



# LISTENING SESSION REPORT

## Community Empowerment Plan

**CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION | MAY 5, 2021**

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# BACKGROUND

- **On May 26, 2020, George Floyd was killed by an on-duty police officer, which sparked protests across the nation, including here in Santa Rosa**
- **Protests called for an overhaul of use of force policies as well as increased law enforcement oversight and accountability**
- **The City responded by developing the Community Empowerment Plan and holding a series of listening sessions with Santa Rosa's communities of color.**



# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PLAN VISION AND GOALS

**VISION:** Build a trusting and open relationship of respect between SRPD and the community, and a space for ongoing, inclusive, constructive dialogue is available.

1. Increase constructive and inclusive dialogue between leaders from POC communities in Santa Rosa and Sonoma County, and the City of Santa Rosa
2. Community is provided with opportunities to review and provide input on Santa Rosa Police Department's use of force and community policing policies.
3. Establish a feedback loop to gauge effectiveness of efforts with and in the community, and among City staff.



# GOAL 1 OUTCOMES

- **280 people engaged**
  - **265 from people of color groups/communities**
- **18 listening sessions held with 13 community groups (5 were follow-up sessions)**
- **18 one-on-one conversations**
- **15 informal group conversations**



# LISTENING SESSIONS OUTCOMES

- **215 participants**
- **13 community groups**
  - **5 Latinx community groups**
  - **4 Black community groups**
  - **1 Indigenous community group**
  - **3 mixed race community groups**
- **5 themes reoccurred throughout these sessions**



# LISTENING SESSIONS OUTCOMES: THEMES

1. Build relationships between Santa Rosa Police Department and community, including youth;
2. Invest in community programming and services, particularly for POC communities;
3. Create police accountability and oversight mechanisms;
4. Address institutional racism, systemic racism and the culture of white supremacy in Santa Rosa; and uplift and celebrate Santa Rosa's POC communities; and
5. Address homelessness in our neighborhoods.



# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 1

***Engage Through an Anti-Racist Lens: Creating an Organizational Culture that Values Public Engagement with All Community Members and Increasing Access to Public Engagement Opportunities***

- *Community Empowerment Plan*
- *Let's Engage SR!*
- *Citizen Guidebook for Participating in Local Government*
- *Civic 101 Videos*
- *Language Access*
- *Project Advisory Boards*



# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 2

## ***Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Transparency and Access***

- Open Letter to the Community from Mayor and City Manager (June 2020)
- Letter to the Community and Resolution in Support and Solidarity with Asian American-Pacific Islander Communities and Denouncing Anti-Asian Racism and Violence (March and April 2021)
- Partnership with Seed Collaborative
- Open Government Ordinance (December 2020)
- Santa Rosa's Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and EEO Officer (hired March 2021)
- Santa Rosa's Equity and Public Health Planner (hired November 2020)
- *Multicultural Roots Project: Stories from Santa Rosa's POC*





# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 3

## ***Declare Racism as a Public Health Crisis in Santa Rosa***

- County of Sonoma joined 145 other cities and counties and 27 states, along with multiple organizations across CA and US in declaring racism as a public health crisis.
- California SB-17
  - Office of Racial Equity
  - Allows California to acknowledge the long-standing impacts of systemic racism and to declare racism as a public health crisis.
  - Creates funding opportunities for state and local agencies.



# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 4

## ***Mandatory Trainings and Educational Sessions for all City Staff, Appointed and Elected Officials, and Members of City Boards and Commissions***

- Skills for Success Trainings – include Building an Inclusive Workplace and Emotional Intelligence for all staff
- Harassment in the Workplace – required for all staff
- For SPRD (current) – crisis intervention and implicit bias trainings (both required)
- For SRPD (upcoming) – Community Policing, Cultural Awareness and Implicit Bias trainings through Community Matters



# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 5

## *Civilian Oversight of SRPD*

- Request for Proposal for Independent Police Auditor
  - Scope of work includes feedback from listening sessions
- SRPD to continue exploring additional components to law enforcement oversight, including the IOLERO model created by the County of Sonoma



# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 6

## ***Restorative Community Justice Circles with the Community***

- Ideas for future work include partnering with the Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership and restorative justice organizations to hold community healing circles.



# COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATION 7

## ***Continue to Explore Best Practice Responses to Protests and Demonstrations (from League of CA Cities Trauma Informed Responses to Protests)***

- Get to know the community you are serving and what issues are important to them.
- Recognize the humanity of why protests happen.
- Recognize generational trauma and its impacts on community.
- Refrain from labeling protesters/demonstrators as dangerous individuals
- Engage with the community and find out what they need to feel safe



# OTHER STEPS TAKEN BY CITY STAFF

- City Council's Public Safety Subcommittee (CEP Goal 2.1)
- Model of Response to Mental Illness and Homelessness
- Chief's Community Ambassador Team (C-CAT – CEP Goal 2.1)
- The Marylou Lowrider



QUESTIONS?

