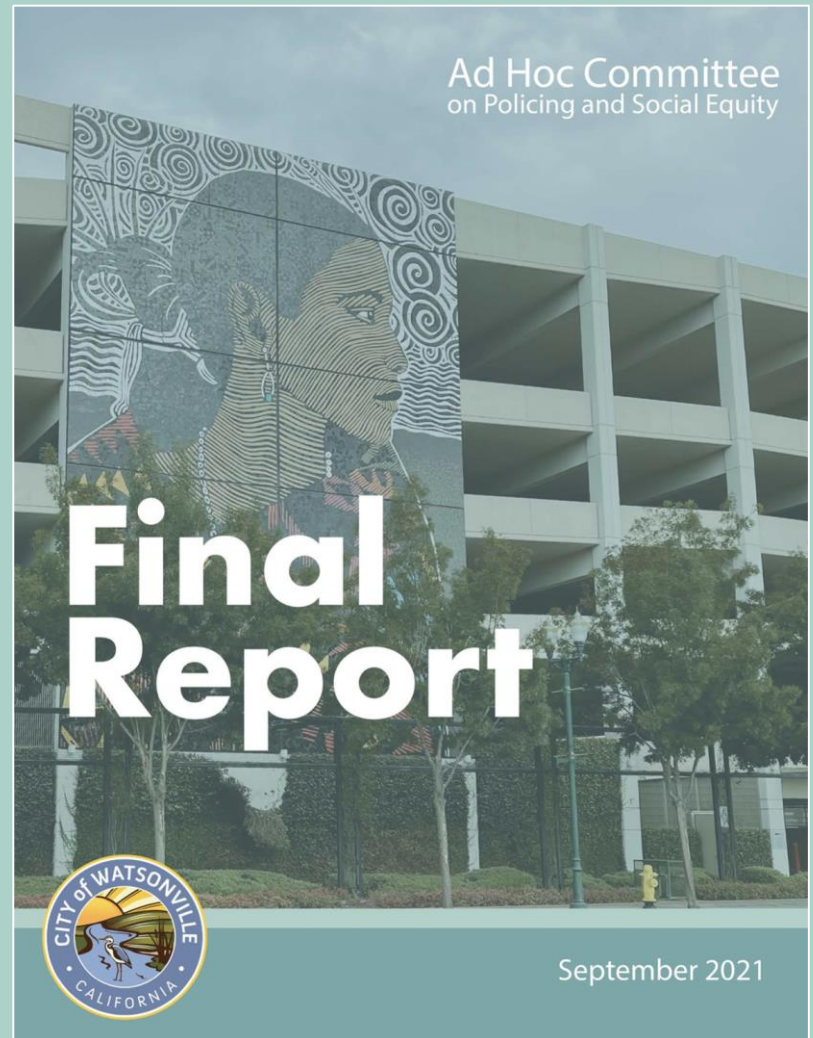




Ad Hoc Committee Final Report

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the City Council accepts and files the Ad Hoc Committee on Policing and Social Equity report.



Background

- National and community-wide calls for racial justice
- Condemnation of the murders of George Floyd
- The Watsonville City Council, Police Chief and City Manager decided to establish a Police and Social Equity Ad Hoc Committee
- To assess current practices of the city and law enforcement entity in regards to bias and social equity and explore opportunities in our community
- The eleven-month engagement effort concludes with the preparation and submission of a comprehensive report of recommendations

Establishing the Committee

- City Council invited Watsonville residents to apply and be part of the Police and Social Equity Ad Hoc Committee
- Community members were selected by the City council based on a number of demonstrated characteristics, including:
 - Commitment to racial equity, social and environmental justice, diversity and inclusion.
 - Ability to work collaboratively with people of diverse perspectives and experiences.
 - Knowledge or experience in any of the following: policy development, evaluation, local government and/or public sector partnerships, public safety, social and human services, human resources, public participation, service design and delivery, research, education or business.
 - Understanding of the systemic issues and barriers that should be examined.
 - Ability to represent the geographic and demographic diversity of the City.

Committee Members



**Kristal
Salcido**



Debbie Israel



**Jenny
Sarmiento**



**Bobby
Marchessault**



Mariana Juarez



Anissa Balderas



**Jen Salinas-
Holz**



Eric Sturm



Jeffrey Tillery



**Angelica
Martinez**



**Celeste
Gutierrez**



Jorge Duque

City Council & Police



Mayor Dutra



Council Member Gonzalez



Council Member Estrada



**Interim Assistant Chief
Zamora**



**Police Officer
Alvarez-Nava**



**Police Officer
Magaña**

Team Supporting the Ad Hoc Work



**United Way of
Santa Cruz County**

Supporting Staff & Consultants



Matt Huffaker
City Manager



Tamara Vides
Assistant City Manager



Thomas Sims
Interim Police Chief



David Honda
Retired Police Chief



Nathalie Manning
Deputy City Manager



Beatriz Vazquez Flores
City Clerk



Cindy Czerwin
Administrative Services
Director



Nick Calubaquib
Parks and Community
Services Director



Lola Maldonado
Police Fiscal Manager



Elizabeth Padilla
Sr. Administrative Analyst



Jaime Molina
Community Engagement
Consultant



Margaret Lapiz
Community Engagement
Consultant



Jenny Niklaus
Chief Facilitation Officer, ALF Insights
American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley



Jason Reynolds
Faculty ALF Insights
American Leadership Forum Silicon Valley

Intent

The overall intent of the Ad Hoc Committee process was to establish a dialogue and learning space for members of the committee so that they would be able to create an informed set of recommendations, based on community input and best practices, for a model of policing and social equity.



Process

- Engage over the course of 9 months
- Provide dialogue and learning space to create recommendations for best practices and a model for policing and social equity.
- Final recommendations to be completed by August of 2021.
- To facilitate honest and authentic dialogues to explore and adopt innovative practices for community input, policing and social equity.
- To set a culture and tone for the working group that translated into writing a defined and accomplishable set of recommendations.

Meetings to support:

Learning, dialogue & critical debate of the AdHoc
Committee on Policing and Social Equity

**Content
Experts**

+

**Home
Groups**

+

**Community
Engagement**

+

**Learning
Sessions**

Group Agreements

- Respect different viewpoints
- Stay engaged and appreciate the beauty of different perspectives
- Be accountable; take responsibility for what you say
- Listen and don't speak over others
- Listen for understanding
- Speak your truth
- Honor confidentiality: share only your experiences not others
- This should be a safe space to express your opinions
- Stay in it and hold people in grace, assume good intentions
- Share responsibility for the work of the group

Ad Hoc Committee Meetings/ Content Experts

- These sessions were designed so the committee could learn from various content experts on policing and social equity.
- A total of 6 AHC meetings were held. 5 over Zoom and 1 in person session.
- A total of 4 content experts were engaged and presented on the following topics:
 - Alternative Policing Models (Chief Phan Ngo, City of Sunnyvale)
 - Police Oversight Models (Ret. Judge LaDoris Cordell)
 - Policing and Equity (Robert Kenter, Center for Policing and Equity)
 - Policing and Equity: Mental Health and Traffic Stops (Michelle Portillo and Jacob Seidman, Stanford Law School)

Home Group Meetings

- The AHC was divided into three Home Groups for the duration of the project. Each home group contained four community members, one council member and one police officer.
- The intent of these groups was to create small learning cohorts that could rapidly build relationships in order to accelerate the process of learning and dialogue in order to develop a set of recommendations.
- Each home group met a total of 5 times over the course of the project

Learning Sessions

These sessions were designed by City staff to provide committee members the opportunity to acquire understanding and knowledge of the Watsonville Police Department and the City of Watsonville budget, City programs and other topics of interest of the AHC members.

A total of 7 sessions were held on the following topics:

- City of Watsonville Community Programs and Services
- City of Watsonville Budget 101
- City of Watsonville Recruitment, Hiring, Training Policies
- Santa Cruz County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission
- City of Watsonville Police Department Annual Report & Budget
- United Way and Copa Report on Safety Community Dialogues
- Community Engagement and Data Report

Two more sessions were organized by members of the Committee

- Systems to respond to Mental Health Calls: Cahoots and MERTY
- LGBTQ+ & Law Enforcement

Community Engagement

- A total of 10 community engagement sessions were held - 9 virtual meetings and one in person meeting
- Community meetings engaged downtown business owners; local community-based organization leaders; seniors and community members.
- Two neutral bilingual facilitators were hired to conduct the community meetings
- Surveys were mailed to every household in city limits and outreach was done at the Farmer's Market to engage more community members

C.O.P.A.

These are our recommended policy, and programs for the City and/or WPD.

- **Expand investment in current social services programs especially support for mental health or**
- **Create a pilot program that diverts non-emergency 911 calls into a non-profit program or independent agency (e.g. MERT)**
- **Reinstate the Neighborhood Services Program**
- **Create a police report follow-up/investigation system**
- **Invest in Parks and Recreation**

Shared Safety Workgroup

Dialogues: Solutions Posed

- Community events
- Alternatives to calling 911 or law enforcement
- More community-oriented policing
- More lighting
- Meaningful activities for youth; youth centered spaces; mentoring
- More parks; green spaces; arts
- Community restoration/ revitalization projects
- Increase access to mental health resources
- Trainings:
 - Youth: Self-defense
 - Business Owners: Engaging with those who have SUD/ Mental Health Issues
- Pedestrian Safety

Applied Survey Research

- “Cost of living/housing” was a top response to what takes away from the quality of life in Watsonville. Programs related to access to jobs and housing and services for youth, children and families were raised as ways to improve the quality of life.
- Most participants reported feeling safe in Watsonville, although crime was raised often as a concern.
- More quality interactions with community and varied programs would improve the effectiveness of WPD’s community policing.
- A majority of participants reported that they feel WPD is trustworthy

Decision Making Process

- The process for honing the recommendations occurred over a series of three Home Group Meetings and a final in person Meeting.
- Preliminary recommendations with a majority vote of AHC members during home group meetings were brought forward for consideration of the full committee.
- It was agreed that only those recommendations with majority vote by all members of the AHC will be in the final report.
- At the final meeting of the AHC all 9 recommendations received full support of all members of the committee.
- As the City and community continue their dialogue regarding policing and social equity, it is expected that these ideas will continue to evolve, iterate and refine over time.

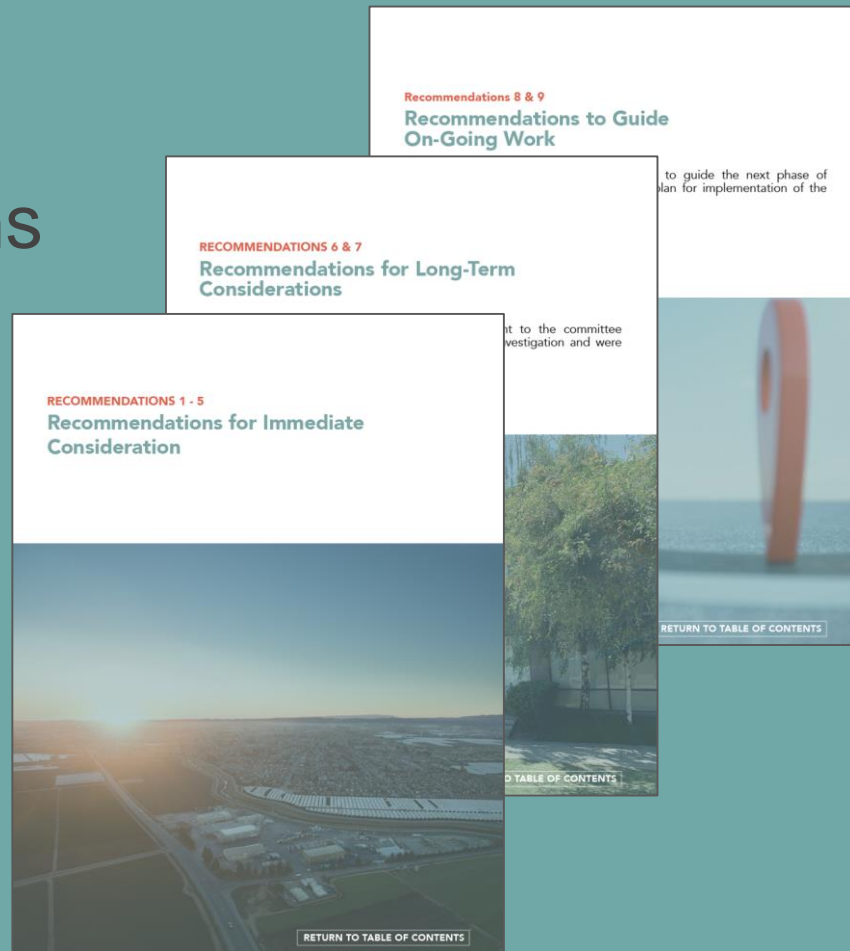
The Ad Hoc Report

How are Recommendations Organized?

1 – 5: Short Term

6 & 7: Long Term

8 & 9: On-Going



1. Mental Health and Police Involvement

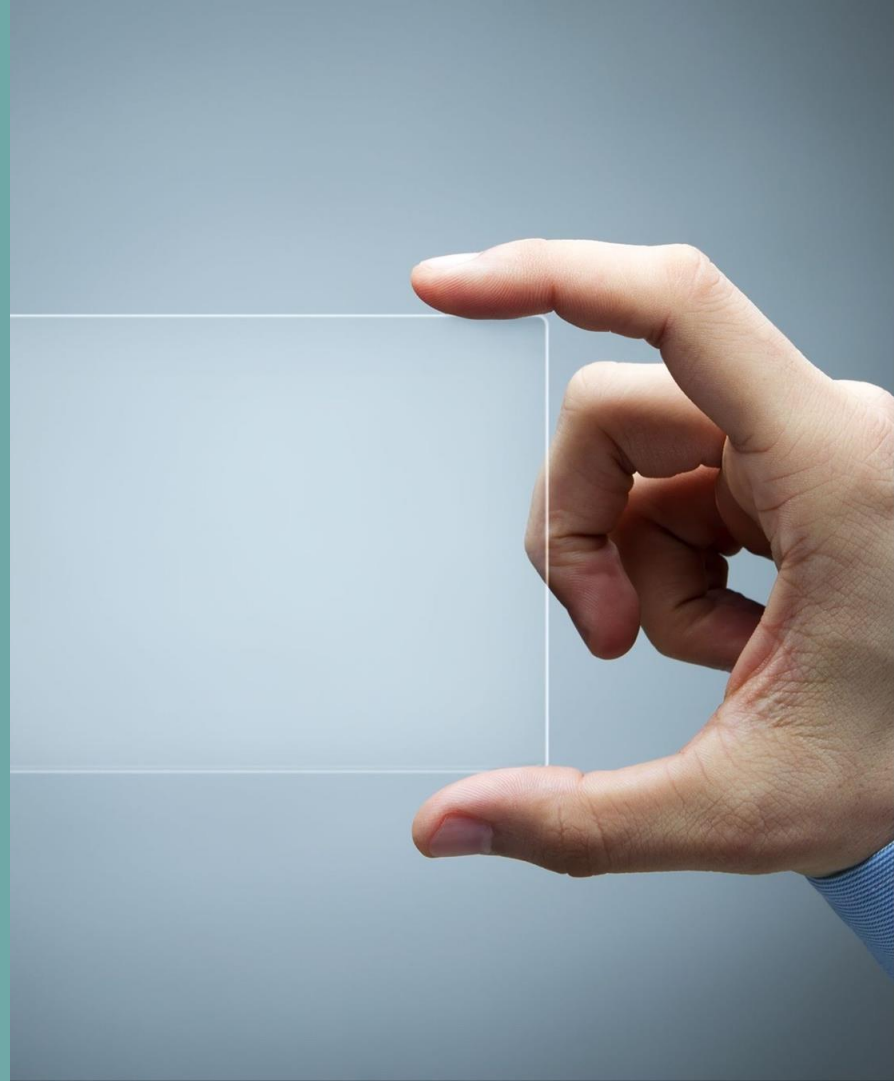
The AHC recommends that the City of Watsonville commit to collaborating with Santa Cruz County Mental Health and other partners to develop a shared, comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional, mental health services plan to enhance the coordination and response.



2. Police Oversight and Transparency

The AHC recommends that the City of Watsonville explore establishing a process for Police oversight that ensures accountability. The AHC recommends the following:

- A.** Develop a formal process for police oversight by working with experts in oversight models to structure the best process for the City of Watsonville.
- B.** Develop on-going community oversight of the recommendations provided by the Ad Hoc Committee.



3. Develop and Increase Programs for Youth & Families

Develop programs and services that keep youth from becoming police involved as well as stopping deeper involvement in the criminal justice system. In order to achieve this goal, it is recommended that the City of Watsonville consider increasing its investments in youth and family centered programs.



4. Ensure City & Police Department Budget Aligns With Community Needs

The City of Watsonville should conduct a professional assessment of the current Police Department budget and operations to determine if the current level of funding and range of services is sufficient to meet community needs and to determine if funding or services allocated for police could be restructured either within the Department itself or to other programs in the City budget.



5. Training & Hiring of Police Officers

Training: Augment the amount of training received by officers beyond the state mandated POST training.

Add discretionary training that supports officers ability to respond to community needs.



6. Traffic Traffic Safety

A. The AHC recommends that WPD engage in a data-driven process that includes experts, other police departments and the community to determine if CSOs could be utilized more broadly at WPD.

B. Using expert support, evaluate social equity in the self-initiated traffic stops by WPD.

C. Reduce the high number of traffic collisions and improve pedestrian safety.



7. Develop Partnership and Collaboration Opportunities

Increase partnership opportunities among city departments, nonprofits and community leaders as a form of community engagement and prevention.



8.Community Engagement

The AHC recommends that the City of Watsonville continue to engage the community past the acceptance of these recommendations in order to harness the wisdom and voice of the community.



9. Social Equity

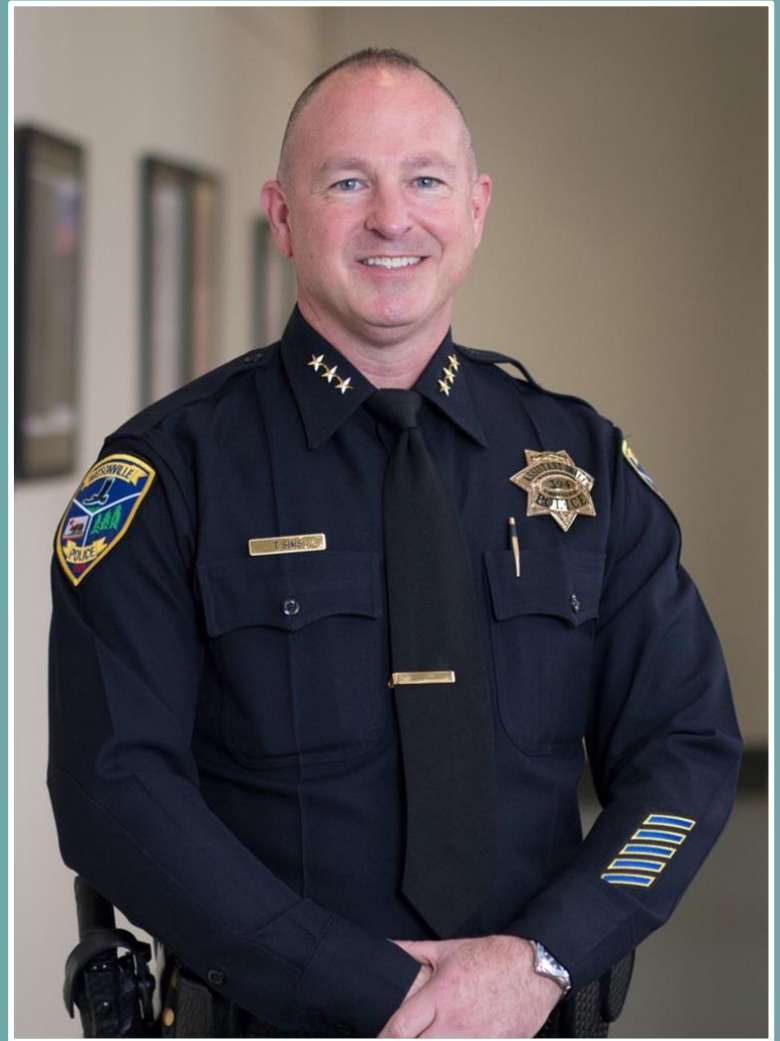
The AHC recommends that the City and WPD continue to commit to this process of learning and healing as a community.



Closing Remarks

Thomas Sims

Interim Police Chief



Next Steps

- Draft an implementation plan and provide opportunities to continue public engagement
- Cost and Procurement
- Hiring the Police Chief



Questions

