



Gregory J. Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

February 4, 2008

Police Accountability Review Panel Members via e-mail

Terrence A. Carroll, Chair
Bob Boruchowitz, Vice Chair
Jenny A. Durkan
Lorena González
Pramila Jayapal
Gary Locke
Hubert G. Locke
Judith Krebs
Mike McKay
Norm Rice
Jennifer Shaw

Dear Police Accountability Review Panel Members:

Thank you for the thorough and thoughtful report you presented me on January 29, 2008. Seven months ago I asked you to tackle a big task: to conduct an unbiased review of the police accountability system, make recommendations for possible changes to the system and explore mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability.

I deliberately sought a panel which represented a variety of viewpoints and which would not shy away from frank exchanges or asking tough questions. Your resulting report and recommendations reflect your collective experience and insight, as well as your individual independence. The fact that you achieved consensus in your recommendations is impressive and important as we move forward.

You agreed we do have a good system of police accountability in Seattle but there are ways it can be improved. Your report contains 29 recommendations to enhance and strengthen Seattle's police accountability system in four areas: accountability & public confidence; independence; professional conduct; and transparency. I have reviewed these recommendations carefully and am pleased to say I accept all of your recommendations.

More than half of the 29 recommendations will be implemented immediately. Here is how all 29 break out:

- 15 are within my authority and within the City's management right to implement immediately and I have directed staff to do so.
- 11 are within my authority and require further discussion with the City's police unions before they can be implemented. The City has agreed to meet with the police unions on these issues. Over the next two weeks, the City and the police unions will be working together to resolve this.
- 3 are within the Council's authority – 1 of those is within City's management right to implement immediately and the other 2 require further discussion with the police unions before they can be implemented.

I have attached my plan for implementing your recommendations. Here are the highlights of those that will be implemented immediately:

- The OPA Director, OPA Auditor and OPA Review Board will agree upon at least three substantive policy or procedural areas that will be the focus of enhanced review by the OPA Auditor. The first in-depth review will examine the relationship between the department and diverse communities, including communities of color.
- The OPA budget will be reviewed separately from that of the rest of the Police Department. The OPA will also have control of its own training budget.
- We will formally designate staff from the Office for Civil Rights to assist OPA complainants through the process as needed.
- The OPA Director, OPA Auditor and the OPA Review Board will independently prepare and jointly present semiannual reports which will include recommendations for improvement and a status report on the implementation of prior recommendations. Within 60 days of receiving these recommendations, the Police Chief will respond in writing with a timetable for implementing the recommendations he is accepting and an explanation for any he is rejecting.

In addition, one recommendation involving the OPA Review Board, which is controlled by the City Council, can also be implemented immediately and I will encourage the Council to do so. Under this recommendation, the OPA Review Board will:

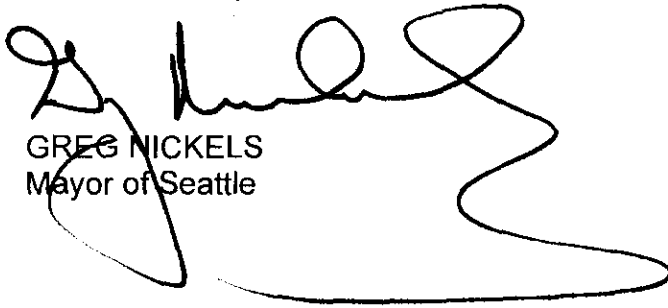
- Research and report on national trends and best practices in police accountability and oversight;

- Review OPA policies and procedures and providing recommendations for improvement; and
- Offer suggested topics for officer training.

Implementing these recommendations is important to keeping trust of those that the police serve. The people of Seattle must have confidence in their police department because the police rely on the community as partners in the ensuring the city's public safety.

Thank you again for the tremendous service you have done for your community. Your recommendations and the work we do implementing them will ensure Seattle continues to be a model of accountability.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Nickels', is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

GREG NICKELS
Mayor of Seattle