City of Portland Community Policing

FOCUS GROUPS

Table
of
contents

Introduction & Methodology 1

From August 15 to August 18, 2016, DHM Research conducted focus group research among Portland residents. The purpose of the survey was to investigate public perception of public safety, policing practices, and Portland police. This research supplemented previous quantitative research on perceptions of Portland police among community residents. Here, in-depth qualitative research allowed for assessments among specific demographic communities that were harder to reach in the general public opinion survey: people experiencing mental health issues, people experiencing homelessness, LGBTQ+ people, and youth.

Research Methodology: DHM conducted six focus groups. Three of the groups focused on people experiencing mental health issues. These groups were each recruited from a specific precinct: North, East, or Central. The remaining three groups each focused on a different specific demographic group and included a mix of participants from North, East, or Central Precincts. One group recruited people experiencing homelessness in the past six months, one recruited members of the LGBTQ+ community, and one recruited youth aged 15 to 17. All groups were held in Portland, Oregon.

Fifty-four people participated in total, including 26 in the groups for people experiencing mental health issues, 10 in the group of people from the LGBTQ+ community, 10 in the group of people experiencing homelessness, and 8 youth. The majority of participants had recent contact with a police officer. See Appendix A for complete participant demographics.

Statement of Limitations: The focus groups were led by a professional moderator. Groups consisted of both written exercises and group discussions. Although research of this type is not designed to measure with statistical reliability the attitudes of a particular group, it is valuable for giving a sense of the attitudes and opinions of the population from which the sample was drawn.

This report highlights key findings from the focus groups. Each section reviews a major topic from the group discussions and includes representative quotations, as well as evaluative commentary. The quotes and commentary are drawn from both written exercises and transcripts produced from recordings of the group discussions.[1] The referenced appendices provide the complete responses to all written exercises.

DHM Research: DHM Research has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions of the United States for over three decades. The firm is nonpartisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.

---

[1] Quotations were selected to represent the range of opinions regarding a topic, and not to quantitatively represent expressed attitudes. Some have been edited for clarity to ensure correct punctuation and to eliminate non-relevant or intervening comments.

Summary & Observations

2

Perceptions of public safety and policing in Portland resist simplification: people have complex, and at times contradictory, thoughts about police and their role in the community. The overall sense, however, is that people are uncomfortable with the current state of policing.

- When asked to name problems in Portland that they would like to see addressed, people voice concern over policing in Portland—although largely as a second tier concern behind affordable housing and homelessness.
- Even though people view policing and law enforcement as a fundamental pillar of safe communities, people put qualifiers around that presence: "*friendly police presence*," "*unarmed police presence*," "*responsible police*," "*policing with proper training.*"
- These qualifiers refer to how the public views policing in general, not necessarily how they view Portland Police Bureau.
- Events around the country clearly color perceptions about police: participants mention concern over "*troubles*" police in general have and a perception that misconduct (or worse) on the part of police goes unaddressed across the nation. That said, participants link national problems to specific experiences here in Portland.

In most of the groups (those experiencing mental health issues, those experiencing homelessness, and those identifying as LGBTQ+), people think Portland Police are doing an adequate job of preventing crime but are doing less well when it comes to making people feel safe, treating people fairly, or understanding their specific group.

- People in all groups related positive experiences with Portland Police; but people in each group also related troubling experiences with the police.
- For those experiencing mental health issues, concerns revolved largely around whether police had adequate knowledge to handle appropriately people in a mental health crisis.
- For people experiencing homelessness, concerns revolved in large part around the perception that police were selective, or capricious, in choosing which crimes and what type of people to investigate.
- Among LGBTQ+ people, concerns about police revolved both around interpersonal issues (seeking to feel respected and safe around police) and general sensitivity knowledge (e.g., using appropriate pronouns to refer to someone).
- Youth tended to be more positive about the police compared to the adults, being best characterized as neutral overall.
- LGBTQ+ youth, however, may be particularly anxious or fearful about the police.

By and large, the public recognizes that police have a challenging position. Nonetheless, they also believe that that police should meet a higher standard than they currently do.

- People want police to be respectful, have empathy, and to interact on a more personal level.
- People want policing to focus more on public service rather than on strict, heavy-handed, or militarized enforcement.
- People also expect to see accountability among police officers.

People believe improvements can be made in three specific areas: recruitment, training, and community involvement.

- People want to see police from different backgrounds. Whether through the representation of people of different racial backgrounds or LGBTQ+ individuals, having diversity in the types of people serving as police officers provides a cue that the diverse perspectives may be respected by the police force.
- Time and again, people call for "more training" in particular areas where they would like to see improvement. Specifically, people want training to revolve around the interpersonal aspect of policing that affects how well police interact with the public, whether that is de-escalating a situation with someone having a mental health crisis to appropriate language when referring to LGBTQ+ individuals.
- This does not mean that all police need to be experts on all topics. People also believe it may be more appropriate for another type of expert (e.g., counselor) to lead interactions in some situations, in particular interactions with a person experiencing a mental health crisis.
- People by and large want to see the police more actively involved with the community.
- Examples include police being at events (such as LGBTQ+ parades) where they talk, laugh, and interact with community members.
- There seems to be a perception that Portland Police officers are generally from other cities, and Portland is a way-station on their career path.
- Similarly, there is a perception that police officers live "elsewhere," not in the communities where they work. This creates another barrier to interpersonal connections.

Recommendations

The below recommendations summarize and represent what people told us they would like to see from the Portland Police Bureau; DHM is an opinion research firm and does not claim to provide expert guidance on law enforcement or policing.

Make training expertise more visible, both figuratively (getting information to the public) and literally (visible designations of specialized training).

- While people are unsure about the training involved to be a police officer, they believe it is insufficient.
- People most want police to have extended training in interpersonal aspects of the job, specifically in handling mental health crises, diversity/sensitivity training, and de-escalation techniques.
- Each of these areas is seen as fundamental to good policing. Sharing information about depth of training may help fill in these gaps of knowledge among citizens.
- People experiencing mental health issues were especially sensitive to the need for sound training in order for police to handle well interactions with people in a mental health crisis.
- Consider visible designations for officers who undergo specialized training—for example, specific insignia on uniforms, and share that information with the community.
- This type of designation was a particular priority for people in the LGBTQ+ community.

Show that building relationships in the community is a priority.

- The perception that Portland police are not invested in the community is common.
- To many people, community connection means casual conversations, knowing people's names, seeing police out of uniform and/or out of their cars.
- The uniform creates distance—a distance that is often a barrier. People frequently brought up that plainclothes officers may often be more appropriate. They may not accurately know the

extent to which police conduct business out of uniform, but their sentiment is clear: police are more approachable out of uniform.
- Prioritize the role of community "ambassadors": officers who can build connections to people in specific communities (LGBTQ+, youth, etc.).
- Having officers associated with specific schools is an effective way to reach youth; continue building those connections.

Elevate the visibility of or promote partnerships with mental health professionals as part of the Bureau's response team.

- Project Respond came up as a strong option in mental health crises and a preferred alternative to calling police.
- People describe a partnership between police and mental health experts as a good model for handling mental health crises.
- Building these partnerships, or promoting those that exist already, may give the public greater confidence that the Portland Police Bureau is making authentic efforts to better respond to people with mental health issues.
- People experiencing homelessness are markedly hesitant to call the police in mental health crises. Given the general reluctance of this group to be involved in the police, consider outreach about options like Project Respond to the homeless population as a potential high-impact effort to support some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

This research assesses how people in Portland's community perceive Portland Police and may not reflect the actual level of service by the Portland Police. Gaps between what the Police are trying to do and how the public perceives them provide guidance on where outreach needs to occur.

- Where Portland Police have made strong efforts to be more responsive to the needs of vulnerable populations, highlight those efforts to show progress.
- Let the community know about the programs and practices of Portland Police that align with public values around recruitment, training, and commitment of police officers.
  - If Portland Police have programs in place that address these concerns, those programs are not well known.

Key Findings 3

Focus group discussions covered a range of topics related to public safety. The purpose of these groups was to investigate public perception of public safety, policing practices, and Portland police among specific demographic communities: people experiencing mental health issues, people experiencing homelessness, LGBTQ+ people, and youth.

1.1   GENERAL COMMUNITY PERCEPTION

Focus group discussions opened with a warm-up section in which people identified what they liked best about living in Portland and the top problems facing the community (Appendix B). People appreciated many aspects of living in Portland, including nature or the environment, the generally welcoming and friendly people, cultural opportunities (music, theatre), and the mass transit system.

> *"I like the music scene. There are so many clubs to play in, music to listen to, a lot of different kinds of music."*   —*East Precinct*[2]

> *"It's close to the beach, the mountains, just about any type of country you want."*
> —*North Precinct*

> *"I love the TriMet system because I ride it a lot."*   —*Youth*

In regards to the welcoming and friendly people, a crucial aspect was that the city includes diverse people. This point highlights the importance of diversity to many people in Portland's community, and is an issue that affects expectations for Portland's police force.

> *"Both racial and gender-expression, sexual [diversity]. It's not just straight, white people."*
> —*LGBTQ+*

When it came to the problems in Portland that participants would like to see addressed, affordable housing clearly topped the list. Several also mentioned related concerns such as gentrification and population growth.

> *"Affordable housing. People that have lived here all their lives, they're getting pushed out of Portland."*   —*East Precinct*

> *"I mean, all of it is kind of tied together, but the whole big word gentrification. We talked about great the music scene is here and everything like that, but all the all-ages venues, all the venues that have been up forever like Splat Town and The Know, everything is getting closed so they can put up condos that nobody can afford, and they're pushing out local businesses that have been there forever, like 30, 40 years, to put up condos that nobody can afford."*
> —*East Precinct*

---

[2] For simplicity of reference, the three groups of people experiencing mental health issues will be identified by precinct. E.g., quotations from people experiencing mental health issues who live in the East Precinct will be denoted as "East Precinct."

Homelessness followed closely as another top concern.

> *"My number one was the homeless population and specifically lack of resources for LGBT youth. They represent something like what, 70% of the youth homeless population. And many shelters won't take them if they're known to be LGBT, so I know that's a really big problem."*
>
> —*North Precinct*

Written exercise responses provided a gauge of the relative importance of participants' concerns (see Appendix B). Housing was mentioned by thirty-one participants, homelessness by twenty-four. Transportation and traffic were mentioned by twelve participants. Seven people wrote down crime or drugs; five people wrote down concerns related to police, either just "*police*" generally or treatment by the police. Overall, then, public safety and policing were a general concern best characterized as being of second-tier importance.

> *"I put down homeless people, but another [concern] is the violence and stuff."*
>
> —*Youth*

> *"There seems to be an increase in crime, or at least crime visibility. I know with the social media that being more involved in community, I've seen a lot more postings about things being stolen, or broken into, or just vandalized, and things like that."*
>
> —*East Precinct*

Crime was linked to homelessness, as well. This link suggests a high potential for the importance of crime to be elevated given the importance of the homeless issue generally.

1.2   PUBLIC SAFETY VALUES

Discussion next turned to public safety values. The purpose of this discussion was to understand better how the public assessed public safety and to gauge how policing fits into their general framework. Participants first discussed what makes for a safe community (Appendix C).

A primary theme revolved around the importance of interpersonal relationships and community engagement. Participants listed communication and respect between individuals, as well as knowing people in their neighborhoods and being able to notice if there was a problem.

> *"Communication with your neighborhood, and looking out for each other. If you see something sketchy in your neighbor's house, you call them. Having your neighbor's numbers, and getting to know them, and actually talking to them. I've lived in a lot of places where people don't know their neighbors, and they move into the neighborhood and just kind of kept to themselves, and we said hi. Nobody knew if there was a problem."*
>
> —*East Precinct*

> *"I think starting out with community outings, barbecues, getting to know your neighbor. Most people don't really know their neighbor nowadays, so that would be a good start."*
>
> —*Central Precinct*

"People caring for people."   *—LGBTQ+*

Other community engagement opportunities thought to foster safety included community centers for gatherings and neighborhood watch programs. Overall, community engagement was mentioned somewhat more frequently than law enforcement. Although policing and law enforcement were mentioned often, such mentions were typically qualified in the written comments: "*friendly police presence*," "*unarmed police presence*," "*responsible police*," "*policing with proper training*."

In other words, participants thought both individuals and the police had roles to play in fostering community safety. Individuals being connected to and engaged in the community formed a necessary foundation for community safety, although clearly police were needed to deal with more severe problems.

> *"Well, in my neighborhood, the other day there was a shooting…Then, there was a drive-by shooting added on because it was gang related. So then the next day they had a bunch of police, and it made it not happen the next night."*   *—Youth*

The qualifiers people placed around the role of police suggested some discomfort over a larger police presence per se. One issue was that some police may actually make people feel unsafe.

> *"I think everybody is [responsible for making a community safe]. We can't depend on the police to keep it safe, because they're part of the reason why some of it is not."*
>
>   *—East Precinct*

> *"I've seen bad policemen, I've seen good policemen. They have so much power. Ideally, they work for us, but sometimes there is just an element in some policemen that aren't that far from the violence of the people you're trying to be safe from."*   *—East Precinct*

Certainly, participants did not want a more heavy-handed approach. In fact, discomfort was directly tied to strict, authoritarian styles of policing. Participants repeatedly emphasized a preference for a friendly approach in policing.

> *"It could always be safer, but then you walk the line of—do you give security and police more authority, or do you let them kind of toe the line as is? The more authority you give, you're starting to get towards militarization."*   *—Central Precinct*

> *"Policing should be to be a peacekeeper and not to go out and subdue people. When you're a good parent or caretaker, you don't just step in whenever your kid is starting to do something that you're afraid they're going to do wrong. You watch and you wait. You analyze the situation before you go in. You go in calmly. You talk to them like they're a human being. You establish a rapport with them."*
>
>   *—LGBTQ+*

> *"They're just too quick on the draw, as is everywhere else in the United States right now. This is why all this is going on and we're having problems."*   *—Central Precinct*

Participants were also asked whether Portland was safe. Opinions were generally mixed, and there was a clear sense that Portland was safer for some people than others. Neighborhood mattered, as did age and personal confidence.

"I raised my hand and said that I would consider [Portland safe], but from my child's point of view, I really wouldn't…I am definitely not going to feel safe with my kids by themselves. Even as they get older, I will definitely be pretty wary of their safety." —East Precinct

"It depends on the person. Your safety might be totally different from my safety. It is the neighborhood. Not to be disrespectful, if you're upper class and you have money, you're going to live in the nice neighborhood. Some people can't afford that." —East Precinct

LGBTQ+ participants, or those with ties to the LGBTQ+ community, voiced particularly high levels of concern over safety for people in the LGBTQ+ community. Despite valuing Portland's general acceptance and liberal attitudes, participants described an unsafe environment for LGBTQ+ people.

"My children are LGBT where they get picked on every day of their life."

—East Precinct

Nonetheless, the overall impression was that Portland felt safer than many other big cities. As in other cities, however, some areas may be safer than others.

"I feel like in Portland, there is a little bit of mutual trust. People go up to people and will talk to you…There is the general friendliness of people, and they will talk to each other. The trust helps you feel safer in Portland than in Los Angeles where people are not friendly. People aren't friendly in other places." —Youth

"Going back to good people in the community, just being from the South and encountering a lot of homophobia and racism, I hardly ever experience that here. That is just my personal experience, and that is really, really important to me, too. So, yeah, I do think it's safe."

—Central Precinct

1.3 PORTLAND POLICE

Participants first assessed how good of a job Portland Police are doing, all things considered, in several areas: preventing crime, making people safe, and treating all people fairly (Appendix D). Written responses revealed that most participants rated the Portland Police as doing an "okay" job in preventing crime. When it comes to making people feel safe, treating people equally, or understanding the needs of specific communities, most participants felt the Portland Police were doing a "poor" job. Youth stood out as being more neutral ("okay" job) compared to the adults in response to all the questions.

When participants described the reasons for their evaluations, concerns revolved around how police treated people and the type of crimes/situations police chose to pursue.

"From what I have seen they're doing an okay job. But I think that there is definitely room for improvement. I have seen the way that some police interact with some of the homeless people downtown and stuff like that. Those are people with obvious either mental issues or dependency issues. Something like that, they need something as simple as having some sort of class in tactics. They just need to address it a little bit better."

—Central Precinct

A few pointed to limitations police might face that make it difficult to do a better job, such as inadequate staffing levels or poor pay.

> *"I think they're just overwhelmed. They just don't have enough staffing. I've had lots of property crime I don't even report. There's just not enough manpower to deal with all of that, and again it goes to funding. I just saw on the news the other day that they're taking away the last person they had for tagging, which is not a big issue, but if it's your house, your property. That all goes back to City Hall and what they want to fund and how much. So I'm sure it trickles down to the police force on what they're told, what they can address, and what they need to [just] write a note about and file a report."*
>
> *—North Precinct*

The general tone, however, suggested that some participants viewed the relationship between the community and the police as more adversarial than collegial.

> *"It does make it difficult for them to do a good job when they're understaffed as well as when we've got nationwide problems with the people killing each other, one way or the other. It makes it hard for them, I think, to feel safe as well. I'm on the side of the community more than I am the side of the police."*
>
> *—North Precinct*

Participants believed improvements could be made in three specific areas: recruitment, training, and community involvement. Each of these are detailed further below.

Recruitment

In regards to recruitment, some participants noted the importance of have diversity in the police force. A key piece to introducing greater awareness within the force about issues in some communities is to have those communities represented.

> *"My whole perspective on that is if you have more in the police force that are in the [LGBTQ+] community, they'll be able to understand and help instruct and get the rest of the police force to understand these needs and necessities."*   *—LGBTQ+*

> *"Assign more diverse, mixed pairs. Every pair of cops should have racial or gender diversity. If he's a white guy, he's got to have a woman or a racially diverse partner with him."*
>
> *—LGBTQ+*

Additionally, a few referenced the type of perspective officers bring to the job. These comments reflected the desire to recruit people with compassion, and concerns that some officers were attracted to the job because of the power associated with it.

> *"You can train somebody all day long. They can do multiple trainings. They can do diversity; they can do whatever. If they don't want to be compassionate, they're not going to."*
>
> *—East Precinct*

> *"Why are these officers deciding to become police officers? What are they intending to do as a police officer?"*   *—LGBTQ+*

"I think sometimes people want to be police officers because it's an easy way to be in a position of power. And I think that sometimes police officers exert that power. And it's not really the most effective way to deal with people." —Central Precinct

"Stop with the breed of cop who has more of a military gung-ho type of attitude." —Central Precinct

Training

Participants were asked to provide specifics as to what could be done to improve policing. The vast majority referenced "more training." People were not necessarily sure of what type of training was required for police. Generally speaking, however, their impression was that it was not enough.

"I kind of just want to know how they are trained because I feel like every police officer approaches different situations the same way." —Youth

"The Portland Police Department is easy to get into. The training is not that long." —Central Precinct

"I think they are supposed to have a high school diploma. I feel like they need more. Maybe not school, but more training." —Youth

"Do they have sensitivity training? How often do they need to take that? Is it once and they're done?" —LGBTQ+

Participants consistently referenced more training around interpersonal themes rather than enforcement skills.

"If the police officer doesn't know anything about [mental health issues], his reaction or her reaction could just escalate the situation and make things worse. So, just some basic classes on psychology or social worker-type classes included with their training, just so they can kind of deescalate a situation." —Central Precinct

"I definitely don't want to generalize all police officers. There are some police officers that probably do this training, and they are amazing and they're doing a great job. But then there are other police officers that don't, and it's of no fault of their own. They don't have the training. So, if they come into some situation where there is somebody acting violent or aggressive and this person has mental health issues…a police officer with no training, they might Taser them or shoot them." —Central Precinct

"I think we do need strong policing but they should be trained better for diversity." —LGBTQ+

The resounding message from participants was that they want police to show respect and empathy when interacting with them. This is crucial to how police set the tone at the beginning of interactions.

"Well, a good officer is going to talk to you in a respectful way and not be suspicious all the time, and not talk down to you." —Central Precinct

"I want them to be friendly, but professional. I want them to be nice people, I guess, is what I am trying to say." —Youth

When people related stories of how police handled a situation well, they time and again brought up the officer talking to the person causing a problem rather than being strict and "*not personable*."

> *"But they were trying to give her an out to get up and not go to jail, or, 'Well, we are going to call your probation officer.' They actually stood there and talked to her."*
>
> —*Central Precinct*

> *"I mean, they talked to you like a person. They didn't just treat you like shit and then just throw you in the car and take you to jail. And the police officers today don't do that. You're going in the car and you're going to jail, because they're going home as soon as they get you in there and get out, after they have to write the report."*   —*Central Precinct*

> *"Offer a hand. Help them. I'm speaking from experience. When I told the officer I was having a problem, five years ago, with my addiction problem, he actually spoke for me in court. Instead of going to prison, I went to treatment, and I have been clean ever since."*
>
> —*Homeless*

Participants believed that police treated certain groups—such as minorities and LGBTQ+—with less respect or fairness. This perception lowers their evaluation of the police.

> **"*I feel the police, as far as downtown, they're going to take their time. Go out to The Numbers, where there are more black people and stuff, they are going to fly out there in a heartbeat. They have always been that way. And they have racial profiled a lot. The only reason I am speaking on this is because my children are Afro-American. I have seen them follow my daughter for hours. They run her license plates and everything. They don't pull her over because she is legal—she has a license; she has insurance."*
>
> —*Central Precinct*

> *"I had a period of time where I had rainbow stickers on my car. I got pulled over a lot more when I did. I took the stickers off of my car. I haven't been pulled over once."*
>
> —*LGBTQ+*

One issue in any interaction with a police officer is the anxiety and fear the situation activates for the civilian. Participants definitely mentioned having anxiety when a police officer approached them or pulled them over. Arguably, some level of anxiety is natural in the situation—and perhaps even desirable in the case of deterring actual criminals. However, that anxiety can also feed into a more negative interaction. Cues that the police officer has training, and thus is presumably better skilled at dealing with situations such as mental health crises or more understanding of LGBTQ+ issues, could be helpful. One such cue might be insignia on the officer's uniform.

> *"One of the things I put down was the ones that have gone through sensitivity trainings have some sort of signified marker on their uniforms. A rainbow or the trans-flag. We can actually identify the safe people."*   —*LGBTQ+*

Participants tended to believe that where police mishandled interactions with people experiencing mental health problems, it was perhaps more due to lack of knowledge rather than discrimination. Participants acknowledged that police could not be an expert in everything. What they did want was for police to receive training in how to better handle situations such as de-escalation and when to call in an expert.

"Going forward and being able to identify when someone has a need for mental health intervention, I think that that's an important thing. But then once that determination is made, being able to manage the situation until someone qualified to deal with someone who is having a mental health crisis arrives would be a better way to move forward…You as the officer make the determination, 'Okay, this is a mental health issue. Now I need to call this other support mechanism that I have in place,' because honestly I don't think the police are capable of integrating that into every officer." —North Precinct

Community Involvement

There were several aspects of community involvement that participants brought up. On a basic level, the desire for police to interact with people in the community in a friendly manner reiterated the desire for general positive interpersonal skills. Participants also discussed community involvement in terms of how invested police were in the community. Getting to know people's names shows investment, as does longevity working or even living in the community. A recurring theme was that Portland police were not invested in the neighborhoods they patrol.

"They're out of here in about five years to a real police department. I know that, because I have talked to quite a few of them. But they don't care. And they're understaffed…They don't have enough people here. Real police don't want to come here." —Central Precinct

"The faces of police officers in my community. I don't want them to be anonymous. I don't want some random officer, I don't want to wonder who they are. I would like more opportunities for us to understand who they are. I think that, for them, would make it harder to operate in a vacuum." —LGBTQ+

"I think that [getting to know the community] would work if the police actually policed their own neighborhoods, which is not the case. The cops in our neighborhood live elsewhere." —LGBTQ+

A concerted engagement with the community has the potential to overcome a history of negativity.

"There's not a whole lot of good positive wonderful fuzzy great vibes between the cops and the queers. It's usually cops beating down queer people or raiding gay bars. There's this historical fear that I carry with me as well. I know it changes the tone. If there was more effort on police forces on their side of things to be more positive towards my community. [Seeing them] out walking around saying, 'How are you doing? Are you having fun?' outside of a queer event and making us feel like we're a priority and they want us to feel safe and okay. Making us feel like we can go to them if we're having a problem. That would help." —LGBTQ+

In multiple groups, conversation referenced the barrier created by a police uniform. It is important to think about how police are dressed when they are engaged in community involvement activities or in situations that call first and foremost for de-escalation.

"Maybe even have plainclothes officers go in, someone who doesn't look like they're a militarized person with a gun."

—Central Precinct

"The most recent interaction that I've had with police was them coming to a community organization called Self Enhancement and talking to us…At first, there were four officers…That interaction went super poorly…For me, I was scared as soon as they pretty much walked into the room. They came in full-gear with their vests on and guns right here. They had Tasers. At any moment, I feel like I can't reach for my phone in my pocket because you're afraid they might shoot you. Two officers came in afterwards…One of them really stuck with me…He came in. Walked in. Took off his vest and set it down… He said, 'Hey.' They introduced themselves. For me, that was super positive and actually gave me a lot of respect for him. Not for him as a police officer. The police officer had the vest. It was him as a person and understanding that this conversation wasn't one where you should be wearing your vest."

—LGBTQ+

Community interactions with police were meaningful to participants. Although there was some ambivalence about how personal people wanted to be with the police, the majority felt that personal interactions were desirable and appreciated those moments.

"I am in a shelter right now. They recently had what they called a community night out…They had members from the local police force in that immediate area come over. I actually got to meet the assistant Chief. Shake his hand and get to meet him. It was a really good situation. It wasn't the usual, 'Okay, what're you doing? Why are you doing it? When are you going to do it and when are you going to be back?' It's not the, 'I'm getting grilled with 50 questions.' I'm actually having a conversation of, 'How was your day,' with somebody in law enforcement. That normally doesn't happen that way."   *—LGBTQ+*

Additional Issues

Accountability. Participants also called for accountability for police behavior. This was more of a basic expectation rather than something to be improved upon. Some of the discussion around this theme perhaps reflected national concerns about policing, or assumptions about police culture. Nonetheless, consideration of how the public views police should take into account the public's desire to see accountability.

"[Police] can get away with whatever, so it doesn't really matter at the end of the day what they do. They could do anything, and even if they are in the wrong and it is widely known, they can get out of it, or get a slap on the wrist, and, 'Do better next time,' kind of thing."

—East Precinct

"Police accountability is being held responsible for actions that you do. Less than three days ago, I was downtown at lunch. Three officers slam a gentleman to the ground simply because he was arguing with them…Instead of trying to calm him down or talk him down, they literally threw him to the ground and [were] subduing him and there was no accountability for it. How can we look at the police as being there to help us if they're causing more of an issue?"

—LGBTQ+

"I feel like the police, they don't want to change also. They don't want to get better. They think, 'Oh, we're doing a good enough job. Yeah, maybe we shot a few people. Maybe we're

doing these sweeps. Yeah, maybe we're profiling people, but it doesn't matter, because we're doing our job.'" —LGBTQ+

Willingness to Call Police. One question posed to participants was whether they would feel comfortable calling the police in a situation involving someone experiencing a mental health crisis. The prevailing tone was of a hesitation to call. Participants often believed that police may not be the ideal people to handle mental health crises. Rather, people believed that someone with greater expertise would be a better choice. Reluctance to call was stronger among participants experiencing homelessness.

"If it's what I perceived as a mental health crisis, no, absolutely not."

—Homeless

"There is a number you can call if you're in the middle of a crisis so you don't have to call the police. I just learned that dealing with my brother. He was having a crisis and I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to call the cops on my brother...They would have to have some type of mental health training. I come back to that. They would have to. You have got to treat someone with mental health issues different. My whole life, I have known he has a problem, but I just learned how to deal with the guy." —Central Precinct

"If somebody is having an actual crisis episode, maybe if there was somewhere they could take them that they could calm down from whatever it is that is going on with them internally, and then they could find out after that, maybe they could speak with a counselor once they bring them someplace. Maybe they could find out what meds they're on if they're off their meds, so that when they release them they're not going to go out and do something violent or aggressive. They will be back down from whatever they're on, and they will be able to just go about their business. —Central Precinct

"In other cities, there are different police units that deal with emotionally disturbed people, and there are special officers with extra training that know how to handle that type of issue with a little bit more know-how. We could offer that. There are also different cities that have a therapist also come along in a car for tense situations. Actions like that where they're not just dealing with it by force or any type of aggression. They're actually taking the time to listen and solve a person's problem." —Central Precinct

Another reason for hesitancy might be questioning whether the situation called for police presence.

"I would feel really bad, I mean if someone was just having a little bit of a break down just because something bad happened, I don't know if it is necessary to get the police involved over something little. If they were yelling or threatening to hurt themselves or somebody else, yes, I would call the police." —Youth

The type of model people wanted to see was one where an expert in mental health was involved in the interaction. Although a few people in different groups knew about Project Respond, only one person mentioned that they were aware that Project Respond worked with the police.

"Also, there is Project Respond in Portland, where there are social workers who will respond with law enforcement. Initially, law enforcement will respond with Project Respond, but

generally—and I have seen this happen several times—Project Respond will wave off law enforcement if the person is cooperative."   —Homeless

When asked about their own experiences, several people mentioned specifically positive experiences with the Portland Police Bureau around mental health crises when those experiences involved officers with mental health training.

"I think that any experience I've had, professionally or personally, where it's been a [mental health] situation, I feel like they've handled it well under the circumstances…My daughter committed suicide two years ago in another state, and Portland police came to my house, and that was some of the best mental health support I ever got, right there in my house, in one of the worst moments of my life. The training that that person had when they dealt with me really still means a lot to me…Any time I've had to send somebody out to do a welfare check on somebody who is suicidal or not responding, I have not had any issues."

—North Precinct

1.4   COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Finally, discussion turned to reflection on how Portland police and Portland's leaders could help make the community safer for people experiencing mental health issues, homeless people, LGTBQ people, and youth (Appendix D).

Advice for Police

Reiterating the theme of interpersonal connections heard throughout discussions, participants called once again for more compassion and respect.

"Approaching people with compassion, I think it goes along with having training in mental health and understanding people with mental health."

—Central Precinct

"Be respectful and understanding, I guess."   —Youth

Participants also emphasized service to the community over strict enforcement.

"I think they should stress to remember that police officers are public servants. They are there to help us, not intimidate us or assume something is wrong…That means sometimes being subservient, or not looking like you're in charge—listening, or being able to show that you care, instead of just having to find an assumption or be aggressive or be rude. I know their job is not easy, but that is their job. That is what they signed on to do, is to be a public servant. And that doesn't always mean that you are going to get the best people or the best things. And yes, you are going to put your life in danger, but that is what you signed on for, so I feel like you should embody that."   —Central Precinct

"I would just want more transparency from the police department itself…there is no reason for small-town police departments to have tanks and armored vehicles and SWAT teams. It is all leading towards the militarization of the entire police force to become the United States police

force, in my opinion. I think that diverting some of those funds from the military and the militarization of the police force into things like mental health and mental healthcare workers working directly with the police department…if police want to be treated like heroes, they need to start acting like heroes." —Central Precinct

"If the Portland Police Bureau really wants to set itself apart from the rest of the country, they need to really show, 'Hey, we are specifically not buying all of this ex-military hardware, because that is in our budget, but instead we are going to put ten therapists on staff, because that is going to be more beneficial for humanity in general.'"

—Central Precinct

"Just like homeless people in downtown. Try to get them into shelters. If they catch a teenager doing the wrong thing, don't try to punish them so hard. Just try to help them go in the right direction." —Youth

Advice to Portland's elected leaders

A clear theme to Portland's leaders was to provide services to help people in need. The link here was that if people have basic needs met, and resources to help them with their problems (addiction, mental health issues), then the community would be safer.

"I mean, try to help the people instead of just giving them a bus ticket out of here or something that is not going to solve the problem. Actually provide answers, provide resources. Find affordable housing for homelessness. Put people in homes and solve the homeless problem. It has been shown in other countries and other cities that have done this that, long-term, it saves them money. It's just that, yeah, it seems like a lot of money up-front, but in general it saves the people a lot more money instead of just dealing with symptoms of mental—you know, actually try to help people. Try to solve the problem. And I know that the Portland police can't do all of that. I understand. That's why it's more of like, 'Yeah, what can elected officials do to help that?'" —Central Precinct

"I think it's important that they establish low-cost or free mental health resources and programs, a lot of them, and make them very, very, very accessible."

—Central Precinct

"I put build homeless shelters. And then [inform people about] different resources because…a lot of people don't know." —Youth

"The mayor, he put a lot of money in the community centers for teens. The thing is, they don't really know about it. I hope next year they give the same money to the teen centers too. I don't think a lot of teens know about them so they are not using the resources."

—Youth

Although not mentioned frequently, increased resources for police did come up a few times in the conversations, and came up here.

1.5 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSES

A key goal of the research was to hear from different demographic groups. Although each focus group centered around a specific characteristic (e.g., those experiencing mental health issues or those experiencing homelessness), some individuals in the groups had intertwined experiences (for example, LGTBQ+ and experiencing homelessness). Given these intersectionalities, similar themes emerged across all groups. Nonetheless, some issues emerged specific to each demographic group. Here, we summarize some of those findings.

Mental Health Issues

Participants who had experienced mental health issues were the ones who most clearly thought that police might not have the training to respond well to someone in the midst of a mental health crises. They often brought up the idea of having a specialist be part of the interaction. A key theme was giving the person space to calm down. Police were not necessarily seen as having those skills; in addition, police presence could cause some anxiety, making it harder to deescalate the situation.

"Police officers can be intimidating, especially to people who may feel like they're weak or agitated or in distress." —Central Precinct

It is important to note that many several people brought up specific instances where the police handled situations with someone having mental health issues well. The general impression was that not all police officers may have the knowledge or skills, but that officers with that training did better.

"When I talked to the behavioral department they were actually quite supportive of me being able to do a couple of police reports and get him [a person with mental health issues] help if they could." —North Precinct

"I've actually seen more often than not that they do [handle mental health situations well], but that's of late." —North Precinct

In this case, knowing how to access or identify officers with the appropriate training would be helpful.

Homelessness

The group of people who had experienced homelessness was particularly diverse in their experiences and opinions, making it difficult to generalize their conversation. A few things stood out.

This group seemed especially likely to believe the police selectively choose what crimes to punish, questioned the police's priorities, and were pessimistic about the police showing up in a timely manner to help if they were called.

"A five-minute wait to even speak to an officer, and then a half-hour, 45 minutes before they even show up where you need them to be." —Homeless

"From personal experience, recently, I believe that the police and the OHSU police are wasting money, resources, time, effort, on people that are doing nothing more than walking

down the waterfront. They had six officers take me into county jail for trespassing two feet past an imaginary line on the waterfront. That is a complete waste of money, time, effort, on everybody's behalf—mine, theirs, everybody's…They should be spending their time and effort on the crackheads that are stealing from people and selling it back to them."

—Homeless

In particular, when it came to calling the police for a person experiencing mental health crisis, most participants in this group indicated that they would not do so, and believed it would only make the situation worse.

"I never call police for that."   *—Homeless*

LGBTQ+

For people in the LGBTQ+ community, a crucial part of training revolved around police learning facts about basic issues in the community. For example, how people self-identify is important, including what pronouns to use when referring to a person.

"I use he, they, she pronouns in that order."   *—LGBTQ+*

"Checking in with people that they're actually interacting with and asking for pronouns."
      --LGBTQ+

"They need to be trained on how to be more respectful, fairness, learn to respect the identities, pronouns. More about just to be more aware and inclusive of gender expressions and sexuality and orientations."   *—LGBTQ+*

How this knowledge is imparted mattered to this community. Training done by people with lived experience of LGBTQ+ issues is seen as more valid.

"Are [the trainings] done by heterosexuals? The training for LGBT people is created by LGBT people and taught by all heterosexuals."   *—LGBTQ+*

LGBTQ+ generally expressed feeling less safe and experienced harassment both from other members of the public and from police.

"I've been attacked twice just because some days I wear a dress, some days I put on makeup, and that's fine with me. I'm not doing anything but reading a book on the MAX as I was coming back from a class I was taking at the community college or in the bathroom. And funny enough, I decided to go in the boys' bathroom while wearing a dress that day. I was attacked, spit on a few times. I've been called names more than I can shake a stick at."

—North Precinct

"I personally, with mental health stuff of my own, have been picked up for suicide alleviation, made fun of by the cops in the front seat, not just once, because I was crying as a man, but between each transition point as they pushed me from hospital to hospital."

—North Precinct

Trans or gender fluid individuals discussed specific challenges to their experiences. A first step for police would be to understand and acknowledge some of those challenges.

> *"I'm gender-fluid. Sometime I present high female, sometimes not. Presenting high female, I feel unsafe pretty much everywhere all of the time. It doesn't matter the time of day."*
> —*LGBTQ+*

> *"If you look approachable, people will try to get into your space and threaten you...It's very unsafe at certain times when people are really drunk and think they can do whatever they want because they're drunk. "*
> —*LGBTQ+*

> *"When a man's dressed feminine, he has facial hair. He's wearing pink and cuteness. That's confusing to people. They get violent."*
> —*LGBTQ+*

In particular, some trans people feel that police are quite dismissive of threats that they experience.

> *"A lot of times [trans people] think that [police are] dismissive. 'You're just being sensitive. Go handle it.' I've seen that attitude a lot. If it would have been coming from somewhere else, they wouldn't have been dismissive...People being threatened with violence by a person on the street at night and the cops are walking by. They're dismissive and walk on their way."*
> —*LGBTQ+*

What was missing for many was the sense that police truly cared about protecting them.

> *"It's really easy to look at somebody and think they don't make sense to me or they're weird to me...They need to be protected. Nobody is protecting them, especially black trans women. They might as well be walking around with a target on them. It's really important to understand people that look different, doesn't mean they're going to be dangerous. They get harassed and treated like crap, especially by people who are sexist or are trans-misogynistic. It's not safe for them. I feel like they really need more protection. Police need to be the ones who are helping get them that."*
> —*LGBTQ+*

The ability to identify police who are comfortable with LGBTQ+ people, or resources for them specifically, was particularly important to the LGBTQ+ community.

> *"I want to be able to look around and know who I can go to."*   —*LGBTQ+*

Youth

Youth participants were a bit more positive about the police than those in other groups. Although they too thought "*everybody*" should contribute to public safety, they were especially likely to refer to police presence.

> *"I think having an obvious presence keeps people from doing crimes. If I saw a cop come drive by here a minute ago, I should probably not rob this house."*
> —*Youth*

They did not necessarily feel that police were particularly good at understanding teenagers. Some felt that the police were unnecessarily suspicious of teenagers or displayed "*attitude.*" When they described police

as having "attitude" it seemed to be that the officer's style was that of demanding respect, or compliance, rather than requesting compliance.

> *"I felt like [the police officer] didn't understand that we are not up to no good. We are studying. I felt like he didn't really understand that we are just not the stereotypical teenagers doing bad things."* —*Youth*

This perception did not always seem to be based on their own experiences, however. Some of the youth seemed to be relying on their own assumptions or second-hand stories rather than personal experiences. A key element to bear in mind is that the youth were also open to more positive relationships with police.

The youth were able to describe specific experiences of seeing police in their schools or neighborhood, giving the sense that they saw more engagement with police than many of the adults. Police presence in schools seemed an effective way to reach children, and teenage youth retained fond memories of police they knew from school.

> *"In my neighborhood, at least, I know they are good at being there. They also come to our schools once a year with the horses and let the elementary school kids pet the horses."* —*Youth*

> *"At my old school, we had this program where we got to know the police officers. They came in and talked to us. They are the ones assigned to our neighborhood. In high school, sometimes I see them, too...and they are really good with all of the teenagers. We trust them because we know them, and we have met them."* —*Youth*

> *"A few years ago we had a cop named Officer Romero...He is in our community, and in our school. We all know him. He judges the talent show so he obviously knows some of the kids, but he doesn't know us by name. 'Hi, don't I know you?' He knows that we are all there...I like the relationship that is currently there. Or was, I mean, he got moved."*
>
> —*Youth*

Youth were asked if they would call the police if they saw a crime happening. Most thought they would; hesitance stemmed more from perceptions that doing so would be ineffective (if someone was breaking into a car and would be gone before police could get there) or unnecessary (you could yell something at the person rather than calling police). When probed specifically about whether they would call the police in situations where it seemed necessary, the sentiment seemed to be that they would and they thought the police would be able to handle the situation well.

> *"If it is more of a major crime, like somebody is breaking into your house, and your life could be threatened, then, yes. I would trust them to come quicker than if someone was breaking into your car or some other random person's car."* —*Youth*

> *"I feel like in life threatening situations, they are good at being there."*
>
> —*Youth*

1.6   SUMMARY

DHM Research investigated perceptions of public safety, policing practices, and Portland Police among select communities: people experiencing mental health issues, people experiencing homelessness, LGBTQ+ people, and youth. The purpose of the research was to assess public perception of public safety, policing practices, and Portland police. Findings demonstrated that interpersonal connection is a fundamental component of people's attitudes about safety in the community and their view of good policing. The chance to be heard and share their point of view was valued by those who participated in these groups.

Appendix   4

City of Portland
Community Policing FGs (6)
Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct; 8/15/16; Portland, N=9
Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community; 8/15/16; Portland; N=10
Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness; 8/16/16; Portland; N=10
Group 4: Youth; 8/16/16; Portland; N=8
Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct; 8/18/16; Portland; N=9
Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct; 8/18/16; Location; N=8

Appendix A
Participant Demographics

City and Zip Code

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Portland/97217	Portland/97214	Portland/Southwest	Portland/97236	Portland/97201
Portland/97211	Portland 97202	Portland/Southeast	Portland/97206	Portland/97205
Portland/97232	Portland/97210	Portland/Southeast	Portland/97216	Portland/97202
Portland/97217	Portland/97217	Portland/Southeast	Portland/97206	Portland/97232
Portland/97211	Portland/97209	Portland/Northeast	Portland/97233	Portland/97214
Portland/97211	Portland/97233	Portland/Southeast	Portland/97206	Portland/97209
Portland/97211	Portland/97214	Portland/Southeast	Portland/97236	Portland/97202
Portland/97211	Portland/97203	Portland/Northeast	Portland/97206	Portland/97205
Portland/97220	Portland/97205		Portland/97202	
Portland/97218	No response		Portland/97202	

Occupation*

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
No response	Student, guidance counselor	Student	Porter	Mother
Massage Therapist	Manufacturing	Unemployed	Retail Associate	No answer
No response	No response	Customer Service	No answer	No answer
Postal worker	No response	Disabled	Freelance Designer	Student
Bookkeeper	No response	Unemployed	No answer	No answer
Senior Admin Assistant	No response	Unemployed	Master of Law Student	Disabled
On unemployment	Transcriptionist	Store Owner	Ride Share Diver, Weekend Retail	Waiter

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Grad. Research/ Teaching Asst.	College student	Housekeeping	Line Cook	Disabled plumber
Mental Health Therapist in private practice	Home care worker	Cannabis packager	US Postal Service (retired), Musician	
Student	No response	Artist/welder	Dance Instructor	

* This topic was not covered on the recruiting screener for Group 4 (Youth).

Respondents in Group 3 indicated during recruitment that they had experienced homelessness.

Spend the Night in Which Part of Portland

Response Category	GROUP 3
Northeast Portland	1
Northwest Portland	0
Southeast Portland	5
Southwest Portland	3

Education Level*

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Less than High School Grade (1-11)	1	0	1	0	0
High School Graduate	0	1	4	1	2
Some College, Technical School, Community College, 2-Year Degree	3	6	4	5	4
College Degree/4-Year Degree	5	2	1	2	2
Post College	1	0	0	1	0
No Response	0	1	0	0	0

* This topic was not covered on the recruiting screener for Group 4 (Youth).

Household Income*

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Under $15,000	2	2	3	4
$15,000 - $29,999	2	1	4	1
$30,000 - $49,999	3	5	0	2
$50,000 - $74,999	1	1	2	0
$75,000 - $99,999	2	0	0	1
$100,000+	0	0	1	0
No Response	0	1	0	0

* This topic was not covered on the recruiting screener for Group 3 (Homeless) or Group 4 (Youth).

Recent Contact with Portland Police Officer

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Yes	7	6	8	4	8	6
No	3	3	2	4	2	2
No response	0	1	0	0	0	0

Gender

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Male	3	3	3	2	3	3
Female	5	6	5	5	4	5
Gender neutral/fluid	1	1	0	0	0	0
Non-binary	1	0	0	1	2	0
Trans	0	1	2	0	0	0
Genderqueer/NGC	0	0	0	0	1	0
No response	0	1	0	0	0	0

Identify as LBGTQ+

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
Yes	5	9	5	1	7	2
No	5	0	4	7	3	6
No response	0	1	1	0	0	0

Racial or Ethnic Group (Mark all that apply)

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
White/Caucasian	10	8	7	5	9	6
Black/African American	1	2	1	1	0	0
Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	1	1	2	3	2	1
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	2
Native American	0	0	0	0	2	2
No Response	0	1	0	0	0	0

Age

Response Category	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6
>18	1	0	0	8	0	0
18 – 24	0	0	1	0	1	1
25 – 34	2	5	2	0	6	1
35 – 44	3	2	5	0	2	2
45 – 54	2	1	2	0	0	0
55 – 64	2	0	0	0	0	3
65 – 74	0	0	0	0	1	0
75+	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Response	0	2	0	0	0	1

In a few words or short sentences, name some things that you like about living in Portland. Put one star next to your most favorite thing and two stars next to your second-best favorite thing.

Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct
- *Volunteer opportunities; **limitations in social development on marginalized areas needing work; arts; food; people; diversity; education opportunities
- *Welcoming culture (especially LGBT community); food variety; parks; environmental awareness.
- *Bicycle highways; **nature; trees; people; food; libraries; schools; close to the coast
- *close to the beach/mountains; **lots of trees/roses/plants; small city; clean air, mass transit.
- *public transportation; walkability; proximity to get out of the city.
- *Diversity/no judgement; food; grid; women; bars/breweries; parks; Max
- *Culture; weather; size; people; politics; neighborhoods; dog/pet friendly; inclusive
- *Weather; **Friendly; fairly multicultural; politics re: Demo/etc.; NPR very reliable for me and focus; feels like home
- *close to many things; trees; green; it smells nice; a lot of kinds of food to choose from; quiet but still has a decent number of events

Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community
- *Fresh air; **ease of voting; trees; TriMet; shoe culture; educational opportunity
- *Proximity to nature (it's changed so much recently, though); **my community of friends; not too close or too far from family; my home
- *Diversity; **beards; gay-friendly; weird; politically-lefty; trans-friendly; kink-aware/friendly; temperate climate; nature around
- *Being close to my needs; **being around a diverse group of neighbors; being near my friends; shows/clubs/parties/events; clientele; parks; resources
- *lots of good food; **easy to bike; the river; the bridges; lots of parks; the library; ice cream; roller skating; Portland Fruit Tree Project
- *diversity of gender expression/non-heteronormativity; **rent is cheaper than New York; no sales tax; emphasis on nature-related activities; events are cheaper
- *LGBT friendly, very open and welcoming; **Portland nightlife; transportation; general populace of the city
- *Liberal mindset; **easy and close access to nature; affordability; variety of food; quality of food
- *Community; **Friends; weather; food; ease of transportation; outdoors; entertainment

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness
- This question was not asked to this group.

Group 4: Youth
- There's a whole lot to like about Portland, I think. The public transit is great, it has an awesome theater scene (12+ companies) and I just feel safer than other big cities.
- *The open gyms; **the nature parks; a lot of things to keep you busy; the Max
- *I like all the strange, fun people who walk down the street; **I like the trees and cleaner air than most other cities.
- *I like the art; **I like how friendly people are; I like the transportation; I like the rivers and bridges; I like that I know how to travel here

- *I love the beauty of the city; **I really like that, although it's a big city, it's not huge and overwhelming; I love the community in Portland
- *the people; **Portland Parks & Rec; TriMet system; the libraries
- *A lot of nice places to visit on the weekends; **nice people; It's a hipster city!; easy access to a lot of different places in Portland: Southwest; Southeast, North
- *Having family close by; **community; closeness; not much traffic compared to other places; prices of merchandise; no taxes.

Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct
- *A lot of things to do and see; **weather; mixture of people; green grass; parks
- *Nightlife; *Queer community; community mindset; variety in terms of entertainment, food, activities
- *Comedy scene; **food scene; access to nature; public transit; beer scene; variety of plant life; size; bike-friendly; many bars; dog friendly
- *Drivability to different types of nature; **nature; bike-ability; diversity in lifestyle; family lives here; community; art-centered; beer, booze & Bud
- *supportive of families; **able to walk to many locations; transportation friendly; parks; accepting people; close to beach and mountains; relatively safe feelings
- *music; **people's attitude (Portlandia-esque); parks; public transportation; music scene; food (restaurants); biking; weather
- *community; **accepting people; happy people; assistance; food!; opportunity; weather; fitness; Roses!; bike trains
- *Different cultures; **good food; mostly friendly people; the Embers Avenue Bar
- *music scene; **dogs everywhere; food/restaurants; nature; cool classic cars everywhere; always some "festival"; "progressive city"

Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct
- *Food; **people; weather; downtown; transportation
- *the weather; **very little traffic; liberal; no waiting in lines at restaurants; doesn't take a long time to drive to places; the people; natural health resources; vegan options
- *they have good transportation; a lot of different restaurants; things to do thurs a lot; the city is growing way fast.
- *close to the beach and mountains; **parks; mid-sized city feel, opportunities to attend events, great food, drag queens
- *weather temperate over 60 degrees; **summertime; VAMC Hospital and Clinic PCC; transportation.
- Downtown, convenience; **diversity; it's good to be weird, non-judgmental; kind of clean
- *Food culture; **nature; temperature (except today); public transit; music scene; accessibility; scenery; sense of community
- *people; **environment; weird; green; family; restaurants; beautiful; lots to do

In a few words or short sentence, name some problems in Portland that you'd like to see addressed. Put one star next to the most important thing and two stars next to the second most important thing.

Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct
- *colorblind attitudes; **help for the needy and marginalized; gentrification; helping the homeless; rent costs
- *Homeless population; **gentrification; lack of racial diversity and integration; unemployment; lack of resources for homeless and LGBT youth
- *Homelessness; **functional, non-exploitative growth; mental health treatment; police; housing control
- *crime; **drug problems; homeless people; clean water/air
- *rental rates; **stigmatism around language—low income, volunteering; drug addiction and treatment of post-incarcerated
- *Homelessness/begging; **cleaner; cheaper prices on food
- *Housing prices/development; **rising income inequity; streets/infrastructure
- *Homeless; **crime; prost; drugs; crime; higher wages; traffic
- *Return of land to indigenous people; **police brutality and accountability; redlining, gentrification; classist laws, sweeping of streets; lack of affordable housing; reparations for black and indigenous people; racial justice; gender justice

Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community
- *Racist liberal culture; **housing affordability; bike culture; Californians; Voodoo donuts; Portlandia show; TriMet
- *Homelessness/Houselessness; **housing prices; traffic (especially I-5 bridge to Washington); Jobs (not enough, hard to obtain)
- *Tenant rights; **Homelessness; urban sprawl; too much building; no licensing or laws for bicyclists
- *Homeless situation; **RAPID RISE IN RENT w/no jobs to support.
- *Friendly people; **walking everywhere; more affordable for me; slightly warmer; smaller streets; food trucks
- *Fast rising rent; **low minimum wage; unsafe to bike in areas without traffic calming; public schools have problems.
- *Gentrification/redlining; **institutional racism/police treatment; homelessness; mental health treatment by cops; job hunting
- *Homelessness/housing; **Cleanliness of the downtown/Pearl; better housing access for vets; more resources
- *racism; **diversity; gentrification; roads need to be improved; speed limit too low; freeways in Portland metro area should have more lanes (wider)
- *Cost of living; **people being pushed out; housing; attitudes; parking

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness
- This question was not asked to this group.

Group 4: Youth
- *Actors equity contracts totally suck; **Gentrification; not tons of racial diversity; so many theater companies means less funding; PPS SUUCKS!!OMG
- *People moving here; **some schools; police stations; how dirty downtown is
- *I don't like having so many homeless; **I don't like the trash people dump everywhere

- *I don't like the number of homeless people; **I don't like the violence; I don't like how there is so much litter; I don't like that people don't care about the environment; I don't like that people move here.
- I honestly have no idea; *Oh, maybe traffic—I hate that everyone's moving here; **I don't have a two.
- *gentrification; **homelessness; schools; not many bike lanes in some parts
- *There are a lot of homeless people, so it can get scary at night; **Transit is sometimes crowded.
- *Housing; **some school systems; not knowing half my family; busing everywhere

Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct
- *Homeless taken care of; **equality; people being more open
- *Displacement of minorities; **Rental crisis; gentrification; lack of forethought around community projects; lack of TriMet system and difficult areas
- *Increases in rent; **Lack of racial diversity; increased traffic levels with poor infrastructure to adapt; unchecked development—city failing to protect old business
- *Affordable housing; **real solutions for homelessness; rent raises; queer community centers; police injustices; education—PPS
- *Increasing crime; **over-development; homeless people in parks; schools need improving; traffic; noise increase; crowding; too much tourism; housing too expensive
- *traffic; **high housing prices
- *Homelessness; **housing crisis; drivers!
- *Not as trans friendly; **homeless; roads
- *gentrification; **people of color, low-income being pushed out; housing market; traffic; not a lot of culture; no good Mexican food; venues being closed

Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct
- *Homelessness; **cost of housing; better mental health
- *very high rent; **cyclist safety; resources for homeless; mostly white people
- *places for homeless people to live; animal hospitals that don't require credit cards a large down payment if your pet is sick
- *continued building of affordable housing; **higher minimum wage; rent control; stop demolition on historic places or houses.
- *Housing; **employment; police; diversity; court system; public defenders; friendliness
- *cheaper housing in downtown; **more schools; more trees; more housing; more stores; transportation to go later
- *Housing and housing rent cap; **homeless; roadways, repair; more train lines; higher wages for service industry
- *drug use; **homelessness; unemployment; panhandling

Appendix C
Written Exercise 2

What makes a community a safe place to live?

Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct
- *car; respect; communication; empathy; economic support; cultural support; social support; affordable medical & psych care services; work opportunities; fun for community-diverse in nature
- Mutual respect; inter-dependency; reliable, effective police, fire, EMT; community pride; development (sidewalks, parks, streetlights, crosswalks)
- Inclusive & affordable housing; responsible community policing; accountability; comprehensive/connected social services; displacement prevention
- Laws; neighborhood involvement/associations; police; good politicians
- Affordability; community involvement—know your neighbors; individuals that lead by example; public services that feel safe to use
- Security cameras; neighborhood watch/meetings; clean environment; lights; law enforcement
- Neighborhoods; friendly police presence; people pay attention; community; clean/well lit
- Safe construction including other materials, windows, etc.; knowing neighbors; affordable and accessible; low crime; handicapped access; transportation; services—groceries, MDs, etc.
- Trust between all members, interdependent; resources that are equally and fairly distributed; resources that are equally and fairly distributed; accessible healthcare and health resources; clean and sanitary streets, food, land; horizontal leadership and equal distribution of power/lack of hierarchies; free and accessible education; inclusive policies

Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community
- Community autonomy; community "policing"; access to resources; access to basking needs and recreation; access to safe transit (pedestrian, bike, car, public transit)
- Neighborhoods; knowing neighbors/community; sidewalks; low speed limits; Traffic restrictions including one-way streets, stop signs, stop lights, no driving zones; community
- Street lighting; strong policing but trained for diversity; clear signage on streets; harsher penalties for real crimes, not parking.
- Teaching consent in schools to children; creating boundaries for communities to follow; a strict adherence to due process; a non-revenue approach to policing; an ability for communities to interact in positive ways
- *Difficult to find a job for me; **more people entering the city causing more traffic; increasing rent (but this isn't my problem, I just hear about it)
- trust; diversity; events/activities; verandas/shared space; shared space in general; alternative transportation
- people can afford enough food and adequate healthcare; nearby grocery stores; people have stable jobs, so they don't have to move repeatedly; parks for recreation; libraries with long hours; non-bars for places for the community to gather and relax; walkable—good sidewalks, businesses nearby.
- Having community discussions about issues to address racism, profiling, police brutality; not criminalizing people of color; accountability by cops; interrupting oppression, diffusion of responsibility
- People; caring people; better traffic system; public meetings; police accountability; better emergency services
- *Unarmed police presence; **diversity; pedestrian and bike-only roadways; access to nature; trees; good schools; good grocery stores; parks; cultural events
- Diversity; education!!!!; access to affordable food, shelter, healthcare; opportunity; mentorship

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness

- Protection; cooperation; respect; acceptance; tolerance
- Local community centers; peace officers that know the person; communication within the community.
- Balanced government/decision/enforcement; balanced population?; appeal process/review; self-policing community makers
- Communication between people in the community; neighborhood watch group; the police department; home security system.
- Effort; knowing neighbors
- Communication; getting along with others; listening
- Streetlights; no meth house; clean streets
- Respect for all backgrounds, lifestyles, etc; proper police/authority training
- Laws; crosswalks; bike paths; where your lives makes a big difference; lights
- Neighborhood watch groups; police education programs; infrastructure; streetlights; social services; public health; sanitation; law enforcement; city works

Group 4: Youth

- Good police; diverse citizens; readily available food and such?; people should feel comfortable with their neighbors; good schools; other emergency services
- Neighborhood watch; making everybody feel at home; having cops drive through the community regularly
- A police force; citizens watching out for each other; street lights.
- Working together; food/water; no one trying to steal; no fights; affordable housing; diversity; clean
- Food; shelter; clean water; protection-reliable; trust?; tolerance/acceptance—maybe; natural disaster people (firemen, EMTs)
- Rules/laws; respectful people; responsible police; places to go for help (ex: homeless shelters)
- Police force (patrolling the streets); firefighters; crosswalks that are safe; easy access to crosswalks everywhere; traffic lights; schools; community centers; crosswalk lights
- Police; community centers; parks; getting to know your neighbors; schools; gates and locks

Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct

- Working together; things for kids to do; bringing families together; teaching our kids the rights way; acceptance of all people
- Awareness; compassion; knowledge/education; open hearts and minds; respect; services
- Advocate base-level of a standard of living for the lowest classes; realistic drug education program
- Looking out for each other; willingness to help; community centers; appropriate access to services; relative representation of diversity within services; being friendly with one-another; transit access to communities
- Access to resources for homeless/mentally ill people in need; affordable healthcare; policing with proper training; affordable housing at all levels of income; clean water and communal lands; good schools; places for kids/teens to hang out off the streets
- Communicate with neighbors (knowing them); caring about neighborhoods; diversity of neighborhoods (financial, social, etc.)
- Equality; closeness to neighbor; community activities; familiar faces; love
- Looking out for each other; creating friendships; parents watching all kids on the block.
- Communication; having each other's back; accountability; less crowding; inclusiveness; services for addition/mental health

Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct
- Communication; outing; bbq
- Resources for mental health/the homeless; low gun ownership; good-hearted people; effective police force
- Neighborhood watch; places for people to go; community centers; neighborhood security who patrol every hour
- Neighbors who are vigilant for each other; safe bike routes/sidewalks; lighting on street corners; lower crime rate; safe roads
- Low unemployment; homeowners; community activities; police well trained; neighborhood watch
- Protections/police; know each other; locks; beware of surroundings; study the neighborhood, doing research; 911, call fast.
- Police patrols; lighting; security; housing; shelters and outreach places; easy access to urgent care/mental health; visibility
- Police; laws and enforcement; people who care; people who watch out for each other

What would make the Portland community safer?
(Groups 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 were not asked this question.)

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness
- Protection for minorities
- More help for the homeless; more help to end drugs and the theft it leads to. (The ones that steal to support)
- Judicial review and oversight.
- Cracking down on the gangs; clean up the street drugs; helping the people on the streets get housing.
- Less tweakers
- Safer place to be. Keeping guns out.
- Clean streets of homeless encampments; get people work (not panhandling); education
- Less/no racism
- Less illegal immigrants; get rid of measure 11; less rain; less bars/strip clubs; wider freeways; more stop signs.
- Better social services funding; community healthcare clinics; homeless services; drug rehab inpatient; drop in spaces/community centers; treatment courts and alternatives to jail.

All things considered, how good of a job are the Portland Police doing on the following: Good, Okay or Poor?

Some respondents chose multiple answers
Not all respondents answered every question

Response Category	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Preventing crime						
Good	1	1	0	1	1	2
Okay	6	7	4	7	3	4
Poor	3	2	5	1	6	1
Make people feel safe						
Good	0	0	0	2	0	2
Okay	4	3	4	6	4	4
Poor	5	8	5	1	6	3
Treating all people fairly						
Good	0	0	1	2	1	1
Okay	3	2		4	3	5
Poor	6	7	8	2	6	2
Understanding perspectives and lived realities of people experiencing mental health challenges/ LGBTQ+ community/people who are homeless/teens and young adults						
Good	0	0	0	2	0	0
Okay	3	3	6	4	2	2
Poor	7	8	3	4	8	4

Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct
▪ Participants did not include additional comments

Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community
▪ I feel like Portland in general is OK with LGB people, but less so as you go through the acronym. Trans people get left out in the LGB culture and in awareness
▪ I was arrested (not in the last year) for DV when my ex was attacking me. Two girls confused them, I think? Not enough positive police presence in queer spaces and events. I got pulled over a lot when I had rainbows on my bumper.
▪ Not clear. Most experiences with police, if I'm being treated better or worse due to being openly/visibly gay. Am I being victimized or playing a victim, or being made to feel as if I'm playing a victim?
▪ In general, they seem to lack cultural understanding—many experiences of explaining myself, such as off duty or just curious people.
▪ I feel like I'm not able to answer these question probably because I have had zero interactions with the Portland PD. I've never been stopped in Portland. I've never even talked to an officer here. Zero interactions.
▪ I don't feel comfortable interacting with the police, as I feel pre-judged and as though I'm being threatened. Anything about me that might deviate from the norm could trigger a bad outcome in my interaction with an officer.
▪ I think they need to be better trained and informed on how to treat LGBTQ+ folk with respect, kindness, fairness, and equality, including respecting their identity, pronouns, etc.
▪ No care about how the people are treated; over-geared for general police work; can be disrespectful

- I feel this way based on my own experiences and those of others close to me. I've seen police dismiss and walk away when a friend told them they were just threatened with violence.
- Few interactions where my queer identity has been a topic. However, I have yet to hear about any steps in education on the police's part to improve their understanding.

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness
- Participants did not include additional comments

Group 4: Youth
- [re: rating "Understanding Teenagers" good] This is surprising, because I expect to find myself under constant suspicion, but all the experiences I've had with Portland Police have been pretty positive.
- Understanding teenagers is rated poor because like say a police catches a teenager drinking. Instead of taking it and pouring it out, they take you to 5th to wait for your parents.
- Most police understand that teenagers are just being teenagers, but sometimes they will react to something when nothing's wrong.
- Preventing crime: they don't do a great job, but they do ok depending on the area. Making people feel safe: in between okay and poor because a lot of people don't call the cops when they need extra help because they don't help all situations. Understanding teenagers: they always approach
- My friend was pulled over, but it felt like the cop was trying to bust her for something and we were only out studying.
- They make assumptions that aren't true. I think they're not in touch with teens.
- Sometimes they can be nice and understand our situation if we are doing bad, but at other times we can be judgmental and not want to deal with us so it is an okay experience with them.
- They know that teenagers are harder to understand and communicate with, but sometimes they don't know how to relate with the teen or how to talk so they understand what will happen.

Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct
- I think it's something they don't know or understand much about and not very sympathetic to who you are or what issues you have
- I speak with my friends, see the homeless and my own personal experience. I feel like their intentions are fair, but it's still lacking.
- The Portland Police tend to treat the person as the problem and not the mental health challenges
- On-situation assessments inaccurate; communication methods are inadequate
- No response
- I have had friends who have mental health problems who were not treated well—roughed up—because police though they could be violent. They weren't.
- I believe they understand a little more than most officers due to the prevalence of this community. The majority of people they work with have mental health issues, so I believe they are more aware than most.
- Lack of understanding instilling fear of mistreatment
- No services; arrests for being mentally ill; "drunk tank"; victim blaming

Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct
- I am not 100% sure. I think they are doing better than 6 years ago.
- I don't have first-hand experience with this so I don't know.
- Because they release them right back to the street with no help, a supervisor, no one to help them with medication. These people are bad.
- Police force could have special forces to deal with emotional distressed people or have a therapist ride along to those calls, could offer housing options to homeless population.

- Portland Police Department is doing a poor job because they're understaffed and poorly trained. Retirement plan sucks. "They don't care."
- An okay job. Refer to resources to take care of people with mental health. (William Temple House, AA meetings)
- I've personally seen police with little training in helping people with mental illness deal with them. Better overall understanding and tactics are needed here.
- They judge you and they are rude and don't give you a chance to explain your side of the problem.

What advice would you give the Portland Police about making sure that the community is safe for people experiencing mental health challenges/the LGBTQ+ community/people who are experiencing homelessness/teens and young adults.

Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct
- education on stereotyping with safety for all considered
- greater training for mental health as well as diverse members of the community. Work on recognizing their own prejudices and not letting them affect their response
- Do better trainings; community policing models; community involvement; multiple agency (social services) collaborations; train your officers
- Be compassionate; be knowledgeable of what help is out there for people in mental health crisis
- Learn to recognize when you ARE NOT qualified to help a mental health individual and call someone who is
- No answer
- Be a part of the community you are serving; get to know residents and makeup of neighborhood
- Insist on good training and continuing education; cultural shift (internal) re: discussing/processing issues; safe space/place to talk
- Keep police accountable for unjust, biased or unfair action toward persons with MI; learn to differentiate between people who are a danger to themselves more than the police; do not assume someone acting non-normal is criminal; consider the situation before attributing things to the person
- I think that if the Portland police spent time not as on-duty officers, but as people interacting with the homeless it would teach both sides not to be afraid and could help. Off duty means not go back to do an arrest or build a case.

Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community
- Disband; Keep police officers in specific communities so they gain insight and connection in that area. I want to not see cops as cops, I wanted to see a cop as Jim from down the street. Or be able to say, "Karen's sister goes to school with me." I need them out of uniform and gear as much as possible to hold those relationships that can be life-changing and life-saving. Community policing works.
- *Walk in our communities—outside queer events at night specifically---make positive comments (Are you having a good night?) and maybe positive small talk. Make us feel like PEOPLE who are WORTH their time and who are WORTH protecting; *Maybe wear rainbow pins or trans (blue/pink/white)pins on their uniforms to show they are safe people for us specifically; *Mandatory volunteer hours with LGBTQ+ Youth (SMYRC; Yellow Brick Road/ Janus)
- Be friendly, make jokes; ask questions in a non-accusatory fashion; get out of your cars; ask what pronouns one prefers; believe people who feel victimized and work to make them feel safe, not dismissed; assign work in diverse/mixed pairs—every couple should have racial or gender diversity; rotate shifts so people aren't bound, but learn differences; pronouns—Mr. Ms. Miss—use first name.
- Please focus on sensitivity training for trans women and men. Identify non-passing trans folk and PROTECT them when possible. Understand that many LGBTQ+ people have endured trauma, lost their families and have a hard time obtaining work and housing and treat them with more dignity. INTERSECTIONALTY TRAINING
- I would say listen to the people! Personally, I don't feel like I'm educated in this matter enough to provide advice, but I know there's people who are much less ignorant than me who have great ideas about this topic. I think being a police officer is probably really hard and what I mean I don't think I

can possibly fathom everything that's going on on both sides to give good advice. I feel very uncomfortable giving advice to people without personal experience on the topic.

- Make an effort to engage in positive, non-punitive interactions with the LGBTQ+ community. Maybe walk more, smile, be social and friendly. Make it so the presence of an officer is not only happening when there's a problem, but have officers interact with the community so that people (business owners, event organizers) know and recognize officers. No anonymity or hiding in patrol cars. Hire more diverse employees.
- Training about LGBTQ+ folks (respect, kindness, pronoun and gender expressions, treatment); being more involved in LGBTQ+ community; recognize; acknowledgment that there is a long history of negative treatment of LGBTQ+ folks and with PTSD and mental illness; accountability and responsibility; treatment of homeless folks
- Be proactive with LGBT community. Be outgoing with community; be friendly; hire more LGBT
- I would advise the Portland PD to educate themselves about how to positively interact with the LGBTQ+ community before doing so. This could be in the form a workshop, speaking with the LGBTQIA community, independent research, etc.
- Disarm; culturally responsive trainings; officers who work in their own neighborhoods; more diversity; continuing education w/incentives; transparency and accountability; clear statements of intent, check-in with people they're interacting with; ask for pronouns; peace keepers not lawmakers; IPV advocate training

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness
- Treat people with dignity and respect. Consider giving the person the benefit of the doubt. Avoid asking for ID right away. Consider what this person might be going through at the time.
- You need civilian oversight; you need to be held to a HIGHER standard than the community you are policing; demonstrate accountability; police yourself first; apologize and correct the ERROR
- Be more understanding with people in general (example: homeless); be more calm and mellow when talking to the public and try to help someone in need, rather than arresting them; give advice if asked; get training on how to deal with people that are homeless, LGBT, mental issues; treat others how you would want to be treated.
- Not all are alcoholics; addicts; mentally unstable; Better situation/assessment
- Treat people with kindness; everybody you see isn't on drugs; don't judge
- No answer
- Better training (on how to handle mentally ill, homeless, LGBT, etc. etc.) How to read people, how to approach them, how to assist them, how to connect them with available services for them etc.; what to wear and when; don't waste resources on less "smaller" crimes.
- Put yourself in our shoes. We could be one of your loved ones. If I haven't broken the law, don't ask for my ID. Because if I was breaking the law, I wouldn't have it on me in the first place.
- Portland police should consider expanding existing crisis intervention training resources, programs and teams. Possibly consider wearing plain clothes when assigned to crisis intervention teams while working with project respond.

Group 4: Youth
- Do your job; don't be a jerk; chill
- I would tell them to catch the ones who are doing something instead of the ones who look like they're doing something.
- Having patrols near schools and places where teens visit on a regular basis; enforcing curfews
- Patrol more and try not to approach with a closed mind and be open to what they have to say and both sides of the story. Maybe interact with events and kids to let us know we can trust and to be able to build some sort of safety and to know you're not here to get us in trouble.

- Make sure you're there/be present; and aware that people are here are kids; and we're not all bad and listen.
- Be present (patrolling); be on first-name basis with people in the community; attend community events
- Make sure they have a good personality so when they do have to interact with us, it will be a nice one; get to know the schools; make sure to understand us.
- Make sure they don't make teens uncomfortable and when something goes wrong to help the tens get back on the right track if they were into drugs or trouble

Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct
- Learn what a mental health is; be thoughtful of their needs; don't assume they're all bad; know how to deal with them as a person
- Be aware, listen more. Not just to the person, but to yourself beyond your training. Question yourself before responding, and find compassion
- Understand that mental health challenges themselves are no crimes. Often times, a mental health crisis can be understood as such and rectified with qualified professionals without looking at the incident in a criminal character
- Adequate diversity and cultural education; more communication tools; more cultural diversity within the force; more compassion
- Portland police need to have more patience, work to not escalate problems as much as possible; contact local mental health specialists and do what is needed to respect the individual having the crisis.
- Empathy. We all have experiences with friends, relatives or ourselves with mental illness. Better training in handling mental health situations. Don't overreact
- Relate better; understand better; be more compassionate; don't jump to conclusions. Understand what is actually going on on a personal level. I feel like these people have never been in situations where they personally have to deal with certain people and issues. These people then make broad laws, legislation, whatever, that is not form an understanding point of view. They have no idea what problems people in the community fare since most are wealthier, never been there types of people.
- Listen to the people and ask questions without judgement and without intimidation
- Your presence makes people's stress escalate because of your behaviors. You should not be the ones responding to mental health crisis.

Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct
- Compassion; patience
- Be educated in mental health; know how to deescalate situations before being reactive; approach people with compassion; your job is to protect people and keep them safe.
- They should ask if there's a mental health problem. What meds they are on? Who is their doctor? Try to have hour opportunities in the field on site.
- Be willing to approach people with mental illness in a less military/formal way. Try to calm agitated people. Hire staff and crisis workers to escort police. Try to find them solutions other than being arrested for being ill (like a hospital or clinic or social services department.
- Try not to be so intimidating; be nice; do not look intimidating; care; don't assume the person has to go to jail; Baker Act before jail
- To be more compassionate. Be human being, put themselves on the other people's shoes (reverse roles). Treat people equally, despite their appearances; Having behavioral units, the mental health specialist predicting what a disturbed person might do next.
- Approach cautiously, but with understanding; deescalate situations and diffuse; training courses offered; empathy

- If no crime is being committed, just a disturbance, you should have special police handle the 911 call response. Don't escalate a mental health crisis.

What advice would you give to Portland's elected leaders about making sure that the community is safe for people experiencing mental health challenges/the LBGTQ+ community/people who are experiencing homelessness/teens and young adults?

Group 1: Experiencing Mental Health Issues North Precinct
- More study on social interactions and outcomes from empirical sources. Peer reviewed as well responsibly (personal)
- More intentional use of funds to programs that promote community engagement, diversity and inclusivity. Greater focus on prevention of homelessness, crime, etc.
- Focus on low-income housing, housing retention.
- Represent the people who voted you on the platform you ran on; do not be corrupt; be dedicated to your office and the people you serve.
- Why are there more mental health services in the post-judicial system, i.e. parole and probation, than there are in any other part of the process
- Understand that they themselves are in a different state of mind that is not confused with mental anguish. Awareness of the fact we are all big and different and not assume; train on human relations; a course certificate required for humanitarianism
- More funding for training of police and mental health outreach; make sure resources are available
- Incorporating mental health professions into the justice system; funding; looking at change in laws around mental health
- Do not criminalize people who are having mental health challenges or are in a MI crisis; provide funding for resources to better serve people who are going through mental health crisis.

Group 2: LGBTQ+ Community
- Provide access to resources!!!; Allow us to be ourselves and become ourselves; protect from micro-aggressions; believe Queer people; support Queer students; better the foster care system
- Speak publically about their commitment to LGBTQ+ safety. Mandate sensitivity trainings for <u>all</u> city employees <u>especially</u> police (including transit police). Emphasize PEACEkeeping over physical combat policy about weapons/gear on police.
- Hire more diverse cops; punish cops who break diversity. In reality not giving them cushy desk jobs; hold more forums or Anonymous suggestions online and pay attention. Don't belittle answers.
- STOP SELLING OUR PROPERTY TO WALL STREET. Make more effective solutions to our homeless, which involves many LGBTQ+ that have been turned out of their family's homes.
- This is such a big question and I am really lacking the education and knowledge about this. I guess I would say don't disregard people. Everybody matters. But also they need to actually get elected to be in office. So they need to be popular. I don't know, sorry!
- Government leaders need to make an effort to understand the needs of the LGBTQ+ citizens, to be pro-active in engaging in conversation with organizations representing LGBTQ+ interests and talking with individual citizens.
- Programs for police training about LGBTQ+ folks re: respect, kindness, pronoun and gender expressions, treatment; implicit attitude test for cops
- Same as above [be proactive with LGBT community. be outgoing with community; be friendly; hire more LGBT]
- My first piece of advice for city elected officials would be the same as the police [to educate themselves about how to positively interact with the LGBTQ+ community before doing so. This could be in the form a workshop, speaking with the LGBTQIA community, independent research, etc.] I would also ask them to consider our community and their LGBTQIA constituents when governing our city.
- Speak with LGBTQ folks to hear their needs; fund public programs and initiatives for LGBTQ folks

Group 3: Experiencing Homelessness

- Please call Ree Karhous of "Boots on the Ground" 503-465-7750.; Community resources for homeless/transient are helpful. Please explore adding more and varied resources. Programs to help homeless reintegrate. Put a stop to building apartments/townhouses/row houses that people cannot afford.
- Spend time some time on internal and take some of the funds that go to unnecessary policing and put it towards the homeless
- You need civilian oversight; take the advice of the community; you need to be ready to throw down: get your hands dirty; demonstrate accountability; apologize and correct error. End use of "UNFORTUNATELY"
- Need to help people with housing services, social services.
- Stop wasting money.
- Not sure
- No answer
- Listen to community (who voted for you); live in their shoes for a week.
- Stop taking bribes; put the working or lower class before your rich friends. Integrity
- We should consider homeless outreach teams which can engage with the population and better connect them to services. I would ask that you consider expediting funding to project respond to serve the larger community by hiring more therapists and social workers.

Group 4: Youth

- Okay, this is really specific, but Tokyo and Glasgow installed blue streetlights and they hugely lowered crime rates. Why? Blue is a calming color; Blue is associated with police presence.
- I would tell them give more community centers and also to be active with the people.
- Community events to involve teens
- Build more community centers; provide resources; advertise safety and examples
- Make sure there are police on patrol and around.
- Give money to community centers; build homeless shelters; educate people on different resources
- Give us a place to feel safe (like community centers); have the police go to schools so that teens can understand that they are there to help us; build a community
- Make more safe programs for teens who need somewhere to go. Make sure all teens have the materials they need for school and money to get to school and home.

Group 5: Experiencing Mental Health Issues East Precinct

- Teach
- Listen more to what the people are telling you is needed. Not so much what the police heads tell you. Dig deep into the dirt of your city.
- Understand that housing first is a pivotal concept in the first step to alleviating mental health crises. The city should act swiftly to provide more adequate housing care to those who have been disadvantaged (or mental health challenges) Zone for more low-income/transition housing.
- Revaluate systemic process; better "scouting" program for individuals wanting to enter the police force; adequate accessibility of services.
- Elected officials need to work harder to hold police accountable and also have some sort of non-hospital facility directed at helping people who are not committing crimes, but are in need of mental health assistance.
- Mayor needs to emphasize better training on mental health issues. He is the head of the police bureau. City council should pass legislation to get more facilities and train people to go with police to help people with mental situations.

- Same as for police [Relate better; understand better; be more compassionate; don't jump to conclusions. Understand what is actually going on on a personal level. I feel like these people have never been in situations where they personally have to deal with certain people and issues. These people then make broad laws, legislation, whatever, that is not form an understanding point of view. They have no idea what problems people in the community fare since most are wealthier, never been there types of people]
- Enforce punishment/reward for police according to their actions. Listen to the people.
- <u>More services</u>. That's it. Help them. Don't demonize them. It's worth the money to help our city.

Group 6: Experiencing Mental Health Issues Central Precinct
- Listen to the people
- Educate yourself in mental health; establish programs for people with mental health; appoint someone to represent people with mental health
- Have officers take training classes for people with mental problems and how to deal with it.
- No answer
- Lead by example
- Have more budgets, training. Responding faster (for non-emergency) After all, safety is very important.
- Fund more civic projects for mental health; better crisis management; divert funds to community and mental health
- No answer.