

From: [Joshua](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Cc: [Friedman, Aviva](#); [Riley, Angela](#); [Resciniti, Sophia](#); [Burns, Joseph](#)
Subject: Personal statements on the 2021 Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan
Date: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 11:04:44 PM
Attachments: [CAHOOTS Program Analysis Final8_25_20%28002%29.pdf](#)

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joshua Vasconi. I'm not reaching out to you on my own behalf, and I would have submitted these comments anonymously if I could, as I'm sure many, many others would have also. I currently live in the Town of Binghamton, but I work (and my family and many friends live) in the City of Binghamton. I was born here, but I have spent most of my life elsewhere, and involved with community mutual aid work across the country since I was a teenager. That work has mostly been in homeless assistance and outreach, and also assisting various organizations in harm reduction and collective food and housing security. I do similar work here, doing whatever I can in my limited capacity to step into gaps where others, most notably government, have failed. I stood in solidarity with the community outside of the city office building on Monday evening and had prepared a statement of my own to read to your council regarding the supposed 'collaborative plan' to 'reinvent police'. I was not allowed to speak because of the abrupt closing of that singular forum. Therefore, I'm writing to you now, and have revised my statement in light of what transpired.

First, I feel it's important to tell you that I'm deeply disturbed by what took place. I'm not disturbed by the language. I'm disturbed by the fact that public servants can pale and fan themselves over some sparse curse words, and yet be seemingly entirely emotionally detached from community trauma. The community members that called in (and countless others who didn't) ARE traumatized - traumatized by the police, who militarily occupy, kidnap, brutalize, and extort their communities, traumatized by racism and sexism and ableism and classism, and traumatized by a centralized system and its actors overhead which are consistently indifferent to their pain and actual living needs, and who either actively or tacitly uphold and legitimize injustice. I understand the value of intentional, good faith communication, and I know that you, as council members and elected public servants, have a decorum you have to maintain for your public image. I also know, even if you haven't engaged personally with your constituents otherwise, that you heard the same testimonies from call-ins Monday evening as I did. So you also know that the community feels afraid, tired, frustrated, and shut out from any meaningful access to determine their own future. They struggle to cope with daily terror. Their neighbors, friends, and children are living as if under military occupation. The pained expression of victims should never overshadow the pre-eminent issues of their trauma and abuse. 'Have some respect' is a pitiless response to a few F words (which, I would like to remind you, were all preceded by heartbreaking and courageous testimony). I think it's paternalistic and a dramatic reflection of indifference. I do believe that, had the community been consulted on the formulative process of this palliative 'plan' and had adequate time to transcribe their feelings, those uncomfortable words probably would not have been said. If the community had any faith whatsoever in this process, those condemnations would not have been said. If the community didn't feel misrepresented, that their terms of agreement were deliberately co-opted, and outraged at the complicity and silence and feet dragging to progress towards restorative justice, those unpleasant obscenities would not have been said. And if their words

and outrage were shocking to you, as their public servants, then I believe that represents nothing but your own dissociation from your constituents. Furthermore, by preventing their expression and redress, you have silenced an unknowable number of victims. That wasn't just done on Monday night, but throughout this entire process. The emotions and tone of those words are very, very little compared to the grief and pain that the people who spoke them endure every single day. Knowingly or not, you've helped the racist mayor and police department put the community's collective backs to the wall, and that should disturb you well beyond what any number of F words ever should. I and many others do appreciate the empathy and understanding that council members Angela Riley and Aviva Friedman, in particular, have demonstrated on that topic.

I implore you to set another public forum so that the community can craft thoughtful statements and be heard.

Now I would like to say some things about the commission's 'plan' itself. Most importantly, there is no oversight or accountability. There is no plan, only palliative and vague lip service, mock gestures from the commission to seem relevant and responsible while simultaneously confirming that they are in fact neither. The skewed data analysis that cost taxpayers \$36,000 seems to me like a sick joke and an attempt by the commission to absolve themselves and bury their completely unsatisfactory 'plan'. Second, there is no commitment that additional funds will be deducted from the existing and grossly exacerbated police budget. How can the community, denied virtually all access to the process, knowing how defiantly the commission had procrastinated on fulfilling executive order 203, knowing how all of their work and discourse in the community has been entirely disregarded, and knowing the character and career history of the individuals who retain essential control of the process, how can they honestly hold any faith that any meaningful changes will result from the few pithy sentences from their abusers that they will reform themselves?

Please understand that when community coalitions offer clear suggestions for the officials and police to redistribute funds (which are extorted from those communities in the first place under the pretense of serving them) and to enact genuine reforms for accountability and oversight, that's attempted good faith negotiation. When the officials and police refuse to even acknowledge any of those suggestions, but increasingly extort more from the communities they occupy and demand assimilation, silence, and submission, that's refusing to negotiate. This isn't really surprising when one considers which 'side of the table' here is actively taking hostages, displacing families, and perpetrating violence with impunity. BPD is, in essence, design and function, a terrorist organization - and this is not my opinion alone.

Instead of taking up your time lodging my own personal complaints about my experiences with specific BPD officers (which truthfully are trivial in comparison to those of others, especially people of color, non-men, and homeless individuals living in Binghamton whose stories personally haunt me), I would like to reiterate some of the consistent demands made by your constituents:

-(Re)establishing a human rights commission/citizen review board, entirely independent of the

BPD and Mayor's office, with power to hire, fire, and subpoena

-Divestment from police and re-investment in the community in areas of mental health, release and re-entry programs, counseling, substance use and addiction care, homeless outreach and prevention, youth programs, public housing, and other essential relief of desperate material conditions

-A public program for non-police response specifically for victims of sexual assault

-Mandatory police training (and regular evaluation) of cultural competency/de-escalation/anti-racism

-Expunge drug convictions

-End cash bail, pre-trial and solitary detention

-Ban and oversight on police use of facial recognition technology

-Accessible and frequently updated public data on police activity such as stops, detainment, and use of force, as well as staff and conditions in the jail, including especially the racial disparities therein

-De-militarization of police and divestment from things like military grade weapons and vehicles

-End qualified immunity

The funding for these initiatives must come from the existing BPD budget. We do not see the merit in granting the police more of our money to spend as they see fit.

Additionally I want to say, without diverting too far from the topic at hand, that Binghamton must take measurable steps to end the criminalization of the homeless, and decriminalize the occupation of unused space. Have you ever been woken up to flashlights and guns in your face? Have you ever had all of your worldly possessions seized and thrown away? Have you ever been attacked, threatened, or arrested for simply asking for help? Sleeping is the most peaceful and vulnerable state that a living human being can ever be in. Sweeping the most at-risk and disenfranchised individuals of society under the rug and without dignity of choice is almost as shameful as the BPDs tendency to hunt them for simply trying to survive. I remind you of the obvious, that a jail is not a home. A shelter is not a home. A motel is not a home.

Now, please direct your attention to this statement (although I am not sure, admittedly, when it was made) by Chief of Police Joseph Zikuski, posted on the binghamton-ny.gov website:

"The Department realizes that crime is a problem that affects all segments of our society, and is a concern of everyone. The Binghamton Police Department will make every attempt to involve the community in generating mutual understanding and cooperation between the residents and Police Department of Binghamton. Involving the community will enhance both police and residents knowledge of the nature and extent of the crime problem in the city. The

police and community members working together against crime will be a major step in crime deterrence. Although, there are certain crimes that cannot be prevented, crimes committed against innocent victims in public places and crimes against property can be deterred by proactive police operations and an involved community. The Binghamton Police Department plans to deter crime by increasing police presence both on foot patrol and police vehicle presence in neighborhoods and business areas. The Community Response Team will saturate high crime areas and make pro-active community policing their focus. The Police and community working together will make the City of Binghamton a better place to live, work and do business."

How does 'saturating high crime areas with pro-active community policing' contrast with 'divestment, accountability, and reinvestment in our community'? Can you see the problem that your constituents, many of them people of color, and who have been shouting about racist police and profiling, are facing? Why they cannot trust the commission to enact any meaningful reform? This is not a crime problem. That would imply the community is under-policed, and would dismiss any need to address the systemic social and material crises that underlie crime, to say nothing of the deep and lasting generational traumas inflicted by the injustice of corrupt, unrepentant, racist policing - inherent tendencies of bias and authority illustrated very clearly, I believe, in that statement by the Chief of Police. The problem is undeniably in the systemic nature of criminalization, incarceration, and policing itself. It desperately needs to be addressed, and not from the top down. I do not think top-down solutions are solutions. I don't think they ever will be, because they aren't meant to be. Police policing police is no resolution whatsoever. It's not even an attempt at a resolution.

What might alternative crisis response and community centered programs look like? I strongly encourage you to learn about and consider the exemplary model set forth in Oregon by the White Bird Clinic collective. They provide their communities with essential services like health clinics and dental care, counseling, harm reduction and outpatient behavioral support, mental health support for students and youth, outreach and expanded access for the homeless, social services navigation support and advocacy, and free interpreter services. CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) is their program for mobile crisis response. Communities across the country have recently begun looking closely at CAHOOTS as a viable alternative to militarized policing, and I am personally very familiar with the work that they do and the lives that they save. I will provide a small eight page PDF file attachment to this letter illustrating some of the relief this organization provides, not just to their community's health and quality of life but also to their city's economic health at large. But, again, I urge you to explore this proven viable model more extensively, as I believe it would be valuable to everyone when it comes to reimagining community-centered social care.

I thank you for your time and understanding.

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EUGENE POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME ANALYSIS UNIT

300 County Club Road, Eugene, OR 97401



CAHOOTS Program Analysis

PURPOSE:

To gain a clear understanding of the CAHOOTS program regarding the nature and levels of activity CAHOOTS personnel are involved with, both in conjunction with, and independent of, other emergency services.

There has been significant visibility and discussion, even nationwide, of the CAHOOTS program in recent months, highlighting the important role this program has in our community by offering critical crisis intervention services. The coverage has shared a variety statistics and figures based on different information sources. In order to provide more consistent and up to date information, EPD Crime Analysis Unit has conducted analysis to accurately gauge the the impact the CAHOOTS program has on the Eugene Police Department's (EPD) activity levels.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- CAHOOTS divert rates are likely between approximately 5% to 8% of EPD Calls For Service (CFS)
- CAHOOTS called for backup from EPD in 311 instances in 2019
 - CODE 3 Cover, or an immediate police emergency response with lights and siren, was needed in ~8% of the backup calls
 - Backup rates are higher in natures of calls that are traditionally dispatched to police, like Criminal Trespass

METHOD:

Two tools have been created by the EPD Crime Analysis Unit to help examine data from the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. Anecdotally, these two tools are referred to as the "CAHOOTS tool," and the "Annual Stats tool." Both are interactive and reside on a closed EPD system, they pull their data from the Eugene CAD system.

Due to the complexities and numerous variables, every effort will be made to be as thorough as possible when describing various filters applied to the data to better understand the nature of CAHOOTS involvement in the public safety system.

The examined data is inclusive from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019.

DISCUSSION:

CAHOOTS is a partner organization with the City of Eugene and is run through the White Bird Clinic. It is currently dispatched via the same system as EPD and Eugene Springfield Fire (ESF) to a variety of calls, diverting some from EPD and other emergency services, as well as handling a subset of unique calls that wouldn't normally be responded to by law enforcement. Calls for CAHOOTS come in through either the emergency 911 system or the non-emergency line. Additionally, there are some calls that are self-initiated, or calls where CAHOOTS vans are flagged down by individual members of the community. The initial step in this analysis is to look at the nature and frequency of Calls for Service (CFS) within the CAD system as they relate to CAHOOTS.

Calls For Service (CFS):

ALL CAHOOTS ASSOCIATIONS:

In 2019 CAHOOTS had some level of activity in 20,746 public-initiated CFS. This number is not indicative of a response, dispatch or arrival, simply an association between a CAHOOTS unit designator and an event in CAD. Figure 1 shows all CAHOOTS associations by call nature. This chart includes calls that may also have an association with other emergency services

Figure 1 – 2019 total CAHOOTS CAD associations

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Check Welfare	5806	28.0%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Assist Public- Police	5555	26.8%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Transport	4583	22.1%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Suicidal Subject	1442	6.95%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Disorderly Subject	529	2.55%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Intoxicated Subject	421	2.03%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Found Syringe	347	1.67%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Traffic Hazard	307	1.48%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Criminal Trespass	288	1.39%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Dispute	225	1.08%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (106 Categories)	1243	5.99%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		20746		

Nature

10

Summary Table Grouping.

Top N from one through 116

ALL CAHOOTS DISPATCHED CFS:

In 2019 CAHOOTS was dispatched to 17,700 public-initiated CFS. This includes calls that are both CAHOOTS only and a joint response with other emergency services. It is a subset of the calls in Figure 1. Lack of dispatch can be for a variety of reasons ranging from a call not requiring a response, to a caller not providing complete information, or a caller calling back and canceling a call. CAHOOTS dispatch rates are higher than EPD due to the nature of the calls they receive. CAHOOTS calls are generally not for information only or calls to report crimes, those types of calls, which are common for EPD are often not dispatched.

Figure 2 – 2019 total CAHOOTS dispatched CFS

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Check Welfare	5083	28.7%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Assist Public- Police	4547	25.7%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Transport	3756	21.2%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Suicidal Subject	1389	7.85%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Disorderly Subject	457	2.58%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Intoxicated Subject	356	2.01%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Found Syringe	310	1.75%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Traffic Hazard	298	1.68%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Criminal Trespass	215	1.21%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Dispute	214	1.21%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (95 Categories)	1075	6.07%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		17700		

Nature
 Summary Table Grouping.

10
 Top N from one through 105

ALL CAHOOTS ARRIVED CFS:

In 2019 there were 15,879 public-initiated CFS (Figure 3) where CAHOOTS was both dispatched and arrived. This number is a sub-set of Figure 2 and includes CAHOOTS-only activity as well as CAHOOTS activity in conjunction with other emergency services. A variance in dispatch and arrival rates is common with service calls. It is often caused by the call being canceled after dispatch and is not indicative of a non-availability of services. Due to the delay between a call being received, dispatched, and resources arriving on scene, a caller may call back and report the subject of the call is no longer on scene.

Figure 3 – 2019 total CAHOOTS response

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Check Welfare	4609	29.0%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Assist Public- Police	4085	25.7%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Transport	3341	21.0%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Suicidal Subject	1294	8.15%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Disorderly Subject	402	2.53%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Intoxicated Subject	320	2.02%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Traffic Hazard	257	1.62%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Found Syringe	254	1.60%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Criminal Trespass	190	1.20%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Dispute	190	1.20%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (92 Categories)	937	5.90%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		15879		

Nature
 Summary Table Grouping.

10
 Top N from one through 102

ALL CAHOOTS ONLY CFS ASSOCIATIONS:

Figure 4 shows all 2019 Public-initiated CFS where only CAHOOTS has an association to the call in the CAD system. There are no other emergency services associated to the call. These calls are a subset of Figure 1 (All CAHOOTS Associations). This does not indicate either dispatch or arrival.

Figure 4 – 2019 CAHOOTS only CAD associations

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Assist Public- Police	5435	30.2%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Check Welfare	5226	29.0%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Transport	4533	25.2%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Suicidal Subject	982	5.46%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Intoxicated Subject	393	2.18%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Found Syringe	328	1.82%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Traffic Hazard	241	1.34%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Disorderly Subject	230	1.28%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Assist Fire Department	161	0.89%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Disoriented Subject	111	0.62%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (59 Categories)	355	1.97%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		17995		

Nature
Summary Table Grouping. *Top N from one through 69*

CAHOOTS ONLY ARRIVED CFS:

Figure 5 indicates 2019 public-initiated CFS where CAHOOTS was the only unit that was both dispatched and arrived on scene. There were 13,854 CFS that fit these criteria. The difference between dispatch (15,356) and arrival is 1,502. The ARRIVED calls are a subset of Figure 3 (all CAHOOTS arrived). These numbers do not include calls where CAHOOTS called for backup from other emergency services after arriving on scene. Divert rate will be discussed later, however 13,851 should be the baseline number for beginning any divert calculations. It indicates a call that may have gone to emergency services but was diverted to CAHOOTS, without intervention or support from emergency services.

Figure 5 – 2019 CAHOOTS only response

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Check Welfare	4220	30.5%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Assist Public- Police	3996	28.8%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Transport	3303	23.8%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Suicidal Subject	889	6.42%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Intoxicated Subject	301	2.17%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Found Syringe	252	1.82%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Traffic Hazard	210	1.52%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Disorderly Subject	196	1.41%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Assist Fire Department	116	0.84%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Disoriented Subject	87	0.63%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (48 Categories)	284	2.05%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		13854		

Nature
Summary Table Grouping. *Top N from one through 58*

JOINT CAHOOTS / EPD CFS:

Figure 6 shows the 2,018 joint CFS where both CAHOOTS and EPD dispatched and arrived at the call. These calls are a subset of calls figure 3 (all CAHOOTS arrived) and include CFS where CAHOOTS called for backup from EPD. These gross joint CFS numbers do not differentiate which units arrived on scene first.

Figure 6 – 2019 Joint EPD / CAHOOTS CFS

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Suicidal Subject	405	20.1%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Check Welfare	385	19.1%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Disorderly Subject	206	10.2%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Dispute	185	9.17%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Criminal Trespass	128	6.34%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Assist Public- Police	88	4.36%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Suspicious Conditions	51	2.53%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Disorderly Juveniles	48	2.38%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Traffic Hazard	47	2.33%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Overdose	44	2.18%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (76 Categories)	431	21.4%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		2018		

Nature

Summary Table Grouping.

Top N from one through 86

CAHOOTS BACKUP CALLS:

Figure 7 illustrates 311 CFS where CAHOOTS called for backup from law enforcement. The calls are a subset of Figure 6 (joint calls).

To be included in the backup category, **ALL** of the following criteria had to be met:

- The call was dispatched to CAHOOTS ONLY
- CAHOOTS arrived on scene
- EPD was dispatched and arrived after CAHOOTS arrived on scene

The percentage of calls beginning as a CAHOOTS ONLY response and then requiring backup was 2% overall. However, when you look at calls outside of CAHOOTS normal top 4 CFS, the percentage of calls requiring

Figure 7 – 2019 CAHOOTS calls requiring backup

Rank	Nature	Count	Percent	Include
1	Check Welfare	116	37.3%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Suicidal Subject	42	13.5%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Assist Public- Police	34	10.9%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Criminal Trespass	23	7.40%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Transport	20	6.43%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Disorderly Subject	16	5.14%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Traffic Hazard	14	4.50%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Intoxicated Subject	9	2.89%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Missing Person	5	1.61%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Suspicious Conditions	4	1.29%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Other (21 Categories)	28	9.00%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Total		311		

Nature

Summary Table Grouping.

Top N from one through 31

backup climbs. With "Criminal Trespass," backup was requested 23 times out of 69 CAHOOTS responses where they arrived and located the subject. That equates to CAHOOTS requesting backup in 33% of the CAHOOTS ONLY Criminal Trespass CFS. For the top 4 natures that make up the bulk of CAHOOTS dispatches, the backup rate is as follows: Transport (>1%), Assist Public (1%), Check Welfare (4%), and Suicidal Subject (5%). The term backup does not indicate an emergency response, it simply indicates that after CAHOOTS arrived on scene it was determined additional police response was required. We were able to isolate 25 instances (8% of backup calls) where the terms "C3" or "CODE 3" were used in the call notes, this would indicate an immediate and emergency police response to the call.

EXPLANATION OF CAHOOTS TOP NATURES:

- 1. CHECK WELFARE (4,615 dispatched):** The CAHOOTS Welfare Check nature is generally separate from the EPD Welfare Check. Dispatch makes the determination at the time of the call that the caller does not appear to require a law enforcement response, or the caller specifically requests CAHOOTS. CAHOOTS arrived at 4,220 of the Welfare Checks. They make up 30% of the total call volume CAHOOTS is dispatched to.
- 2. ASSIST PUBLIC- POLICE (4,448 dispatched):** This nature is not considered a traditional police call. It generally involves non-emergency service requests from the public, from counseling, to injury evaluation after a person declined to be evaluated by a medic, to providing general services. CAHOOTS arrived at 3,996 of the Assist Public calls. They make up 29% of the total call volume that CAHOOTS is dispatched to.
- 3. TRANSPORT (3,712 dispatched):** A CAHOOTS transport call generally involves moving an individual, often unhoused and in need, or dealing with mental health issues, from one location to another for non-emergency services. For example: an individual may need to get from a dusk-to-dawn site to a hospital for non-emergency issues. CAHOOTS arrived at 3,303 of the Transport calls. Transport calls make up 24% of the total call volume CAHOOTS is dispatched to.

To better understand the natures, the following are random samples from the calls of these natures, which were dispatched to CAHOOTS personnel. These calls are indicative of those in the nature, although not all inclusive.

1. Check Welfare:

- (19283789) LOC/ SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION, ON THE OVERPASS FEMALE WALKING BAREFOOT AND NOT WEARING MUCH CLOTHING -- REQ CAHOOTS TO GO AND CHECK ON HER LAST SEEN 5 AGO NO WEAPONS OBS
- (19250067) LOC/NE CORNER OF 2ND AND VAN BUREN. C/ADVI THERE IS POSSIBLY A PERSON SLEEPING ON SIDEWALK, OR POSSIBLY ITEMS COVERED BY TARP. HASN'T MOVED IN 5 HOURS. C/IS CONCERNED THE PERSON MAY NEED A WELFARE CHECK

2. Assist Public:

- (19062532) C/ REQ CAHOOTS FOR COUNSELING AND ASSISTANCE C/ HAVING SUICIDAL THOUGHTS NO PLANS OR MEANS AT THIS TIME
- (19310041) C/ REQ TRAN FOR HERSELF AND HER SON TO A MEAL THIS MORNING

3. Transport:

- (19222410) INV/UNK, NAME NEEDS XPORT TO SERVICE STATION - WAITING IN ED LOBBY
- (19080551) LOC/ LOBBY I/ UNK, MARK WM. 57. 600. MED. BALD LSW/ UNK TRAN TO HOURGLASS

CAHOOTS DIVERTS

Divert Criteria: For a call to be considered a divert, ALL of the following criteria must be true:

1. The call is received by dispatch
2. Police are *normally* dispatched to the call nature
3. The call is dispatched to, and arrived at by, an outside agency
4. No EPD resources are dispatched to the call

Dispatch versus non-dispatched calls: This is one area where CAHOOTS and EPD numbers differ significantly. The term “dispatched” indicates that physical resources (individuals) have been sent to the scene of activity in order to render assistance or investigate activity.

For CAHOOTS, a non-dispatched call indicates there is no activity that occurs, or no response. A typical example of this is when a member of the public calls in, the call is placed in the queue waiting for available resources, and due to a time lapse from the initial call, the caller calls back and states the subject is no longer there, or no longer in need of assistance. The call is never dispatched to CAHOOTS.

For EPD a non-dispatched call often still carries a burden of activity, including the filing of reports, the gathering of information and possible future activity. A typical example of this is a call for Theft From Vehicle. In 2019 there were 2,559 CFS to EPD of this nature and the agency dispatched personnel to approximately 101 (~4%) of those calls. Officers are generally not needed on scene to file a report. Despite personnel not being physically sent to the scene, the agency still has multiple individuals and staff-hours dedicated to these events.

The distinction between the two agency responses becomes important when calculating diverts. We must look first at all CFS dispatched, and arrived at, by CAHOOTS only (Fig. 5: 13,854); that number must be compared to the total CFS volume for both agencies (Fig. 8 below). In 2019 there were 105,402 Public CFS placed to the call center.

Figure 8 – ALL EPD public-initiated CFS in 2019

Nature	Count	% of All CFS	Freq Pri	Freq Desig	% Disp'd
CHECK WELFARE	8469	8.0%	7	CAHOOTS	87.1%
CRIMINAL TRESPASS	7007	6.6%	3	PATROL	72.1%
DISPUTE	6364	6.0%	3	PATROL	94.2%
ASSIST PUBLIC- POLICE	6245	5.9%	7	CAHOOTS	78.7%
TRANSPORT	4664	4.4%	7	CAHOOTS	81.6%
BEAT INFORMATION	4455	4.2%	5	PATROL	82.7%
ILLEGAL CAMPING	4313	4.1%	5	PATROL	9.8%
THEFT	4264	4.0%	4	PATROL	28.7%
DISORDERLY SUBJECT	3832	3.6%	3	PATROL	84.1%
THEFT FROM VEHICLE	2559	2.4%	9	CSO	3.9%
ALL OTHER (241 Cats)	53231	50.5%	3	PATROL	52.5%
TOTAL	105403	100.0%	3	PATROL	60.5%

Calculating the divert rate of CAHOOTS for EPD activity is not as simple as removing all calls associated to CAHOOTS from the total number of CFS received by the call center. It needs to be capable of answering the question: “If CAHOOTS services weren’t available, how many additional calls would EPD need to handle?” To address that specific question, the four divert criteria listed at the beginning of this section must be met.

If we incorrectly assume that ALL calls associated with (Figure 1: 20,746), dispatched to (Figure 2: 17,700), or handled by only CAHOOTS (Figure 5: 13,854) would be dispatched to police if CAHOOTS services were not available, then we have gross divert rates of: ~20%, ~17%, or ~13% respectively.

However, as discussed when examining call natures, the top 3 CAHOOTS CFS natures: Check Welfare (4,220), Assist Public (3,996), and Transport (3,303) are not traditionally law enforcement calls, and would likely not be dispatched to police. The majority of these calls are received by the call center because of the partnership with CAHOOTS; the public is aware that CAHOOTS services are accessed through calling 911 or the non-emergency number and it artificially inflates the total call volume to emergency services.

If all calls in the top three CFS, which are CAHOOTS-centric, are removed from the total of CAHOOTS only responses (11,519), we are left with 2,335 CFS, which are likely diverts. This equates to an overall divert rate of ~2%

If we look only at dispatched calls for both agencies (63,738) and subtract out the removed CAHOOTS natures (11,519) we are left with 52,219 total dispatched CFS, of which 2,335 were handled by CAHOOTS, which would equate to ~5% divert rate of dispatched calls.

The calls in the Check Welfare nature, handled solely by CAHOOTS, are the most challenging call nature to differentiate from traditional law enforcement calls. Following further analysis of a random sample group of 200 of these calls by dispatchers, we estimate that approximately 74% (148 of 200) of the Welfare Check calls would *likely* be dispatched to police if CAHOOTS resources weren't available. If we apply this percentage to the larger group of Check Welfare calls dispatched to CAHOOTS (4,220), we are left with 3,123 CFS that may be sent to police. Using this methodology, the number of divert calls for CAHOOTS becomes 6,346: the overall divert rate is ~6%. Additionally, this would make the divert rate of all dispatched calls ~10%.

SUMMARY:

CAHOOTS is a valued partner within the city of Eugene and provides a needed service within the community. In examining interplay between EPD and CAHOOTS, they are partner organizations where they both meet specific and unique needs. Additionally, CAHOOTS and EPD are often jointly dispatched to CFS to meet those needs.

CAHOOTS does divert calls from EPD, however it is not the 17-20% reported by just looking at the total number of CAHOOTS calls compared to EPD calls. Even with a full and comprehensive study of calls responded to by CAHOOTS, it is not possible to find an exact divert rate for a specified time period. **It is likely that the true divert rate falls between approximately 5% - 8%.**

Additionally, EPD does provide backup for some CFS where CAHOOTS was the only unit initially assigned. **EPD rates of CAHOOTS requesting backup are higher than what has previously been reported in the news media.** It should be noted that backup rates for more "traditional" CAHOOTS-centric calls: Check Welfare, Assist Public and Transport are relatively low. It is when CAHOOTS is dispatched to a traditionally police-centric call, like Criminal Trespass, that the instances of CAHOOTS requiring backup from the police jumps significantly.


Compiled by: Eugene Police Crime Analysis Unit

Current as of: August 21st, 2020

Contact: Ryan Skiles, CAU Manager // rskiles@eugene-or.gov

From: [Andrew](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Subject: a word from a Binghamton citizen
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 2:54:03 AM

This whole police reform plan is a bunch of weak nonsense !! We are not Fascist China ! Stop wasting taxpayers money and time. Diversifying police ranks is racist !! Let the police department do it's job without a bunch of bureaucrats who know nothing about police work, try to make the rules ! We need less rules and regulations and more honest cops who can do their jobs freely!

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From: [Adam William](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Subject: BPD Reform Plan
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 8:51:03 AM

Hello,

I'm sure you're all getting quite a bit of hate mail from a few loud mouths but don't let that distract you from the 100% fact that the overwhelming majority of Binghamton residents and people who work/travel to and through Binghamton on the regular very much appreciate what the BPD does every day.

Thank you guys for everything you do!

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From: [Haley Colavito](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Subject: Cancellation of Public Police Reform Meeting
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 9:24:13 AM

It really is a travesty the way this committee has refused to do its due diligence on one of the biggest issues facing our country. When the members of your community, who have given you a job, have no way to seek justice and reform because you think you deserve more respect, I would ask you to check your privilege before hand. These people are asking for basic human rights, not to be harassed because of the color of their skin, and to be treated with kindness and compassion, especially when experiencing a mental health emergency.

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [Sara Moore](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Subject: Illegal activities of rescinti.
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 7:05:13 AM

Sophia rescinti is a slumlord and a crook.

We see right through you.

Reopen the city council meeting and allow the community's voice to be heard.

It is absolutely ridiculous and actually, illegal to just shut down a public meeting like that. It infringes upon my first amendment rights.


Shutting a meeting down because of profanity is the most immature thing you could do. Ask the KID in the BCJ if the five guards who beat him to a bloody pulp swore at him. I can guarantee profanities were used when beating up an innocent child.

I was one of the people who was waiting to speak and voice my opinion about my personal experiences with BPD as a white, privileged girl who was using heroin.

But of course, sophia doesn't want people to know that BPD is one of the MOST twisted, racist police forces in probably the whole country.

I'd love to share my stories with y'all. Being that I'm now a productive member of society and almost five years clean from heroin I think y'all should probably hear my opinion!

Thanks.

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From: [Mike](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Subject: Police Reform - Council Meeting
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 5:31:53 AM

First off the way your meeting was cut off is totally wrong and sends the message that you have no concerns about what the residents of Binghamton have, leaving no excuse for such childish behavior. **This action goes to prove taxation without representation.**

Second the ones calling the Binghamton Police Department bias are the ones who are creating the issues within the City of Binghamton. I do agree that refresher courses should be mandatory every two (2) years but do not agree with cutting the force or taking desperate actions just to please a few.

Laws are laws, meant for everyone to obey. There are consequences for not complying with orders from the police. Just like there will be consequences for cutting the open Council meeting short, in the terms of voting any official out of office for self gain or putting personal agenda's in front of what the law abiding citizens want and need. Most Binghamton residents are against the protests and violence created by a few residents and those few residents do NOT represent the overall feelings of the majority of the Law Abiding Citizens of the City Of Binghamton.

Time for City Council to stop playing politics and conform to the wants and needs of all the Law Abiding Citizens . These Self Proclaimed Special Interests Groups need to be stopped at the forefront, not after it's to late because of demonstrations and violence.

The City Of Binghamton has always been a community that comes together in times of need, this is no difference. The residents are sick and tired of the way the City Of Binghamton plays up to the Clooeege Students, bending rules, like parking on the streets and not obeying the alternate street parking rules (just tke a ride down Court Street by the Library to get a taste.

In closing, it would be a 10 to 1 odds that you do not get re-elected, based on your lack of compassion towards those of us who try to voice simple solutions but get cut off because of personal feelings getting hurt or things being said that you do not like.

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From: [Joshua](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Cc: [Friedman, Aviva](#); [Riley, Angela](#); [Resciniti, Sophia](#); [Burns, Joseph](#)
Subject: Re: Personal statements on the 2021 Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 8:51:59 AM
Attachments: [CAHOOTS-Media.pdf](#)

I apologize. Reviewing my message this morning that I had submitted last night, I noticed that I had sent the wrong accompanying attachment with my letter. While that PDF resource does contain supportive data analysis of the CAHOOTS program, this is actually the attachment I meant to include.

Thank you for your time and understanding,

Joshua Vasconi, Binghamton resident and concerned citizen

----- Original Message -----

On Mar 24, 2021, 11:03 PM, Joshua <jhvasconi@protonmail.com> wrote:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joshua Vasconi. I'm not reaching out to you on my own behalf, and I would have submitted these comments anonymously if I could, as I'm sure many, many others would have also. I currently live in the Town of Binghamton, but I work (and my family and many friends live) in the City of Binghamton. I was born here, but I have spent most of my life elsewhere, and involved with community mutual aid work across the country since I was a teenager. That work has mostly been in homeless assistance and outreach, and also assisting various organizations in harm reduction and collective food and housing security. I do similar work here, doing whatever I can in my limited capacity to step into gaps where others, most namely government, have failed. I stood in solidarity with the community outside of the city office building on Monday evening and had prepared a statement of my own to read to your council regarding the supposed 'collaborative plan' to 'reinvent police'. I was not allowed to speak because of the abrupt closing of that singular forum. Therefore, I'm writing to you now, and have revised my statement in light of what transpired.

First, I feel it's important to tell you that I'm deeply disturbed by what took place. I'm not disturbed by the language. I'm disturbed by the fact that public servants can pale and fan themselves over some sparse curse words, and yet be seemingly entirely emotionally detached from community trauma. The community members that called in (and countless others who didn't) ARE traumatized - traumatized by the police, who militarily occupy, kidnap, brutalize, and extort their communities, traumatized by racism and sexism and ableism and classism, and traymatized by a centralized system and its actors overhead which are consistently indifferent to

their pain and actual living needs, and who either actively or tacitly uphold and legitimize injustice. I understand the value of intentional, good faith communication, and I know that you, as council members and elected public servants, have a decorum you have to maintain for your public image. I also know, even if you haven't engaged personally with your constituents otherwise, that you heard the same testimonies from call-ins Monday evening as I did. So you also know that the community feels afraid, tired, frustrated, and shut out from any meaningful access to determine their own future. They struggle to cope with daily terror. Their neighbors, friends, and children are living as if under military occupation. The pained expression of victims should never overshadow the pre-eminent issues of their trauma and abuse. 'Have some respect' is a pitiless response to a few F words (which, I would like to remind you, were all preceded by heartbreaking and courageous testimony). I think it's paternalistic and a dramatic reflection of indifference. I do believe that, had the community been consulted on the formulative process of this palliative 'plan' and had adequate time to transcribe their feelings, those uncomfortable words probably would not have been said. If the community had any faith whatsoever in this process, those condemnations would not have been said. If the community didn't feel misrepresented, that their terms of agreement were deliberately co-opted, and outraged at the complicity and silence and feet dragging to progress towards restorative justice, those unpleasant obscenities would not have been said. And if their words and outrage were shocking to you, as their public servants, then I believe that represents nothing but your own dissociation from your constituents. Furthermore, by preventing their expression and redress, you have silenced an unknowable number of victims. That wasn't just done on Monday night, but throughout this entire process. The emotions and tone of those words are very, very little compared to the grief and pain that the people who spoke them endure every single day. Knowingly or not, you've helped the racist mayor and police department put the community's collective backs to the wall, and that should disturb you well beyond what any number of F words ever should. I and many others do appreciate the empathy and understanding that council members Angela Riley and Aviva Friedman, in particular, have demonstrated on that topic.

I implore you to set another public forum so that the community can craft thoughtful statements and be heard.

Now I would like to say some things about the commission's 'plan' itself. Most importantly, there is no oversight or accountability. There is no plan, only palliative and vague lip service, mock gestures from the commission to seem relevant and responsible while simultaneously confirming that they are in fact neither. The skewed data analysis that cost taxpayers \$36,000 seems to me like a sick joke and an attempt by the commission to absolve themselves and bury their completely unsatisfactory 'plan'. Second, there is no commitment that additional funds will be deducted from the existing and grossly exacerbated police budget. How can the community, denied virtually all access to the process, knowing how defiantly the commission had procrastinated on fulfilling executive order 203, knowing how all of their work and discourse in the community has been entirely disregarded, and knowing the character and career history of the individuals who

retain essential control of the process, how can they honestly hold any faith that any meaningful changes will result from the few pithy sentences from their abusers that they will reform themselves?

Please understand that when community coalitions offer clear suggestions for the officials and police to redistribute funds (which are extorted from those communities in the first place under the pretense of serving them) and to enact genuine reforms for accountability and oversight, that's attempted good faith negotiation. When the officials and police refuse to even acknowledge any of those suggestions, but increasingly extort more from the communities they occupy and demand assimilation, silence, and submission, that's refusing to negotiate. This isn't really surprising when one considers which 'side of the table' here is actively taking hostages, displacing families, and perpetrating violence with impunity. BPD is, in essence, design and function, a terrorist organization - and this is not my opinion alone.

Instead of taking up your time lodging my own personal complaints about my experiences with specific BPD officers (which truthfully are trivial in comparison to those of others, especially people of color, non-men, and homeless individuals living in Binghamton whose stories personally haunt me), I would like to reiterate some of the consistent demands made by your constituents:

- (Re)establishing a human rights commission/citizen review board, entirely independent of the BPD and Mayor's office, with power to hire, fire, and subpoena

- Divestment from police and re-investment in the community in areas of mental health, release and re-entry programs, counseling, substance use and addiction care, homeless outreach and prevention, youth programs, public housing, and other essential relief of desperate material conditions

- A public program for non-police response specifically for victims of sexual assault

- Mandatory police training (and regular evaluation) of cultural competency/de-escalation/anti-racism

- Expunge drug convictions

- End cash bail, pre-trial and solitary detention

- Ban and oversight on police use of facial recognition technology

- Accessible and frequently updated public data on police activity such as stops, detainment, and use of force, as well as staff and conditions in the jail, including especially the racial disparities therein

-De-militarization of police and divestment from things like military grade weapons and vehicles

-End qualified immunity

The funding for these initiatives must come from the existing BPD budget. We do not see the merit in granting the police more of our money to spend as they see fit.

Additionally I want to say, without diverting too far from the topic at hand, that Binghamton must take measurable steps to end the criminalization of the homeless, and decriminalize the occupation of unused space. Have you ever been woken up to flashlights and guns in your face? Have you ever had all of your worldly possessions seized and thrown away? Have you ever been attacked, threatened, or arrested for simply asking for help? Sleeping is the most peaceful and vulnerable state that a living human being can ever be in. Sweeping the most at-risk and disenfranchised individuals of society under the rug and without dignity of choice is almost as shameful as the BPDs tendency to hunt them for simply trying to survive. I remind you of the obvious, that a jail is not a home. A shelter is not a home. A motel is not a home.

Now, please direct your attention to this statement (although I am not sure, admittedly, when it was made) by Chief of Police Joseph Zikuski, posted on the binghamton-ny.gov website:

"The Department realizes that crime is a problem that affects all segments of our society, and is a concern of everyone. The Binghamton Police Department will make every attempt to involve the community in generating mutual understanding and cooperation between the residents and Police Department of Binghamton. Involving the community will enhance both police and residents knowledge of the nature and extent of the crime problem in the city. The police and community members working together against crime will be a major step in crime deterrence. Although, there are certain crimes that cannot be prevented, crimes committed against innocent victims in public places and crimes against property can be deterred by proactive police operations and an involved community. The Binghamton Police Department plans to deter crime by increasing police presence both on foot patrol and police vehicle presence in neighborhoods and business areas. The Community Response Team will saturate high crime areas and make pro-active community policing their focus. The Police and community working together will make the City of Binghamton a better place to live, work and do business."

How does 'saturating high crime areas with pro-active community policing' contrast with 'divestment, accountability, and reinvestment in our community'? Can you see the problem that your constituents, many of them people of color, and who have been shouting about racist police and profiling, are facing? Why they cannot trust the commission to enact any meaningful reform? This is not a crime problem. That would imply the community is under-policed, and would dismiss any need to address the systemic social and material crises that underlie

crime, to say nothing of the deep and lasting generational traumas inflicted by the injustice of corrupt, unrepentant, racist policing - inherent tendencies of bias and authority illustrated very clearly, I believe, in that statement by the Chief of Police. The problem is undeniably in the systemic nature of criminalization, incarceration, and policing itself. It desperately needs to be addressed, and not from the top down. I do not think top-down solutions are solutions. I don't think they ever will be, because they aren't meant to be. Police policing police is no resolution whatsoever. It's not even an attempt at a resolution.

What might alternative crisis response and community centered programs look like? I strongly encourage you to learn about and consider the exemplary model set forth in Oregon by the White Bird Clinic collective. They provide their communities with essential services like health clinics and dental care, counseling, harm reduction and outpatient behavioral support, mental health support for students and youth, outreach and expanded access for the homeless, social services navigation support and advocacy, and free interpreter services. CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) is their program for mobile crisis response. Communities across the country have recently begun looking closely at CAHOOTS as a viable alternative to militarized policing, and I am personally very familiar with the work that they do and the lives that they save. I will provide a small eight page PDF file attachment to this letter illustrating some of the relief this organization provides, not just to their community's health and quality of life but also to their city's economic health at large. But, again, I urge you to explore this proven viable model more extensively, as I believe it would be valuable to everyone when it comes to reimagining community-centered social care.

I thank you for your time and understanding.

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Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets

White Bird Clinic
Eugene, Oregon

MEDIA GUIDE 2020



**Mental Health First Response
and Mobile Crisis Intervention
since 1989**

WHAT IS CAHOOTS?

31 years ago the City of Eugene, Oregon developed an innovative community-based public safety system to provide mental health first response for crises involving mental illness, homelessness, and addiction. White Bird Clinic launched CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) as a community policing initiative in 1989.

The CAHOOTS model has been in the spotlight recently as our nation struggles to re-imagine public safety. The program mobilizes two-person teams consisting of a medic (a nurse, paramedic, or EMT) and a crisis worker who has substantial training and experience in the mental health field. The CAHOOTS teams deal with a wide range of mental health related crises, including conflict resolution, welfare checks, substance abuse, suicide threats, and more, relying on trauma-informed de-escalation and harm reduction techniques. CAHOOTS staff are not law enforcement officers and do not carry weapons; their training and experience are the tools they use to ensure a non-violent resolution of crisis situations. They also handle non-emergent medical issues, avoiding costly ambulance transport and emergency room treatment.

A November 2016 study published in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine estimated that 20% to 50% of fatal encounters with law enforcement involved an individual with a mental illness. The CAHOOTS model demonstrates that these fatal encounters are not inevitable. Last year, out of a total of roughly 24,000 CAHOOTS calls, police backup was requested only 250 times.

The cost savings are considerable. The CAHOOTS program budget is about \$2.1 million annually, while the combined annual budgets for the Eugene and Springfield police departments are \$90 million. In 2019, the CAHOOTS teams answered 17% of the Eugene Police Department's overall call volume. The program saves the city of Eugene an estimated \$8.5 million in public safety spending annually.

CAHOOTS calls come to Eugene's 911 system or the police non-emergency number. Dispatchers are trained to recognize non-violent situations with a behavioral health component, and route those calls to CAHOOTS. A team will respond, assess the situation and provide immediate stabilization in case of urgent medical need or psychological crisis, assessment, information, referral, advocacy and, when warranted, transportation to the next step in treatment.

White Bird's CAHOOTS provides consulting and strategic guidance to communities across the nation that are seeking to replicate CAHOOTS' model.

MEDIA CONTACT: If you would like more information about CAHOOTS, please contact:

Loretta McNally
Public Information Officer, White Bird Clinic
Eugene, OR
cahoots.consulting@whitebirdclinic.org

QUICK FACTS ABOUT CAHOOTS:

31 YEARS OF CRISIS RESPONSE IN EUGENE AND SPRINGFIELD

- *In 1989, the City of Eugene diversified public safety spending by creating a human services partnership with White Bird Clinic's CAHOOTS program.*
- *CAHOOTS is part of Eugene and Springfield's emergency response system and is dispatched by EPD & SPD.*
- *CAHOOTS supports Eugene and Springfield Police Departments by responding to crisis situations, other situations needing de-escalation, behavioral and mental health concerns, intoxication calls, welfare checks, and even death notices.*
- *Last year CAHOOTS handled more than 24,000 calls, about 17% of the calls dispatched by 911. CAHOOTS teams called for police backup 250 times.*
- *CAHOOTS teams are comprised of a medic (either a nurse or EMT) and a crisis worker experienced in behavioral health.*
- *All team members complete over 500 hours of training that emphasizes de-escalation and crisis intervention to resolve situations where a social service response is more appropriate than a police response.*
- *CAHOOTS workers are not trained to be police and they do not have the same powers as police. CAHOOTS staff is unarmed.*
- *CAHOOTS receives funding from Eugene and Springfield city governments, a coordinated care organization, and donors.*
- *CAHOOTS has saved an estimated average of \$8.M on public safety and \$14M for ambulance/emergency room treatment annually.*

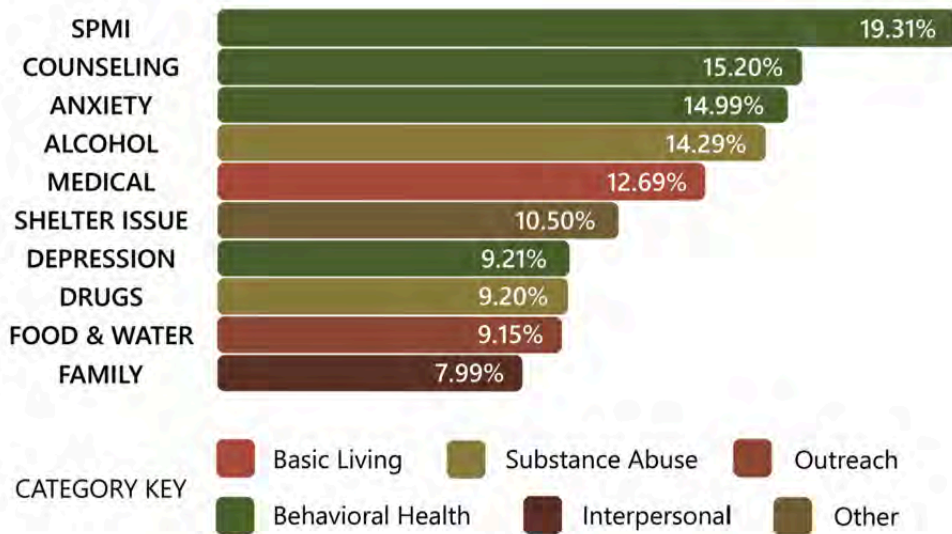


CAHOOTS RESPONSE DATA 2014–2019

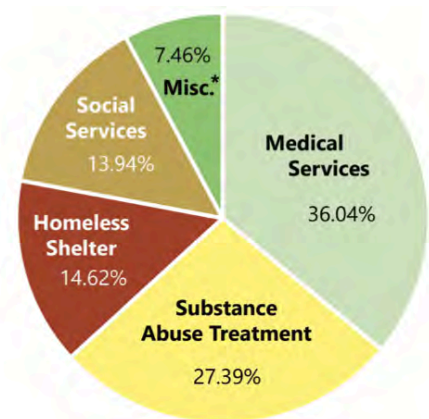
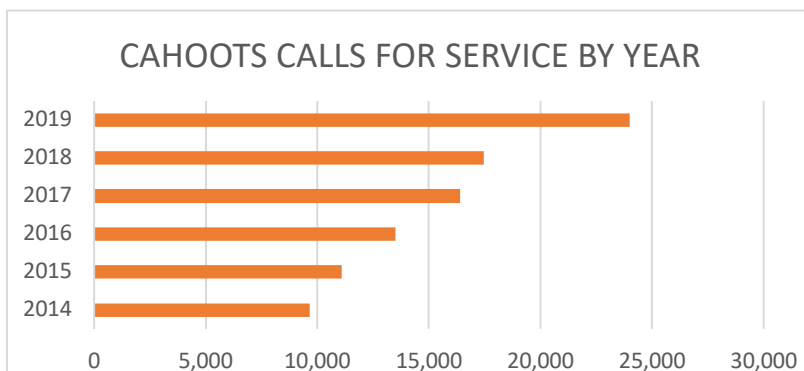
We respond to a diverse range of calls, including non-emergency medical care, counseling for people in crisis, welfare checks and requests for transportation to social services, substance abuse treatment facilities, and medical care providers. More than 60% of our clients are homeless, and 30% live with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI).

In 2019, CAHOOTS responded to 24,000 calls for assistance, and of these only 150 calls required backup from the police department.

Predominant CAHOOTS Call Factors



Transportation Calls



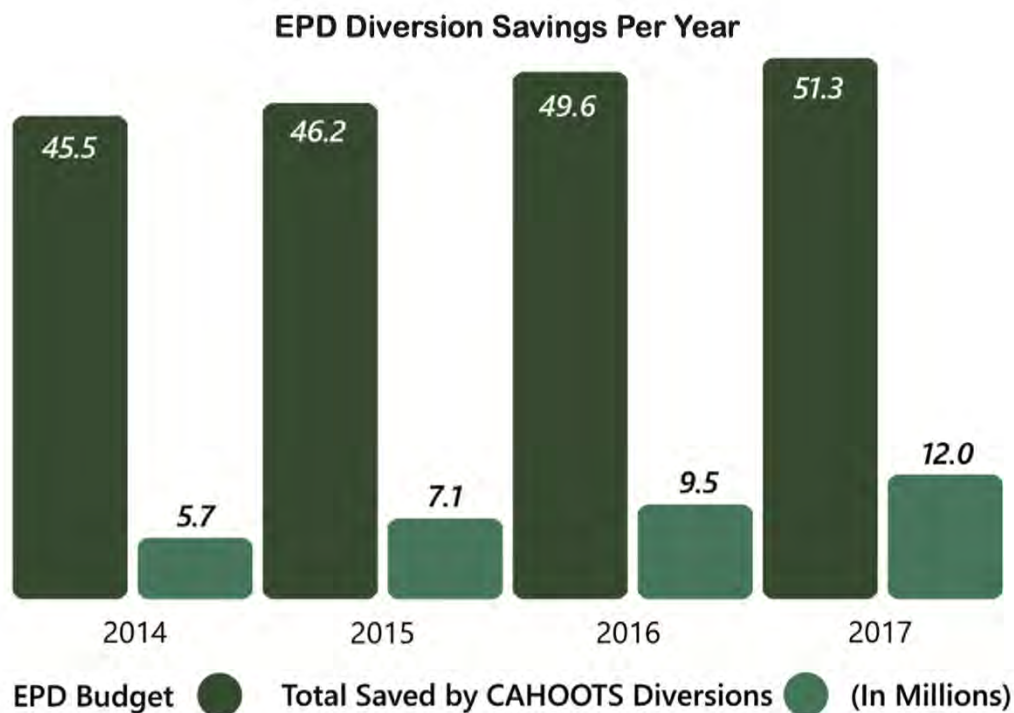
MOBILE CRISIS INTERVENTION

Saves Money for Police & Emergency Management Services

CAHOOTS was not designed to replace policing; CAHOOTS team members are not law enforcement officers and do not carry weapons. Instead, CAHOOTS offers a service that responds to non-violent crises so police don't have to. The most common types of calls diverted to CAHOOTS from the police are welfare checks (32.5% of all CAHOOTS calls), public assistance (66.3%), and transportation to services (34.8%). Some of these crisis responses involve more than one call type.

By diverting crisis calls that can be more appropriately handled by a CAHOOTS team, the CAHOOTS program takes a substantial load off of Eugene Police Department (EPD) and saves taxpayers an average of \$8.5 million every year.

CAHOOTS' efforts focus on a set of problem areas that otherwise would take up a lot of police time and attention. Police training also doesn't provide adequate preparation for dealing with mental health, homelessness and other front-line social interventions. The CAHOOTS model provides a comprehensive solution that allows the police department to focus on law enforcement issues while ensuring that appropriately trained responders are dispatched for each unique situation.



The EPD quotes \$800 per police response. Using the number of calls that would otherwise be handled by police, including suicide risk, homicide risk, self harm, intoxication, rage, welfare, and transport, CAHOOTS has saved the EPD an average of \$8.5 million each year from 2014-2017.*

*www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10635

CAHOOTS EMS SAVINGS

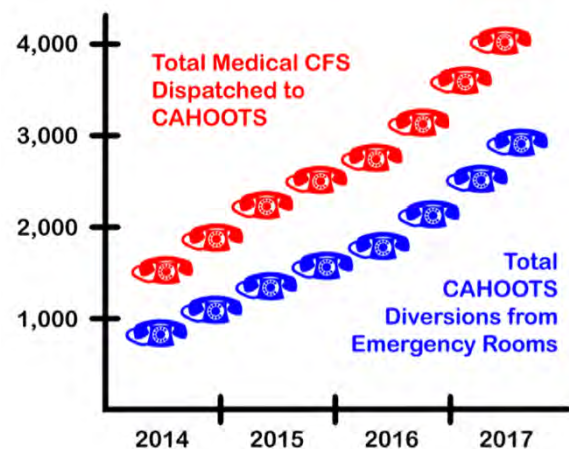
CAHOOTS is also able to attend to non-emergency medical calls that would have otherwise been responded to by Emergency Medical Services (EMS). CAHOOTS can respond to suicide or self-harm calls, calls for basic medical treatment such as wound cleaning, and provide assistance for clients who are presenting as disoriented or delusional with an alert and oriented level of less than 4, or who have other symptoms of psychosis. Treating these symptoms in the field prevents infections, which are common among homeless populations (as many have no way of keeping wounds clean). This in turn also keeps patients out of the emergency room in the long term.

In 2019,
The CAHOOTS
program saved roughly
\$14 Million
in emergency medical
systems costs,
including ambulance
transport and emergency room
services

EMERGENCY ROOM DIVERSION

CAHOOTS teams divert a large number of medical calls for service from Fire/EMS and/or the emergency room, transporting or treating according to need.

- Primary Assessment
- Wound Care
- Medication Management
- Substance Use Disorders
- Suicidal Ideation/Risk Assessment
- Failure to Thrive
- Isolation and Loneliness
- Lift Assists
- Chronic Utilizers/Frequent Flyers



REPLICATING THE CAHOOTS MODEL

Mobile Crisis Program Consultations & Guidance

White Bird Clinic's CAHOOTS mobile crisis response is being recognized as an important and innovative public/private partnership delivering crisis and community health first response effectively and at significant cost savings. Communities across the country are requesting training and strategic guidance in order to replicate the CAHOOTS model.

In November 2018, the Wall Street Journal published *When Mental Health Experts, Not Police, Are the First Responders*, an article that showcased CAHOOTS as an innovative model for reducing the risk of violent civilian/police encounters.

White Bird has been assisting other communities in the Pacific Northwest for years; publication of the WSJ article put CAHOOTS in the national spotlight for the first time.

CAHOOTS focuses exclusively on meeting the medical and mental health needs of the community, making it both more economical and more effective than traditional models involving agencies with a much larger scope of responsibility. The CAHOOTS model ensures that medical and behavioral health care are integrated from the onset of intervention and treatment, adding to the efficacy and economy of the model.

The CAHOOTS model cannot be replicated with a cookie-cutter approach; the program's efficacy is dependent on a community's existing human services network. There are three underlying factors that support our success in Eugene, Oregon:

- 1) A robust human services network.
- 2) Trust of the population we serve, based on our 50-year history in the community.
- 3) A community culture of care and compassion supporting this kind of response to struggling community members.

Currently, CAHOOTS is working closely with the communities of Olympia, WA and Denver, CO on implementing a mobile crisis response program.

In addition, we are poised to assist with the initial development of programs in:

- Western Lane County, OR
- Roseburg, OR
- Coos Bay, OR
- San Francisco, CA
- Albuquerque, NM
- Indianapolis, IN
- Hartford, CN
- New York, NY

CAHOOTS offers a variety of consulting services that can be tailored to address the specific needs of a community. Interested parties can travel to Eugene to observe CAHOOTS in the field, or CAHOOTS teams can travel to other locales to conduct field training with local patrol, fire/EMS, or dispatch personnel.

Other services include development of training materials and operating manuals for community mobile crisis response programs, policy development, training in classroom setting, advising on best practices and service delivery, assistance with hiring and interviewing, other technical advisory/assistance and ongoing program support.



ABOUT WHITE BIRD CLINIC

For more than fifty years, White Bird Clinic has helped individuals to gain control of their social, emotional and physical well-being through direct service, education and community. The clinic is a Federally Qualified Health Center committed to providing accessible, patient-centered human services. White Bird opened in 1969 as a grassroots free clinic organized by student activists and concerned practitioners, offering a crisis hotline and medical care for counter-culture youth in Eugene. Throughout fifty years of service, White Bird has continuously grown in response to community need.



White Bird's program model capitalizes on the wide variety of services offered, allowing it to provide comprehensive integrated care by treating the whole person. The clinic operates ten programs, including: a medical clinic, 24-hour crisis service, counseling, outpatient drug and alcohol treatment, a human services information and referral center, homeless case management, CAHOOTS mobile crisis intervention, dental clinic, OHP and benefits enrollment, and mental health outreach in schools. When low income, unhoused community members have an unmet need, White Bird adds or expands services in response. Recent accomplishments include opening a new crisis center that offers walk-in services and a 24/7 crisis hotline, expanding the main medical clinic's hours and adding a street medicine service, and building a new dental clinic that increases capacity by 70%. An in-home end of life counseling service was launched in addition to a care coordination team that supports patients with complex needs.

For more information about White Bird Clinic:

<https://whitebirdclinic.org/>

For links to articles and other media about the CAHOOTS program:

<https://whitebirdclinic.org/services/cahoots/cahoots-in-the-news/>

If you would like more information about CAHOOTS, please contact:

Loretta McNally

Public Information Officer, White Bird Clinic

Eugene, OR

cahoots.consulting@whitebirdclinic.org

From: [Jill Shultz](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Subject: Comments on the 3/21 BPD Reform Plan
Date: Sunday, March 21, 2021 9:19:12 PM
Attachments: [BPD 2021 Police Reform Plan- Comments J Shultz- 3-21.docx](#)

Dear Committee Members,

Attached are my comments on the police reform plan. They're long but they're well organized and include a tip that will make it easier for you to read this document -- and might save you time on other work projects as well. (That's in the intro.)

Of course I hope you will read the whole thing. If you can't at first, then please read the summary; my comments on the plan; and my recommendations for the ongoing process.

I hope City Council votes yes, so we can strengthen this plan and begin to implement it.

Regards,

Jill Shultz

East Side resident

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March 2021 Binghamton Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative Plan

Jill Shultz's Bottom-Line Summary

I urge City Council to vote “yes.” While the plan isn't as well-developed or transformative as it could and should be, if implemented correctly, it does include important changes that would improve transparency and accountability in the department, and lays the foundation for more much needed public engagement.

- The analysis was compromised by missing data and cannot provide strong conclusions about whether there was racial and/or ethnic bias in the stops and arrests conducted by the Binghamton Police Department (BPD) from 2017-2019.
- Rather than conduct pro forma analyses on incomplete and questionable data, the funding would've been better spent using the Finn Institute's expertise to help the BPD improve its data collection methods and data sets so policy decisions are guided by meaningful analyses. We don't have good answers now and we won't have them at the next audit if we don't implement meaningful changes to the existing data collecting methods.
- In the use of force analyses (pgs. 66-68, Tables 13-15), three points did ring out strongly:
 - The rate of Level 2 force used against Blacks was ~40% higher overall than the rate used against Whites.
 - When Blacks resisted passively, officers were **~3 times more likely** to use Level 2 force.
 - And most of this problem was due to the **excessive use of Tasers** on Black people.
- In response, the Plan rightfully calls for deeper investigation into the use of Tasers and the re-training of all officers who carry one. This needs to be more specific. Those officers who are the worst offenders should receive monthly oversight. The BPD's overall use of Tasers should be evaluated at least quarterly, with consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- The planning process was deeply flawed and throttled public input. Goal #7 promises a mechanism for enhancing citizen participation in shaping goals. This is sorely needed.
- The plan lacks measurable outcomes and needs more focus on the results (changed behaviors), not the process (training, supervision).
- Transparency and accountability are critical. Both need significant improvements and careful oversight. For example, posting BPD policies online is critical, but it's not helpful to just place everything in one daunting list. The website needs better organization to facilitate public engagement.

From: [Nathan Hotchkiss](#)
To: [COB_BPDcollaborative](#)
Cc: [Scaringi, Giovanni](#); [Resciniti, Sophia](#); [Riley, Angela](#); [Friedman, Aviva](#); [Burns, Joseph](#); [Strawn, Philip](#); [Scanlon, Thomas A](#); [COB_MayorDavid](#); [Kraham, Jared](#)
Subject: Comments prepared for City Council Special Business Meeting 3/22/2021
Date: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 12:50:42 AM

Nate Hotchkiss, 64 Chapin St

I was unable to make this comment I prepared for the public hearing on 3/22. Please consider it for the public record.

I have followed this process as closely as I possibly could, engaging with it whenever possible. Despite the late start I was optimistic and enthusiastic to see so many people beginning to participate with the process. After witnessing all has been said and done it's obvious this process was designed to fail. So congratulations Mayor David for successfully sabotaging this chance to create the change his community is asking for.

There is inherent distrust in the Binghamton Police Department just like there is inherent distrust in police across the country. Whether or not you want to argue the distrust is warranted is besides the question. Despite its flaws, Executive Order 203 gave communities across the state the opportunity to address that inherent distrust. Mayor David has wasted this opportunity, and rather than alleviating distrust in the system he has solidified it further.

- The Mayor hand picked representatives for the Steering Committee without community input.
- The Mayor waited until January to begin this work, allowing barely three months for it to engage the community, gather feedback, collect information, analyze data, create a plan and vote on the plan
- The Mayor nominated Finn Institute as an independent party without community input
- The survey generated was inadequate as it did not cover all topics discussed in public police reform meetings
- The Steering Committee had less than a week to review a 100 page report and incorporate that information in their plan.
- The Steering Committee meeting videos have not been posted. The public has

played a guessing game as to what deliberation took place to arrive at this plan.

- We can't accept the results of this process. The process was inadequate, and therefore generated inadequate results.

50% of the completed survey reported that they did not know the police reform meetings were public or there was opportunity for input. How is this inclusive? The viewership of these reform meetings is at best 1% of the city's population. How is this transparent?

The Mayor's combative nature and labeling activists as anti-police hate groups clearly illustrates his position on reforms. He never intended to do this process any justice. Unfortunately for him, the issue of police reform isn't going anywhere. It is time for change and if the Mayor can't see the writing on the wall he is delusional.

The only chance to salvage what we have started, that I can see, is to allow the Steering Committee to continue their work for at least an additional year. I would ask the City Council to support this effort and give the opportunity for the community to nominate additional members to the Steering Committee. With a new committee appointed you can begin the process again. Allow for adequate time to engage with the community. Allow for adequate time to listen. Allow for adequate time to collect and analyze information. I would hope that the Steering Committee could then serve as the first Citizen Review Board for a short tenure before handing it off to the first elected board.

Regarding tonight's proceedings. President Resciniti, it is extremely difficult to be respectful of this committee after witnessing how dysfunctional it is and how it repeatedly fails to meet the needs of the community. It's shameful that you would use language as an excuse to shut down the voice of your constituents.

Sincerely,

Nate

--

Nathan Hotchkiss

Email: hotchkiss.nathan@gmail.com

Tel: 607-222-4745

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- Goal #4 calls on the BPD to reallocate its training to focus on skills that will improve officers' abilities to interact in a fair and just manner with the public. To evaluate success, the BPD needs to categorize its trainings. While some of the titles clearly suggest the content or objectives of the training and are readily understood by the general public ("Terrorist Weapons Tactics and Techniques"), many others do not.
- Reassign responses to nonviolent situations involving: the homeless; those experiencing mental health crises; and overdoses to unarmed professionals who are specialists in that area. Cut the BPD budget proportionately and transfer that money to the groups that will provide the services. This will allow BPD officers to dedicate more time to community policing and other crime prevention efforts.
- Create partnerships between the BPD and local groups to better respond to domestic violence and sexual assaults. These situations are more likely to become dangerous than those described above, so police presence in a backup role is a reasonable precaution.
- Expand community policing in all of the ways described in Goal #5.
- BPD's force of officers is 89% male and 90% White, with no women of color. Attempts to diversify the force will more likely succeed as the department implements more procedurally just practices.

Finally, policies and trainings alone cannot achieve the transformation we want. The culture of the BPD must change. We need to change the attitudes of officers and administrators and the incentives that drive behavior.

To be effective, cultural change has to happen simultaneously and consistently at all levels of policing: recruitment; at the police academy; in the department; and during trainings provided by outsiders that are paid for by the department.

Evidence shows that meaningful rewards are far more effective than punishments at changing behavior. For example, fines don't persuade most drivers to stop speeding (the punishment approach used by police). But giving drivers money for safe driving (the rewards approach used by some insurance companies) has proven far more effective.

Cultural change is challenging work that requires an ongoing and long-term process. The BPD should seek guidance from social psychologists who specialize in social influence and attitude change. Improving communication and relationships with the public will then help to change community attitudes, which is also necessary for success.

Introduction

First, thank you to the Collaborative for continuing its work on this plan and its implementation. This will ameliorate some of the flaws in the process and lay the foundation for ongoing efforts to improve public safety and the quality of life in of our community.

I also want to thank you—especially the volunteers—for taking on the stress of this work, which would've been difficult at any time, let alone given the extra hardships of the pandemic.

My comments are divided into 5 sections: bottom-line summary; introduction; analysis of police data and community input; the plan (which I am considering the bulleted list on pages 160-166 of this document); and recommendations for our ongoing efforts.

In that vein, I want you to know that all of my comments are meant to be productive. Like you, however, I'm working at warp speed to meet the unreasonable deadlines of this process. With something of this importance and sensitivity I'd normally do two rounds of review with breaks in-between to ensure that my ideas were expressed as kindly and clearly as possible, so they inspired rather than deflated. That wasn't possible.

Frankly, I suspected that public comments wouldn't receive their due when the schedule of the process was made public, and wrote to the Collaborative expressing my concerns on Jan. 15, 2021, urging you to ask for an extension from the Governor. By not responding to that message (and similar ones from other community members), you reinforced skepticism about this process and eroded trust in the BPD.

Do I believe it's possible that many of the members of the Collaborative have taken this seriously and worked their hearts out? Absolutely. Do I suspect you were hamstrung? Yes.

There were serious flaws in this process. Public participation was throttled:

- Not enough time was devoted to each stage of the effort.
- The process was unclear; even members of the Collaborative and City Council didn't know what was going to happen after the Feb. 18th "Open Public Comment" meeting.

Information about how to participate in meetings and submit comments should've been clear to the whole Collaborative and partners who entered the process later (City Council members and the City Clerk). It should've been made publicly available.

- A limited number of speaking slots were available at the public meeting (10 people who wanted to speak weren't allowed to, and some people weren't even able to sign in to listen).
- BPD Collaborative didn't respond to messages.
- There was never any discussion, just monologues.

- Critical documents were inaccessible to some community members for various reasons: they were only available online, they were only in English, there might've been accessibility issues with the files, etc.
- The survey only addressed limited topics and didn't include space for respondents to share their concerns or elaborate on any of their responses.
- Documents, such as the compilation of written testimonies and email messages, were posted late and were so poorly organized it was difficult to find information.
- The collaborative website is poorly organized and key information is missing or buried.

That brings us to the current moment.

The Review of the Reform Plan

- The public had no opportunity to question the researchers about their analyses.
- There wasn't enough time to review and comment on this plan, which undoubtedly stifled the response. I'm concerned that it may have disproportionately affected some of the most vulnerable groups in our community, the very people we need to listen to most about this issue.
- In any large community, there will be people who are technophobic or lack access to chosen tools. Their voices deserve to be heard, so provisions need to be made to facilitate other approaches. That didn't happen.
- The confusion about how to participate in the March 22nd public hearing and how to submit comments about the plan might have discouraged some community members from taking part.

Members of the Collaborative, City Council, and the City Clerk were confused about which email addresses should be used to submit written comments, for example. They tried to be helpful but gave contradictory information.

- No guidance was offered about how you wanted to receive comments: on the PDF, using Acrobat's commenting features and annotation tools? Or in Word?
 - No instructions or support was offered; this would've been particularly important if you wanted to use a PDF review process.

- Using a PDF review process can be a great choice, especially because it's so easy to import all of the comments into one file (if you don't know that wonderful trick and want to learn it, email me at jills@stny.rr.com). It also ensures that the main text cannot be altered.

But PDF review only works well if:

- You're working with a tech-savvy group who, if not familiar with this process, is willing to learn, given good instructions—**and support**. (Both are necessary.)
 - The comments are likely to be short and specific. Not only is it more difficult to read a long comment in the Comments Pane, there's no easy way to free-write and share big ideas that relate to the document as a whole (such as my Executive Summary or Recommendations sections).
 - There's enough time for people to learn how to use Acrobat's commenting features. It would've made sense to add another 2 weeks to the schedule for this.
 - Both parties must be confident that the other has the proper skills and tech to read and respond to each other. Since the PDF was uploaded with no instructions, I wasn't sure that anyone would know how to deal with an edited PDF. Most likely, some members of the Collaborative and City Council would struggle. They all need access to these public comments.
- Reviewing documents in Word has its advantages:
 - Far more people know how to use Word than Acrobat Reader DC. Many will be skilled in the appropriate reviewing techniques.
 - Word is more flexible. Even if someone doesn't know how to use track changes or commenting in Word, they can type below relevant text and apply a highlight to their text to make it obvious.

We have smart, knowledgeable, creative people in our community, many willing to share their strengths to help improve policing. This resource was not tapped fully.

For example, here's a bit of my professional expertise that would've facilitated the public review process—a simple trick that's particularly useful for working with long documents and tight deadlines.

It's a document management technique using the Navigation Pane that I hope you will use from now on, because it makes things so much easier for everyone to manage.

It would've made such a difference for the review of the "Binghamton Police Reform and Reinvention Documents and Testimony" file, which at a whopping 631 pages, was hard to wade through. I learned a lot from listening to my neighbors and reading their comments; there were some great ideas I hadn't considered. Given how difficult it was to find the meaningful

information in that file, I'm sure many people were forced to give up before they benefited fully from the insights of other community members. (More on this later.)

Here's how this technique will save you time right now:

Keep the navigation pane open as you read. Click on any heading to instantly jump to that page—no endless scrolling!

It's a fast way to move around a document, plus it gives you the outline, which may aid in comprehension. (You may want to add this to your repertoire to make other projects easier.)

Here's how to use the Navigation Pane:

- In Word, open the Navigation Pane. On a PC, press CTRL+F or click View> Navigation Pane and check the box for Navigation Pane.
- You should now see the navigation pane on the left side of the document. Click on the Headings tab (it should become boldface).
- Now you should see the 5 sections of my document (summary; introduction; analysis of police data and community input; the plan; recommendations).
- Notice the arrows that appear to the left of 4 of the sections? They are toggles that reveal subheadings, like a dropdown menu. Click on any of the arrows to see the subsections. Then click again to collapse the section so just the top-level heading appears.

For example, under the top-level heading "Recommendations for Our Ongoing Process," there are 2 levels of subheadings:

- General;
- How to Improve the Overall Process;
- Gathering and Sharing Community Input: which is further subdivided into:
 - Listening Sessions and Discussions
 - Future Community Surveys
 - How to Organize Public Comments for Review.

- Give it a whirl. Click on the arrow next to "The Plan." Then click on "Goal # 1." To get back to this spot, click on "Introduction."
- **It's simple to set up the navigation pane.** To make a title show in the Navigation Pane, select it in your document and apply either Heading 1 style (for main headings) or Heading 2 style (for subsections). Additional levels can be added; I used 4 for this document. Here's how to apply styles:
 - Click on the Home tab. Notice the wide Styles menu, which includes Heading 1 and Heading 2 styles.

- Highlight the text that you want to turn into a heading. Now click on either the Heading 1 style (for a main heading) or Heading 2 (for a subhead).
- More help:
 - https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-the-navigation-pane-in-word-394787be-bca7-459b-894e-3f8511515e55#ID0EAABAAA=Newer_versions
 - 5-minute video with more tips (showing how this can speed up document creation, too): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vx8Lz3oRRRY>

Another important thing that was shortchanged in this process was the opportunity for the community to take advantage of the strengths of our networks to bring ideas to this process. There wasn't enough time to do this.

Police reform is not a new topic; community members have been working on this and related social justice issues all their lives. That strength was ignored.

We should do better. We *can* do better. Let's move forward together, stronger and wiser.

Sincerely,

Jill Shultz

Analysis of Police Data and Community Input

I reviewed this document with a social scientist who is trained in assessment. If we'd have enough time, we would've reached out to other scientists and professionals we know to evaluate this analysis and address some of the gaps we identified. For example, the Finn Institute identified a problem with the benchmark used to analyze the arrests data, but didn't offer a clear solution.

How well did the Finn Institute do its job overall?

- They had 3 tasks:
 1. Analyze police data (personal safety, stops, arrests, and use of force) to assess current racial and ethnic disparities in Binghamton
 2. Systematically analyze the input of the community
 3. Gather information about the deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices of the BPD and assess them against the base of social scientific evidence.

- Results:
 1. They failed to do the first task adequately. Two of the four analyses of police data do not merit serious consideration: police stops (due to data loss) and arrests (by the Institute's own warning).
 2. This was also inadequate. The survey was so problematic it should be disregarded.
 3. They did an excellent job on the last task. As a bonus, their recommendations were also very helpful, especially when they were more specific.

- Their writing style did not adequately consider the needs of the general public. Many members of our community might struggle to understand this report:
 - Reading level was too high.
 - Writing style was too convoluted.
 - There's far too much jargon and some of it was not defined. (A glossary would've been very helpful.)
 - An executive summary of the key findings and recommendations would probably have been deeply appreciated by all audiences.

- Their visual presentation style is inadequate. Many of the tables are poorly designed and difficult to understand:
 - The column titles are too cryptic.
 - Useful information was sometimes missing: totals, percentages, residential census population percentages, sample sizes, degrees of freedom.
 - Too much information is sometimes crammed into a single table.
 - There are no footnotes to elaborate as needed, e.g., describing categories in detail. This information was typically placed in the narrative, often distant from the table,

making it harder to grasp (see Table 16, pg. 106, as an example—this warranted a page of its own with all of the category details underneath the table).

- Units of measure are sometimes unstated and unclear.
 - Some of the data in the tables might have been easier to understand if it had also presented in visual forms, such as a set of histograms or a pie chart.
 - Tables should've been listed in the Table of Contents to help readers find them.
 - A note about their Table of Contents: This is not their fault, but when our document was put together, the page numbers in the original table of contents of their report were not updated (the original pg. 1 in their standalone report is actually page 50 in our plan). That made it harder to find some of the most important information in our document.
- Was the Finn Institute an unbiased research partner, as promised? They seemed to be stringent about reporting the strength of scientific evidence presented in the literature, an excellent sign. But then they worked with an inadequate data set and used a questionable analytical approach. Their willingness to do that is deeply troubling, as was their pro forma approach to the community survey.

Bias was evident in some sections of their narrative. Their introduction exhibited a strong pro-police bias beginning on its second page. They sometimes characterized statistics inappropriately. Interestingly, their narrative about policing strategies (the Research Base section) didn't exhibit this bias; neither did their recommendations.

Analysis of Public Comments

Overall approach

It's unclear if the committee members listened to all of the meetings and read all of the written messages. If the Collaborative relied on the summary provided by the Finn Institute, they missed a lot of detail and some entire topics, such as the department's failure to enforce public safety protocols (many officers not wearing masks throughout the pandemic); and the necessity to change the department's culture.

The Finn Institute's decision to combine the survey results with the testimony from the listening sessions in one narrative made sense. It would've been helpful if the explanation of the approach (pgs. 68-69) clarified that the full survey results were in the Appendix.

Their approach to coding topics and presenting summary information about community input is legitimate and typical, but they excluded some information. That is unacceptable. And yet that's a minor problem compared to their handling of the community survey, which was flawed in its methodology and analysis.

Listening Sessions

- The following information should've been available on the website and in other venues:
 - Need to pre-register to speak at the meeting (with contact info. and deadline).
 - How to submit written comments.
 - How to join a meeting if you just want to listen.
 - When the video would be posted.
- Someone should've monitored the chat and participants' screens during each session to respond to issues that developed during the meeting, such as people who were having trouble joining the meeting.
- The one-hour limit was too short.
- Members of the Collaborative and City Council should've been the last speakers, to give the public time to be heard.
- If people wanted to speak and couldn't because of the time limit, then another session should've been held.

The Online Community Survey

There were significant problems with the data-gathering effort, some of which were beyond the Collaborative's control (incomplete BPD data) while others were caused by your research partner (bad survey design and methodology) or the process (insufficient time for responses, insufficient outreach, and limited response methods).

For these reasons, I urge the Collaborative to add a social scientist to the steering committee, one with experience in both qualitative and quantitative research.

With so many colleges nearby I'm sure you can find a volunteer who can help ensure that future assessments provide information that can legitimately guide decision-making (information that's collected in an unbiased manner and is scientifically valid).

Since the Collaborative is considering conducting periodic surveys in the future, here's a detailed critique of this effort to help deepen your understanding of the task, in hopes it will help you produce stronger surveys that provide meaningful responses.

The Finn Institute's survey was deeply flawed:

- First, in its sampling method: available online-only for a short period of time, with little outreach, it was inaccessible to some members of our community, likely including those most affected by police, the very people we most need to listen to.

To achieve the largest and most representative community sample possible, the survey should have been available for several weeks, in online and non-electronic forms, such as on paper and via canvassers. It should've been distributed to households in all areas of the

city, and through partnerships with community organizations, faith-based groups, schools, the public library, etc.

The researchers cautioned that the respondents were probably not representative of the community, as anyone with experience conducting surveys would expect from this approach. This seemed more of a pro forma exercise than a scientific endeavor.

- They claimed “the community meetings... guided the development of the survey instrument” (p. 50)—but the survey was released moments after the end of the Feb. 18th public meeting, so the comments of members of the general public did not influence the creation of the survey. In other words, the very limited sample of community members who spoke during the first 5 meetings—almost all White and most invited to attend—guided their questions. That is highly biased.

In contrast, the DAROC letter was signed by ~250 people and summarized ideas gathered during community meetings attended by ~700 people over the course of a year, many of whom were Black. Yet its concerns were not addressed in the survey.

- There was no need to start from scratch or conduct such a limited survey. This ain’t the first rodeo on this topic. I’m sure that comprehensive community survey instruments on the topic of policing—unbiased, scientifically credible instruments—exist and could’ve been the basis for ours.

The New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Resources and Guide for Public Officials and Citizens included a series of guiding questions that could’ve formed the basis of an excellent survey (subheads from pages 9-21):

- How should the police and community engage with one another?
- Should we deploy social service personnel instead of, or in addition to, police officers in some situations? (This section’s follow-up questions were equally important: Do we want police to respond to mental health calls, substance abuse/overdose calls, calls regarding the homeless? Are there other matters for which the community currently turns to its police for assistance that might be better addressed by others with different skills and expertise?)
- Can our city reduce violence more effectively by redeploying resources from policing to other programs?
- What function should 911 call centers play in our city?
- Should law enforcement have a presence in schools?
- Should components of the police department be civilianized?
- How should the police engage in crowd control?
- Should the police be “demilitarized”?
- Should the department have some form of civilian oversight over misconduct investigations or policy reform? (p. 64)

- Is there an easy, accessible and well-publicized process for members of the public to report complaints about police misconduct? (p. 67)
- What police incident and complaint data should be collected? (p. 71)
- What data should be available to the public? (p. 71)
- How can the BPD demonstrate a commitment to transparency in its interactions with the public? (p. 74)
- When should officers be required to turn on their BWCs (body-worn cameras)? (P. 81)
- What should be the penalties for non-compliance? (p. 81)
- Under what conditions should footage be accessible to officers, the public, or investigators? (p. 81)
- Does the agency reflect the diversity of our city? (p. 83)

Other problems existed beyond the limited range of topics included in the survey:

- One researcher who looked at this survey said that if this had been an assignment turned in by an undergraduate, it would've flunked.
- The questions oversimplified complex situations.
- There were no open-ended items for comments about the plan. The only open-ended items solicited facts (reason for most recent contact with BPD; name of person who received complaint; choice of neighborhood in which you live; gender and race identification; and whether you own or rent.
- No space for comments.
- Many items were poorly worded and there were leading questions.
- Leaving the "neutral" response out of a Likert scale distorts results:
 - Forced-choice test items are valuable for some purposes, but if your aim is to find out what people think about a complex issue, then it's important to have a neutral response, because that is how some respondents feel. In this case, using a true Likert scale would've been preferable.
- There was no option to respond to an item by saying "do not wish to respond." A refusal is not equivalent to "don't know" or leaving an item blank (which might've been an error). Actual refusals are an important data point.
- All but 3 of the items were phrased in ways that allowed respondents to simply check all the extreme answers, all 5s (strongly agree) or all 1s (strongly disagree), without looking at the items. Reframing questions would have shown if this was a problem.

Instead of asking, "The rank-and-file members of the BPD are receptive to change/innovation," the question could have been "backward-coded" and rephrased as "The rank-and-file members of the BPD are not receptive to change/innovation." With this approach, if someone was simply rushing through, checking all the 5s or all the 1s, some of their answers would have been inconsistent, potentially alerting the researchers to this issue.

- The 3 backward-coded items all represented negative opinions: BPD is biased; People of color are treated less fairly than white people; BPD services in white neighborhoods are better than those in Black neighborhoods. The pattern is easily discernable. A better use of backward-coding applies the technique to negative and positive opinions.
- There should be roughly as many backward-coded items as forward-coded ones, and they should be randomly distributed, so no clear pattern can be discerned.
- Inserting more reliability-detection items would've been useful. For example, any topic could be repeated, with an item that's phrased differently and backward coded, to see whether the respondent was consistent in their responses to that particular topic. These items would be placed in different parts of the instrument, so that the respondent would be unlikely to notice them.
- Some items were vague or badly phrased, perhaps unanswerable. For example, the item "Many of the needed police reforms will require the City to direct more resources toward the BPD," did not say which reforms were under consideration. And if a thoughtful person tried to respond, they might be puzzled and wish to provide some context for their answer, which wasn't possible.
- Some items should have been contingent on the responses to previous items. For example, the item "Do you feel Binghamton leaders made a meaningful effort to ensure that diverse points of view are represented on the Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Steering Committee?" cannot be answered meaningfully by people who don't know about the group's existence or don't know who is in the group. In a well-designed survey, these respondents would not have been asked to respond to this item.
- There were no follow-up questions to try to understand why people hold certain beliefs.
- Throwing out the outliers during analysis is a standard statistical technique. In this case, because of the sampling difficulties, it's possible the outliers—on either side—are more representative of the community. There's no way to know, based on the way this survey was conducted.
 - According to the report, "of the 1,206 respondents, there were 179 who were extremely negative and 79 who were extremely positive." In other words, nearly 15% of the respondents were in the extremely negative category, while approximately 6½% were extremely positive.
 - The researchers used a set of 20 questions to categorize respondents as extremely negative or extremely positive for all of the items. It would be helpful

to know which 20 questions were used to make this categorization, and why they were chosen, to consider the legitimacy of that decision.

- Several groups of questions oversimplified complex issues and because of this, a more knowledgeable or thoughtful respondent might find it difficult to respond, recognizing that there are actually several parts to that question. For example, to answer the group of items that began with “Community outreach programs in which police engage directly with community members to build relationships, seek input, and solve problems would help to...” a respondent needs to consider several questions:
 - Can community outreach programs [accomplish X]?
 - Is that universally true?
 - Or would certain conditions have to be met for that to be true?
 - If certain conditions are necessary (such as the program must be well designed and has to be implemented correctly), then would BPD be likely to meet those conditions?

Two respondents might strongly agree that these programs could succeed—if the conditions were right. But they might strongly disagree about the probability of the BPD satisfying those necessary conditions based on their different experiences with the department. This could lead to a range of answers. Without open-ended information gathering, it would be impossible to know the respondent’s intent.

- The survey results don’t seem to have much internal consistency, which researchers would typically discuss. Looking at the “extremely negative” group (n=179), for example:
 - 172 (99.4%) strongly agree that BPD are good at “dealing with problems in your neighborhood.”
 - 179 (100%) disagree strongly that BPD “can be trusted to make the right decisions for residents in my neighborhood.”
 - 179 (100%) disagree strongly that “when dealing with people in your neighborhood, the BPD are helpful.”
 - 161 (89.9%) agree strongly that “BPD are biased.”
 - 173 (100%) strongly agrees that “BPD are good at treating people fairly.”
 - 177 (98.9%) disagree strongly that “BPD are polite.”

So the BPD treat people fairly but are biased and impolite? They’re not helpful at all but they’re good at dealing with problems? They’re good at dealing with problems but can’t be trusted to

make the right decisions for residents? With data like this, how can you reasonably draw any conclusions?

Bottom line: Given the poor construction and distribution of the survey, the validity of its analysis should be treated with the utmost caution, bordering on suspicion.

The Analysis and Discussion of Police Data

It's unclear if the collaborative as a whole had the opportunity to study and discuss any of the well-researched and evidence-based approaches to police reform, such as the *President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Implementation Guide* (<https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p341-pub.pdf>) or the resource guide developed by our governor.

Likewise, it's also unclear how deeply the collaborative studied and discussed successful programs run by other police forces.

Comments on the Finn Institute's Analysis of Police Data:

Analysis of personal safety

- The public safety data seems robust. The simple analysis seems trustworthy.

Analysis of police stops

Two red flags immediately jumped out when I read the report:

- BPD data management is suspect:
 - Nearly 81% of the BPD stops data from 2018-2019 was unusable. 81%! That's stunning.
 - Whether this was accidental or a deliberate effort to stymie review, it interfered with the analysis and may have hidden records that would've revealed a different picture.
 - This issue demonstrates the need for audits and better oversight of the BPD to improve transparency and accountability.
 - It may also signal that the BPD might benefit from reviewing its data collection methods with a good research team—ideally, to find a manageable way to collect better data that would facilitate better analysis.
- The BPD data loss raises concerns about the quality of the Finn Institute's analyses, because:
 - After discovering a problem of this magnitude, many careful researchers would alter their approach:
 - They might refuse to do the work, or
 - They might focus on different years, when full data was available.
 - To continue an analysis with <20% of the data, one must assume that the missing data was lost in a random and proportional fashion, and that's not a

reasonable assumption—it’s especially problematic since their job was to assess whether evidence of bias was present in this data.

- A huge loss of data could introduce other factors that would need to be controlled. The researchers noted the loss of data but didn’t discuss its ramifications.
- To add to the data problem, the authors pointed out the analytical difficulties in detecting racial bias in policing. “The simplest and easiest approach to this problem is to compare those who are stopped to the residential population of the surrounding jurisdiction, but this approach suffers from many shortcomings” (pg. 55). Residential census populations **are the least reliable** of the benchmarks available, they report.

Yet they go on to use this method, cautioning us to “exercise care in drawing inferences about police bias from the analyses that we are able to perform with BPD’s data, because the benchmark that we can apply with the available data is not optimal” (pg. 55).

As a result, the analysis of the stops data is compromised and didn’t answer our question.

- On page 97, the researchers recommend periodic analysis of the stop data using an “acceptable benchmark (not the demographics of the residential population).” They cited 4 publications. Why didn’t they discuss the more promising analytical approaches and recommend better benchmarks?

In addition to the studies they cited, a quick search revealed 4 others that offer promising methods:

- Ridgeway, G. (2006). Assessing the effect of race bias in post-traffic stop outcomes using propensity scores. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 22(1),1-29. DOI: 10.1007/s10940-005-9000-9
- Horrace, W. C., & Rohlin, S. M. (2016). How dark is dark? Bright lights, big city, racial profiling. *Review of Economics & Statistics*, 98(2), 226–232. https://doi.org/10.1162/REST_a_00543
- Antonovics, K., & Knight, B. G. (2009). A new look at racial profiling: Evidence from the Boston Police Department. *Review of Economics & Statistics*, 91(1), 163–177. <https://doi.org/10.1162/rest.91.1.163>

There are several other studies using Ridgeway’s method with success and some variations that seem to increase its accuracy. In addition, there is a promising mixed-methods approach used in:

Williams, B. N., & Stahl, M. (2008). An analysis of police traffic stops and searches in Kentucky: a mixed methods approach offering heuristic and practical implications. *Policy Science*, 41, 221-243. DOI 10.1007/s11077-008-9065-z

- Given the issues with the stops data set, the researchers should've discussed the quality of the data used to analyze public safety, arrests, and use of force to show that these analyses are trustworthy.

Analysis of arrests

- The Finn Institute offered only a “quite tentative” conclusion about racial or ethnic bias in arrests because they lacked data for comparative incidents that didn't result in arrest.
- Rather than perform two analyses with questionable data (the stops data and arrests data), I strongly believe our money would've been better spent having the Finn Institute work with the BPD to improve its data collection so we could conduct a better analysis in the future and secure meaningful results from that point on.
- As it stands, it seems that we don't have a reliable answer to our questions about stops or arrests and we aren't positioned to do a better job in the future.

Analysis of use of force

There were some problematic gaps in the presentation of the use of force analyses:

- In Table 6 (pg. 60), 64% of offenses that triggered the use of force were categorized as “other.” What does that mean? How can we know if the use of force was reasonable and proportional to the offense if don't know what the majority of offenses were? A simple explanatory footnote would've solved this issue.
- Table 7 (pg. 61) doesn't provide a way to correlate the level of offense that led to the use of force with race/ethnicity. So we have no way to know if force was used against Blacks and Hispanics for nonviolent offenses. Impairments are not matched to groups by race, ethnicity, age, or sex. This is basic data reported without any analysis or interpretation.
- On page 64, they report: “Level 2 force was somewhat more likely to be used against Blacks than Whites, overall and at each of most levels of resistance.”

When you look at the numbers in Table 14 (pg 66), you see:

- Overall: Rate of Level 2 force used against Black people was ~40% higher than the rate used against Whites.
- And when Blacks offered passive resistance: cops were nearly **3 times more likely** to use Level 2 force.
- Neither counts as “somewhat more likely.” That's a misrepresentation of the data, and in the case of passive resistance, a gross misrepresentation.

- Table 15 (pg. 67), the regression analyses that are supposed to show whether there's bias (as opposed to disparities) are incomplete, missing the sample sizes and degrees of freedom, which relate to the statistical significance.

The Narrative (Writing Style and Content)

Bias was evident in the narrative:

- The discussion, which is far more likely to be meaningful to the general public, sometimes distorted the statistics (for example, referring to something that was almost 3x more likely to happen as “somewhat more likely”).
- The introduction included several examples of pro-police bias:
 - On page 51, they referred to “riots triggered by incidents of police use of force.” George Floyd was mentioned, and of course the real subject here is the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020:
 - These protests were legal and permitted, an exercise of constitutional rights, not riots;
 - The vast majority were nonviolent;
 - In most places, problems that developed were caused by far-right groups who sought to discredit the protestors;
 - Soft-pedaling the killing of Black people as “use-of-force incidents” is disgusting. A neutral and appropriate term would be “deaths.”
 - Also on page 51: “We would not suggest that no room for improvements remains in how police services are organized, managed, and delivered, but it is worth considering how much the recurring unrest triggered by use-of-force incidents may be in part symptomatic of larger problems.”

That sentence is astonishingly biased. First, its wording suggests that police departments overall are doing a great job. Yet a 2019 study published by the *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS) found that “Police in the United States kill far more people than do police in other advanced industrial democracies” and that “police violence is a leading cause of death for young men in the United States. Over the life course, about 1 in every 1,000 black men can expect to be killed by police... Black women and men and American Indian and Alaska Native women and men are significantly more likely than white women and men to be killed by police...”¹

¹ Edwards, F., Hedwig, L. and M. Esposito. 2019. Risk of being killed by police use of force in the United States by age, race-ethnicity, and sex. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1821204116>

The Kerner Report was far more honest, using the words “police abuse.” That distinction matters; the authors of the Kerner Report acknowledge misconduct, while those of the Finn Report seem to be attempting to brush aside killings and to discredit protests and calls for reform.

I agree that context is needed to understand policing. In this introduction, their attempt to provide context was woefully inadequate and one-sided. They failed to acknowledge the number of innocent Black Americans who have been killed by police, the long history of police misconduct that has gone unpunished, and the role of police unions in resisting reform. We now live in a world where police officers have participated in insurrection and openly display White nationalist symbols.

Protests persist because police across the country continue to kill Black people—when they are sleeping, jogging, driving, standing on a street—and to harass and terrorize people, including young children.

And yes, of course the unrest is related to larger issues of racism and inequities in this country. **That does not in any way excuse police brutality.**

This diversionary tactic also seems to suggest that we don’t know what we are protesting about. We do. And many of us are working on anti-racist campaigns *as well as* police reform. In fact, many advocates have been working on both issues *for decades*.

- Also on page 51: “... racial inequities with respect to income, wealth, housing, education, employment, and health all remain, and on some of those dimensions, the degree of inequality has hardly changed.”

Actually, on all of those dimensions, the degree of inequality has increased. The situation is worse.

- “Since 1968, policing has changed in a number of respects, yet it remains the object of repeated calls for reform.” (pg. 51).
 - Well, DUH. Perhaps that’s because some of the changes were bad (financial incentives for confiscating property associated with drug busts, including property not owned by dealers, that sometimes resulted in severe hardships for innocent people; militarization of equipment and training approaches), and others have been inadequate and there’s still much cause for concern? Because police are armed and can—AND DO—kill us?

Information about the deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices of the BPD

- Their general discussion about policing topics (the “Research Base” section) was one of the most helpful things they offered to us. I suspect this is boilerplate text they provide in every

report, which could've been shared with the community at the very beginning of the process. That might have really improved our discussions and the community survey. For example, I bet that when people asked for a community oversight board, they may have had different things in mind.

- They wove all of the information that was specific to Binghamton into the “Research Base” section. That makes sense. The report would've been even more useful if they'd duplicated this information in a separate section, to facilitate later reference.
- The information they gathered about crime in our city is useful (“Control of Violence and Other Crime” section, pgs 112-114). I suspect it would be of great interest to many people, but it's hard to find. It would've made more sense if it had preceded the “personal safety” section of the introduction of the report (pg. 52), or been part of a separate section about Binghamton, as suggested above.
- On pages 112-113, under “control of violence and other crime,” the information contained in the first two paragraphs would've been much easier to comprehend as a table. Perhaps several tables.
- Finally, to put this into perspective, I'd like to share highlights from a two-hour long conversation I had with a former police officer (who eventually rose to management) about police reform. His major points:
 - Accountability and transparency have to be huge.
 - In terms of transparency, very few things have to be secret after the fact.
 - More cameras is great: this is not an “us vs. them” issue, because body cams can provide evidence that protects police officers, too.
 - Civilian review boards matter. Review is more important than investigation.
 - Officers get too much protection when there are allegations of misconduct.
 - Need to expedite the disciplinary process. It often takes longer than a criminal trial.
 - Assign officers to the same geographic area all the time. Let them walk a beat, talk to the public, and show respect.
 - Ask your officers, how can we make it possible for you to concentrate on the things that matter most?

The Plan (Bulleted List on Pages 160-166)

While the plan does not go as far as I wanted, I hope the City Council will vote “yes.” It includes important changes that would improve transparency and accountability, if implemented correctly. It lays the foundation for more public engagement.

Overall:

- This plan lacks an overall vision/goal statement for the reform, such as “to implement policies and practices that promote public safety through fair and just policing (“procedural justice”) and improve the relationships between the community and police department.”
- It does not clearly define what we want our police to do—or just as importantly, to *not* do.
- This plan needs to be fleshed out with more measurable objectives to ensure accountability, which is sorely lacking. How will these efforts be evaluated? Without measurable goals, there’s no way to legitimately decide if something is working.

Measurable goals can also be good for the department, providing evidence of success. This could reassure the public that the department is improving and build trust.

- Accountability should focus on behavioral outcomes. The BPD focuses on inputs, such as the number of hours spent in training sessions. The process is not the end goal (and trainings alone will not solve problems that are reinforced by cultural norms, policies, and management practices).
 - To create change, there must be consequences for good and bad behaviors, rewards and punishments for officers.
 - The evaluation of the department’s efforts (separate from the audit of data) should be conducted by an unbiased party, not by the police department or city administration.
- The 7 goals forming the BPD report do not address some of the most serious concerns expressed by the community, such as:
 - Create a community oversight board;
 - The Finn Institute recommended a mediation program instead, suggesting it may provide better outcomes than adjudicative complaint review processes.

- Demilitarize the department:
 - Get rid of all military equipment and prohibit the acquisition of military equipment. Prohibit “warrior-type” trainings.
- Change the culture and practices of the BPD, especially regarding cases of domestic violence and rape, to help prevent crimes and treat the victims more respectfully. (See: testimony of RISE, the SOS Shelter):
 - Implement a partnership between officers and advocates for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to respond together to domestic incidents to provide better care and protection of the victim(s).
- Remove the police from responses to nonviolent situations involving: the homeless; those experiencing mental health crises; and overdoses. Reassign these duties to unarmed professionals who are specialists in that area. (More on this under the discussion for Goal #3).

Goal #1 — Improve Transparency & Accountability

Note: My comments are shown as tracked changes and also highlighted below the referenced item. Please check that your computer is set to show “all markup” (Review tab, tracking section).

● **Conspicuously Publish The Department’s Annual Report** — While a public record, the Department’s annual report has historically been used as an internal document for City policymakers, for preparing grant applications and as part of re-accreditation efforts. The Department’s annual report should be conspicuously published on the City’s website ~~within 90 days~~immediately upon its completion and released to local media outlets each year ~~upon its completion~~.

- This report should be written in plain English with a minimal use of jargon; any jargon that is required should be defined upon first use.
- A glossary of this terminology would be very helpful within this report and published as a standalone item on the department’s website.
- Include an introduction that explains the purpose of the report; how to use it; and includes a contact person who can answer questions.
- Printed copies of the report should be delivered to community locations, such as libraries and community centers, that serve those who are less likely to have Internet access.

● **Conspicuously Publish The Department’s Non-Tactical Policies, Including Use Of Force Policy** — Publish on the City’s website all Police Department policies that, if published, do not threaten the safety of officers or detail specific police tactics, including the Department’s use of force policy, within the next 90 days.

- Jargon and legal terms required for these policies should be defined on first use.
- All new policies should be posted upon adoption.
- Printed copies of these policies should be available at the same community locations that will receive the annual report.
- Each policy should include a contact person who can answer questions.

● **Conduct A Regular Audit Of Arrest, Use of Force and Stop Data** and implement changes to provide more accurate data — The review can seek to address data-collection inefficiencies and identify any racial bias or disproportionate policing of communities of color. Key items to audit are arrests, use of force and traffic and pedestrian stops. This audit ~~may be~~should be conducted by independent research partners ~~—such as the Finn Institute.~~

- Address data collection irregularities. This is critical. It’s possible this is causing mistrust that isn’t warranted (best-case scenario).
- Define “regular”: quarterly, annually?

- Publish year-to-year comparisons, too.
- This audit, including its summary data, should be published on the department's website within a week of its delivery to the department.
- Raw data should be made available upon request. One way to keep this manageable would be to upload the data into a repository that is available to the public, rather than responding to requests individually.
- While I strongly agree that this audit must be conducted by an independent party, I urge you to not work with the Finn Institute again, for the reasons mentioned previously. There are many organizations that include social scientists, data analysts, and law enforcement professionals that can conduct an audit that will better serve our purposes. Some possibilities:
 - Policing Project (NYC): <https://www.policingproject.org/>
 - NYU Law School Criminal Justice Lab: <https://www.criminaljusticelab.org/>
 - Center for Policing Equity: <https://policingequity.org/>
 - Vera Institute of Justice: < <https://www.vera.org/> >

● **Publish Summary Statistical Data Regarding Citizen Complaints** — To be included in the Department's annual report.

- Be specific. Finn recommended: complaints, allegations, dispositions; stops and post-stop outcomes by race/ethnicity; arrests by race/ethnicity; use of force by race/ethnicity.
- This should also be audited by an independent party.
- Publish this more frequently, perhaps quarterly? That way, issues won't fester as badly.
- Again, publish year-to-year comparisons, too.

● **Publish Summary Statistical Data Regarding Officer Discipline** — To be included in the Department's annual report.

- This should also be audited by an independent party.
- Critical incidents should be reviewed by a community group.
- Again, publish year-to-year comparisons, too.

● **Publish Monthly Call For Service Data** — Conspicuously publish the Department's call for service data on a monthly basis. Starting April, 2021.

● **Improve Use Of Force Collection Data** — Build on the current subject resistance form to systematically capture more detailed information on forms of force, and analyze those data for the purposes of policy development, training, and monitoring racial/ethnic/ability disparities.

- Review the data collection methods to make them as easy to use as possible, as well as to reduce input error and confusion. This may require changes to the user interface.

- **Create An Online Citizen Police Academy Curriculum** — The Department’s Citizen Police Academy is a long-running community policing program to educate the public on basic police operations and divisions in the department, taught directly by Binghamton Police officers. The 10-class curriculum should be made available online and marketed, and be utilized both for Department transparency and as a recruitment tool.

- Online teaching is dramatically different from classroom teaching. To effectively translate this program online, consult with a skilled online instructor or educational designer at the beginning of the project.

- Consider adding weekly Q&A sessions with one of the instructors who teaches the in-person program.

- **Study How Arrest Information Is Published** — Currently, the Department publishes arrests on its Facebook page every Monday. There may be a more robust or appropriate manner to get this information public on a regular basis.

- **Improve The Efficiency Of The Citizen Complaint Process** — Increase the ease by which citizens can file a complaint involving the Police Department, including by providing more information on the City website about the complaint process.

- Excellent start. But what do you mean by “ease,” specifically? Need details.

- Can’t be online only. Need print and phone access.

- Establish an outside partner agency that can also help people file complaints. Perhaps the American Civic Association? They could provide translations, too.

- Develop a clear, easy to navigate user interface for the online version.

- **Use Social Media To Engage With The Public, Increase Transparency** — Enhance the Department’s use of social media as tool by which to inform the public of the Department’s accomplishments and activities, promote community events, engage with the community in a positive way, enhance Department recruitment efforts and grow a positive relationship between the police and the residents they serve.

- These tactics would dramatically increase transparency, which is critical. But there’s no accountability. What happens if:

- The department doesn’t publish information or does so at the last minute?

- The audit exposes issues?

- The complaint process is not improved?

- Data collection is problematic, as is currently true?

Goal #2 — Diversify Binghamton Police Ranks

● **Appoint Full-Time Recruitment Officer** — Create a police officer position, reporting directly to the Chief of Police, to manage the City’s recruitment efforts year-round with the goal of more minority and women candidates taking civil service examinations to be eligible for hire at the Binghamton Police Department. Position to be funded in the next 90 days for 2021 budget, and also funded in 2022 Budget.

- This position should be held by a civilian employee, not a police officer because it doesn’t include patrol duties. We can save money and likely find someone who is more experienced by widening the pool of applicants.
- Do we need a full-time recruitment officer just for the police? Or should this person also be recruiting for our other frontline agencies, such as the fire department and emergency responders? They, too, would benefit from a more diverse workforce.
- Can you partner with Workforce Development?
- Rather than a recruitment officer, I think we’d be better served by a DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) Director. In addition to recruitment, this director would be involved in policy and management issues that would help nurture and retain a diverse workforce.
- Recruitment approaches need to be matched to the targeted group.

● **Expand Digital Recruitment Outreach** — Through existing social media channels, the City’s JoinBPD.com website and new digital advertising opportunities, the City should expand its recruitment outreach online to reach younger demographics.

- Sure. But if you want to reach a more diverse applicant pool, you have to do a lot more than that:
 - Develop partnerships with organizations that serve each group, to build trust;
 - Work with HR (human resources) professionals who are skilled in DEI to ensure that you advertise in the right places, create job ads that appeal to a broad audience, etc. (I’m sure Dr. Bryant can elaborate on this).

● **Improve Partnerships With Criminal Justice Education Programs** — New York State’s community colleges and universities offer a critical pipeline of young people looking for careers in law enforcement. The Department should seek to partner with these higher education institutions on job recruitment. Partnerships with SUNY Broome’s Criminal Justice & Emergency Services Department may serve as a pilot program for other outreach efforts.

• **Study Changes To City Personnel Policies To Encourage ~~More~~ a Greater Number of Diverse Applicants and a larger pool overall**

• **Implement A Residency Incentive To Increase The Number Of Police Officers Who Are City Residents** — Office of Personnel, Office of Corporation Counsel, and Police Administration will explore the concept of a residency incentive for police officers and identify impediments to implementation.

Additionally:

- The number of applicants has been steadily decreasing, according to the report. Why? If those concerns are not addressed, it's unlikely that a recruitment officer will succeed. There's nothing in this plan that addresses officer wellness and safety (one of the six pillars of the *President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*). Are there issues that need to be addressed, both for the sake of our current force and to entice new recruits?

Interestingly, some of the recommendations related to officer wellness and safety are also crucial to improving community policing, such as assigning officers to geographic areas consistently, and basing shift lengths on scientific evidence.

Goal #3 — Invest In Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Crime Victim Services

- Remove the police from responses to nonviolent situations involving: the homeless; those experiencing mental health crises; and overdoses.

This will give the police the time they need to concentrate on the things that matter most to ensure public safety. The BPD says that its community policing and crime prevention efforts are currently hampered because they don't have enough time.

They want the opportunity to improve the quality of their work. These social work related duties were not originally part of the job and shouldn't be; it's just too much to ask of them. If officers are allowed to focus on their core responsibilities, their work satisfaction will likely increase, which should also improve retention and recruitment.

- Reassign these duties to unarmed professionals who are specialists in each area; this may include a mix of other city agencies and nonprofit organizations.
- Cut the BPD budget proportionately and transfer that money to the groups that will provide the services.
- Adequately fund the successful programs that are already in place:
 - the 9-1-1 Distressed Caller Crisis Diversion Program.
 - the MHA Mobile Crisis Services Team.
 - and the "Our House" crisis respite house.

• **Expand Partnership With MHA Mobile Crisis Services** — The Department should expand its partnership with the Mental Health Association of the Southern Tier (MHA), on training and response programs to improve interactions between police and individuals experiencing mental health crises.

- Transfer the responsibilities to MHA, as suggested above.

• **Establish Working Group To Recommend Programs In Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Crime Victim Services** — In the next 90 days, the Department and stakeholders will collaborate with leaders in local human services fields to solicit recommendations for funding programs in mental health, substance abuse and crime victims services that will have a positive affect on public safety in the City of Binghamton.

Expanding existing partnerships, including the MHA Mobile Crisis Response and Fairview Recovery Services Intensive Care Manager, and new programs should be considered for funding in the 2022 Budget and beyond.

- Again: take the police out of these situations, as described above.

● **Explore Transportation Alternatives For Individuals In Crisis** — Explore alternatives to transporting citizens in a patrol car to the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) when an individual is experiencing a mental health crisis.

- Why don't you just ask MHASt how to properly outfit a vehicle for this duty and assign the task of transportation to them?
- Contact the Independence Center for guidance about accessibility issues.

Additionally:

- Form partnerships with advocates for victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault to jointly respond to these calls (these are likely to be higher-risk situations that require the presence of police in a backup position).
- Divert calls about issues related to homeless people to appropriate service providers and allow them to respond without police, as appropriate.

Goal #4 — Enhance Training / Policies In Use of Force, Cultural Competency, 21st Century Policing Issues

● **Conduct Comprehensive Re-Training On TASER Deployment** — Based on Finn Institute’s findings on use of force disparities “..officers were somewhat more likely to draw a Taser when the citizen was Black, even when the level of resistance is held constant,” the Department should conduct a further examination of TASER use in interactions with citizens of different race/ethnicity, and retrain officers who carry the device.

- While the highlighted quotation is exact, it’s misleading. The actual statistic is 2.55 times more likely (see Tables 13, 15, and page 68). That’s more than twice. And when the citizen passively resisted, the disparity was even higher.

Here’s what measurable outcomes to correct this problem might look like:

- Investigate each officer’s use of Tasers. For the worst offenders, have their supervisor review their use of force data (weekly, monthly, whatever makes sense).
- Re-train everyone (elaborate) with the goal of dropping the overall rate of use of Tasers against Blacks in half.
- Evaluate the department’s overall use of Tasers (monthly/quarterly).

● **Expand Cultural Competency Training For Immigrant / Refugee Populations** — Work with institutions like the American Civic Association to develop training programming to ensure all individuals, regardless of their immigration status, religion or country of origin, feel secure [that when](#) contacting or being addressed by Binghamton Police officers.

● **Improve Policies And Training Regarding Police Interaction With Transgender People** — Work with LGBTQIA+ community members and organizations to create a Binghamton Police Department policy for interacting with transgender people, modeled after a Syracuse Police Department policy adopted in 2019, which includes requiring officers to use the pronouns a person uses for themselves.

● **Explore Cornell University’s Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) Training** — To respond effectively to children and young people in crisis situations is critical in establishing not only a safe environment, but also one that promotes growth and development.

The highlighted sentence does not make sense, mostly because of the last phrase. Did you mean to say that police should create a safe environment for children in crisis? Agreed.

● **Require Additional Annual Training For All Officers** — On implicit bias, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, structural racism, de-escalation, domestic violence, [rape and other sexual assaults](#), and other cultural competency disciplines, [as well as community policing](#).

- The BPD devotes too much time to weapons training and not enough to training about cultural competencies, though officers are guaranteed to interact with people and may never fire a weapon. Cut the amount of time spent on weapons training in half and double the amount of time devoted to cultural competency training.
- You must do more than offer training and cross your fingers. Create rewards for good behavior and punishments for bad behavior.
- For de-escalation training:
 - the Finn Institute recommended the ICAT (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics) curriculum produced by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), which delivered impressive behavioral changes in the use of force for the Louisville Metro Police (see pg. 101). <https://www.policeforum.org/icat-training-guide>
 - Center for Policing Equity’s Guiding Principles for Crowd Management: <https://policingequity.org/images/pdfs-doc/crowdmgt.pdf>
- The Finn Institute also recommended training in the SARA model of problem-oriented policing and other community policing tasks.

● **Explore Enhanced Use of Force Training During Annual In Service Training** — Explore hiring use of force experts in cutting-edge legal and operational training in use of force deployment.

What does that mean? I can’t tell if this suggestion is good or horrifying. If you want to communicate better with the public, then stop hiding behind jargon. This point needs to be rewritten so it’s understandable.

● **Explore Restorative Justice Training And Programs** — The Department will work with stakeholders to develop specifics on programs in the next 90 days.

● **Explore Professional Development Or “Train The Trainer” Programs For Current Police Officers**

- **To transform the BPD, we need to change the attitudes of officers and administrators. Dictates from above, whether enforceable or not, will not change the culture by themselves. We need an ongoing and long-term process guided by social psychologists who specialize in attitude change.**

On Feb. 16th, I sent a 3-pg. message about cultural change in the department. Cultural change wasn't mentioned in the summary of community input, so perhaps the message went astray. Here's an excerpt:

Culture change is a critical component in reforming the department. Others have addressed *what* needs to change. I want to discuss the challenges of *how* to make such changes actually happen.

So many of the concerns about policing in Binghamton and throughout the nation are reflected in police identity: do officers see themselves as warriors or guardians, as part of, or separate from, the community they serve? These polar opposites define how an officer interacts with the public and makes enforcement decisions. Guardians focus on the principles of procedural justice, using that as a guide for public interactions. Warriors focus on law enforcement outcomes. That focus can be so distorting that it can cause officers to forget their humanity, with horrifying results.

To be effective, cultural change has to happen simultaneously and consistently at all levels of policing: recruitment; at the police academy; in the department; and during trainings provided by outsiders that are paid for by the department.

If the old guard is not swayed, they will either override progressive tendencies of new recruits or force them out of the department. If recruitment efforts don't seek to diversify the department so it better reflects our community, it's more likely that an "us vs. them" attitude will prevail. If officers receive warrior-style training, or if academy instruction is outdated, officers are unlikely to adopt a progressive approach to their work that emphasizes partnership with the public. If rules are mocked, or officers are rewarded for inappropriate behavior and punished for doing the right thing, they will quickly learn to adapt to the real culture of the department, or they will leave.

After the BPD has identified the changes it wishes to enact:

1. Work with social psychologists who specialize in social influence to plan and execute the reform process. They know how to persuade people to change behavior. For example, many hotels have tried to convince guests to reuse their towels, with mediocre success. Then social psychologists stepped in and reworded the message to focus on social norms, boosting compliance by 26% (to learn more, see <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/yes/200808/changing-minds-and-changing-towels>).
2. Learn from past reform efforts. What worked, what didn't?
3. Make reform a long-term and ongoing process.
 - a. One-shot training experiences are good for honing skills, not for changing attitudes.
 - b. Training needs to be ongoing.

- c. Create safe learning environments in which staff can speak freely without fear of negative consequences.
 - d. Employ credible and trusted instructors.
- 4. Create meaningful rewards for behaviors that promote your reforms and punishments for those that interfere with them. Emphasize rewards, which are far more effective. For example, fines don't persuade most drivers to stop speeding (the punishment approach used by police). But giving drivers money for safe driving (the rewards approach used by some insurance companies) has proven far more effective. Note that both approaches use the same incentive, money, but offering it as a reward works better, and promotes loyalty and happiness.
- 5. Choose those who will be most effective at modeling and promoting the new norms:
 - a. Identify the most credible and persuasive people at each level of the department, those who are respected and trusted by their peers. People are often best swayed by those whose circumstances closely match their own, so officers are more likely to be influenced by other officers, while the chief is more likely to be persuaded by other top administrators.
 - b. These promoters should also include community members who are respected by the police.
 - c. Members of outside police agencies can also prove helpful, as well as celebrities who are admired by the force.
- 6. Craft your messages promoting change carefully:
 - a. Focus on the needs of each audience, to explain how they will benefit from each change.
 - b. Include both a logical, information-based argument and a personal argument:
 - i. The logical argument should describe why this change is necessary and how the force and individual officers will benefit from this change, as well as the community.
 - ii. The personal argument should describe how this change will improve the way they feel about themselves and their jobs (happier, more respected, less stressed).
- 7. Create an assessment plan. How will you know if your culture has changed? The assessments must target measurable outcomes, not inputs, such as the amount of time or effort spent on training. For example, did trainings result in more appropriate behaviors?

Goal #5 — Expand Community Policing Strategies

- **Regular Meetings To Review Implementation of Reform Plan** — Continue regular meetings of the Community Steering Committee to review implementation of plan, and continue to discuss long-term program implementation or new ideas. Meet once weekly for the first month, twice monthly for months 2-3, and once monthly thereafter.

- In addition, continue to solicit public comments about the plan and its implementation.

- **Expand Community Problem-Solving Partnerships** — Presentations and collaborations with neighborhood groups allow a two-way communication ~~for perceived about~~ public safety problems and provide a mechanism ~~to for working~~ collaboratively to address those problems. More regular participation by Binghamton police officers in these meetings can help accomplish this goal.

Good point, just needed a bit of editing to make it clear.

- **Boost The Number Of Foot and Bike Patrols** — Identify grant funding and staff resources to boost the number of foot and bike patrols in residential neighborhoods.

- Allocate BPD budget for this. Don't treat patrol cars as the norm and community policing as an extra. Define goals: how many foot and bike patrols, and in which neighborhoods?

- **Ensure the Community Response Team (CRT) Has Adequate Staffing To Meet City-wide Needs and Demands for Problem-Solving**

- **Expand CPTED Task Force Resources** — Binghamton's Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Task Force works collaboratively with neighbors and businesses to analyze property data and focus the City's enforcement arms to address the physical environments where criminal activity takes place. This Task Force has served as a model for other municipalities, and Binghamton officers have led CPTED training sessions for law enforcement agencies across the region.

- **Increase Presence of High-Ranking Department Members In The Community** — Improve participation of Department leaders in opportunities to engage with community members. Examples include pop-up BBQs, National Night Out, and movie nights, police involvement in athletic leagues, civilian police academies, and attending and participating in community meetings. Informal forms of engagement by all ranks of the department, such as taking time to stop, talk, and listen to people in the community, should be valued.

- Diversify the activities so you interact with different groups; for example, attending Pride activities or a drag show to get to know the LGBTQ community; First Night to meet creatives, etc.
- How will officers be compensated for their time?
- Set goals for specific personnel: which activities, how often.
- Don't just say "it should be valued," give it a value.

● **Reinstitute "Clergy & Cops" Partnerships** — ~~Ride-alongs with~~ Invite members of Binghamton faith community to ride along with Binghamton police officers for proactive community engagement, neighborhood meet and greets, or outreach in high-crime neighborhoods. Work with Broome County Council of Churches to develop programs and identify funding.

- Excellent. Do the same for neighborhood groups and social justice organizations, beginning with the ones that requested this opportunity, such as the Southern Tier Alphas. Also contact the Southern Tier Independence Center.

● **Train Staff Of Community Human Service Providers On Roles And Responsibilities of Binghamton Police Officers** — To foster understanding between police and human service agencies about police operations and existing programs and resources for citizens.

- I want to see those roles and responsibilities changed. Regardless, officers also need to understand the roles and responsibilities of human service agency personnel. Understanding is a two-way street.

● ~~Study Conducting Periodic Routine Contact~~ Surveys To Gauge Public Perception Of the quality and justness of the BPD's policing (known as "procedurally just policing") ~~Procedurally Just Policing~~

- This is a great idea, though not an easy one. It's worth the effort.
- First, you'll need to develop a survey instrument that is unbiased and well-designed, and a process for fair sampling of the community.
 - Work with a good, impartial researcher to do this and have your survey and sampling procedure reviewed and pilot-tested by others who are knowledgeable about research methods.
- How often will you conduct surveys? Annually, quarterly?
- Some community members are unfamiliar with procedurally just policing. Develop a well-designed educational effort on this issue before conducting the survey.

Goal #6 — Improve Police-Youth Relationships

● **Site A Youth Recreation Center In Binghamton** — The City will site and staff a youth and community center for enhanced afterschool and summer programming to support low-income children and broader youth and community development in the City.

○ In early 2019, Mayor David announced plans to site and staff a fully operational City youth center.

○ Construction on a \$4-5 million youth and community center is expected to break ground at Columbus Park downtown in Fall 2021. The new center will include a gymnasium, community rooms, a commercial kitchen, a locker area, offices and other amenities. In addition, outdoor park amenities will be upgraded.

○ In August 2020, Mayor David announced the City will work with the Change Coalition, a community group formed after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, to collect community input on the project and potential programming at the center.

○ Public meetings to solicit input will be held throughout 2021.

- This is terrific. Will officers be a regular, informal presence at the center, to foster healthy interaction? Will they be compensated for their time?

● **Provide Youth A Voice In Development Of Policing Programs** — Consider the needs and voices of youth in development of community policing programs, outreach efforts and the Departments regular crime prevention strategies.

- How will this happen? Why don't you add some youth to the Community Steering Committee now? (Of course, to avoid bias, this can't include the children of police officers, politicians, or city administrators. Keep the selection process open and broad. Don't rely too heavily on recommendations from teachers or school officials, for example.

● **Support New Programming, Modeled After NYS Trooper Foundation's Partnership With Broome County Urban League** — Build positive relationships with youth by adopting programming modeled after the NYS Trooper Foundation's partnership with the Broome County Urban League, which includes: mentoring & community education, activity engagement such as playing basketball, board-games, and building Legos with children; field trips to local sporting events (Binghamton University basketball games, Rumble Ponies baseball games, Adventure Course at Greek Peak, etc.); and safety and anti-bullying education. [Also include rape and sexual assault prevention training for both boys and girls.](#)

- Excellent. Partner with agencies that serve different groups.

● **Study Ways That City Youth Programming Grantees Can Support Community Policing Efforts** — As part of annual youth programming grant awards, explore if grantees can work collaboratively with the Department on community-police relations.

- No! This is problematic. The grants are awarded to accomplish certain goals that could be compromised if that group works with the police. There are many advocacy groups requesting the opportunity to work with the police. Start there. Invite residents of all ages and some youth will participate.

Or consider creating new grants to support this idea.

- **Expand Youth Outreach Efforts With The Boys & Girls Clubs of Binghamton**
- **Support School Resource Officers (SROs) at Binghamton City School District**
 - No! Eliminate SROs.

Goal #7 — Citizen Engagement

1. Identify A Mechanism For Enhanced Citizen Participation To Advise & Shape Goals & Programs Detailed In This Plan — The Collaborative recognizes that increased citizen engagement was identified as a key area for Department improvement from the community input process. In the next 90 days, the Steering Committee will continue to evaluate and develop a structure for robust citizen participation that will help advise and shape the priorities addressed in this plan.

This is a good start. Please keep these points in mind:

- Engage with residents, neighborhood groups, and a broad variety of community groups, including advocacy groups—especially those serving the most vulnerable populations.

Recommendations for Our Ongoing Efforts

General

- Add a social scientist who is experienced in qualitative and quantitative research to the Collaborative. Specifically seek someone who is good at producing scientifically valid surveys and working with focus groups and interview data. Different types of expertise may be needed, so this may require more than one person.
- If you don't have a good logistics person on the Collaborative, seek one.
- Likewise, if you don't have a trained and impartial facilitator to run the meetings, consider adding one. This is a large group working on a controversial topic. Professional facilitation can really help.
- Someone with advertising expertise and contacts with local media would be helpful.
- Organize the Collaborative's website better:
 - Key contact info (such as your email address) at the top
 - Create some more categories:
 - Upcoming meetings
 - Our Reform Plan
 - Background materials (the Finn Report; EO; NYS Reform Resource Guide; C&G review)
 - BPD policies and mission statement
 - Police Crime maps
 - If you can't put the content on separate pages, then make the top-level item collapsible, so the page isn't an overwhelmingly long list.
 - Consider partnering with others to accomplish this. For example, Rachel Hinton at SUNY Broome teaches advanced classes that do this type of design work.
- For the first audit of police data:
 - In addition to evaluating the data, ask the auditor to recommend manageable ways the BPD could improve its data collection to facilitate better analyses.
 - Ask the auditor to work with the BPD to implement these improvements.
 - If this isn't appropriate work for an auditor, then let's find someone who can do that.
- If we have the opportunity to hire a research partner in the future:
 - Ask for samples of reports they produced for the public to ensure:
 - They are not biased.

- They can present complex information in a manner the public is likely to understand.
 - Their analyses are credible (have it reviewed by a good researcher).
- Specifically ask about their training in communicating effectively with the public. There are many excellent resources and trainings on this topic; for example, the Alan Alda Center For Communicating Science at Stony Brook University.
- Request the following as part of their work:
 - An Executive Summary that's written in plain English.
 - A public Q&A session to discuss the analyses.
 - That the raw data is made available in a public repository. This way, the validity of their analyses could be checked.

How to Improve The Overall Process

- Create a reasonable schedule for the next stage. Better yet, create a *generous* schedule.
- Create opportunities for discussions with the public, not just monologues.
- Have one committee member whose sole job is to advertise for the Collaborative, ensuring that key information is as widely available as possible. This person could also respond to messages.
- Post information about how to participate in meetings as early as possible, a minimum of 2 weeks before the meeting. Same for how to submit comments.
- Reorganize the website so it's easy to find information. Keep the website up to date and uncluttered.

Gathering and Sharing Community Input

- Consult with social scientists to create the process.
- Consult with someone who's done a good job of managing public document reviews for tips about how to make this whole process work better.
- As you move forward, create opportunities for more and better public input:
 - Respond to emails.
 - Give yourself enough time and support to cast the widest net possible and deal with responses delivered in the widest manner possible.

- Broaden the ways you present material to the public and the ways they can respond (online, on paper, by phone, etc.) See: “Submit Your Input to the Process” section of this page: <https://www2.tompkinscountyny.gov/ctyadmin/reimaginepublicsafety>
 - Give people a reasonable amount of time to respond, especially on longer or weightier documents.
 - Organize documents to make it easier to find information and review the content.
 - Carefully consider the program you’ll use to collect comments. Word and Acrobat each have advantages and disadvantages: which matter most for the process, and to our community?
 - Provide guidance about how to submit comments (for all methods). Detailed instructions will likely be needed for the technological approaches (online; PDF review process; commenting in Word; etc.).
 - Provide support if you choose a less familiar method, such as PDF review.
 - Consider language and other accessibility issues. Can you partner with local organizations to address these concerns?
- Ask the BPD to create a glossary of their jargon (this may exist at the national level) that can be posted online and included in documents that use these terms.

Listening Sessions and Discussions

- It’s reasonable to set a time limit for meetings. However, at the end of the meeting, assess whether everyone had a chance to speak. If not, schedule a follow-up meeting.
- Advertise the following information for each meeting:
 - Need to pre-register to speak (with contact info. and deadline).
 - How to submit written comments.
 - How to join a meeting if you just want to listen.
 - When the video will be posted.
- For Zoom meetings, monitor the chat and participants’ screens during each session to respond to issues that develop during the meeting, such as people having trouble joining the session.

Future Community Surveys

- The detailed critique of the Finn Institute’s survey should demonstrate that creating a fair and scientifically valid survey is not easy. It takes expertise, time, and review.
- Use a sampling method that is more likely to result in the largest and most representative community sample possible:
 - Alert the community that the survey is going to be conducted in advance.
 - The survey should be available for several weeks.
 - Offer it online and in non-electronic forms, such as on paper and via canvassers.
 - It should be distributed to households in all areas of the city.
 - And available through partnerships with community organizations, faith-based groups, schools, the public library, and other trusted parties.
- Work with your social scientist to choose the topics that will be included. This should be a broad-based survey, not one that only addresses the concerns of a limited group. Consider the list of questions on pages 11-12.
- Find out if there are any validated surveys available that would meet our needs. (“Validated” means an instrument has been scientifically reviewed and is free of bias and the types of mistakes found in our survey.)
- Include open-ended items and places for respondents to add comments.
- Have the survey reviewed by other scientists who are experienced in survey design to check that:
 - Items are worded well: they are not vague, confusing, or oversimplifying the question.
 - The scale used for responses to forced-choice items is appropriate.
 - All questions should provide these options in their choices: a neutral response, “don’t know,” or “do not wish to respond.”
 - Follow-up items are included when needed to clarify responses.
 - Items that should be contingent on the response to a previous item are handled properly.
 - There are enough reliability-detection items in the survey to assess the instrument’s validity.
 - Reliability-detection items are used appropriately. For example, with backward-coded items:
 - There should be about as many backward-coded items as forward-coded ones.
 - They should be randomly distributed through the survey.
 - Respondents should not be able to detect the pattern of their use.
 - The chosen statistical analysis, including the treatment of outliers, is appropriate.

How to Organize Public Comments for Review

As mentioned earlier, the compilation of public comments (the “Binghamton Police Reform and Reinvention Documents and Testimony” file), was presented in one extremely long document that was not organized to facilitate reading or information retrieval.

That may have eroded trust in the process, because it could be seen as a deliberate attempt to thwart public input. I know this may have just been the result of logistical issues. Here’s one way to approach this more effectively.

1. Unless you are required to present public comments in a PDF, work in Word. It’s easier to organize information. Most scanners include OCR programs that allows you to save as a Word file.
2. Word includes security features that would allow you to lock the document so it cannot be altered easily. (PDFs can be altered, too, by determined people. There is no absolute security.)
3. Rather than scanning messages, an easier and perhaps faster option for creating the file would’ve been to copy/paste everything into a Word document. The identifying info that had to be blacked out could’ve been cut or blacked out.
4. Organize the public comments using meaningful topics (the date is unlikely to be a good choice). Choose a few simple categories. For this document, that might’ve been:

Good:

- a. Written testimony presented at public sessions
- b. Email messages
 - i. About the process or plan
 - ii. About registering for meetings

Better:

- c. General messages about the process
- d. For each listening session:
 - i. Written testimony
 - ii. Registration messages
- e. Messages about the community survey
- f. Other comments and testimony about the plan

5. Some people attached files, such as the NYS Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Resource Guide (139 pages). Ideally, providing a link to those resources would’ve made this document much shorter. If you’re not allowed to do that and have to literally copy every page you receive, then organizing the info and using heading styles and the Navigation Pane becomes even more important.

6. To encourage readers to take advantage of the Navigation Pane, provide instructions. Here's a quick take on that.
-

Instructions for the public on how to use the Navigation Pane:

Here's a tip that will save you time right now: Keep the Navigation Pane open as you read this file. Click on any heading to instantly jump to that page—no endless scrolling! It's a fast way to move around a file.

1. Open the Navigation Pane. On a PC, press CTRL+F or click View> Navigation Pane and check the box for Navigation Pane.
2. You should now see the Navigation Pane on the left side of the document. Click on the Headings tab (it should become boldface).
3. Now you should see the sections of this document (*list the titles of each heading here*).
4. Notice the arrows that appear to the left of the sections? Click on the arrow and it will reveal a dropdown menu showing sub-sections. (*Give an example here.*) Click on the arrow again and the section collapses, showing just the top-level heading.
5. Try it out. Click on the arrow next to "*fill in name of main heading example*" to reveal its subsections. Then click on "*fill in name of subheading under that main heading.*" To get back to this spot, click on "*name of the main heading for this page.*"

More help:

- https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-the-navigation-pane-in-word-394787be-bca7-459b-894e-3f8511515e55#ID0EAABAAA=Newer_versions
 - 5-minute video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vx8Lz3oRRRY>
-

I envision a future in which the community is safe, treated fairly, and feels respected by the BPD. Where the public is allowed to participate in meaningful ways in vital decision-making processes.

I want all of the members of the BPD to be able to do a great job, thrive, and be as safe as possible. I want them to feel connected to our communities, and valued.

I want diversity, in all the ways it manifests, to be valued.

I believe we can begin to create that future. Toward that end, I took this review seriously and gave you the best I could under the circumstances. Of course, there are other equally valid ways to address all of the concerns raised in this document. I hope my comments spark good ideas.

Should you have any questions about these ideas or wish to speak further about them, you can reach me at (607) 527-0784.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Jill Shultz