

# Community-Police Dialogues 2021 Results

## SEATTLE – CITYWIDE

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**Crime and Justice Research Center** 

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## Introduction

Seattle University has collaborated with the Seattle Police Department since 2015 to conduct the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey as part of the Micro-Community Policing Plans (MCPP). In 2021, Seattle University piloted virtual community-police dialogues as part of the MCPP that involved conversations between Seattle community members and Seattle Police Department personnel who engaged in dialogue to discuss the 2020 Seattle Public Safety Survey results and real-time concerns about crime and public safety and security.

The purpose of the dialogues was to give community members who live and work in Seattle the opportunity to engage in conversation with Seattle police personnel to discuss concerns about public safety and security at the micro-community (neighborhood) level. All who live and/or work in Seattle were eligible to participate in the virtual community-police dialogues with the goal of engaging community members and SPD personnel in conversation about the results of the 2020 Seattle Public Safety Survey and to provide opportunity to share and discuss real-time concerns about crime and public safety and security at the micro-communities/neighborhood level.

The results presented in this report offer a window into the dialogue sessions that involved over 100 community members and over 100 police personnel in 15 distinct two-hour dialogue sessions (three for each of the five SPD Precincts) conducted from May 2021- August 2021. The themes and quotes provided in this report convey the essence of the dialogue sessions highlighting the key themes identified by precinct.

The 2021 SPD MCPP Community-Police Dialogues were advertised through flyers calling for community and police participants (See Appendix A). The flyers soliciting community members went out to the public through the SPD MCPP webpage, the SPD Blotter, Nextdoor, Facebook, LinkedIn, other social media, and email lists used to administer the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey. Reach out was also conducted through media interviews with local news media and presentations to community groups. Police participants were recruited through distribution of the flyer internally to SPD civilian and sworn personnel.

Three community-police dialogues were held in each of the five police precincts - East, North, South, Southwest, and West (a total of 15 dialogues) on designated Thursday Nights 5:30-7:30pm via Zoom video conferencing from mid-May through the end of August 2021. Dialogues were facilitated by Dr. Jaqueline Helfgott and co-facilitated by one of the Micro-Community Precinct Research Analysts, while two other Analysts took notes. Each session included community members and police personnel including sworn and civilian personnel from line staff through command staff who work in the respective precincts as well as personnel from other precincts and departments.

The dialogues were conducted using a restorative framework focusing on strengthening relationships through sharing stories, responsibility/accountability, and developing understanding and mutual trust and respect. Participants were invited to think in terms of how they perceive each other, the ways in which community members

and police can work together to help make sense of, and to constructively work in concreate ways to increase, public safety, and, finally, address collateral consequences that arise in police strategies directed at the micro-community level. The following ground rules were established at the beginning of each meeting to protect the anonymity of the participants and to facilitate a culture of openness and honesty:

- (1) **Help create a safe space –** Try to use "I" rather than "you" statements, avoid name calling, allow others to express whatever thoughts/feelings they have in the spirit of open dialogue -- there are no right or wrong feelings.
- (2) Make space for others to speak Avoid crosstalk, interruptions, and try not to dominate the conversation.
- (3) **Maintain confidentiality/privacy** Do not give personal details about yourself that have no relevance to the seminar discussions, respect the level of disclosure each participant chooses to maintain, Keep information shared in meeting room/Respect the privacy/honesty of group members, do not screenshot or take a video of the session.
- (4) **Commitment** -- Please commit to participating in the entire session. However, if at any point you feel uncomfortable, feel free to leave the meeting.

The meetings were not recorded by the facilitators, and participants were asked to not record or photograph the sessions. Dialogue participants included community members who lived and worked within the respective precincts and microcommunities, business owners, crime prevention coordinators, patrol officers, and members of the SPD command staff from a range of units. Following a brief introduction, during which the focus and purpose of the dialogues were introduced and the top concerns/themes of the 2020 survey were reviewed, the dialogues focused on: Expectations and Focus, Reimagining Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement, and Discussion Wrap-up. Community members and police attendees were invited to share what topics were at the forefront of their minds, what the number one thing they desired to accomplish was, and what would be needed, in their opinion, for the dialogue to be considered a success. Participants were then asked to share ways they believed the community and members of the police could work together, in concrete ways, to increase public safety and neighborhood quality of life for all. At the conclusion of the sessions, participants were asked to raise topics that remained unaddressed for them and their hopes for moving forward.

Research Analysts observed the dialogues and took written notes, identifying impactful quotations and recurring themes in each of the dialogues, while maintaining the privacy of the participants. In addition, participant observation reflection comments were completed by the facilitator and research analysts with the purpose of capturing the nuanced conversation, nature of the discussion, and general feel of each of the sessions. The notes and reflection comments were then analyzed examining themes identified in the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey. dialogue-specific key themes, and quotes reflecting these themes. Qualitative data collected through the notes and participant observer comments were also analyzed to identify the most frequently mentioned concrete actions suggested by community and police participants to help improve neighborhood quality of life.

## Citywide

## Crime and Public Safety Concerns

Participants

Total Community Attendance $N = 109$	Total Seattle Police Attendance N= 131
Attended only one session: 103	Attended only one session: 87
Repeat Attendees: 6	Repeat Attendees: 44

#### Results

In the Seattle Public Safety Survey the most prominent themes for the City of Seattle and all of the Seattle Police Department's Precincts and precinct micro-communities were identified from narrative comments in survey responses to questions "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" and "Do you have any thoughts on the Micro-Community Policing Plan Initiative that you would like to share?" The responses were then coded and ranked by frequency. In the dialogues we noticed a pattern of survey narrative themes being touched on throughout conversation. Thus, we coded them and organized them by how often the themes get mentioned in our dialogue notes.

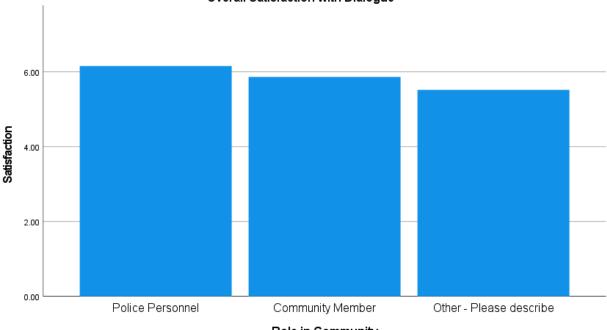
Top Narrative Themes from Dialogue	Top Narrative Themes from Public Safety Survey
1. More Police Needed/Underpolicing	1. City Politics
2. Crime – Traffic/Pedestrian/Bike/Transit	2. Public Order Crime
3. Lack of Trust in Police Specifically – SPD	3. Property Crime
4. City Politics are Decreasing Public Safety	4. Police Capacity
5. Concerns About Police Use of Force/Excessive Force	5. Homelessness

Comparing the 2020 Public Safety Survey themes to the Community-Police Dialogue themes reveals some unsurprising similarities and some interesting differences. Both the Community-Police Dialogue themes and the Public Safety Survey themes reveal that city politics, as well as police capacity, are important issues to the individuals who participated. It is interesting to note that their relative importance seems to have flipped between the 2020 Public Safety Survey and the 2021 Community-Police Dialogues. For the Community-Police Dialogue participants, crime relating to traffic (including bikes, transit, and pedestrians) seems to be very important, which is unexpected. Finally, the Community-Police Dialogue participants felt a lack of trust in the Seattle Police Department and expressed concerns of the Department's use of force and a concern for excessive use of force. These three themes replaced the themes of Public Order Crime, Property Crime, and Homelessness from the 2020 Public Safety Survey.

For a more complete breakdown, included below are the individual reports for each of the five Seattle Police Department precincts.

## Post-Survey Feedback

After each dialogue, all participants were invited to participate in a post-dialogue survey designed to elicit feedback on their reaction to the dialogue. The like to this post-dialogue feedback survey was sent to the same email addresses, provided by the participants themselves, as the zoom invitation links for the dialogues. The post-dialogue feedback survey contained five quantitative measures of dialogue satisfaction (Length, Agenda, Participants, Technology, and Facilitation), as well as qualitative questions for participants to provide written feedback on what they had hoped to gain, if they achieved that goal, if they felt safe during the discussion, what more was needed for them to consider it a success, unaddressed topics that they had hoped to discuss, and other feedback suggestions. The graph below shows the participants' overall satisfaction with the dialogues, the measure of which was taken as the mean of the five assessed quantitative measures.



**Overall Satisfaction with Dialogue** 



Satisfaction measured from 1 (Extremely Dissatisfied) to 4 (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied) to 7 (Extremely Satisfied)

A median score of 4 indicated a "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", while scores between 4 and 7 represent satisfaction and scores between 1 and 4 represent

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dissatisfaction. As shown, the scores for all participant types (Police Personnel, Community Member, and Other) was higher than 5, demonstrating that participants, on average satisfaction level of "slightly satisfied" was achieved for all groups. Feedback comments will be provided as a separate appendix to this report.

## East Precinct

Crime and Public Safety Concerns

Participants

Dialogue Dates	Community Members N= 14	Seattle Police Members N= 17
May 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 5	N= 2
June 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 2	N= 9
July 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 7	N= 6

### Results

In the Seattle Public Safety Survey the most prominent themes for the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department's East Precinct and precinct micro-communities were identified from narrative comments in survey responses to questions "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" and "Do you have any thoughts on the Micro-Community Policing Plan Initiative that you would like to share?" The responses were then coded and ranked by frequency. In the dialogues we noticed a pattern of survey narrative themes being touched on throughout conversation. Thus, we coded them and organized them by how often the themes get mentioned in our dialogue notes.

Top Narrative Themes from Dialogue	Top Narrative Themes from 2020 Public Safety Survey
1. More Police Needed/Underpolicing	1. Unsupportive of SPD
2. Crime – Property	2. Unsupportive of City Council
3. More Services/Resources Needed in City to Respond to People in Behavioral Crisis	3. More city services / resources needed to respond to homelessness
4. City Politics are Decreasing Public Safety	4. More city services / resources needed to respond to behavioral crises
5. Lack of Trust in Police Specifically- SPD	5. More police needed

Between the 2020 Public Safety Survey and the Community-Police Dialogues held in the Summer of 2021, there are a few points of comparison and some striking differences. For both, Under Policing/More Police Needed were in the top 5, although at the opposite ends of the spectrum. It is interesting to note that the discussion in the East Precinct

leans more favorably to requiring more police now that some time has passed since the administration of the survey. City Politics appears in both, though the Survey Themes speak specifically about the City Council whereas the Dialogue referenced City Politics as a whole. Property Crime was mentioned multiple times across the dialogues but was not a top theme in the survey. Finally, the need for more services and resources for people experiencing behavioral crises were mentioned prominently in both the Dialogue and Survey Themes.

## **Dialogue Specific Themes**

One of the goals of these dialogues was to create conversation about Public Safety that goes beyond our yearly survey. There were then themes that arose that are unique to these dialogues that the survey does not give justice to. In this section, we have read and synthesized further in our notes and reflections to come up with top themes we have found from each individual dialogue and display them in the order of their prominence. Beneath those themes, we have included quotes that really captured the unique prominent themes.

### Dialogue 1 - May 20th, 2021

#### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Police-Community Communications
- 2. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 3. Police-Public Media Relations
- 4. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 5. Police Wellness

"The department should notify the public if they terminate someone due to that individual's biased actions/responses/social media posts/etc."

> "Community members want "day-to-day" level understanding of "intense" reactions from police for minor situations. One community member felt anxiety while living near East precinct."

"Departmental actions should be in line with community expectations; when the community wants change, conversations between the community and the department should happen to weigh the pros and cons of that change together to make a final decision."

> "Being a police officer here is tough, SPD exit interviews say, 'community betrayal' and 'administrative betrayal' as reasons SPD personnel are leaving."

### Dialogue 2 – June 24th, 2021

#### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Technology and Public Safety
- 2. Police-Community Communications
- 3. Officer Wellness
- 4. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 5. Police-Public Media Relations

"I think the cameras are great, but I think they are a barrier to getting to know people more intimately. We can't be ourselves."

> "I want to get to know people and want to see what people want from their police department"

"I'm surprised that there have been no officer suicides due to the tension and problems [Officers] have endured while in the East Precinct"

> "After everything that happened last year with Chop...I want to restore morale with the officers in the precinct and rebuild the [relationship] with the community."

Dialogue 3 – July 29th, 2021

#### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 2. COVID-19 Impact on Police Response and Public Safety
- 3. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 4. Police Engagement with Youth
- 5 Polico Public Modia Polations
- "I feel as though I am on my own, I feel like there is no protection. I too want to learn more about what is going on with them, what challenges are they having that is putting us in this position"

"I am wondering whether there are resources in SPD that can help communities who have schools in them find safe spaces and help the people who are involved to figure out spaces for kids"

"We have not been instructed to ignore crime but a lot of the common themes with this is going to be staffing; we only have 8 officers responding tonight for 35,000 people When covid started they imposed booking restrictions so even if people refuse to leave our last resort would be arrest but we cannot do that anymore"

> "We have been asked to not be on school grounds. I used to lead the program for officers to be in schools, but we were told to not be there and not come back. Officers could be outside, but people think that it is surveillance, it would have to be approved by the school board and superintendent."

## Reimagining Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement

#### How can police and community work together to address public safety concerns?

- 1. Community-Police Collaborations
- 2. Education and Shared Understanding
- 3. Call 911
- 4. Community Participation in Public Safety
- 5. Political Action

"I think now more than ever we need support from the community in calling 911 and community watch. It is always a safe bet to call 911 and people are on the fence about calling and then they call too late. Be on the safe side and call if something is out of the ordinary. Yes, no matter what, call 911. Often it is the hesitation that causes the time lapse. It is better for us to have at least a call on the board so we can triage it."

> "We do offer personal safety classes for a variety of individuals. Focuses on awareness, personal safety, trusting your gut,... etc. Something that the community has to request. It is up to the community to address this and reach out"

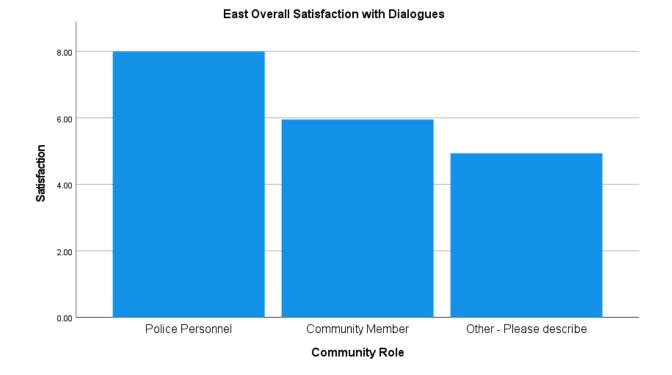
"One thing I ask community members to do is to talk to officers and we want to know. It keeps things on our radar and that is what we want. When you put it on our radar then we put it on someone with a higher paygrade's radar. If we do not know what is going on then there is no way we could assist."

"Our objectives are supposed to be aligned with the community's needs. When city council is back in person that is the time when to get your voices heard.

It takes all of us in the community to continue to be that voice to the people we elect."

## Post-Survey Feedback

After each dialogue, all participants were invited to participate in a post-dialogue survey designed to elicit feedback on their reaction to the dialogue. The link to this post-dialogue feedback survey was sent to the same email addresses, provided by the participants themselves, as the zoom invitation links for the dialogues. The post-dialogue feedback survey contained five quantitative measures of dialogue satisfaction (Length, Agenda, Participants, Technology, and Facilitation), as well as qualitative questions for participants to provide written feedback on what they had hoped to gain, if they achieved that goal, if they felt safe during the discussion, what more was needed for them to consider it a success, unaddressed topics that they had hoped to discuss, and other feedback suggestions. The graph below shows the participants' overall satisfaction with the dialogues, the measure of which was taken as the mean of the five assessed quantitative measures.



A median score of 4 indicated a "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", while scores between 4 and 7 represent satisfaction and scores between 1 and 4 represent dissatisfaction. A score of 8 indicated that the participant elected to leave no response. As shown, the scores for Community Member, and Other was higher than 4, demonstrating that these participants, on average satisfaction level of "slightly satisfied" was achieved for all groups. The police personnel participating in the postdialogue survey chose not to respond Feedback comments will be provided as a separate appendix to this report.

## North Precinct

Crime and Public Safety Concerns Participants

Dialogue Dates	Community Members N= 43	Seattle Police Members N= 37
May 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 14	N= 14
July 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2021	N= 14	N= 10
August 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 15	N= 13

#### Results

In the Seattle Public Safety Survey, the most prominent themes for the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department's North Precinct and precinct micro-communities were identified from narrative comments in survey responses to questions "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" and "Do you have any thoughts on the Micro-Community Policing Plan Initiative that you would like to share?" The responses were then coded and ranked by frequency. In the dialogues we noticed a pattern of survey narrative themes being touched on throughout conversation. Thus, we coded them and organized them by how often the themes get mentioned in our dialogue notes.

Top Narrative Themes from Dialogue	Top Narrative Themes from Public Safety Survey
1. Lack of Police Accountability	1. City Politics
2. SPD Doing the Best They Can	2. Public Order Crime
3. Crime – Public Order	3. Property Crime
4. More Social Services	4. Police Capacity
5. Homelessness – Public Health Issue	5. Homelessness

In comparing the Community-Police dialogues to the annual Public Safety Survey, there are some stark differences in addition to several commonalities that prove to be interesting. Though holding different standings on the scale, Public Order crime proves to be a continued area of interest within the North Precinct, its presence proving to exacerbate citizen concern. Holding different specifications within both realms of the Dialogue and the Public Safety Survey, homelessness continues to be an existing issue within the city, specifically the North Precinct. What presents as an interesting dichotomy within the top narrative themes from the Dialogue, is both the presence of a Lack of Police Accountability and SPD Doing the Best They Can, both represented within the top narrative themes, despite still being present within the discussion,

as well as property crime, falling below existing expectations from the Public Safety Survey. The need for More Social Services presented itself in deviation from the results of the survey in conjunction with the specified nature of Homelessness being a Public Health Issue, rather than the existing generalization of Homelessness as a category of its own.

## **Dialogue Specific Themes**

One of the goals of these dialogues was to create conversation about Public Safety that goes beyond our yearly survey. There were then themes that arose that are unique to these dialogues that the survey does not give justice to. In this section, we have read and synthesized further in our notes and reflections to come up with top themes we have found from each individual dialogue and display them in the order of their prominence. Then, we will pull specific quotes that really capture the unique prominent themes.

### Dialogue 1 - 05/27/2021

#### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Police Union an Obstacle to Trust
- 2. Police-Public Media Relations
- 3. Bias Crimes
- 4. Broken Community-Police Relations
- 5. Community Informed Police Response

"We don't need a police response to everything but to have a rapid response to serious problems, let social workers assist those in mental crisis"

> "I want people to be treated fairly regardless of what race they are"

"The police union needs to match the community they are policing, they currently don't

"The police need to answer to the community, we are the ones they serve"

## Dialogue 2 - 07/01/2021

## Top Dialogue Specific Themes

- 1. COVID-19 Impact on Police Response and Public Safety
- 2. Police Wellness
- 3. Police Community Communications
- 4. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 5. Community Informed Police Response

"Morale is at an all-time low, never has it been lower as of today in my 12 years working in the North Precinct, 20% of the police force has left in the past year."

> "Since the pandemic, there hasn't been a lot of coordinated work between LEAD and SPD, COVID-19 derailed everything

"I'm concerned about the problems of homelessness, social cohesion, and fear of crime, I am not convinced people in the department are managing it the way they should"

> "Low priority calls are not responded to right now, we have a lot of challenges because of COVID-19, we can't book people into jail, there is not much we can do"

### Dialogue 3 - 08/05/2021

#### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Police Union an Obstacle to Trust
- 2. Police-Public Media Relations
- 3. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 4. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 5. Increased Gun Violence

"Maybe the police need to better understand the differences in neighborhoods and the culture surrounding the police for each of those individuals"

> "I think that SPD needs a PR project or a group that outreaches because in fact, I didn't know that the 7 officer who were in D.C., that three or four of them had been adjudicated to have been there rallying Trump but not involved in the insurrection"

"In sharing what the police are doing, I have gotten death threats, doxed, and having people threaten me because of my race"

> "During the protests, we had the opportunity to speak as humans, not officers, that it was not right [George Floyd's death]. But, because of how the events were hijacked, it kept us separate. We were denied to opportunity to stand with the people on this matter"

## Reimagining Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement

How can police and community work together to address public safety concerns?

**Top Ideas Surrounding Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement** 

- 1. Community-Police Collaborations
- 2. Social Service Response to Public Safety
- 3. Political Action
- 4. Education and Shared Understanding
- 5. Non-Armed Response

"I would like to have more connection with the police and the community"

> "The city voted in the city council, it is our duty to decide who is in charge of this city, if you don't like it, you need to be voting"

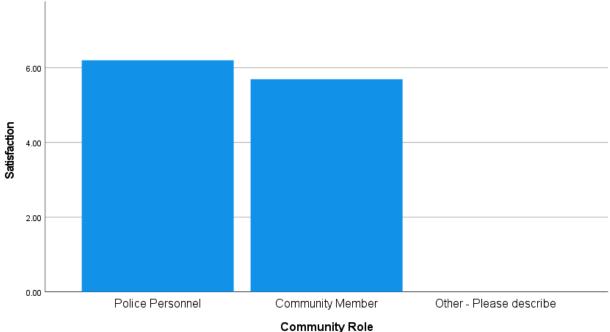
"Getting more people who are comfortable with the police talking to those who are not comfortable might help shift the perspective"

### Post-Survey Feedback

After each dialogue, all participants were invited to participate in a post-dialogue survey designed to elicit feedback on their reaction to the dialogue. The like to this post-dialogue feedback survey was sent to the same email addresses, provided by the participants themselves, as the zoom invitation links for the dialogues. The post-dialogue feedback survey contained five quantitative measures of dialogue satisfaction (Length, Agenda, Participants, Technology, and Facilitation), as well as qualitative questions for participants to provide written feedback on what they had hoped to gain, if they achieved that goal, if they felt safe during the discussion, what more was needed for them to consider it a success, unaddressed topics that they had hoped to discuss, and other feedback suggestions. The graph below shows the participants' overall

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satisfaction with the dialogues, the measure of which was taken as the mean of the five assessed quantitative measures.



#### North Overall Satisfaction with Dialogues

Satisfaction measured from 1 (Extremely Dissatisfied) to 4 (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied) to 7 (Extremely Satisfied)

A median score of 4 indicated a "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", while scores between 4 and 7 represent satisfaction and scores between 1 and 4 represent dissatisfaction. A score of 8 indicated that the participant elected to leave no response. As shown, the scores for Community Members were higher than 4, demonstrating that these participants, on average, were "slightly satisfied" with the dialogues. For Police Personnel, the average reported score was higher than 6, indicating the level of satisfaction on average was "moderately satisfied". As no other participants were reported within the North Precinct, that piece of the overall satisfaction for the dialogues was left blank. Feedback comments will be provided as a separate appendix to this report.

## South Precinct

## Crime and Public Safety Concerns Participants

Dialogue Dates	Community Members N= 15	Seattle Police Members N= 25
June 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 5	N= 5
July 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 6	N= 9
August 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 4	N= 11

### Results

In the Seattle Public Safety Survey the most prominent themes for the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department's South Precinct and precinct micro-communities were identified from narrative comments in survey responses to questions "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" and "Do you have any thoughts on the Micro-Community Policing Plan Initiative that you would like to share?" The responses were then coded and ranked by frequency. In the dialogues we noticed a pattern of survey narrative themes being touched on throughout conversation. Thus, we coded them and organized them by how often the themes get mentioned in our dialogue notes.

Top Narrative Themes from Dialogue	Top Narrative Themes from Public Safety Survey
<ol> <li>More Police Needed/Under policing</li> </ol>	1. City Politics
2. City Politics are Decreasing Public Safety	2. Police Capacity
3. Lack of Trust in Police Specifically- SPD	3. Violent Crime
4. Violent Crime	4. Public Order Crime
5. Training - Implicit Bias/Anti-Racist	5. Public Safety & Community Capacity

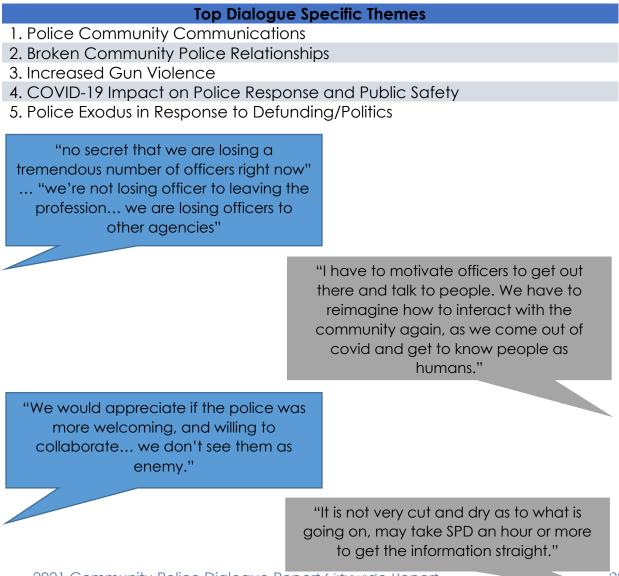
Between the 2020 Public Safety Survey and the Community-Police Dialogues held in the Summer of 2021, there are a few points of comparison and some striking differences. For both, Under Policing/More Police Needed were in the top 5. City Politics appears in both, though the Survey Themes speak specifically about the City Council whereas the Dialogue referenced City Politics as a whole. It is significant to note that lack of trust in Police Specifically-SPD was mentioned in the dialogues but was not a top theme in the

survey. Also, public order crime did not rise of much importance in the South Precinct dialogues. Finally, violent crime was mentioned prominently in both the Dialogue and Survey Themes.

### **Dialogue Specific Themes**

One of the goals of these dialogues was to create conversation about Public Safety that goes beyond our yearly survey. There were then themes that arose that are unique to these dialogues that the survey does not give justice to. In this section, we have read and synthesized further in our notes and reflections to come up with top themes we have found from each individual dialogue and display them in the order of their prominence. Beneath those themes, we have included quotes that really captured the unique prominent themes.

## Dialogue 1 - 06/03/2021



### Dialogue 2 - 07/08/2021

#### Top Dialogue Specific Themes

- 1. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 2. Technology and Public Safety
- 3. Police Community Communications
- 4. Increased Gun Violence
- 5. Police-Public Media Relations

"There are no cameras to track any sort of data around speeding. The enhancements SDOT is doing is just frustrating drivers. It's a lot more dangerous now with the new enhancements than it was 5 years ago."

> "From a young person's perspective, it's more about looking how Seattle polices people and how people are impacted by that system, even if it's better than everywhere else."

"We've been direct witnesses to many deaths and violent crimes involving guns. From our non-profit work with BIPOC, we've tried to interact with police, but the police seem to not have time but aren't interested in our work."

> "I know my job intimately and one of the harder things we face is the negative perception that is being pushed out in the media and a lot of it comes from a lack of knowledge of what we do, how we do it, and why we do it."

### Dialogue 3 - 08/12/2021

#### Top Dialogue Specific Themes

- 1. Bias Crime
- 2. Increased Gun Violence
- 3. Community Informed Police Response
- 4. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 5. Technology and Public Safety

"The company that is promoting the shot spotter in a presentation mentioned how expensive the system is, which is one of the hang-ups with the subscriber fee with sensors and the equipment cost, it just didn't seem to make sense."

> "The biggest topic I run into on patrol is that we are responding to a crime that is already biased based."

"As to where you can get the information about the staffing shortage is the media relations unit of the department. I wouldn't have that information available."

> "I want it to be understood that principle of defund police has been more propagandized than your understanding of what it is."

## Reimagining Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement

#### How can police and community work together to address public safety concerns?

- 1. Community Participation in Public Safety
- 2. Evolving Community Initiatives
- 3. Education and Shared Understanding
- 4. Community-Police Collaborations
- 5. Social Service Response to Public Safety

"Can connect with [Crime Prevention Coordinator] to start/revitalize a block watch in South. Block watch gives opportunity to meet with neighbors, talk about community concerns and community building."

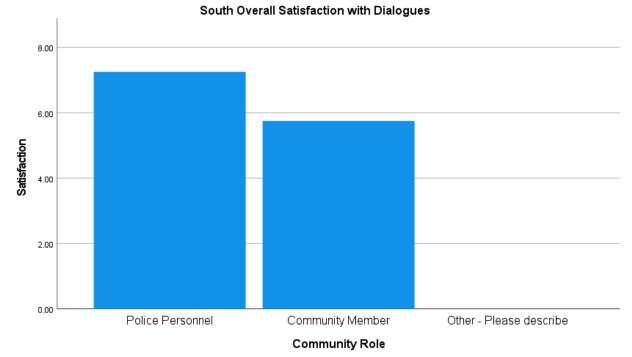
> "There may be community connections that aren't be utilized to the best of its abilities. No community is monolithic, but we are still a resilient community building a repertoire to heal ourselves with/without Police support."

"I wanna correct your understanding of what the defund the police means." ... "It's about defunding and investing it in the community"

> "When it comes to violent crime, for the most part police are responding to it, not preventing it. The community needs to be at the center of crime prevention."

## Post-Survey Feedback

After each dialogue, all participants were invited to participate in a post-dialogue survey designed to elicit feedback on their reaction to the dialogue. The link to this post-dialogue feedback survey was sent to the same email addresses, provided by the participants themselves, as the zoom invitation links for the dialogues. The post-dialogue feedback survey contained five quantitative measures of dialogue satisfaction (Length, Agenda, Participants, Technology, and Facilitation), as well as qualitative questions for participants to provide written feedback on what they had hoped to gain, if they achieved that goal, if they felt safe during the discussion, what more was needed for them to consider it a success, unaddressed topics that they had hoped to discuss, and other feedback suggestions. The graph below shows the participants' overall satisfaction with the dialogues, the measure of which was taken as the mean of the five assessed quantitative measures.



#### Satisfaction measured from 1 (Extremely Dissatisfied) to 4 (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied) to 7 (Extremely Satisfied)

A median score of 4 indicated a "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", while scores between 4 and 7 represent satisfaction and scores between 1 and 4 represent dissatisfaction. A score of 8 indicated that the participant elected to leave no response. As shown, the scores for Community Member were higher than 4, demonstrating that amongst these participants, on average satisfaction level of "slightly satisfied" was achieved. Police personnel were shown to have an average satisfaction level of "satisfied". The police personnel and community members participating in the post-dialogue survey Feedback comments will be provided as a separate appendix to this report.

## Southwest Precinct

## Crime and Public Safety Concerns

Participants

Dialogue Dates	Community Members N= 15	Seattle Police Members N=22
June 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 4	N= 7
July 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 7	N= 9
August 19th, 2021	N= 4	N= 6

### Results

In the Seattle Public Safety Survey the most prominent themes for the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department's Southwest Precinct and precinct micro-communities were identified from narrative comments in survey responses to questions "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" and "Do you have any thoughts on the Micro-Community Policing Plan Initiative that you would like to share?" The responses were then coded and ranked by frequency. In the dialogues we noticed a pattern of survey narrative themes being touched on throughout conversation. Thus, we coded them and organized them by how often the themes get mentioned in our dialogue notes.

Top Narrative Themes from Dialogue	Top Narrative Themes from 2020 Public Safety Survey
1. Crime-Traffic/Pedestrian/Bike/Transit	1. City Politics
2. More Police Needed/Underpolicing	2. Police Capacity
3. City Council-Neutral	3. Property Crime
4. Lack of Trust in Police Specifically- SPD	4. Traffic Safety
5. Issues with 911/Dispatch	5. Public Order Crime

There are several similarities and differences between the 2020 Seattle Public Safety Survey and the dialogues facilitated in the Summer of 2021. For both, Under Policing/More Police Needed, and Traffic Safety were in the top five. City Politics remained a prominent issue. In the dialogues however, City Politics frequently came up as neutral references of city council specifically. Also notable is that Lack of Trust in Police Specifically-SPD was mentioned in the dialogues, but was not a top five theme in the survey. Lastly, property crime was the third most prominent theme in the survey, but did not appera in the top five themes from the dialogue.

## **Dialogue Specific Themes**

One of the goals of these dialogues was to create conversation about Public Safety that goes beyond our yearly survey. There were then themes that arose that are unique to these dialogues that the survey does not give justice to. In this section, we have read and synthesized further in our notes and reflections to come up with top themes we have found from each individual dialogue and display them in the order of their prominence. Then, we will pull specific quotes that really capture the unique prominent themes.

Dialogue 1 – June 10, 2021

### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Police-Community Communications
- 1. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 1. Police-Public Media Relations
- 1. Police Wellness
- -

"How many years of experience are now running out the door?"

> "Over the last year and half, police have been eliminated from conversation from the community..."

"This punitive system that we have really isn't working and I think a lot of officers can agree that the system needs to change."

> "No matter what you do, the perception is not the reality at all...you got a bad PR problem."

Dialogue 2 - July 15, 2021

#### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

1. Police Engagement with Youth

2. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics

3. Community Informed Police Response

"Calling 911 is a good way to hold [people breaking the law] accountable. Generate those calls, it gives the statistics that we need to justify putting more officers in those areas."

"Day-to-day interactions are what we are looking for in trying to help rebuild trust, especially with one that has been broken or damaged. If you see me out there please come up and talk to me, that is what is special about being a west Seattle officer is that it is a great community. People are becoming more reclusive and passive in their interactions with us. I want to interact with people every day, not just on their bad days. "It hurts that people have bad experiences with the police. I can't be a part of your community if you do not let me be a part of your community"

"I cannot build a relationship with my son, community, etc. if the only time I spend with them is when there is a crisis afoot. That means I have to take time to interact with people who are important to me when there are not crises. Works in racial and social justice, we have a long way to go. Our department is leaps above many departments although we still have leaps to go. We have to build these relationships with people. Until we can all understand the history of policing and what it means to be within an ingroup or outgroup, it matters your gender, religion, race, all of these things matter. "Far too often we as police officers say that these things do not matter, but yes it does matter."

#### Dialogue 3 – August 19, 2021

#### Top Dialogue Specific Themes

1. Police Union an Obstacle to Trust

1. Police-Community Communications

3. Police Wellness

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"Bring community members to the roll call. All the men and women are there to be there for the community"

> "We need a long-term comprehensive traffic management plan that provides enforcement from SPD and SDOT. SPD has previously offered emphasis patrols, but after they leave the behavior returns."

"We have a diverse department, though still male dominated, my guild only sees me as being an officer, not who I am as a person. The guild doesn't care that I am a person of color, but that I am police."

> "Staffing is going to be an ugly conversation here tonight. The numbers are getting very low and dire"

## Reimagining Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement

How can police and community work together to address public safety concerns? Coming up with solid things

X

- 1. Community Participation in Public Safety
- 2. Community-Police Collaborations
- 3. Evolving Community Initiatives
- 4. Call 911
- 5. Education and Shared Understanding
- 5. Political Action

"I truly believe it's the little interactions...it takes time...and relationships...I don't want to interact with people only on their worst day."

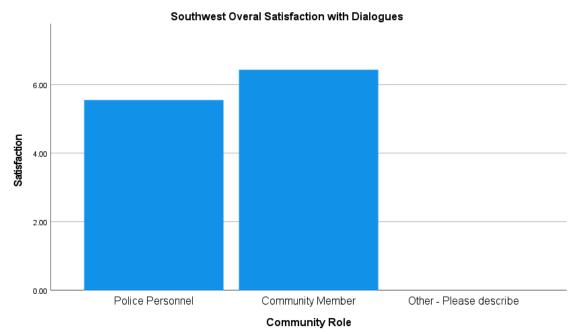
> "We have to build these relationships with people. Until we can all understand the history of policing and what it means to be within an ingroup or outgroup, it matters your gender, religion, race, all of these things matter."

"Relational policing. I cannot build a relationship with my son, or community if the only time I spend with them is when there is a crisis afoot. That means I have to take time to interact with people who are important to me when there are not crises."

> "I love these Zoom meetings. I would like to bring them into roll call."

## Post-Survey Feedback

After each dialogue, all participants were invited to participate in a post-dialogue survey designed to elicit feedback on their reaction to the dialogue. The link to this post-dialogue feedback survey was sent to the same email addresses, provided by the participants themselves, as the zoom invitation links for the dialogues. The post-dialogue feedback survey contained five quantitative measures of dialogue satisfaction (Length, Agenda, Participants, Technology, and Facilitation), as well as qualitative questions for participants to provide written feedback on what they had hoped to gain, if they achieved that goal, if they felt safe during the discussion, what more was needed for them to consider it a success, unaddressed topics that they had hoped to discuss, and other feedback suggestions. The graph below shows the participants' overall satisfaction with the dialogues, the measure of which was taken as the mean of the five assessed quantitative measures.



Satisfaction measured from 1 (Extremely Dissatisfied) to 4 (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied) to 7 (Extremely Satisfied)

A median score of 4 indicated a "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", while scores between 4 and 7 represent satisfaction and scores between 1 and 4 represent dissatisfaction. A score of 8 indicated that the participant elected to leave no response. As shown, the scores for Community Member were higher than 6, demonstrating that these participants, had on average a satisfaction level above "moderately satisfied." Police personnel were shown to have an average satisfaction level between "slightly satisfied" and "moderately satisfied." Southwest stands out as the only precinct in which community members had a higher average satisfaction level than police personnel. The police personnel and community members participating in the post-dialogue survey Feedback comments will be provided as a separate appendix to this report.

## West Precinct

Crime and Public Safety Concerns Participants

Dialogue Dates	Community Members N= 22	Seattle Police Members N=30
June 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 9	N= 10
July 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021	N= 6	N= 11
August 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	N= 7	N= 9

### Results

In the Seattle Public Safety Survey the most prominent themes for the City of Seattle and Seattle Police Department's West Precinct and precinct micro-communities were identified from narrative comments in survey responses to questions "Do you have any additional thoughts on public safety and security issues in Seattle, generally, or your neighborhood, specifically, that you would like to share?" and "Do you have any thoughts on the Micro-Community Policing Plan Initiative that you would like to share?" The responses were then coded and ranked by frequency. In the dialogues we noticed a pattern of survey narrative themes being touched on throughout conversation. Thus, we coded them and organized them by how often the themes get mentioned in our dialogue notes.

Top Narrative Themes from Dialogue	Top Narrative Themes from Public Safety Survey
1. More Police Needed/Underpolicing	1. Unsupportive of City Council
2. Concerns about Police Use of Force/Excessive Force	2. More Police Needed
3. More Services/Resources Needed in City to Respond to People in Behavioral Crisis	3. Encampments are Decreasing Public Safety
4. More Services/Resources Needed in City to Respond to Unhoused/People in Social Crisis	4. Unsupportive of Defunding SPD
5. Supportive of SPD	5. Homelessness is a Public Safety Issue

Between the 2020 Public Safety Survey and the Community-Police Dialogues held in the Spring/Summer of 2021, there are a few points of comparison and some striking differences. For both, Underpolicing/More Police Needed were in the top 5 and were ranked nearly identically. Generally, the participants in the West Precinct were supportive of SPD and less supportive of the City Council. Outside of discussing how the community and the department can work together to move forward, the City Council, and city politics in general, were not heavily referenced during the dialogues, even though it was the number one narrative theme for the 2020 survey. An increase of

resources for individuals in behavioral and social crises featured prominently in the dialogue, ranking third and fourth respectively. Even though this desire was strongly felt by the dialogue participants, survey participants from the West Precinct in 2020 were strongly opposed to defunding SPD, which could have provided some funds to increase those resources.

## Dialogue Specific Themes

One of the goals of these dialogues was to create conversation about Public Safety that goes beyond our yearly survey. There were then themes that arose that are unique to these dialogues that the survey does not give justice to. In this section, we have read and synthesized further in our notes and reflections to come up with top themes we have found from each individual dialogue and display them in the order of their prominence. Then, we will pull specific quotes that really capture the unique prominent themes.

Dialogue 1 – June 17th, 2021

### **Top Dialogue Specific Themes**

- 1. Police Exodus in Response to Defunding/Politics
- 2. Community Informed Police Response
- 3. COVID-19 Impact on Police Response and Public Safety
- 4. Police Wellness
- 5. --

"There have been budget cuts and we've lost almost a whole precinct in terms of personnel. We can only go to highest priority calls."

> "When reimagining police, you tell us what to do with the budget you give us.

> Officers are tired of goalpost moving. They want to serve but don't know what are the expectations."

"Spent 6 months at the mayor's office on protocol to handle encampments in a decent, fair way. Of course, we got 6 months in and COVID threw it all off. There is now a policy to not move encampments to avoid spreading COVID."

2021 Community-Police Diale

"I think generally we have really strong support for SPD. We miss our community policing folks; we would like to have them back. Our frustration is not with police dept... it's with the city's lack of support for the police dept."

### Dialogue 2 – July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

#### Top Dialogue Specific Themes

- 1. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 2. Police-Public Media Relations
- 3. COVID-19 Impact on Police Response and Public safety
- 4. Police Wellness
- 5. Police Engagement with Youth

"I feel bad that it gets to the point where you have to use violence. It scares anyone, it makes us feel more unsafe but maybe it makes you feel safer but if people are being traumatized then that is where something has to change."

> "The news admits that they do not do well with reporting what they do well, they focus on the bad stuff as well as police, who don't tell the good things that happen as well. Hyper focus on the ones that don't go how we want them to go... It doesn't sell the story when we save people's lives, if it doesn't make someone money it is not going to be beneficial to them to sell what they are saying."

"[I see] a cycle of funding for youth programs running out and youth violence increasing."

> "In the last year, there were a lot of people who were targeting us, so that is very hard for some officers who had to experience people wanting to hurt cops, it can be very overwhelming. It is hard for some officers to realize that yes people are friendly, rather than people telling us that they hate us, and we should quit our jobs."

Dialogue 3 – August 26th, 2021

#### Top Dialogue Specific Themes

- 1. Broken Community-Police Relationships
- 2. Police Community Communications
- 3. Police Engagement with Youth
- 4. Increased Gun Violence
- 5. COVID-19 Impact on Police Response and Public Safety

"To all the officers, you are appreciated and wanted. I see that on Nextdoor completely switched recently where people were very forward with how they feel about the police. When we ask for a callback, that is us saying that we appreciate you and want you here, it gives us a chance to directly tell you that we believe in you."

"A lot of our community has been telling us that they were hurting and have been for a long time and we are trying to figure out how to get back to just talking to decide where we go from here."

> "I don't know how many years it has been since an SPD has called back. There is a disconnect. The SPD doesn't even know they are supposed to follow up. It is really frustrating. It has been weeks and there is no follow up."

"My position as a school resource officer, when things started happening a year ago, without much conversation were removed from the schools based on a decision made by the higherups in the school. That level of extreme reaction didn't leave anything for us working together to fix issues, we were just exterminated."

> "I will arrest numerous people, with felony charges, they are released the next day. I cannot keep people in jail, the threshold for us to take people to jail are extremely high because of COVID. We cannot enforce lower-level crimes"

## Reimagining Public Safety and Police-Community Engagement

How can police and community work together to address public safety concerns?

#### **Working Together**

- 1. Community-Police Collaborations
- 2. Political Action
- 3. Education and Shared Understanding
- 4. Social Service Response to Public Safety
- 5. Non-Armed Response

"[There is a] narrative that if police come people die, or that there will be harm done. We need to fix this. We don't know how many times a specific crime has occurred if people don't call. If you called and said, 'I don't want to see police here, but I want to document that this occurred,' maybe that would help."

"I shadow 911 operators, and they say if someone isn't sure to call 911, call and let the operator decide. They can transfer you to non-emergency if needed."

"You can always approach us. If it looks like we are all addressing an individual but if you want to stand by and watch or interact with us out there, we will probably talk to you more than you want."

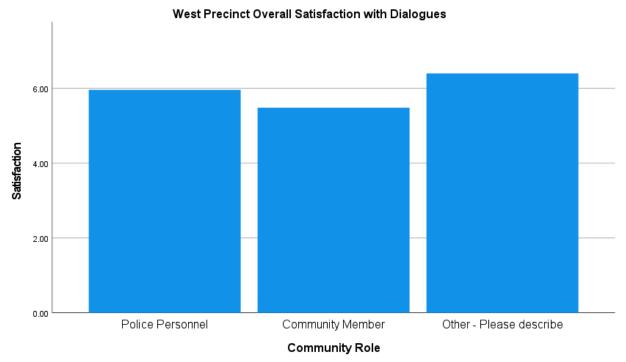
"If we are standing against out patrol cars please come up and talk to us. If we are on a call please come and stick around, we are happy to answer any questions."

"What we are seeing is that there is a disconnect between why we aren't funding but also comparing how people are treated by the police. On our end, we need to do a better job about not having poor attitudes about things or putting ourselves in the victims shoes. We are being pulled in many different directions at many times but explaining why we did what we did would take maybe 90 seconds"

"I think one of the things that could help is if we can find a successful program that gets the homelessness issue away from the police. KAHOOTS, people can ask for it with MH calls."

## Post-Survey Feedback

After each dialogue, all participants were invited to participate in a post-dialogue survey designed to elicit feedback on their reaction to the dialogue. The link to this post-dialogue feedback survey was sent to the same email addresses, provided by the participants themselves, as the zoom invitation links for the dialogues. The post-dialogue feedback survey contained five quantitative measures of dialogue satisfaction (Length, Agenda, Participants, Technology, and Facilitation), as well as qualitative questions for participants to provide written feedback on what they had hoped to gain, if they achieved that goal, if they felt safe during the discussion, what more was needed for them to consider it a success, unaddressed topics that they had hoped to discuss, and other feedback suggestions. The graph below shows the participants' overall satisfaction with the dialogues, the measure of which was taken as the mean of the five assessed quantitative measures.



Satisfaction measured from 1 (Extremely Dissatisfied) to 4 (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied) to 7 (Extremely Satisfied)

A median score of 4 indicated a "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied", while scores between 4 and 7 represent satisfaction and scores between 1 and 4 represent dissatisfaction. A score of 8 indicated that the participant elected to leave no response. As shown, the scores for Community Members and Police Personnel were both higher than 5, demonstrating that these participants, on average, had a satisfaction level of "slightly satisfied" was achieved. The category for Other participants exceeds a 6 on the scale, indicating that they were, on average, "moderately satisfied" with the dialogues. Feedback comments will be provided as a separate appendix to this report.

## Next Steps

Moving forward, the next step in the process is to present these findings to the Seattle Police Department with the intent of continuing the dialogues. Overall, it appears that there was at least moderate satisfaction with the dialogues from the perspective of both community members and Seattle Police Department staff. We hope to facilitate more dialogues between the community and the Seattle Police Department and begin to restore the relationship between both groups.

In addition, the Seattle Public Safety Survey will be administered from October 15<sup>th</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>. This is our standard assessment tool for documenting the perspectives of the community relating to areas of Police Legitimacy, Fear of Crime, Social Cohesion, Social Disorganization, and Informal Social Control. The RA's who were integral in the operation of these dialogues will be distributing flyers advertising the survey, reaching out to community members and groups via email and social media, and spreading information via word of mouth to elicit responses across the city. That information will be analyzed and synthesized into a report to be distributed to the Seattle Police Department early in 2022.

Finally, we will utilize the narrative feedback provided by both the community and the Seattle Police Department staff to improve future dialogues and relations between the community and the Seattle Police Department.

Special thanks to the community and police participants who participated in the pilot dialogues. We invite those who would like to fully experience the dialogues to participate in the 2022 dialogues that will be held from May-August 2022 to discuss the results of the 2021 Seattle Public Safety Survey.

#### Appendix A – Community-Police Participant Flyers

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS! Virtual Community-Police Dialogues



Seattle University has collaborated with the Seattle Police Department since 2015 to conduct the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey as part of the Micro-Community Policing Plans (MCCP). This year, as part of the MCCP, Seattle University will be holding virtual community-police dialogues that will involve conversations between Seattle community members and police personnel from the Seattle Police Department. The purpose of the dialogues is to give people who live and work in Seattle the opportunity to engage in conversation with Seattle police to discuss concerns about public safety and security at the micro-community (neighborhood) level.

All who live and/or work in Seattle are eligible to participate in the virtual community-police dialogues. There will be three community-police dialogues held in each of the five police precincts - East, North, South, Southwest, and West (a total of 15 dialogues) on designated Thursday Nights 5:30-7:30pm via Zoorn video conferencing from mid-May through August 2021.

If you live and/or work in Seattle and are interested in participating on one of the upcoming community-police dialogues, go to <u>PUBLICSAFETYSURVEY.ORG</u>

For questions, contact:

Dr. Jacqueline B. Helfgott, Director Seattle University Crime & Justice Research Center

Email: <u>ihelfgot@seattleu.edu</u> Phone: (206) 295-5477



#### CALL FOR SEATTLE POLICE PERSONNEL PARTICIPANTS! Virtual Community-Police Dialogues



Seattle University has collaborated with the Seattle Police Department since 2015 to conduct the annual Seattle Public Safety Survey as part of the Micro-Community Policing Plans (MCPP). This year, as part of the MCPP, Seattle University will be holding virtual community-police dialogues that will involve conversations between Seattle community members and police personnel from the Seattle Police Department. The purpose of the dialogues is to give people who live and work in Seattle the opportunity to engage in conversation with Seattle police to discuss concerns about public safety and security at the micro-community (neighborhood) level.

Seattle Police personnel from all ranks from each of the SPD precincts are needed for the virtual community-police dialogues. There will be three community-police dialogues held in each of the five police precincts - East, North, South, Southwest, and West (a total of 15 dialogues) on designated Thusday nights 5:30-7:30pm via Zoom video conferencing from mid-May through August 26 2021. The goal is to have a minimum of three SPD personnel in each of the dialogue sessions with SPD personnel assigned to each precinct participating in precinct-specific dialogue sessions.

If you and are interested in participating on one of the upcoming community-police dialogues, go to <u>PUBLICSAFETYSURVEY.ORG</u> For questions, contact:

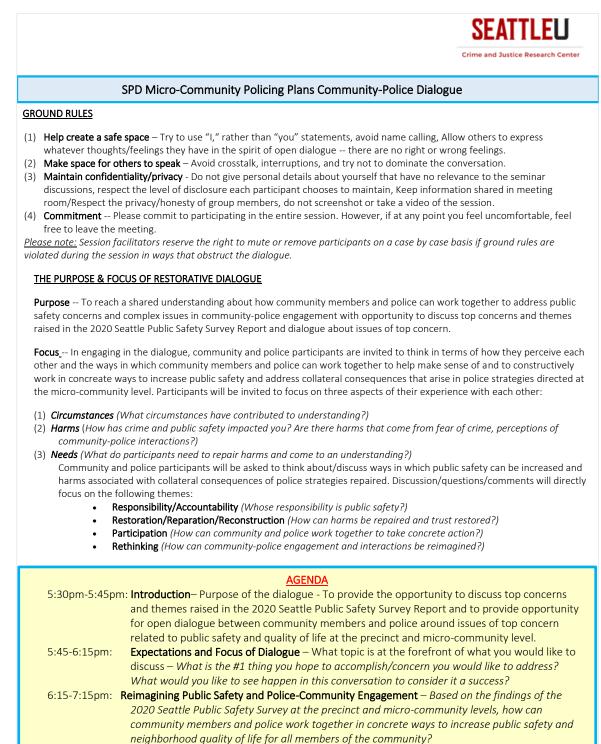
questions, contact.

 $\ensuremath{\mathsf{Dr}}$  , Jacqueline B, Helfgott, Director Seattle University Crime & Justice Research Center

Email: jhelfgot@seattleu.edu Phone: (206) 295-5477



### Appendix B – Community-Police Dialogue Agenda



7:15-7:30pm: Wrap-up discussion – What topics were addressed/unaddressed for you during the dialogue?