to show the public what it can do to contribute to constructive conversations and actions, including asking the public to consider how community expectations can be met with limited resources. [See “What Builds Trust Between Law Enforcement and the Community” sidebar.]

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### **What Builds Trust Between Law Enforcement and the Community**

These comments are culled from the full conversation of Strategy Summit participants. Building trust is clearly a multifaceted and multistep endeavor.

- Overtly acknowledging the community’s trust and equity issues
- Authentic conversations with the right people invited to participate
- Engagement—giving a voice to all stakeholders
- Allowing stakeholders to vent
- Giving stakeholders opportunities to provide input
- Listening and being listened to
- Being part of the decision-making process
- Showing respect and acting with fairness
- Acknowledging biases and talking about and acting on issues of different kinds of diversity—racial, generational, gender, language, and so on.
- Giving the public a go-to person in the police force
- Starting and maintaining individual relationships
- Educating the police, elected officials, and the public about the community’s racial and equity issues
- Issuing clear and quick communication after officer-involved shootings
- Using social media and other communication channels smartly
- Asking stakeholders what they want and how police policies impact them
- Consistency, fairness, and procedural justice
- Transparency (e.g., beat cops, online data, listening tours)
- Involving youth
- Using safe, neutral gathering places
- Asking citizens to be co-owners in finding solutions
- Accountability on the part of law enforcement for bad decisions or actions.

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**Inclusiveness.** Also important is consideration of who should be at the table. President Gloria Rubio-Cortes (National Civic League) referenced work by the Kellogg Foundation that reveals that youth want to be community organizers (Rubio-Cortes quoted them as saying “We are current leaders, not future leaders. Involve us!”). Young people want to talk about daily interactions and policing practices and priorities, and how they impact their lives. Rubio-Cortes also reminded Strategy Summit participants of the important and trusted role of public libraries and churches. From the outset you need to ask “Who owns this conversation in our community, and what is going to sustain it?” The slippery slope, warned Chief J. Thomas Manger (Montgomery County, MD), is to “respond to issues only tactically while failing to define the strategic, sustaining element.”

**Accountability.** Engagement builds trust and banks social capital. “Citizens do have issues and concerns you ought to hear,” advised Director of Exploratory Research Valerie A. Lemmie (Kettering Foundation). Too often, she continued, “citizens hear what we’re concerned about when we need to *listen* to what citizens say they care about.” This gives you the opportunity to ask citizens what they are willing to do about the issues they identify. “We call that developing deliberative practices—how you name and frame the problem, how

you find resources, what citizens can do to own with you the responsibility,” Lemmie explained. There are economic and social benefits. Hear with a different ear. Involve citizens in the process—a good way, Lemmie said, to begin to develop relationships of trust and confidence.

Accountability is another critical element of building trust. Messam voiced the opinion that moving forward, police departments have to hold accountable bad officers and good officers who make bad decisions. The police have to communicate to the community that accountability is part of what the community stands for. “This kind of transparency lets people treat a bad incident as one that is isolated and not systemic,” Messam commented. Additionally, partnering with elected officials, police can effectively reach out to the private sector to be part of the conversation and the solution.

**Communications and culture.** The communication of conversations is critically important too. As Ramsey pointed out, “your words can never be taken back,” so police need to be trained in communication skills. And understand that a communication channel that works well for one group might not be appropriate for another. A meeting for a young person might actually be Tweets or text messages, whereas other groups might prefer conducting business or being informed face-to-face.

The challenge of filling an information void is a constant one in this world of Tweets and Facebook pages, Assistant Chief Santos Cadena (Dallas, TX) observed. “It’s important for police departments to get their messages out to fill an information void or to counter incorrect information.” It really shouldn’t be that hard, remarked Acevedo, given that for every bad incident there are tens of thousands of good ones. “Police can enlist citizens to lift up and give voice to the good examples.” It’s important, he added, to bring balance to the conversation.

Part of that will come, Martel remarked, when the focus is on changing the culture. Typically you can change policies and procedures, Martel said, “but often the culture doesn’t change simultaneously; it requires persistent focus to shift cultural attitudes.” O’Neill added that it takes a willingness to change what needs to change.

## Hiring and Residency Requirements

Many aspects of the Strategy Summit conversation pointed to a re-examination of whom police departments hire and on what qualifications hiring decisions are based. One participant wanted to hear from his colleagues about their residency requirements and their effectiveness in producing good policing and building trust. Manger reported that even with residency requirements, personnel may not be evenly distributed throughout the county, so some areas may not see or feel a police presence. In Montgomery County, Maryland, no qualitative difference in policing was found between areas where police lived and where they did not live. Rather than consider that they have to live in the community to be part of the community, Manger suggested that the unique role of providing police services is what makes them part of the community, not a geographic location. Lemmie reported that in Ohio the requirement that public employees live in the city made no difference in service and how employees interacted with residents.

For Cadena, it gets back to whom you recruit, hire, and train. He suggested that an important hiring qualification is how skillfully a candidate is solution focused. Patillo agreed with the underlying premise, namely, that in these fast-changing times, the elements upon which police are evaluated need to keep up with the changed environment, and how police performance is measured needs to change as well.

## Law Enforcement Recruitment

Recruitment for diversity in law enforcement is a strategy recommended by the President's task force. Zone noted that Cleveland is targeting recruitment of minorities and women for the police force, but getting resources to make that happen can be challenging. Jacobs remarked that she was a product of such recruitment. She believes that targeting women and minorities has the benefit of fueling interest in people who might not otherwise have considered a law enforcement career.

Acevedo mentioned that Austin eliminated the educational requirement because it was making it tougher for people of color to apply. He noted that it's still quite possible to gauge the intellectual and psychological level of applicants. It has worked for Austin, and Acevedo advised, "don't put up roadblocks."

In the District of Columbia, observed Burke, one of the biggest challenges is recruiting from the city's own population. Since they found that they were losing youth even before high school, the D.C. police structured a junior cadet program for youth in the fifth and sixth grades. This program is designed to improve students' attendance, grades, and behavior by offering incentives for making progress in those areas.

**Hire the right people.** Manger feels strongly that you have to be smart about recruiting, especially because effective recruiting burns time, effort, and money. The good news, said Manger, is that "we know better today about what makes a good police officer. We want someone who is smart, deals well with people. Someone with empathy and a spirit for public service." Manger advised managers to ask their police chiefs for details about how the department is recruiting. Manger's philosophy is "hire the right people, then train them to be a cop." Executive Director Chuck Wexler (Police Executive Research Forum) added that "cops are making life-or-death decisions," and he would favor having "fewer but highly qualified and trained cops . . . and highly paid. Then arm them with the right tools." Don't forget the civilian workforce, Pattillo advised. You have to look at the entire department and look at civilian oversight. It must reflect diversity too.

**Remove obstacles.** Messam challenged the group on some of the recruitment conversation. He wanted to know why, when we talk about diversification—especially when talking about dealing with increasing the number of people of color, the statement comes up about not wanting to reduce standards or qualifications. "We do the process a disservice," Messam commented, "if we think it comes to that. There may be obstacles in the pool of qualified candidates, but in order to reach an ideal balance on the force, we don't have to lower standards." In south Florida, said Messam, the local government invests in the schools. The city of Miramar funds a fire academy and a public safety academy at its two public high schools—Everglades High School and Miramar High School, respectively. So when these students graduate, he noted, they will have about half of their educational training already in place if they choose to pursue a law enforcement or fire position.

**Look at the data.** It's important, Messam continued, to be sure to eliminate artificial barriers to recruiting. For example, it may be that you have to pass the police test with an 80 percent score, but when demand is high, hiring personnel weren't considering applicants below the 95 percent level. In these circumstances Messam encouraged police chiefs to look at other parameters they could incorporate to identify the best potential candidates. Anthony added, "Look at the data. Many applicants of color have bachelor degrees. That data may change your view on whether people of color have the qualifications." In addition, Acting Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta (Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice) advised Strategy Summit participants to pay equal attention to the underrepresentation of women in the profession. Diversity, she reminded, isn't only about race.

**Communicate positive images of law enforcement.** Ramsey observed that the image of police is not very positive right now, so that's hurting law enforcement's ability to recruit. To turn that around, he suggested, law enforcement needs to push out positive images, because there are good stories to be told. Burke concurred: Take advantage of social media as much as possible to spread positive messages.

Broadnax concurred that it's a tough time to be recruiting. At a broader level, he noted, "we need to think about branding the benefits of policing." On the issue of diversifying the workforce, Broadnax exclaimed that "diversity does not mean less than! It's about being intentional!" Unfortunately, he added, our systems don't lend themselves to being diversified. An important factor here, Broadnax continued, is empowering your chiefs to be part of changing the environment in your organization. Jacobs agreed: "We are recruiting for diversity because we want the value diversity adds to the organization, and we have to sell that inside and outside the organization." She noted that they use the best ideas from diverse perspectives and that is making the organization better. It's not, she said, about numbers.

**Pay attention to details of the hiring process.** In addition, Acevedo remarked, "we in executive ranks have to pay attention to details." He commented that candidates can't be held to any particular individual's personal standards, but rather to department standards. Tracy noted that in Chicago, a simple change to the rules about the days of the week and time of day that testing and hiring occurred created more diversity. Chicago also found it was losing candidates in the hiring process, and so now it is looking at why. In addition, Chicago plans to get marketing help for recruitment.

**Hiring veterans.** One Strategy Summit participant raised two questions about hiring veterans who are trying to return to the workforce. He wanted to know whether veterans require different reentry training, and how does the community perceive their presence? Stephens reported that Charlotte found the military to be a good source of quality people. They tended to have college backgrounds, were mature, and many had been officers. An added bonus, noted Stephens, was that their presence helped build diversity. Ramsey affirmed the Charlotte experience. In Philadelphia and previously in Washington, D.C., he said, the experience was good. Military candidates took the same battery of tests as everyone else, and there was no indication of any difference from the non-military population of police officers.

**Reflect the community.** Martel commented that the history of law enforcement and city management is that of being a white workforce, so reflecting the community's diversity has been challenging. "Minorities can't be who they can't see, so they can't see the possibility of being in those positions," Martel observed. She also pointed out that if police and local government reflect the community, they can be empathic. Villanueva-Saucedo added that accompanying training is just as important as recruitment; training can instill the importance of community connection and help new recruits understand who the communities are. Likewise, Lemmie advised, "it's equally important to invest as much in those recruits when they're on the force—to culturally embrace them."

**Position people for success.** Acevedo described a related challenge—namely, promoting the targeted recruits once they're in the system. It requires moving people around and getting them out of their comfort zone. In other words, Acevedo explained, "it's about positioning people to be successful." Yes, said Public Safety Policy Aide Nicole Archbold (Minneapolis, MN), pay attention to what's happening in the pipeline, because there are big obstacles there. She advised that you need to look at the recruitment process, the background process, where there may be disconnects, whether recruiters are involved in decision making, and so on. It goes back, as was noted earlier, to paying attention to the details and looking at the smaller steps in the process. In Archbold's case, they found a problem with the electronic process. Archbold concluded, "If you do the same things the same way, you will always get the same results."

City Manager Bruce Moore (Little Rock, AK) agreed. In his situation, he found that even though 400 people applied for 45 vacant positions, only 43 were being recommended. It was a red flag, and Moore said he needs to examine where the problem resides. Wexler told the group that his organization asked why is it that women use less force than men. The findings were “strong communication and interpersonal skills.” Clearly, Wexler noted, there’s something to be learned in those situations. Jacobs could speak to the issue firsthand. She said that “a woman has to ask, what are my options given that I can’t physically dominate?” Jacobs often uses persuasion.

## Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight

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To quote from the *Final Report of The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing*, May 2015, p. 2:

*[Police] policies must reflect community values. . . . Law enforcement agencies should . . . develop policies and strategies for deploying resources that aim to reduce crime by improving relationships, increasing community engagement, and fostering cooperation. [They] should have clear and comprehensive policies on the use of force, . . . mass demonstrations, . . . consent before searches, . . . gender identification, racial profiling, and performance measures—among others such as external and independent investigations and prosecutions of officer-involved shootings. [They] are encouraged to periodically review policies and procedures, . . . and establish civilian oversight mechanisms with their communities.*

In regard to Pillar Two, Strategy Summit participants were asked to address **recommendation 2.1** (“Law enforcement agencies should collaborate with community members to develop policies and strategies in communities and neighborhoods disproportionately affected by crime for deploying resources that aim to reduce crime by improving relationships, greater community engagement, and cooperation.”) and **recommendation 2.8** (“Some form of civilian oversight of law enforcement is important in order to strengthen trust with the community. Every community should define the appropriate form and structure of civilian oversight to meet the needs of that community.”).

O’Neill asked Strategy Summit participants whether a general culture of niceness prevents important conversations from being genuine, and how could a conversation with the African American community rise to a level of authenticity.

### Reaching Your Constituents

Again the point was made that African Americans comprise different sectors, which means you have to talk with many groups, asking each what is of concern to them. In Moore’s (Little Rock, AK) view, people want to see people who look like them, in this case meaning that “the police need to have diversity in command staff.” As noted previously in the discussion, you have to devise multiple communications and multiple strategies if you expect to reach your many constituencies. Broadnax pointed out that “the design of your engagements and who you include are crucial to the convening process.” Villanueva-Saucedo reminded the group that the police are not in this alone and that for transparent conversations to occur, “established trusting relationships have to be in place and maintained over time.” It then makes sense, she continued, to rely on community partners to give entree to pockets of the community you find difficult to reach or that you know are underserved.

Another participant pressed the point: Is there a common purpose for the engagement? What will bring constituents’ interests to the table? Does it have to be more than just the right thing to do? Martel noted that a few elements have to be in place. For instance, in Daly City the city brings in a facilitator from a

nonprofit organization; that is, the government deliberately doesn't lead the conversation so that it can join the conversation. Two other necessary elements are holding the meeting on neutral ground and focusing on the issues. Special Projects Manager John Peterek (San Antonio, TX) concurred with the advice about a third-party facilitator and neutral territory, acknowledging that "the process can be messy" and advising that you shouldn't go into a conversation with a preconceived idea about what the end product will be.

Anthony asked the Strategy Summit participants, what is the biggest challenge in engaging with communities of color, and how does it feel? Acevedo replied, "It's what we come to work for every day!" He went on to say that relationships start with the police chief, and the officers see the benefit of the chief's relationships. The onus of finding a structured way to have sustained engagement is on the city leadership, noted one participant. Decisions about training, for example, can be informed by the advice and perspective of a city commission or similar governing body.

Burke noted that having established structures for engagement allows you to regularly check in with such questions as, how do you want to be policed? Zone declared that "the best projects happen when community members feel they are part of the decision-making process. They have to feel their voice matters." In Cleveland, Zone noted, constituents created a transparent process to serve on a community commission, and this group includes people representing vulnerable constituencies. In Baltimore, Davis commented, the police feel the challenge of getting to all of the vulnerable communities and the city's historical African American groups. [See "How to Sustain Trust-Building Initiatives and Change" sidebar.]

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### **How to Sustain Trust-Building Initiatives and Change**

Strategy Summit participants were well aware of the need for long-term solutions, not just short-term, one-time-only tactics. Although how to achieve sustainability is still very much under exploration, a few common elements arose:

- Define a strategy that develops over time.
  - Provide training of law enforcement, elected officials, and the public.
  - Adapt recruitment and hiring strategies that are relevant to today's world.
  - Change what is being measured—that is, measure engagements as part of police performance and measure program effectiveness.
  - Create structured ways to sustain engagement, such as building into each entity's infrastructure an ongoing connection to other groups (e.g., regularly scheduled meetings).
  - Invite partners and diverse stakeholders to the table.
  - Use police/local government/community leaders to communicate and establish relationships among community organizations.
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The discussion of vulnerable groups prompted an idea from Olivas: Give kids who are acting up the opportunity to experience policing firsthand. "Give them a choice—detention, or ride along in a police car," Olivas suggested. This way, perhaps even for the first time, young people would be shown a different path and "given an opportunity to make a good choice, made easier when they can picture themselves in a different context."

## **Respectful Treatment**

Ramsey added that "treating people respectfully is as important as achieving diversity in the police force." Most people, he said, are upset not because they've been stopped by the police but because they felt treated disrespectfully. "Kids," Ramsey noted, "recognize fairness." And it isn't always just police interactions that

need to be examined; it's also the system, which can trap police officers between the law and prevailing attitudes. "Sometimes you have to change the law," Ramsey suggested, "to give clarity and direction to officers rather than putting them in the middle." For example, do the laws reflect the current cultural shift in attitudes about the use of marijuana?

## Supporting Law Enforcement

Strategy Summit participants were asked what kind of support law enforcement needs in order to frame its limits and its opportunities. O'Neill compared work done in the areas of job opportunities and educational outcomes, asking what now needs to be done in the area of law enforcement to improve outcomes. Cadena said that "police need to see a fundamental change in expectations regarding what law enforcement provides. For example, schools and other institutions and professionals need to step up to the plate."

Zone described an initiative in Cleveland that combines the resources of academia, hospitals, and police around the issue of youth violence. When they observed a spike in youth deaths, law enforcement began working with boys and girls clubs and schools to reach out to youth and initiated a "[Standing Together Against Neighborhood Crime Everyday](#)" campaign.

Ron Loveridge (Riverside, CA) believes the integration of resources—and delivery of services—can occur in neighborhoods "because people associate themselves with neighborhoods more so than cities." Neighborhoods are also where opportunities lie. Ott sees a shifting of resources, as Austin is getting requests from agencies and school systems for things that were not part of the initial core services. Elected officials are responding to intense pressure to deliver services in a climate where affordability and housing costs are increasingly challenging. "There's actually talk about reducing law enforcement so that resources can be directed to address other issues," Ott explained.

## Community Collaborations

Martel echoed the dilemma and explained that in Daly City, a nonprofit collaborative comprising 65 organizations—including law enforcement—was established to deal with the plethora of needed services. The collaborative gives the police department resources and partners they don't always have; when the police find someone in need, the police know whom to call on to provide services. Martel described the fact that "the collaborative empowers police officers and helps them understand that they're not just enforcing the law, they're simultaneously building community."

**Urgency vs. long-term solutions.** In Cincinnati, there's "Cincinnati Shares of Greater Cincinnati" <http://cintishares.org/about-us/>. Lemmie described an umbrella group that provides an array of opportunities and addresses social equity and justice issues. Students, for example, are mentored from cradle to college. The challenge is learning how to sustain funding and interest over the long run, especially as new groups get new agendas as time passes. The key, said Lemmie, is to "find ways to invest some of the initial resources for a return down the line." Manger put it this way: "Programs have to address the urgency as well as the importance over the long haul." Unfortunately, he noted, the urgency of violence takes away from the importance of long-term solutions. And with long-term programs, it's critical to determine the leading measures that will indicate when there is success.

**Speeding up program adoption.** Nicole Archbold (Minneapolis, MN) offered the perspective of an elected official, to whom choices about resource allocation are "often risky because they may not pay off for years, and yet an investment in the future has to be made." Messam pointed out the problem created by the long lifecycle of taking an abstract idea and turning it into a program with resources. "It can take years, which

becomes a disincentive,” stated Messam. In Miramar, schools, hospitals, parks (many with community centers), and police work collaboratively. Nongovernment service providers are encouraged to use government-owned community centers, which is helping to get programs up and running much more quickly. It’s Messam’s experience that “appropriate collaborations and partnerships shorten the lifecycle of delivering services, which makes it critical that elected officials be on the front line in establishing the relationships.”

**Getting into the community.** Villanueva-Saucedo agreed, also noting that there will always be funding challenges for new programs, which is why it’s important to embed police and local government partnerships within the organizational infrastructure of each entity. For example, standing meetings between these institutions can help everyone survive the boom and bust of program funding. At the same time, Rubio-Cortes pointed out, “local government can’t play every role, which points to the importance of inviting partners to the table.” In Denver the mayor holds “cabinet meetings” in the community; these cabinets consist of police, fire, local government economic development, the city library, and others. The cabinets go into neighborhoods and talk with residents, setting an invitation for interaction and building trust. Interestingly, the mayor of Denver has created a book club with a group of gang members in order to better understand what’s going on in gangs. He told these youth how intellectual they were, and their response was that no one had ever told them they have value. “It’s critical,” Rubio-Cortes repeats, “to reinforce the message to disenfranchised groups that they have value.” [See “Empowering Teens” sidebar.]

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### **Empowering Teens**

Gloria Rubio-Cortes, president of the National Civic League, shared with Strategy Summit participants the following video, which highlights two projects from NCL’s 2015 All-American City Awards. The video illustrates what youth and police can accomplish together in Somerville, Massachusetts, and Carson, California: <https://youtu.be/PjdSVDFtptU>.

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## **Speaking Up About Social Issues**

Acevedo believes it’s important for the chief of police to weigh in on issues of public safety and on other social issues (e.g., immigration reform) that impact the credibility of law enforcement. He wondered how many mayors allow chiefs to voice their opinion on these issues. Acevedo believes the police lose credibility when the sit back in silence. Though being vocal is risky, Acevedo thinks that “not being vocal is neglectful.”

Whatever the social issue (homelessness, mental illness, addiction), Peterek believes that community collaborations are core to being able to address the issue, and officers need to be informed about what services are available. Chuck Wexler noted that it’s complicated. For example, in the case of dealing with the mentally ill, knowing what use of force is appropriate can make the difference between gaining or losing public trust. As things stand now, Wexler said, “because of the demand to clear calls for service, the police are not always able to commit the time or resources that they should to deal with more complicated calls that deal with mental illness. These calls are becoming more common as the movement toward deinstitutionalization becomes more pervasive.” Critical-incidence training, and juvenile critical-incidence training, is something all officers need, noted Tracy. [See “Addressing Policing Issues Associated with the Mentally Ill Population.”]

Even still, remarked Cadena, critical-incidence calls are the number one incidence for use of force. Cadena would like to see other agencies address mental illness situations. Police aren’t adequately trained in that realm, he emphasized, and “with other agencies taking on the mental illness challenges, police would be able to more efficiently address crime issues.”

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### **Addressing Policing Issues Associated with the Mentally Ill Population**

One Strategy Summit participant commented on the National Association of Counties' "[Change Direction](#)" campaign. A NACO group met in March 2015 to launch the initiative. As featured on the website, the chair of NACO's Heath Steering Committee, Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson (Douglas County, Nebraska), described the purpose of this initiative: "As county leaders, we are committed to improving the responsiveness, coordination, accountability, and integration of person-centered behavioral health services in appropriate settings." The thought was that MCCA and ICMA could explore whether this would be an avenue for addressing policing issues associated with the mentally ill population.

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Manger half jokingly declared that the largest mental health treatment facilities in Montgomery County are its two jails. So he recognizes that prevention of truancy and other early childhood issues is important, and that mental health is a big issue. Manger noted that Montgomery County recently took a position about the decriminalization of the use of small amounts of marijuana. But he added that because of finite resources, "often decision making becomes an either/or proposition—a mindset that doesn't work."

Olivas said that with neighborhood services, in Arizona there is an opportunity to create formalized interactions and to constantly have an ear to the ground about emerging needs. "When police aren't saying anything about the issues," Olivas observed, "the community can be puzzled by the absence of law enforcement's voice." What, Olivas queried, are the formalized mechanisms by which law enforcement can weigh in on social and public policy issues?

### **Role of Other Community Service Providers**

In Philadelphia, Ramsey reported, law enforcement has been aggressive about taking positions on immigration, guns, marijuana. It sometimes shares information through ICMA, the Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, and other groups, so more people know. But the fact is, said Ramsey, "we keep heaping more and more responsibilities on police. It's time to ask, is this what we really want to do? Law enforcement shouldn't be the only game in town. Why don't we have round-the-clock presence of social worker professionals? Instead, it all lands on the police."

**Seeking equal collaborators.** Even with in-service training, noted Ramsey, there's a limited amount of expertise law enforcement can have. This situation, said Ramsey, doesn't seem an equal collaboration. "If law enforcement wants to have an impact on how things are handled," Ramsey continued, "it has to ask the right questions and get buy-in from the community and the business community." Ramsey has seen how, unfortunately, newly elected officials may eradicate previous programs rather than build on ones that indeed may be working. "Which in turn again points to the fact that everything law enforcement does needs to have a research component that measures program effectiveness," emphasized Ramsey.

Jacobs pointed out that first responders from the mental health community are afraid of the violence at the scene, but law enforcement does need those experts and needs help servicing the homeless. In Columbus, noted Jacobs, infant mortality is high, and the police can't solve that problem; it needs the attention of public health experts. Community liaison officers attend meetings of collaborative groups, said Jacobs, but many want police to be part of it for their own security. "Collaboration needs the input of law enforcement, but law enforcement is not going to solve the problems alone," said Jacobs.

**Mental health first responders.** Gupta observed that you can't understate the importance of investing in community alternatives. Already some communities have mental health first responders at the scene in crisis situations. Gupta suggested that "the appropriate response may involve merging the systems of different organizations." Gupta also sees an overinvestment in corrections in the criminal justice system. The federal government has a role to play as well: It can support a longitudinal approach. "Without that," said Gupta, "you can end up where Baltimore is now, with extreme levels of inequality, where 2- to 3-year funding cycles create problematic service gaps when they end."

Getting a handle on mental health issues, noted Cadena, is particularly critical in low-income communities where most residents can't afford treatment. Offering such assistance would go a long way in terms of establishing trust in those communities. Jacobs added that immigration is a similar issue in that she questions whether it is a core law enforcement issue. Jacobs wants guidance and help from the federal government on this issue.

**Getting collaborative results.** Broadnax reported that in Tacoma they are recognizing that it's hard to coordinate across agencies to get collaborative results in part because of agencies' different systems and funding cycles. Broadnax observed that there has to be a political will as well, especially because "sacred cows" are tough to defund. Nonetheless, said Broadnax, "local government managers and law enforcement have to start the conversations about the fact that we're in an entirely new game. It's not the same old environment, and what worked in the past isn't sufficient now."

## Civilian Oversight

The President's task force report recommends that "every community define the appropriate form and structure of civilian oversight to meet the needs of that community." The question for the Strategy Summit participants was whether they believe civilian oversight produces more accountability and trust, and what might civilian oversight look like. [See "Varieties of Civilian Oversight and Related Issues" sidebar.]

**Matching level of expertise to the job.** Freeman-Wilson reported that Gary, Indiana, has a police civil service commission with civilians on it. But Indiana is also looking to develop a citizens advisory group. The public and police have a level of confidence in the commission because of who's on the commission. "We appoint people who understand HR issues, the community, discipline levels, and so on—their level of expertise is consistent with the level of work expected of them," Freeman-Wilson explained.

**Including the underrepresented.** Broadnax reported that with a history of having had a police chief who killed his wife and himself, Tacoma had a citizen review panel that recently has been reconstituted as a citizen police advisory. The size of the group was increased to add a youth seat, and five members had to come from historically underrepresented areas of the community. The group looks at trends. Broadnax expects the community to push for the citizen police advisory to have more authority. He reported that the city has struggled with the boundaries of the rules and roles. It's Broadnax's opinion that as long as the citizen police advisory doesn't overreach, it can create a cooperative environment.

**Needing evidence of effectiveness.** Wexler has observed that having a citizen oversight or advisory group creates a complicated situation. Intuitively civilian review boards seem like a good idea, he said, but there is no actual evidence. Civilians don't always agree with the police chief about actions regarding police officers (e.g., civilians might overturn firings). Wexler believes civilians should be looking at policy decisions, which officers have to follow. "What's intuitive isn't always the best thing to do," Wexler commented. Public perception is that "there is this blue wall of silence," said Wexler, "when in reality often the firing is reversed by a civilian board. It erodes the internal procedural justice process."

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### **Varieties of Civilian Oversight and Related Issues**

Communities are using different oversight mechanisms, some of which are perhaps only different in name:

- “Police civil service commission,” with civilians on the commission
- “Citizen police advisory,” with seats for youth and members from historically underrepresented areas
- “Office of police complaints,” appointed by the mayor with the police chief being the final arbiter of the group’s decisions
- Panel of subject matter experts outside the police department
- Review panel and police monitor
- Community advisory boards, but not oversight boards
- Disciplinary hearing board.

Regardless of the form, the issues surrounding use of oversight mechanisms can be complicated and require thoughtful administration. Some of the issues include

- Level of responsibility of the group has to match the expertise of the individuals in the group.
- Need the right mix of people (i.e., the composition of the group) to achieve fairness and objectivity.
- Currently there is no evidence about what works and makes a difference.
- Should focus on policy issues.
- Can erode internal procedural justice processes.
- Need model formats and measures of effectiveness.
- Must respond quickly.
- City needs a good attorney to defend the decisions of its police chief.
- Including police on an oversight board can lend credibility or destroy credibility.
- Some groups include non-active police personnel.
- Need to measure trust levels of the community before and after use of an oversight mechanism, to measure its effectiveness.
- Use of an oversight mechanism is a step, not an answer.

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**Achieving fairness and objectivity.** Ramsey echoes some of Wexler’s comments: Even though there are many different models of civilian oversight, there is no research to show what actually works and makes a difference. Ramsey believes that the final decision about discipline should rest with the police chief. Often, he noted, the boards are far more lenient than the police department. Also, Ramsey added, it takes the right mix of people on the board for the board to be fair and objective. Ramsey believes an oversight board can add value, but he advised that you need to pay attention to the results you get from a citizens advisory group.

In Washington, D.C., Burke reported, the citizens complaint review board became the Office of Police Complaints (OPC). The primary mission of the OPC is to receive, investigate, and resolve police misconduct complaints and, Burke explained, OPC also makes policy recommendations. The mayor appoints the members of the oversight board, while the office is run by a fulltime executive director and a full staff of investigators.

**Defending law enforcement decisions.** In at least one city, observed Deputy Assistant to the President Roy Austin (Office of Urban Affairs, Justice & Opportunity, Domestic Policy Council), “we found that the city was

not taking seriously its defense of the decisions made by the chief.” For example, Austin continued, while the officer under investigation was hiring quality counsel, the city was not conducting the type of investigation necessary to defend the actions of its chief of police. In sexual assault cases, Austin noted, having citizen review of declinations can be helpful. When citizens see the full files, they better understand the challenges involved and why a decision was made not to prosecute.

Alderman Jose Perez (Milwaukee, WI) reported that in Milwaukee, the community thinks the overwhelming majority of complaints aren’t investigated well. It puts a real strain on police resources, Perez added.

**Looking for formats and measures.** What we probably all would appreciate, suggested Freeman-Wilson, are model formats for citizen oversight mechanisms, recognizing that there are many varieties because communities have unique needs and circumstances. Additionally, she noted, we need to see supporting research that shows what is best format or the effectiveness of different formats. Lemmie reported that in Ohio, arbitrators are not from the community; consequently, their orientation may not support city or department policy. Lemmie suggested that this issue needs to be examined.

Freeman-Wilson asked, is this an opportunity to come up with ideas about how citizen oversight entities or mechanisms could be improved? What should the process look like? For example, she continued, you want to have both members from the community and from the police force. There has to be “some nexus between a person’s background/experience/knowledge and service on this board,” said Freeman-Wilson.

Miramar, Florida, doesn’t have an oversight board, reported Messam. It has a citizens police academy (i.e., a 6-week program). Messam remarked that any oversight board member should go through the same kind of educational process as a citizens police academy offers. Through that experience the person can learn how the police department operates, its challenges, and more.

Zone reported that in Cleveland a community police commission is being dissolved and re-formed. The perception, said Zone, had been that there wasn’t any impartiality or transparency. This time a nominating committee was created, and it consists of 10 members. Zone is certain that immediately this will create some community confidence. The commission will have 13 community seats, including 3 police. In addition, a civilian leads an internal affairs department, and an inspector general (who reports to the police chief) will have a separate line in the budget.

**Establishing quick response times to critical incidents.** Zone advised that regardless of the citizens oversight mechanism, it’s important to respond visibly and quickly to any incident. He offered the example the city’s reaction to a U.S. Department of Justice report which indicated probable cause that Cleveland police officers engage in a pattern of excessive force. In the wake of the findings, the city reached out to residents to create dialogs on how police and citizens can restore and build trusting relationships together. The concerns and suggestions gathered during the “listening tour” were published and will be used to set the city’s safety agenda.

**Balancing form versus function.** O’Neill remarked that often the form of a citizens advisory group is put into place before its function has been clearly articulated, and he asked Strategy Summit participants for their reactions. Moore offered the opinion that police shouldn’t be on an oversight committee if you expect community buy-in and transparency. Ott wondered whether having police on the oversight group would be much like having officers investigating other officers. What, he asks, will be the reactions of citizens? Cadena noted that Dallas has a panel of subject matter experts outside the department. If there’s a question about policy or procedure, he explained, the panel serves as an outside source. Obviously, Cadena added, it

requires careful consideration of who's on the board because board composition has the potential to be a point of distrust.

Burke pointed out that he is on the D.C. board but has no role in recommendations of discipline. It's Burke's opinion that some kind of representation lends credibility to the group. Ott explained that Austin has a police monitor in addition to a review panel, and she has credibility. Broadnax reported that Tacoma has up to three nonactive police personnel—as long as the representation doesn't outflank civilians.

Jacobs noted that she works for a civilian public safety person who reports to the mayor. Jacobs reported that all police policies are available online, which should help build trust through transparency. Still, she said, there will always be disagreement with levels of punishment and the like. Jacobs asked, "how does an oversight group build trust for the people who aren't involved?" Burke suggested that it comes down to whether the oversight group has the trust of the community.

Olivas posed several questions: Are citizen boards effective? What should be the outcomes or the performance criteria, and who should determine them? Acevedo recommended using a baseline survey of trust and then measuring trust levels before and after having an oversight board. Jacobs indicated that she asks citizens what level of information they want to know.

Loveridge said that having an oversight group is a step, not an answer. As for who decides about a citizens advisory group, that depends. One participant said the advisory group is appointed by the city manager (to whom the police chief reports) and approved by council. Moore countered that he thinks an advisory group has to be totally independent, made of diverse citizenry qualified to serve.

**Being transparent.** Manger reported having many community advisory boards, though no civilian oversight board. Most often, the genesis is an incident. When we have an incident, Manger remarked, "we immediately get out in the community—being transparent, communicating, answering questions." As a consequence, said Manger, "there's never been a tidal wave of folks wanting civilian oversight." Manger noted that Montgomery County does have a three-person disciplinary hearing board, but an arbitrator who rules in favor of management is generally not invited back. Manger used to have the authority to argue against rulings, but it was an arduous process, and now he no longer has a final say in discipline. Manger remarked that he would like to see the hearing panels open to the public.

Acevedo noted that such hearing panels in Austin are actually televised on the community TV channel. He said that he'd like to see the state of Texas get rid of arbitration. "We need administrative law judges who don't have to worry about where the next gig is coming from."

Wexler contemplated why the public doesn't know the stories behind some of the poor decision making or the overruling of police discipline decisions. He asked why city managers and mayors aren't saying that the system is broken and they need help to fix it. Broadnax admitted his frustration with the process but also acknowledged how at risk the police union is too. Managers and council members want what citizens want, Broadnax commented, and "every expectation a citizen has is all about that citizen. Until you have a good experience, the bad stories prevail."

## Oversight and CALEA Accreditation

The Strategy Summit participants were asked who has a process for the community to provide input on police policy. Perez responded that a process exists in Milwaukee, and it can be both good and bad. Broadnax wondered what the role of an oversight group is if your police force has gone through the CALEA

accreditation process. Jacobs explained that in Columbus, whose force has been accredited since 1999, there is a type of civilian oversight. The oversight group decides what are best practices, and it advises the police force to have a policy on X, Y, or Z, but it doesn't dictate what the policy should say. There is also a public hearing, Jacobs added, but Columbus doesn't receive much input from that. City Manager Tom Bonfield (Durham, NC) is frustrated by the credentialing process. He said that Durham is told to have best practices but isn't told what the best practices are. Also, Bonfield isn't sure that the credentialing process is where leading practices should be vetted.

Tracy reported that Chicago is going through the CALEA accreditation process. The process, said Tracy, requires that Chicago review all of its policies. The challenge, he continued, "is whether you have the organizational discipline to adhere to the policies." Chicago's policies are transparent in that they are all online. For Bonfield "the value of the accreditation process is that it gets you to pay attention to all the areas you should pay attention to." He noted that the community isn't interested in everything the Durham police do but added that "the community is interested in what and how we train."

Most people are now interested in use-of-force policy, Moore noted. And he asked, should citizens be involved in this? Manger responded that it's important that the police listen. Civilians do ask how law enforcement ensures that officers adhere to the policies. But bottom line, said Manger, "we're the subject matter expert." Freeman-Wilson noted that some of the citizen interest in these issues stems from wanting to have input.

Acevedo reported that in 2007 Austin was a CALEA flagship agency, but now isn't. Acevedo warned that having the accreditation can give you a false sense of security. "When we came up for Department of Justice review, CALEA meant nothing," said Acevedo, concluding that "at end of day, the police chief has to set the tone."

## Implicit Bias and Training

With a new police oversight commission and questions about racial profiling, Archbold remarked, law enforcement is answering questions in a public forum. Manger noted that Montgomery County reports on the number of discrimination complaints received. There are procedures and training in place for how these complaints are handled, he added. Zone mentioned that Cleveland has had a policy in place for more than a decade, but still, citizens feel there's no enforcement. Jacobs said Columbus also does training, and she believes in using cruiser video, but finds the statistics the department keeps are meaningless.

Broadnax noted that putting data online doesn't make it accessible to poor communities, and he probed the issue of training: "What type and depth of training do you do around implicit bias, and how do you get past the argument that there isn't enough time or money to do the training?" Jacobs explained that in Columbus, a topic—sometimes race, sometimes implicit bias—is selected. Columbus uses Ohio State University's research on race and in in-class training has discussions on what the OSU research shows.

Tracy reported that Chicago has trained 9,000 police officers. In addition, he said, Chicago puts community stakeholders through the same type of training and sometimes in the same class with officers. Chicago uses citizen satisfaction surveys to measure the impact of the training. Tracy noted that "complaints against officers are down, and officer-involved shootings are down." In addition, Chicago has come to agreement with the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) about how to do investigative stops, and it has changed how it records stops. Then, Tracy noted, a consultant looks at the statistics and makes recommendations. This review has found that sometimes the stops are good, but that documentation was lacking.

One participant noted that Chicago is still seeing an uptake in violent crime, and he wondered about how citizens are reacting to that. Another wanted to know what the officers think about the training and protocols for investigative stops. Tracy responded that many factors come into play. He said that “we keep stressing through training that if things are done properly, we have your back.” Tracy added that proactive, investigative stops are down but arrests of people with guns are up, and that the police are making fewer arrests over all.

## Conversations About Race

Villanueva-Saucedo reported that Maricopa provided training around cultural competency—provided mostly by such community groups as academicians and public health and social services professionals. Executive Director Chuck Bean (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments) noted that procedural justice has a lot of relevance to how you treat people. “It’s not the outcome, it’s the process—do people feel respected?” Looking at unconscious bias is a recognition that everybody has biases, Bean continued. Acknowledging unconscious bias levels the playing field and enables honest conversation about race. Bean wondered how you get the community to go through the same self-examination, because communities have biases too. Villanueva-Saucedo added that “to not acknowledge race-based differences misses the boat.”

Acevedo remarked that “racial profiling complaints would go away if police just acted with respect.” He noted that if you look at some uses of force, you’ll find that many are about poor decision making, poor training. Which, he emphasized, is all the more reason to hold law enforcement accountable for providing the training and following the established protocols.

Burke observed that “good officers are going to continue to be good officers” regardless of the rules. He also noted that in the District of Columbia, the entire police academy is currently transitioning to scenario-based training as an effective way of learning decision-making skills to maneuver the nuances.

Broadnax observed that training for unconscious bias and for more standard core skills isn’t an either/or choice. “It comes back to what the community wants and expects,” said Broadnax. He rhetorically asked, “How do we get to new expectations if we don’t change what we do?”

Freeman-Wilson added that “we have to have an honest conversation about race. If half the time it’s about training and procedure, then the other half of the time it’s about race.” Which is why, she continued, bias training is equally important. “We can all see that bias is driving people to take another’s life. Yet we’re so inclined to give every other reason to avoid calling something *racist*, it impedes us from dealing with it.”

## Independent Investigation of Officer-Involved Shootings

When Strategy Summit participants were asked to consider the value and/or impact of independent investigations of officer-involved shootings, Jacobs responded that such investigations need to be done by people experienced in investigating violence, and hopefully not for the first time. Unfortunately, she added, many small agencies that might be called upon to do investigations don’t have that type of experience and training. “As an employer, I believe we owe our employees the best investigation possible,” said Jacobs. She believes that if external investigations were of the same quality as internal ones, then there wouldn’t be a problem on the quality dimension. Nonetheless, Jacobs added, there are many related issues, including the costs associated with independent investigations and determining who’s accountable for those investigations.

Austin revealed that he started his career as a civil rights prosecutor, and he advised that the importance of that body shouldn't be underestimated. He noted that of about 1,000 fatal officer-involved shootings each year, few involve criminally prosecutable conduct. It is important, said Austin, that the public believe that the investigation was fair and independent. In matters where the DOJ found that the officer's conduct was not prosecutable, the DOJ's review, Austin remarked, changed the conversation; the public wouldn't accept the outcome in the same way if the review had only been by the involved police department.

Tracy noted that in Chicago, civilians are being trained to investigate police-involved shootings. Cadena wondered whether having dual investigations would work well to ease a community's concerns. Jacobs noted that Columbus would seek assistance from an outside agency if there's a question of bias. It gives the public a level of comfort, she said, but law enforcement must establish who will be called in and what the process is before an incident occurs. O'Neill added that two important components of well-received independent investigations are certainty and established relationships; "ad hoc will never work."

Acevedo noted that the state of Texas wants to place responsibility for independent investigations in the department of public safety, although Acevedo doesn't agree. Manger stated that law enforcement has to reconcile that independent investigations are coming. "It's about public perception and confidence," Manger observed. Montgomery County does the administrative investigation, Manger explained, but when it looked for the Maryland state police to do the criminal investigation, the request was turned down because of constrained resources. Recently Manger recommended the creation of a deadly-force investigative team consisting of four jurisdictions and overseen by the states attorney office, but he knows this will take time to get through all the red tape. Jacobs remarked that there's even distrust of prosecutors. "It goes back to whom do you hold accountable," she said. "You need to talk to the community about what they want."

Stephens noted that the Major Cities Chiefs Association supported the President's task force recommendations regarding independent investigations and believes there are different ways to achieve oversight of investigations.

## Next Steps

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Strategy Summit participants were challenged to consider how to individually and collectively build on the group's conversation [see "Common Ground" sidebar], and how to find other groups to be involved in implementing next steps.

Jacobs reported that Columbus has had many task forces, and that she's looking at all of their recommendations, prioritizing, and creating a response. She said Columbus is analyzing "what's important to us." Manger remarked that some of the President's task force recommendations are being implemented to some extent, and other aspects are being ignored, primarily because "one size does not fit all in terms of the recommendations."

He went on to say that this Strategy Summit conversation, with many players from different disciplines, takes the conversation to the next level and "will help us have conversations at home on these issues because it can give us a framework." Zone offered that much of the implementation of the President's task force recommendations comes down to the leadership of police and their ability to implement.

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### Common Ground

Several underlying themes emerged throughout the Strategy Summit about which the participants were in agreement:

- No single entity—be it law enforcement, local government, or community organizations—has all the answers, and none has sufficient resources to effect comprehensive change. All of the community’s available resources need to be brought to bear in a coordinated effort.
  - Success starts with reaching out to all segments of the community, giving voice to the underserved, listening, and building and maintaining collaborative relationships among all organizations that can contribute to making a stronger community.
  - Diversity in the workforce, race relations, and serving the underrepresented are issues that need to be tackled head on. Mental health and homelessness are two important social conditions that need to be addressed by the entire community, not just by the police, whose expertise and resources are not designed to serve these groups or address these issues.
  - Assuming a strategic and genuine effort to improve police policies and practices and interactions with the public, an equally strong initiative (in part comprising communications and branding) needs to occur simultaneously to shift the public’s negative perception of the police. On the other hand, sometimes it’s the laws and policies that are behind the times and need to change.
  - Comprehensive police training is just as important as smart recruiting.
  - Each community solution is unique, but shared models of what works and effective practices would be helpful.
  - Reliable measures of community engagement (as one participant put it, “what you count, people will do”) and other police-involved activities need to be agreed upon and accessible in an easy-to-use format.
  - Organizations like ICMA, the National League of Cities, and others are needed to help at least facilitate the cross-discipline conversations that need to take place in communities.
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## The Recommendations

The next-step recommendations (see “Executive Summary”) came out of a closing dialog in which participants voiced consensus about how to move forward with the recommendations of the President’s task force.

Austin encouraged the Strategy Summit participants to **go to their mayor, council, manager, and police chief with *The Final Report of The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing* in hand and ask what they’re doing with the recommendations.** He noted that The Fraternal Order of Police did this in a constructive way, point by point. “It forces you to look at things you wouldn’t necessarily look at on your own.” Austin also noted that the Department of Justice’s COPS (Community-Oriented Policing Services) program is coming out with a playbook to accompany the President’s task force report.

Manger emphasized that the issues discussed in this convening are not restricted to only the police and the public, and that these can’t all be separate conversations—that **the conversations also need to involve mayors, council members, local governments, and other community organizations.** Manger encouraged participants to, for example, check out an initiative called Campaign Zero [see “Campaign Zero and Black

Lives Matter” sidebar], which addresses many of the issues identified in the President’s task force recommendations.

Lemmie described the Kettering Foundation as being focused on helping democracy move forward and being supportive of innovative practices. O’Neill pointed out the need for an analysis of the things that move transparency and trust forward because at this juncture, “we don’t actually know what works.” To which Stephens reminded the participants that **community organizations can be a convening resource for cross-discipline conversations.**

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### **Campaign Zero and Black Lives Matter**

The [“Campaign Zero”](#) report makes similar points as those of the President’s task force recommendations. The Campaign Zero website describes its mission as this: “Campaign ZERO was developed with contributions from activists, protesters, and researchers across the nation. This data-informed platform presents comprehensive solutions to end police violence in America. It integrates community demands and policy recommendations from research organizations and The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing.”

Another initiative addressing policing, social, and cultural issues is [“Black Lives Matter.”](#) According to its website, “Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.”

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Martel affirmed that **ICMA has an opportunity to work with its members** “to identify leading practices, to initiate community conversations around community values, and to talk about race issues.” If we don’t take that step, Martel warned, “then we’re putting all responsibility for moving forward on these critical issues on the police department when in fact there is a collective responsibility to help move the needle and ensure that we make progress in these areas.”

Manger emphasized that ICMA, the National League of Cities, the Conference of Mayors, and other local government groups can **proactively reinforce the value of these recommendations** and the fact that there’s an expectation that there is an obligation to do something with this and an obligation to communicate about it. Manger challenged Strategy Summit participants to look for opportunities to highlight implementation of the recommendations and talk about their impact.

Also noted was the existence of **the White House police data initiative**, where any law enforcement department can put its data online in 10 designated areas. Once sufficient data is collected, it’s possible that the aggregate data could be crowd sourced to determine what to do with all the data. None of what is being reported online is secret information, so there is no barrier to participating.

Another consideration, said Pattillo, is how CALEA is involved in this and **how implementation of the President’s task force recommendations will impact CALEA’s certification.** Police and mayors, she advised, need to move this agenda forward. Stephens noted that they did testify before the President’s task force on more than one occasion.

The group agreed that a constructive next step would entail **developing a strategy to replicate this Strategy Summit conversation**, pulling together leaders of diverse stakeholder groups, at a regional level.

Stephens wrapped up the day-and-a-half dialog by noting that this conversation was unique in that it was the first joint MCCA–ICMA project and the diversity of the group’s composition created one of the best conversations to date about difficult issues. Manger agreed: “This meeting was unique because mayors, city managers, and police chiefs were all in the same room.” He added, “The sincerity and intensity of the discussions were helpful to everyone.” Freeman-Wilson observed that the conversation was mutually beneficial, and she appreciated hearing the candid remarks of other police chiefs because she can bring that home to her own police chief to enrich their conversations.

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