



*Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.*

## Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circles 2018-2019 Report

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Thank you to Bader Philanthropies for hosting these listening circles.  
We would also like to thank our partners: Safe and Sound, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Regional Department of Corrections.

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## Glossary

**Listening Circles** – Listening Circles are composed of a structure part of experience sharing between participants, followed by an unstructured portion during which participants can exchange about what has been said and ask questions of curiosity. The goals of the listening circles are to foster communication and build bridges between communities, invite trust and facilitate relationship building between officers and residents.

**Go-Around or Round** – The structured part of a Listening Circle composed of one question that each participant answers with the same amount of time, with no interruptions, going clockwise. Listening Circles are usually composed of two or three go-arounds.

**Connected Conversation** – The unstructured part of a Listening Circle that takes place after all go-arounds are completed. Participants are asked to share airtime yet are not timed. It is the moment for participants to interacted with each other and react to what they have heard during the structured parts of the dialogue. Connected conversation questions are available as well if participants want to explore other topics with the help of a prompt.

## Executive Summary

The Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion (Zeidler Center) has facilitated dialogues between police and residents in the Harambee community since 2016. This report details participant responses and feedback during and after our 2018-2019 sessions (on Monday, September 17, 2018; Monday, October 15, 2018; Monday November 12, 2018, Monday, February 18, 2019, Monday, March 18, 2019, and Monday, April 8, 2019). The executive summary (pages 8-24) identifies major themes of the listening circles, followed by a section offering an in-depth analysis of each dialogue.

### Program Description

The Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion believes that an important step in repairing relationships between law enforcement and communities of color in Milwaukee is to come together in unique spaces that provide the opportunity for facilitated, face-to-face communication to co-create resident-based solutions. The Zeidler Center's program, funded by Bader Philanthropies, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Racial Equity and Inclusion Grant, and the Northwestern Mutual Foundation, involves circles that are professionally facilitated by Zeidler Center facilitators and co-designed by residents and police to fit the needs of each community it serves.

Participants experience both structured and unstructured portions of dialogue. Through timed facilitation, participants can respectfully share their personal perspectives and learn about the perspectives of others. The Zeidler Center listening circles create a platform for greater mutual trust and understanding, essential for establishing a constructive, collaborative environment for change. Community partners play an essential role in encouraging continued resident, youth, and officer engagement. Our partners in Harambee include Bader Philanthropies, Safe & Sound, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Milwaukee Regional Department of Corrections.

### Listening Circle 1 – "Shots Fired!" Escalation/De-escalation

The first Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle was hosted at Bader Philanthropies on Monday, September 17, 2018. Milwaukee police officers and neighborhood residents of Harambee took part in four listening circles that were led by trained facilitators from Zeidler Center. The event started with the facilitated dialogue, during which every participant responded to two discussion questions centered around the issue of escalation and de-escalation:



1. *"Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?"*
2. *"What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighbor-hood?"*

After each participant was given an opportunity to speak, they were invited to engage in Connected Conversation, an open discussion during which participants follow up with each other's responses from the facilitated dialogue. To start the conversation, Zeidler Center facilitator could use the following prompt:

*"Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin."*

During Question Round One, most participants described a situation they witnessed that escalated. Participants described either a situation that escalated among a group of individuals or crowd of witnesses or a situation involving two individuals that escalated. Some involved physical violence while others involved verbal arguments. There were also participants who did not describe a situation that escalated per se, but the incident they witnessed did lead to violence. A few participants also described situations where there was de-escalation, or at least an attempt to de-escalate the conflict.

During Question Round Two, participants offered a variety of suggestions, some of which they intended to enact individually. Several participants suggested increasing police involvement, whether it is increasing police presence or individuals calling the police when they witness an incident. Others who shifted the responsibility to individuals suggested that witnesses should try to intervene and prevent escalation themselves. Still, more participants emphasized the importance of trust and respect among all residents and between residents and police officers. In general, participants expressed their support for more communication.

During Connected Conversation, participants followed up with one another's comments from Question Round Two. Some discussed the initial steps that residents can take, while others focused on how the police should change their approach. Not all the discussion groups had time to have this open conversation, so the responses were limited to two groups. At the end of the event, participants expressed hope and optimism in their parting words, indicating an overall positive experience from this event.

## *Listening Circle 2 – Healthy Relationships*

The second Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle was hosted at Bader Philanthropies on Monday, October 15, 2018. Milwaukee police officers and neighborhood residents of Harambee participated in five listening circles led by facilitators trained from Zeidler Center. The event began with facilitated dialogue, in which every participant was given the opportunity to respond to two discussion questions:

1. *“Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What's something that you enjoy doing together?”*
2. *“What does a real friendship look like to you?”*

After answering two rounds of questions, participants moved on to the Connected Conversation. The Connected Conversation is an open discussion where participants are encouraged to follow up with one another. To launch the conversation, the facilitators prompted the participants with the following question:

*“What's one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?”*

During Question Round One, most participants identified a family member as their closest friend. Participants also identified friends who they described as trusted confidants. Many highlighted the length of their long-time friendships, while other participants emphasized their shared common interests in sports and exercise or arts and culture.

During Question Round Two, most participants described the importance of trust and loyalty in friendships. Participants also highlighted important characteristics such as being non-judgmental and understanding. Some emphasized the importance of good communication, specifically being good listeners. Others discussed the importance of being helpful and reliable as friends.

During the Connected Conversation, most participants followed up with one another from their earlier discussions. Many comments emphasized the importance of more communication and interaction within their community. Some specifically mentioned more positive dialogue and interaction with their neighborhood police officers. Others suggested holding more organized community dialogues like Zeidler Center's Listening Circles. At the end of the event, participants indicated a successful session overall by giving positive comments in their parting words.

### Listening Circle 3 - Gratitude

The third Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle was hosted at Bader Philanthropies on Monday, November 12, 2018. Milwaukee police officers and neighborhood residents of Harambee participated in listening circles led by facilitators trained from Zeidler Center. The event began with facilitated dialogue, in which every participant was given the opportunity to respond to two discussion questions:

1. *"What's a memorable situation you've had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?"*
2. *"How have you been grateful for someone in authority?"*

After answering two rounds of questions, participants moved on to the Connected Conversation. The Connected Conversation is an open discussion where participants are encouraged to follow up with one another. To launch the conversation, the facilitators prompted the participants with the following question:

*"What's one thing you are grateful for about this community?"*

During Question Round One, respondents' answers fell into two broad categories of authority: parents and teachers; and law enforcement and other government officials. Respondents relayed a balance of negative, mixed and positive experiences within each category. Respondents shared feelings of trust, mistrust, sadness and gratefulness as a result of their experiences.

During Question Round Two, participants discussed gratefulness with others who fell into three categories: parents, family and god; supervisors and teachers; and law enforcement and other government personnel. Respondents described feelings of appreciation across categories for authority figures that provided them guidance, support, and discipline when warranted.

During Connected Conversation, respondents' responses fell into five categories: trust and gratefulness, generally; change, including change through generations; continuing responses related to relationships with law enforcement (positive and negative); information and responsibility, including the media; as well as suggestions and next steps to take. Overall, discussion focused on building community relationships and the value of respect, communication and shared understanding.

### *Listening Circle 4 – Positive Police and Resident Interaction*

The fourth Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle was hosted at Bader Philanthropies on Monday, February 18, 2019. Community members and police officers joined in four listening circles, each led by a trained facilitator from the Zeidler Center. During the facilitated dialogue, each participant was given the opportunity to respond to two rounds of questions:

1. *“Describe a time where you’ve seen police and community work together well in Harambee or somewhere else. What were they doing and what was the impact?”*
2. *“What projects would you like to see police and residents work on together to improve or beautify the neighborhood? What projects would you personally want to get involved in?”*

After the facilitated dialogue, participants were invited to speak in the Connected Conversation. This is an open conversation that encourages participants to follow up with each other by discussing what was heard during the facilitated dialogue. To initiate the discussion, participants were invited to respond to the following question:

*“What would motivate you and/or what would hold you back from getting involved? What other ideas do you have to beautify the neighborhood? What’s your role?”*

During Question Round One, respondents shared a variety of personal experiences and encounters that impacted them in Harambee or somewhere else in the community. A common sentiment was with a strong level of understanding, respect and trust from all members of the community, positive outcomes and a better community are developed.

During Question Round Two, most participants agreed they were willing to take part in neighborhood cleanups to beautify the neighborhood. They felt this type of interaction, with community members and police officers joining in on the effort, will bring everyone together and benefit the neighborhood as a place to be admired and desirable to live in. Other ideas included gardening, playing basketball together and fixing up boarded houses.

During Connected Conversation, participants shared the ideas on what would motivate them or hold them back from becoming involved, and what role they would take on to help beautify the neighborhood. Most participants said that the idea of holding these types of open

communication events was needed and appreciated, and most importantly, more people needed to become involved.

### **Listening Circle 5 – Mental Health in the Community**

The fifth Harambee Police & Resident Listening Circle took place at Bader Philanthropies on Monday, March 18, 2019. The topic of the listening circle focused on mental health in the community. Participants were asked two rounds of questions by facilitators trained by the Zeidler Center:

1. *“Describe a time where you witnessed or heard a conversation or situation where someone’s mental health played a role in the moment or in the outcome.”*
2. *“What steps do you think should be taken by the community and law enforcement to help ensure a positive outcome when dealing with someone in a mental health crisis? Name some specific actions you can take to be part of the solution.”*

If time permitted, participants were asked to participate in Connected Conversation and were asked the following question:

*“What do you plan to do to become more knowledgeable about mental health and its effects on the community? What are your thoughts about being a ‘trauma-informed community’?”*

During Question Round One, respondents described situations from work and with their family and neighbors where mental health played a significant role. Some participants described situations revolving around suicide attempts; others, the aftermaths of traumatic events. In their stories, participants described how they interacted with the individuals affected and how some of them had no help until that point.

During Question Round Two, respondents discussed several steps the community and police could take to ensure better outcomes in mental health crises. Connecting with individuals dealing with mental health crises was a common suggestion amongst participants. Participants also suggested helping police and giving information about the situation and the person dealing with the mental health crisis. The community and police need more training on mental health and how to properly respond to mental health crises. Lastly, when handling a mental health crisis, participants said that staying calm was an important factor in keeping situations from escalating.

During Connected Conversation, many participants continued to discuss their experiences dealing with mental health in the community. Participants spoke about police in the community. Some felt that calling the police should not be the first response. Others spoke of their distrust of the police from past experiences of prejudice. Some participants, again, spoke of the lack of training they have received on mental health. Participants revisited Question Round Two and gave more suggestions on how to ensure better outcomes when handling mental health crises. Some participants discussed community members helping those in need and not being bystanders to troubling situations. Some also discussed mental health lists or registries that would document mental health crises in the community.

During Parting Words, participants noted the positive discussion that was had and remarked on the opportunity to hear from different sides of the community on this issue. Some participants again emphasized the importance of communication in handling mental health crises. Others mentioned having learned more about mental health.

### **Listening Circle 6 – Does it all really matter?**

**Lack of respect for each other and disconnection between youth and older people (impact of social media on this). How do we increase community engagement or talking face to face?**

The sixth Police & Resident Listening Circle session in Harambee was hosted at Bader Philanthropies on Monday, April 8, 2019. Police officers and neighborhood residents of Harambee participated in four listening circles led by Zeidler Center-trained facilitators. The event began with a structured dialogue, during which every participant was given the opportunity to respond to the following discussion questions:

1. *“How have you seen this community talked about on social media? Share about a video/post you read on social media that directly affected you.”*
2. *“Who is someone you know personally in the neighborhood who you think makes the neighborhood great? Why?”*

After responding to these two rounds of questions, participants continued in Connected Conversation, which is an open discussion format. The facilitators prompted the participants with the following questions:

*“What’s one thing that makes you feel connected to other people in the neighborhood?”*

*“What are your ideas/suggestions on how to increase community engagement and build mutual respect between youth, adult residents, and law enforcement?”*

During Question Round One, most participants described encountering a negative portrayal of their community either through social media or the news media. A few shared stories of positive portrayals of their community as well.

During Question Round Two, most participants identified either a family member or a community member such as a neighbor. Among the latter, participants generally described two types of people: those who helped maintain the cleanliness of their neighborhood, and those who remained actively involved in mentoring or helping the neighborhood youth.

During Connected Conversation, most participants followed up with one another from their earlier discussions. The majority of comments focused on a desire for more community discussion and events. A couple of participants highlighted the positive side of their community while another couple of participants discussed the negative side of social media. Although most of the listening circles veered away from the Connected Conversation question prompts, their discussions were fruitful overall, as indicated by their positive Parting Words.

## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post-Surveys

Through pre- and post-surveys, the Zeidler Center collected demographic and quantitative data regarding the impact of Listening Circles on participants. The following graphs are a combination of the six events that took place in the Harambee neighborhood. Trends among resident participants and police officer participants were very similar for all six events, and thus are presented collectively for a matter of reading efficiency.

Pre- and post-survey questions explored resident perceptions about police officers (resident participants) and perceptions about police and community relations and listening circles (all participants). All graphs indicate **improvements from a negative or neutral response to a positive response after the listening circle.**<sup>1</sup> For example:

- In response to “I can count on the police to support my neighborhood,” **60% of resident participants** had a positive response after the listening circle session as opposed to **47%** before.
- In response to “I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents,” **77% of all participants** (resident and police officer participants) had a positive response after the listening circle session as opposed to **69%** before.

Results for individual events are available in the “Feedback Forms” section of each Listening Circle event (beginning on page 33).

Each listening circle included an average of 19 resident participants and 8 police officer participants. Many participants expressed positive experiences regarding the inclusion of youth participants, who represented 59% of resident participants and are under 18 or between 18 and 24. Police officer participants represented District 4, District 5, the Office of Community Outreach and Education (OCOE), and the Truancy Abatement – Burglary Suppression (TABS) program. Furthermore, the Milwaukee Police Department began asking recruit officers to join Police & Resident Listening Circles. While there was one recruit officer who attended one event, there is an opportunity to include more recruit officers.

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<sup>1</sup> Positive responses indicate the sum of participants' responses for “quite a lot” and “a great deal” (Questions 1, 2, and 4) or “somewhat agree” and “totally agree” (Question 3). Negative responses indicate the sum of participants' responses for “none” and “very little” (Questions 1, 2, and 4) or “totally disagree” and “somewhat disagree” (Question 3). At the aggregate level, we can understand total shifts in participants' responses from before to after the listening circle event rather than at the individual response level. For example, responses conclude overall as positive despite a decrease in responses for “a great deal” individually.



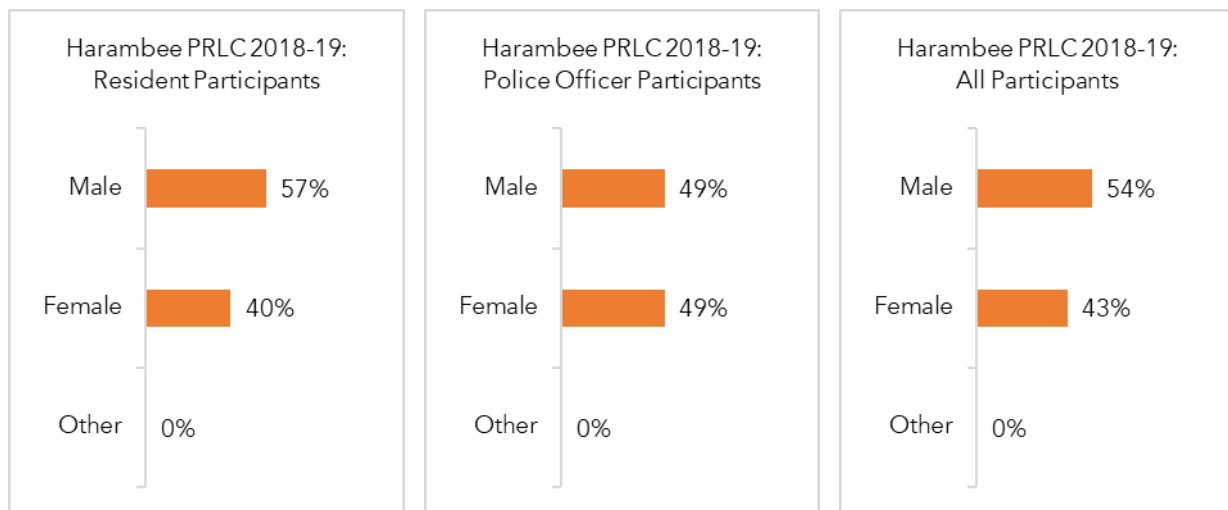
The Zeidler Center also tracked self-identified returning and newcomer rates for all participants:

- **81%** of police officer participants had attended **2, 3, and more than 3 events**.
- **5%** of police officer participants had attended **1 event**.
- **14%** of police officer participants had **not attended** a prior listening circle.
- **42%** of resident participants had attended **2, 3, and more than 3 events**.
- **16%** of resident participants had attended **1 event**.
- **42%** of resident participants had **not attended** a prior listening circle.

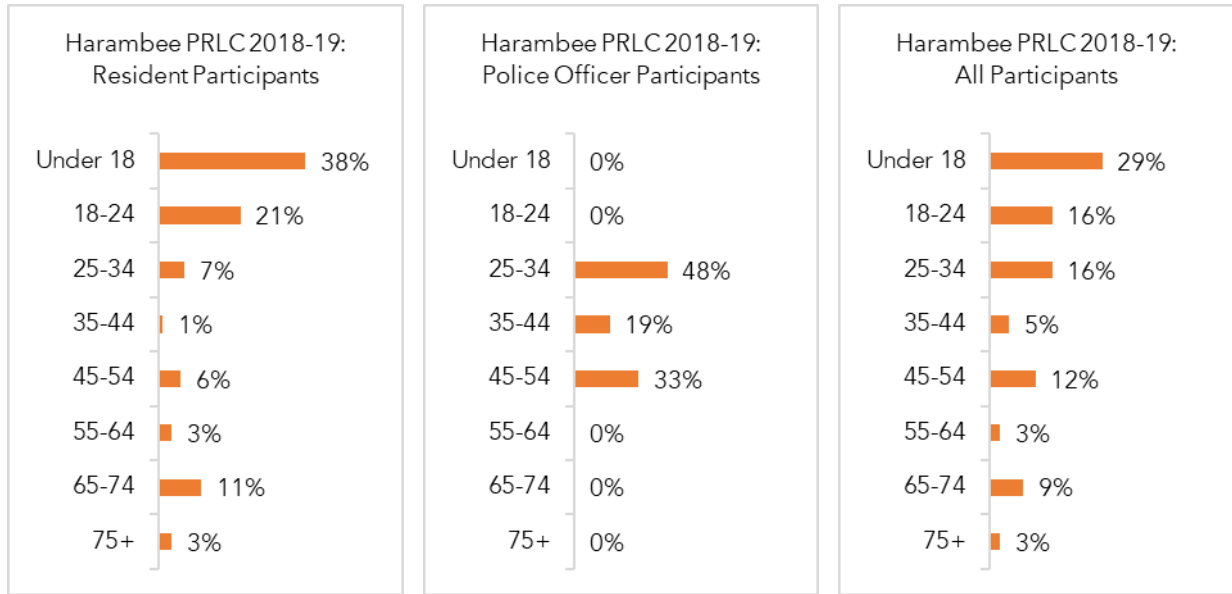
The newcomer rate for both police officers and residents was high which underlines the outreach efforts undertaken in Harambee leading to new participants being exposed to Listening Circles.

### Demographics

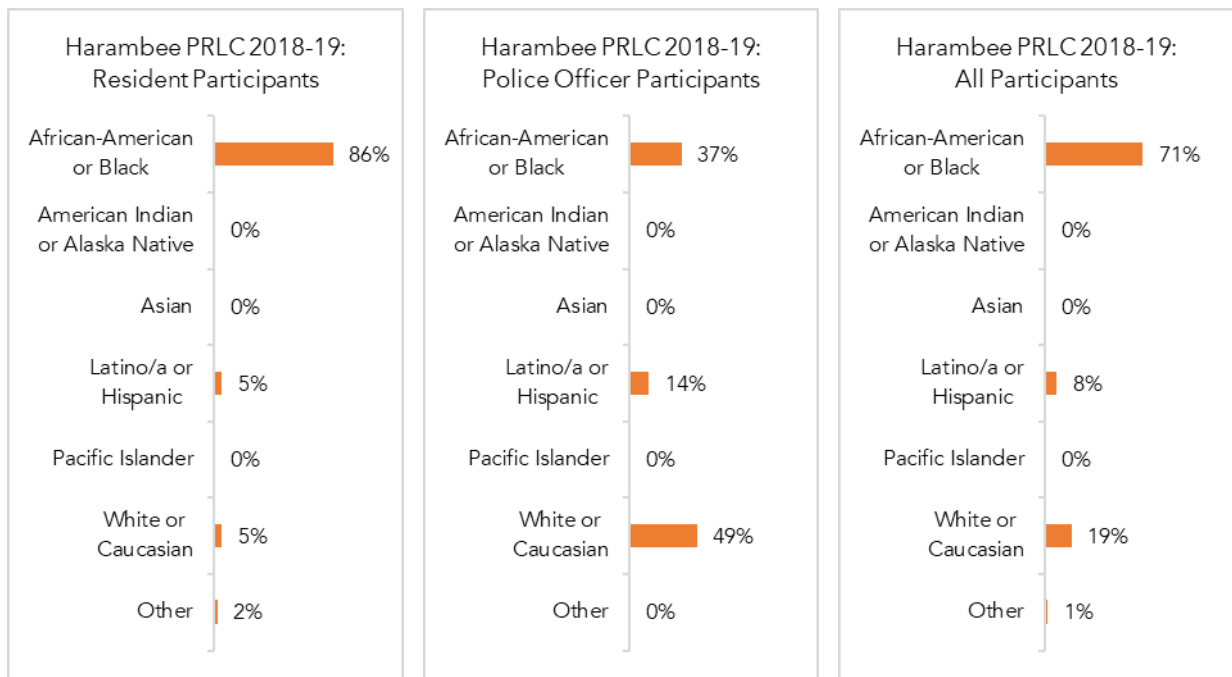
Gender:



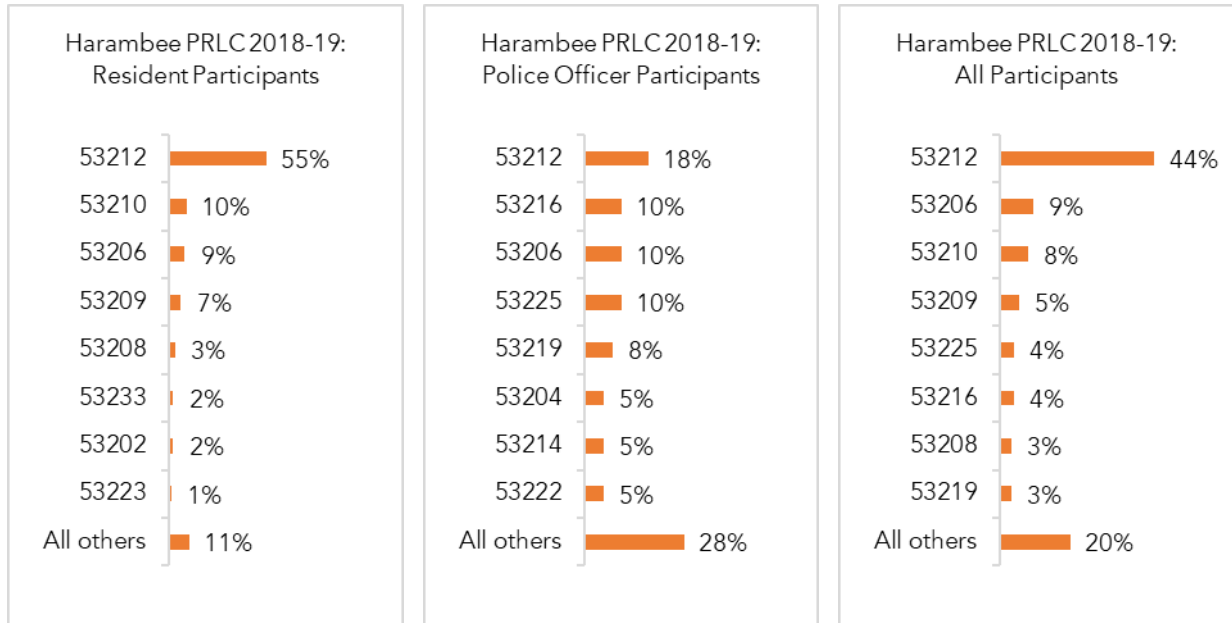
## Age Range:



## Race/Ethnicity:

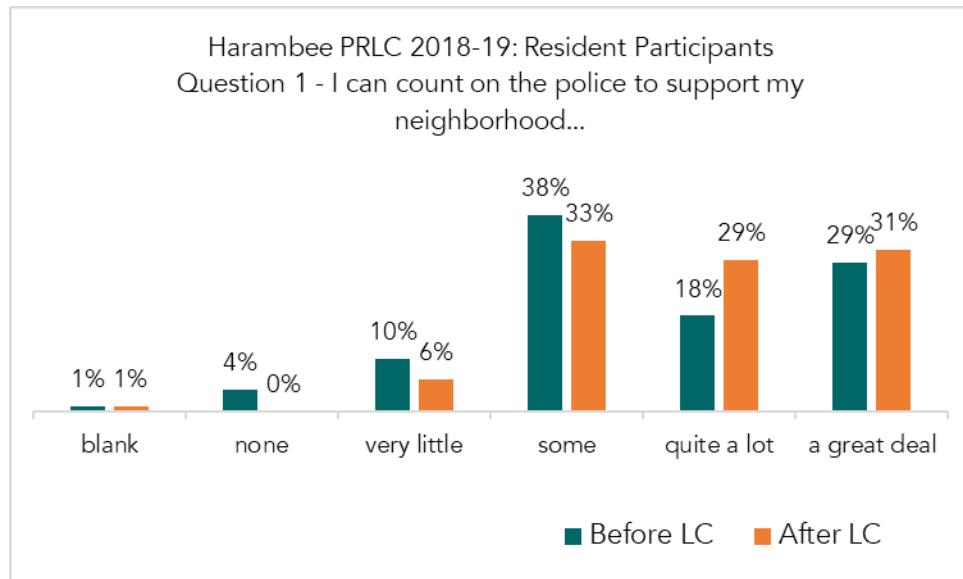


Zip Code:



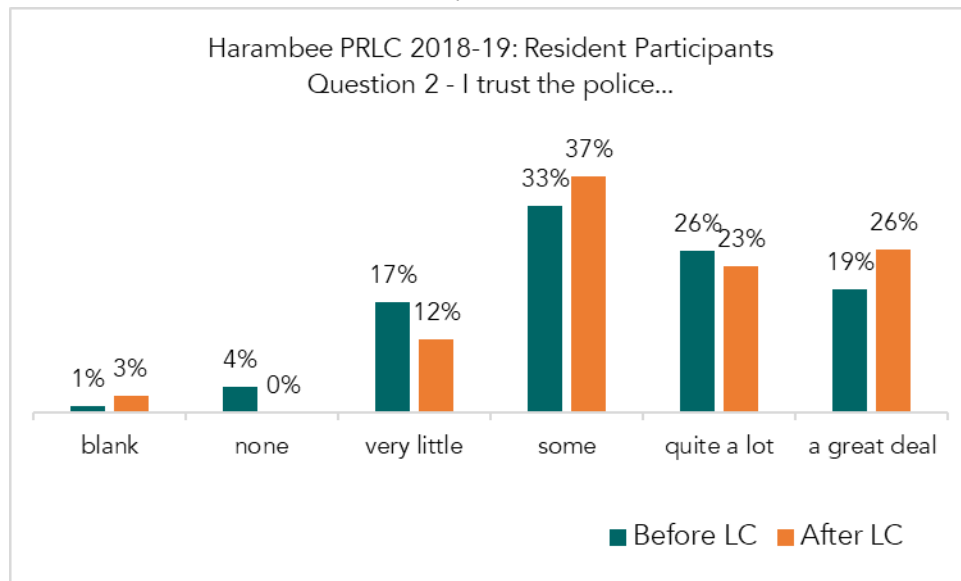
**Question 1 - I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...**

Note: Question was asked of Resident Participants only.



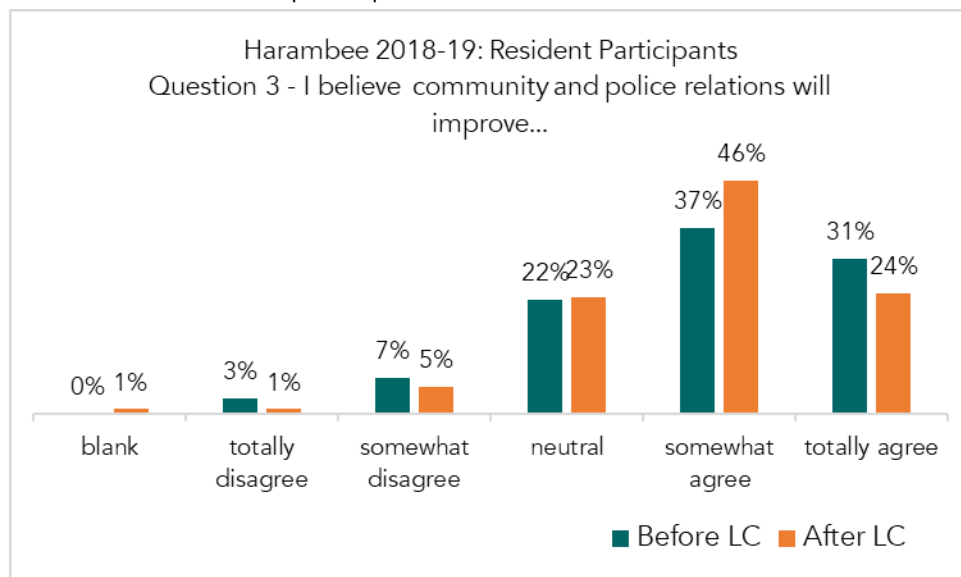
### Question 2 - I trust the police...

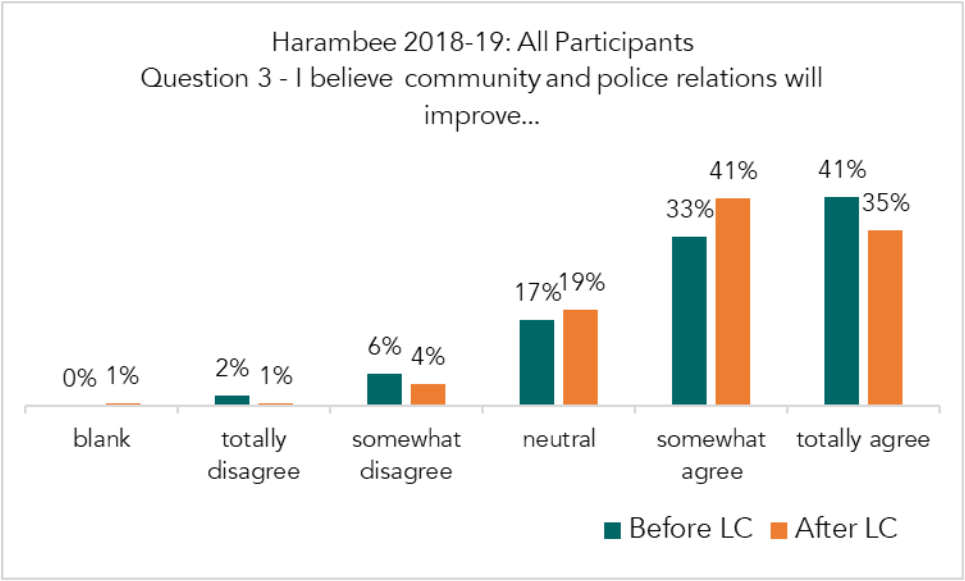
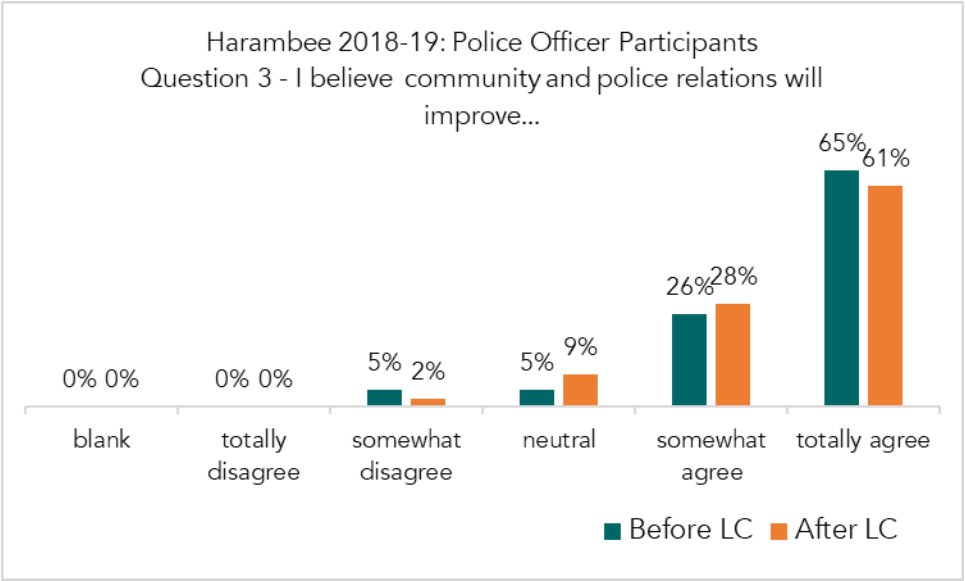
Note: Question was asked of Resident Participants only.



### Question 3 - I believe community and police relations will improve...

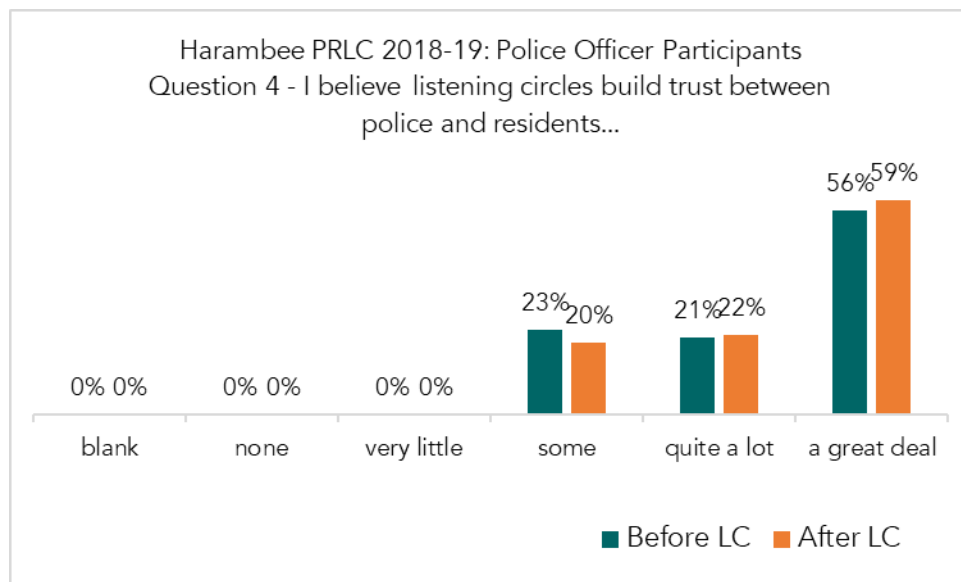
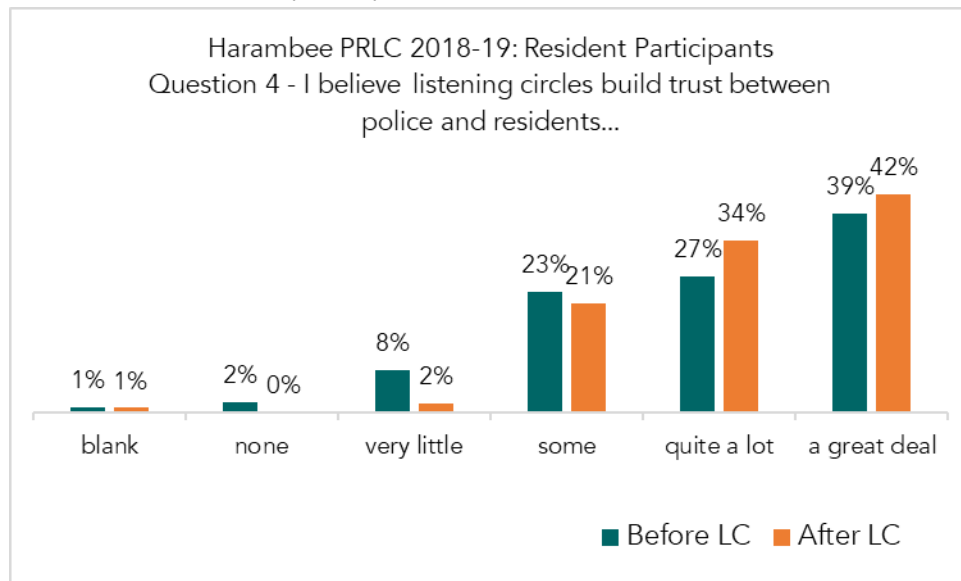
Note: Question was asked of all participants.

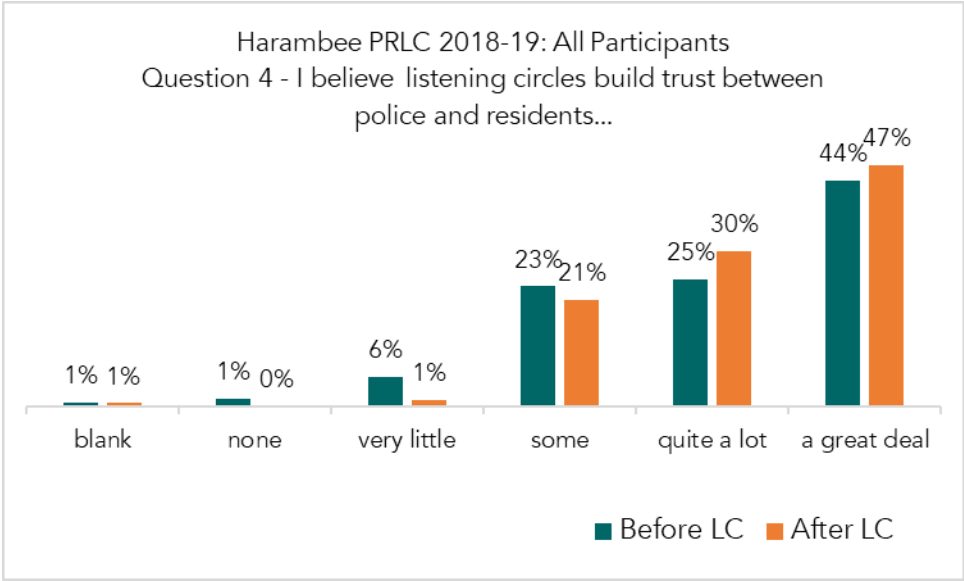




#### Question 4 - I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...

Note: Question was asked of all participants.





## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on participants' testimonies and feedback forms collected during each listening circle session. Recommendations often fell into two categories: 1) building relationships through establishing trust and respect and 2) increased and improve communication and collaboration. Implications for the Zeidler Center, Harambee residents, and the Milwaukee Police Department are included under each category.

### **Build Relationships through Establishing Trust and Respect**

Efforts to build relationships should include...

**Hosting community events that bring together a diverse group of people.** Many participants discussed positive examples like the Harvest Festival and Coffee with a Cop. Cultural diversity at community events and marketing of community events should also be prioritized.

**Actively involving police officers in the neighborhood.** Participants discussed examples including walking the beat during the summer or taking the initiative to talk to officers during non-crisis settings. Also, many described wanting to see police officers take part or continue taking part in community events.

**Building community from within.** Participants described examples such as trash clean-up days, beautification projects, and block parties. Furthermore, many indicated solving issues among residents and within the community through conflict resolution skills rather than relying on police intervention.

**Building community relationships for listening circles.** Planning committee members of the listening circles discussed needing to build relationships spatially including the Zeidler Center's participation in community events, garnering the support of businesses directly surrounding Bader Philanthropies, and training facilitators from the Harambee neighborhood.



## **Increased and Improved Communication and Collaboration**

Efforts to increase and improve communication and collaboration should include...

**Continuing listening circles.** Participants described appreciations and wanting to continue listening circles because they provided a space outside of non-crisis settings for participants to gather, listen, and understand one another. Also, topics for listening circles were chosen by planning committee members who are of the neighborhood, reflecting issues relevant for the neighborhood such as issues of mental health and social media use. Furthermore, listening circles happened consistently and some participants attended regularly. This regular schedule allowed some to bond beyond a one-time event and continue conversations from previous sessions or outside the sessions.

**Improving attendance of listening circles.** Participants described wanting to gather more people, especially those who may seem disinterested in building relationships in the community or with police officers. In addition, participants suggested increasing the diversity of participants to provide different experiences and perspectives, including the age range, race or ethnic background, and more. Efforts should include increasing marketing efforts for listening circles.

**Improving knowledge about existing initiatives.** Knowledge about programs within the Milwaukee Police Department should be extended in the community, especially regarding the police academy, community-based liaisons, and events like Coffee with a Cop.

**Improving knowledge about roles, rules, and procedures of police officers.** Many youth resident participants expressed curiosity about police officers including their day-to-day work life and why they chose to become police officers. Furthermore, many resident participants spoke about a lack of understanding of police officers' behaviors which often comes from not understanding police procedures. Educating residents should be prioritized. Lastly, both resident and police officer participants discussed working at the individual or family level to dispel myths and stereotypes about police officers or about youth in the neighborhood through communication and discussions, for example.

## Listening Circle 1 Analysis – “Shots Fired!” Escalation/De-escalation

**Question Round One:** *“Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?”*

Many participants shared a story of witnessing a situation escalate in public. Some of these participants described an incident of escalation incited by a crowd of witnesses. Others de-scribed a conflict that escalated between two individuals. A few of these participants described their own attempts to de-escalate the situation. Although several participants did not describe situations that escalated, they did describe stories of violence that could have been instigated by escalation. These stories are described in the following sections.

### 1.1 Group Escalation

Most participants described situations where an incident escalated because of witness involvement. Some of the incidents began as a conflict between two individuals before being intensified by the crowd of witnesses.

*“While working with my four-member team at one of the big summer events, there were people walking and passing by regularly. Then I noticed one young lady walked over and reached and grabbed another girl and began fighting with her. While the two girls were fighting, more and more people came over and the situation kept escalating out of control.”*

Other incidents involved domestic violence between two people that escalated when other neighbors or family members joined in the conflict. These were not necessarily public situations but reflected the participants’ experiences in witnessing conflict escalation.

*“Two years ago, my brother’s girlfriend and him [sic] had been fighting all day. Any-way, it escalated so bad that she broke all the dishes in my house and called her mom over and they came over and fought my whole family. They pulled my mom's hair out and beat up her boyfriend.”*

*“I was sent out to a domestic violence argument, the neighbors were there and every-thing, and instead of breaking it up they instigated it!”*

One participant shared a similar story of witnessing a situation that escalated where the crowd did not help to de-escalate the conflict.

*"Three years ago, there was a fight down at Juneteenth. It was some youngsters, like they was [sic] about eighteen or nineteen. There were like forty people standing around with their phones out. No one was trying to break it up though and it was crazy because most of them were adults. This was like in front of a bar."*

However, not all stories involved physical violence. Some participants described situations that escalated verbally, which they perceived as a potential for escalation into further conflict.

*"I was walking around the neighborhood meeting people, and I heard this woman from church with a friend of hers in the far distance talking very loudly to some teenage girls, and the conversation became heated."*

*"There was a school basketball game one time where people arguing over a bad call they were all friends, but it got out of hand they were ready to fight each other."*

These situations where participants perceived the potential for more violence were also echoed by other participants describing conflicts they witnessed between two individuals. Interestingly, some of these participants described similar situations of conflict on basketball courts like the last quote.

## **1.2 One-On-One Escalation**

Several participants described confrontations that escalated between two individuals on the basketball court. These ranged from verbal arguments to actual physical violence.

*"I was at an open gym playing basketball and one guy fouled another guy and they starting [sic] arguing. Security came over and broke it up and put one of the guys out of the gym."*

*"I witnessed somebody on a basketball court get fouled and there was pushing and shoving. Then the guy went to his car and got a gun and started shooting."*

As with the group escalation stories, not all of the one-on-one escalation stories were physically violent. Some participants described heated arguments between two individuals in other public spaces.

*"About a month ago inside of a store on the east side I witnessed an argument be-tween two young ladies that continued to escalate for ten minutes."*

*"My mom and I were at the laundromat and as we were coming out we saw a lady arguing with another lady who was sitting in a car. The lady inside the car threw a cup of water at the lady standing outside as they continued to argue."*

### **1.3 Other Incidents of Escalation**

A couple of participants described other types of situations where things escalated quickly after a poor decision that was made. These stories exhibited how situations could escalate even when those involved are not engaged in a confrontation.

*"Five summers ago, my cousins stole a vehicle which the police tried to stop but a chase began, he kept driving and I jumped out at a turn, the car crashed on Capitol and my cousin split his head in two and died and my nephew died in the hospital later."*

*"Some youth stole a mini-van for joyriding and a thirteen-year-old girl ended up dead in a crash!"*

### **1.4 Not Escalation but Violent**

A number of participants did not describe an escalation incident per se, but a couple of them described situations that involved violence:

*"Me and my grandmother say some guys rob an old lady of her purse at the gas station and she fell down and had to go to the hospital."*

*"My eleven-year-old brother and I were walking to the [sic] and I saw someone get shot and it was sad!"*

### **1.5 Participant Attempt at De-Escalation**

A few participants recounted stories of when they themselves tried to intervene and de-escalate the situation. Most of the time, they were successful.

*"So, I had to intervene. I reminded the guy with the gun about his daughter. I asked him to think about what would happen to her if he went to jail. Think about some other man raising your daughter. I was able to calm him down and got him a drink. It's about helping people see the context and keep things in perspective with the bigger picture."*

However, sometimes the participant was not as successful as they had hoped.

*"Me and my friend broke it up and after everything was good. The police rolled up, and they didn't want to hear me out at all. In fact, they just ignored me. They looked right past me, and they picked people at random to arrest."*

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**Question Round Two:** *"What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighborhood?"*

Participants produced a variety of suggestions. Some suggested more police involvement, while others gave suggestions for how to intervene in situations directly. Most of the participants tended to focus on the importance of trust and respect among residents and between residents and police officers. Participants generally agreed on communication being a key component to de-escalation.

## **2.1 Increase Police Involvement**

A number of participants gave suggestions for increase police involvement. Some placed this responsibility on the police officers themselves.

*"When stuff happens, the police need to come and come right away instead of taking their sweet time!"*

*"The police need to have more undercover cops to catch people speeding in the neighborhoods putting everybody lives at risk!"*

Others placed the responsibility on individuals who are witnessing a conflict.

*"Call the police and warn them of the situation happening."*

*"We have to learn to call the police when something dangerous happens instead of just standing around."*

These suggestions for witnesses to call the police emphasized individual responsibility, something that is echoed by other participants who suggested that witnesses should intervene directly to de-escalate a situation.

## 2.2 Take Initiative to De-Escalate

Several participants emphasized the importance of stepping in and intervening directly before a conflict escalates. These participants were critical of witnesses who focus on recording the incident on their cell phones rather than intervening to help de-escalate the situation.

*"In our neighborhoods when things happen, we can't be afraid to say something. We have to be brave enough that when we see things escalating, that we get to our kids right away we have to learn how to call for help instead of pressing record all the time on our phones."*

*"Cell phone recording is a major problem I feel like instead of calling police people are taking out their phones and recording stuff."*

These quotes, along with the earlier stories from participants who have tried to de-escalate a situation, highlight the overall agreement among participants that individuals need to take action when they are witnessing a confrontation at risk of escalating.

## 2.3 Trust and respect

Participants also emphasized the importance of respect and trust. Some stated in general terms that people should respect each other.

*"I think being respectful and not rude would and will be helpful."*

*"We need to remember the importance of respect we need to remember treating people as human beings is important. That's the problem with this rift between people sometime fear gets in the way of respect and I think that's why things are the way they are."*

Others reminded the group the importance of respecting police officers as well.

*"We'd ask that you try to treat every officer as an individual and give each one a fair chance to show their light."*

However, participants expressed their frustration with feeling disrespected by police, an issue that other participants suggested could only be mitigated by trust on both sides. This is succinctly captured by one of the participants who described his/her own personal experience in the previous round of discussion.

*"The hood can't trust you right away (looking at officers) the police is going to have to learn how to be more strategic and less aggressive. We feel oppressed by the officers we have mental and drug abuse in our in our community. Take me for an example I'm an ex-con I am a victim of the predators of my day...the drug pushers and the gangs! A lot of time, folks pre-judge me, but I am a walking testimony! I feel their respect is key but it's going to be a long road to get to it."*

## **2.4 Communication and Collaboration**

Quite a few of the participants gave suggestions for improving communication and increasing collaboration within their communities. Some focused on the importance of better communication between residents and police officers.

*"I think there must be better communication by educating each other (police and residents) I come to events like this because the education of things changes the whole attitude and prevents clashes and wrong understanding."*

*"We have to learn to communicate with each other and talk to each other when you sit down and talk to people you can see where the we have a uniform on or not that we have more in common then we don't have in common."*

Others emphasized the importance of working and collaborating together to prevent escalation.

*"We need to work together like brothers and sisters, police and neighbors have to develop real relationships before things escalate and not after."*

*"We going to have to work together and stop the violence we have to learn how to call for help when folks are fighting instead of just watching."*

In general, these types of suggestions were optimistic.

## **2.5 Other Suggestions**

Participants also gave a variety of other suggestions—some directly related to the question, and others not so much. A complete list of these suggestions can be found in the Annexes.

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**Connected Conversation:** *"Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin."*

Not all of the discussion groups participated in this portion of the event, but the two groups that did have a lot to say were separately focused on different topics. One group focused on the importance of increasing and improving communication in their communities. The other group engaged in a deep conversation about issues of bias that need to be addressed.

### **3.1 More Communication**

One discussion group focused on the importance of communication in their communities, with some participants offering some concrete actions to take. A couple of these participants suggested ways to intervene through dialogue.

*"I would suggest saying 'Hello, how are you'?"*

*"I would suggest letting them know you are there for them."*

Others gave more vague suggestions centered around increasing community discussion.

*"I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other."*

*"I think becoming more informed through community conversations."*

A couple of participants mentioned the challenges of intervening, with one pointing out the issues of fear among the community.

*"There's a lot of fear out here because of the code and that's why people don't try to help."*

In general, this discussion group offered a variety of suggestions for individuals to consider.

### **3.2 Addressing Issues of Bias**

Another group engaged in a discussion about issues of bias both for police officers and residents. Both police officers and residents in the group agreed that police officers do have biases they need to address. As one police officer stated,



*"We show up on the scene, we don't know anything about anything, and yeah I would be less than honest if I didn't say there are personal biases that come into play."*

However, another participant, who was also a police officer, pointed out that biases are also an issue that residents need to consider about themselves.

*"Yes, we do come in to bad situations with mistrust, and it works the other way too. I can't tell you how many houses I have been to where folks just wouldn't cooperate, and I felt like it was because I was white, and they didn't feel like I understood them. Sometimes when we get there the wall is already up!"*

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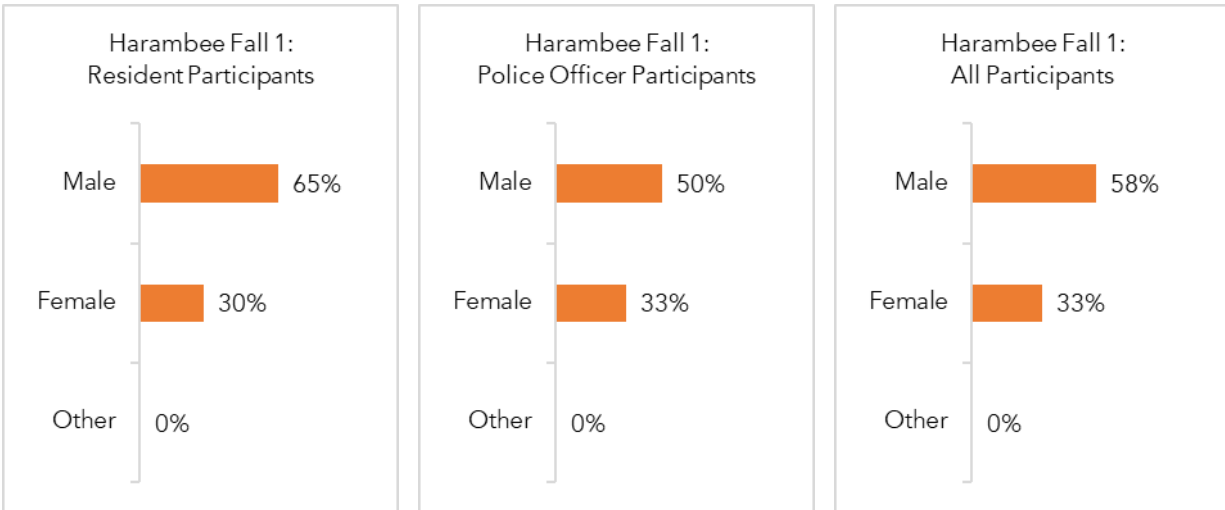
### **Parting Words**

Participants generally expressed hope and optimism in their parting words. Some expressed a changed attitude toward the police, while others reminded the group to not antagonize the police. Overall, participants indicated they had a positive experience from this event.

## Feedback Forms

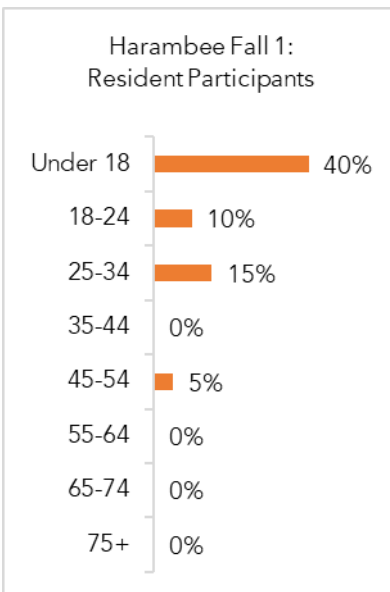
### Demographics

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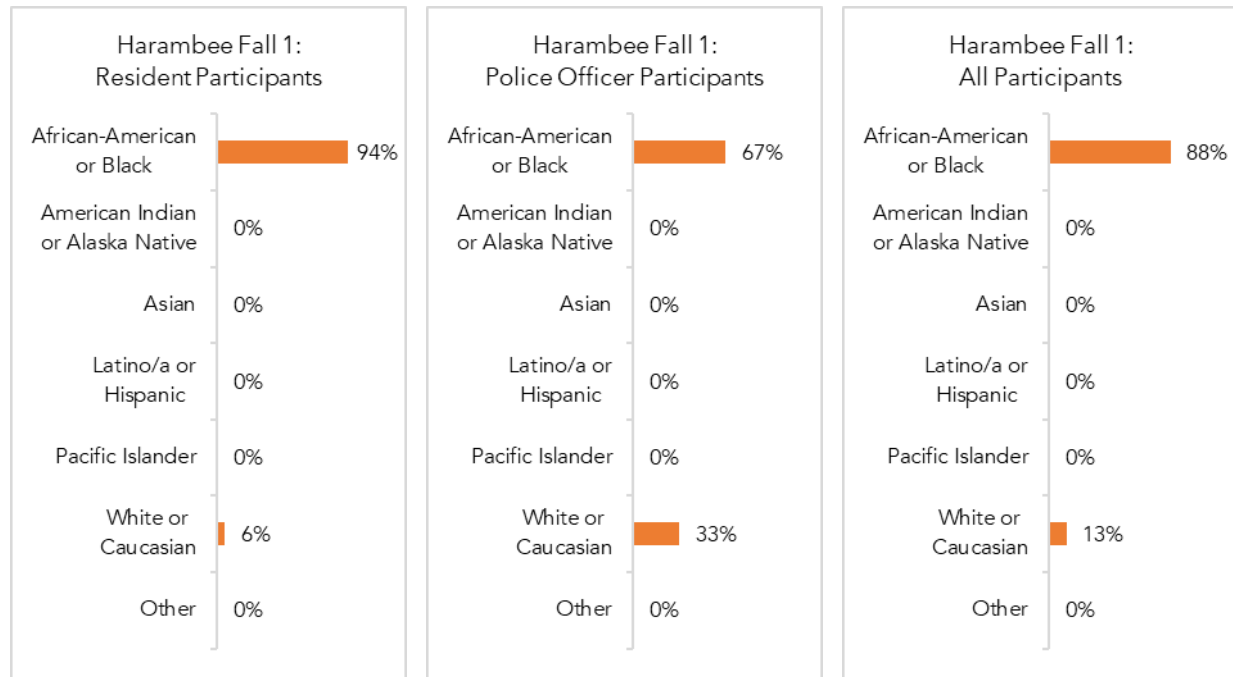


Age Range:

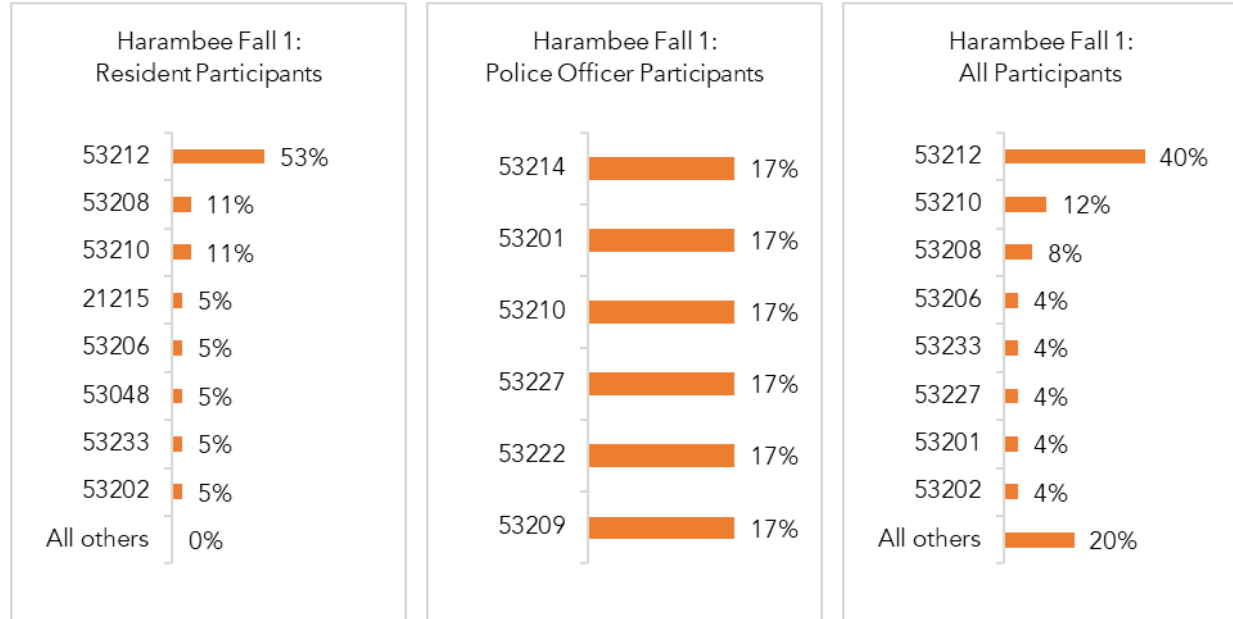
(Note: Age range data was not collected for police officer participants.)



## Race/Ethnicity:



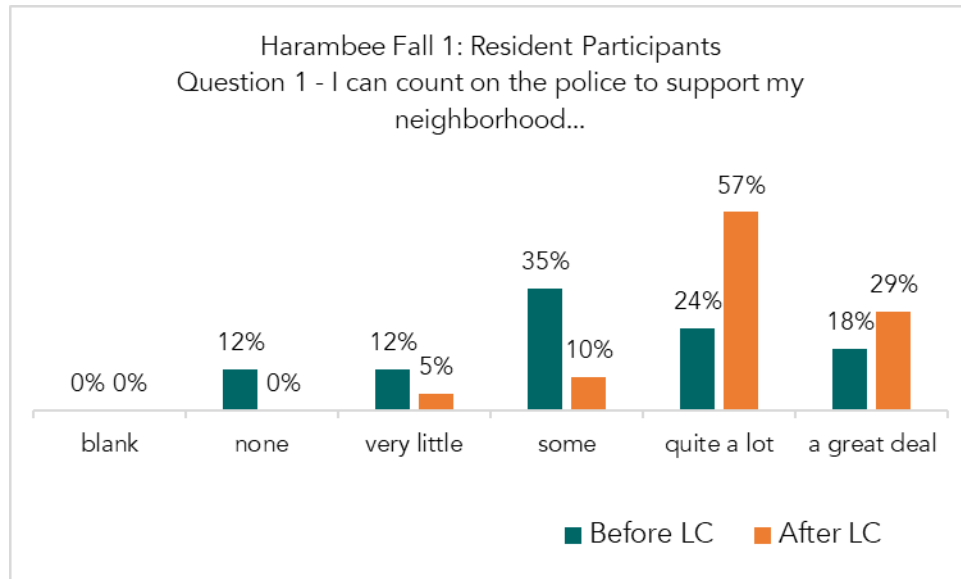
## Zip Code:



## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys

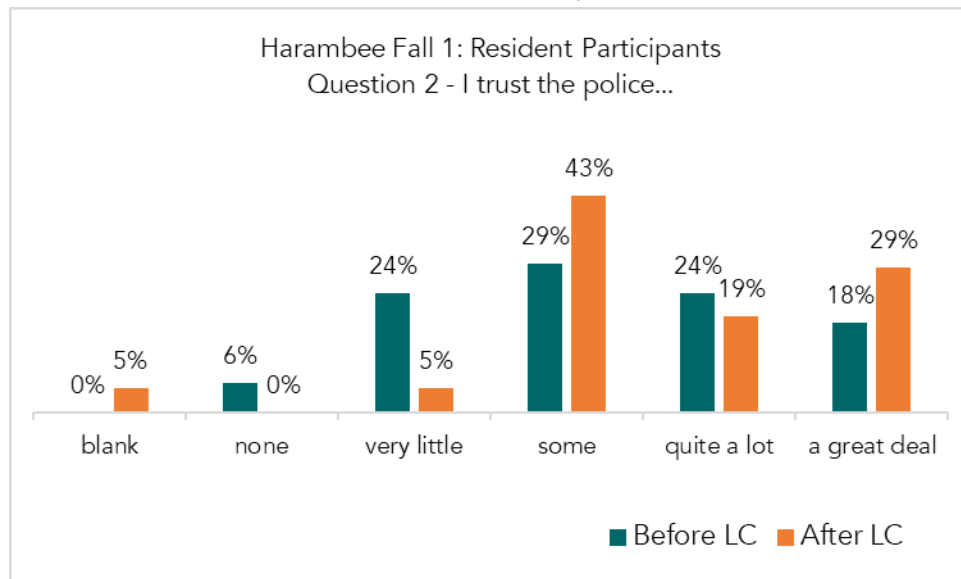
Question 1 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 1 was asked of Resident Participants only.

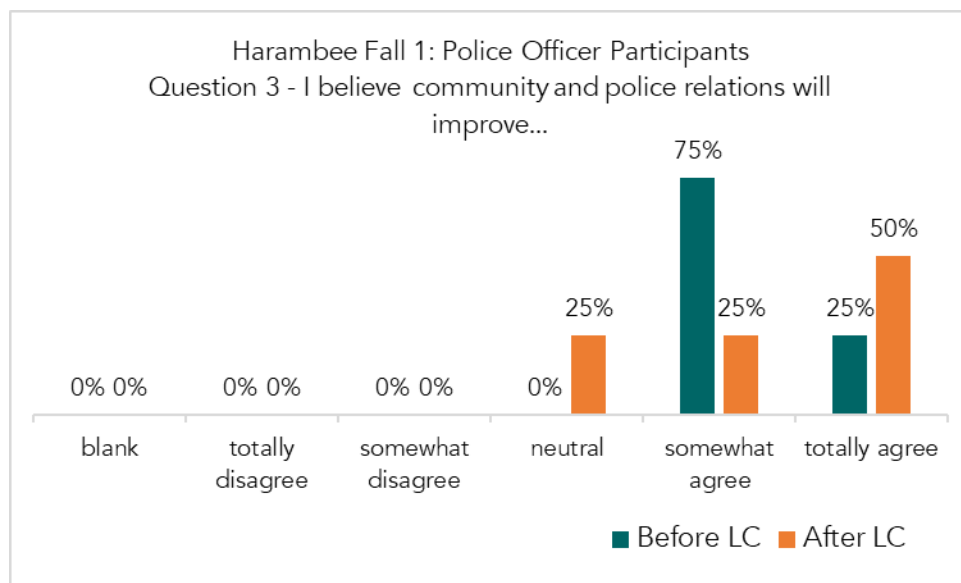
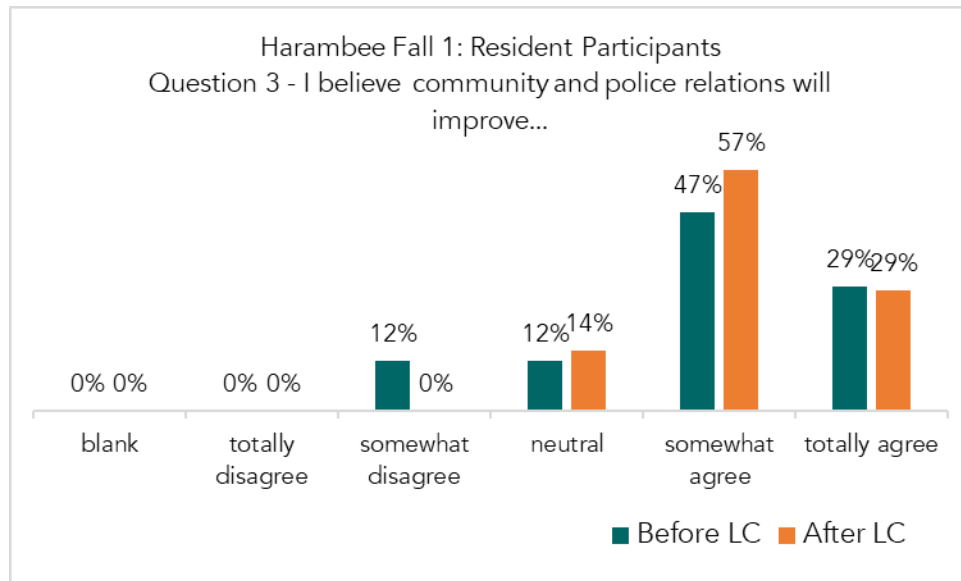


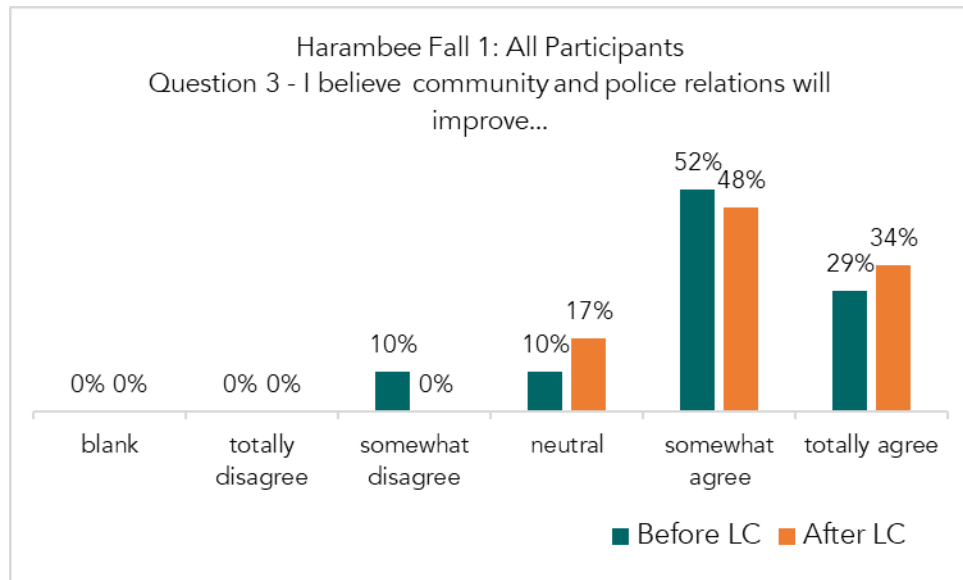
Question 2 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 2 was asked of Resident Participants only.

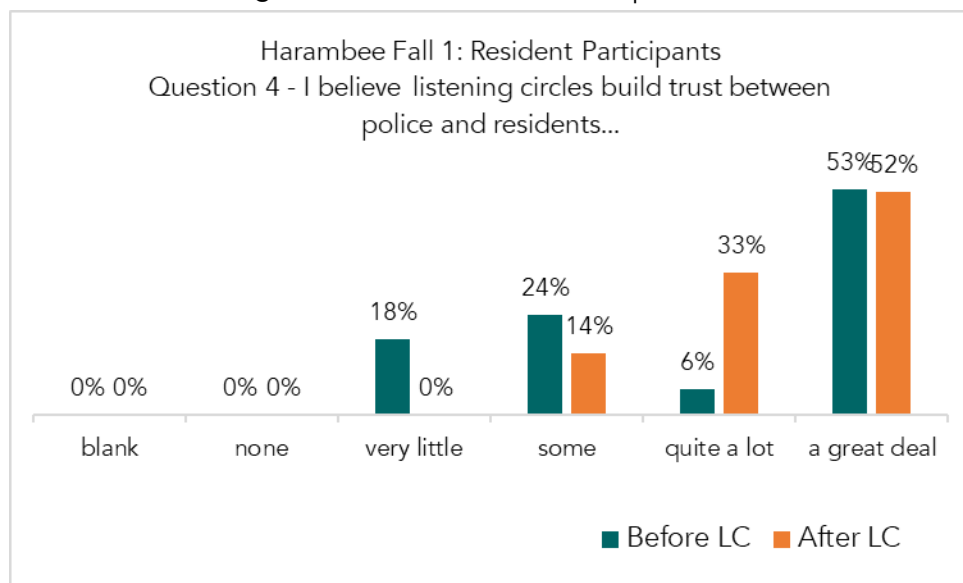


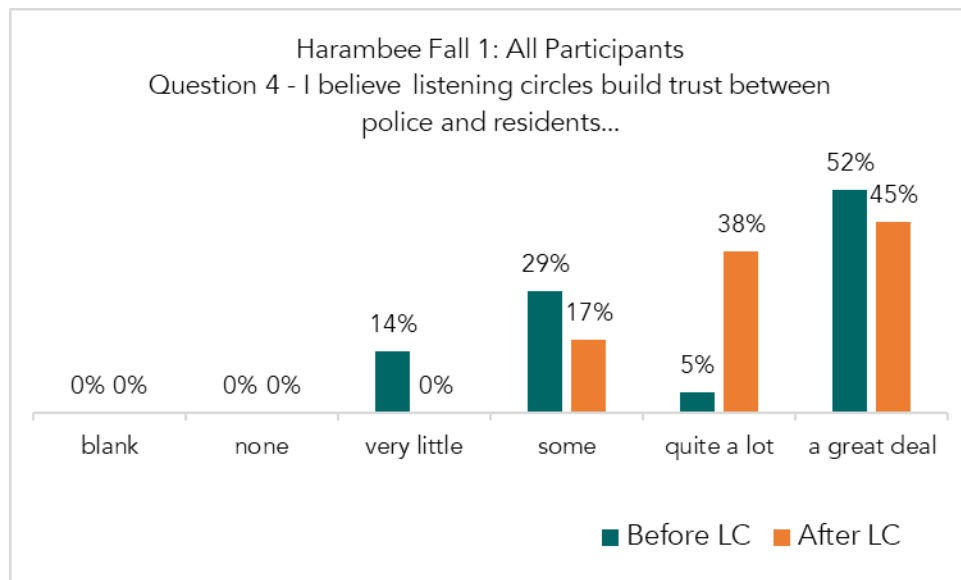
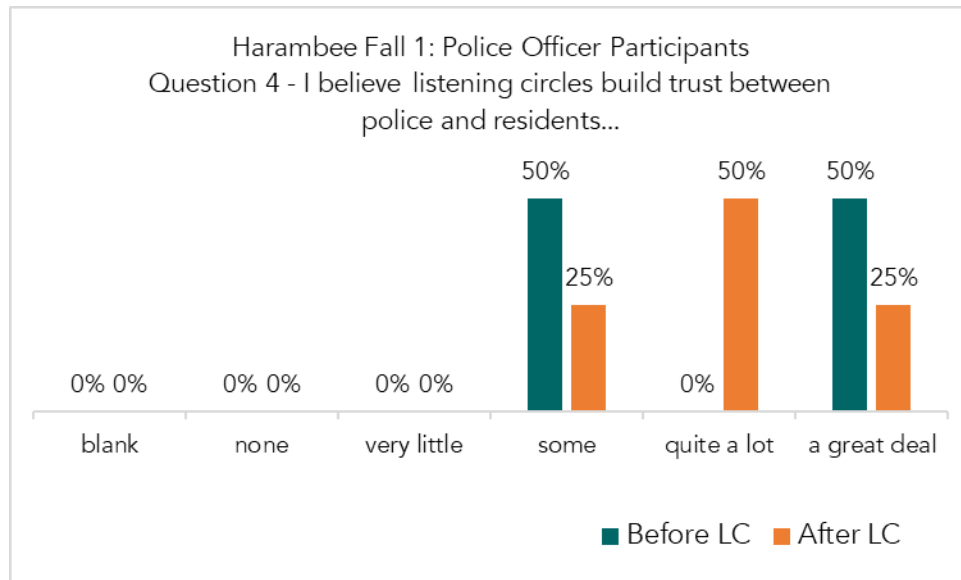
Question 3 – I believe community and police relations will improve...





Question 4 – I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...





### Qualitative Data – Answers to Open-Ended Questions

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the police/community today?

- Communication.
- That everyone wants to build relationships to a better level to form trust and faith in each other.
- Conversation with the elders of the group. It seems as if the community does not trust police.
- Yes most people don't like the police officers they are people too. Everyone needs more ....on how to get along with others no matter the age etc ...

- Most feel the same way I do. There is trust with the police.
- The youth participation.
- I liked talking to everyone.
- That they keep people safe sometimes more than 5.
- They help stop violence.
- Nothing really.
- Learning from the police perspectives.
- I enjoyed talking to the police and seeing their perspectives.
- If something happen you can't all ways count on the police.
- They listened and was positive.
- That I can believe in them.
- The young people and police were able to share their thoughts as human beings with a common purpose and concern.
- How it is gotten worse standard traffic stops escalate quickly.
- Intentional discussion.
- Yes, getting to know police.
- hot much but I learned that speaking to Police builds more trust.
- I learned police have to do the job to protect us.
- Yes that not to do bad thing.
- That all police isn't bad.
- Yes that not to do bad things.
- That they will be always here for us.
- Talking about improving school systems that police go through a lot.
- They are respectful and they come.
- The police is cool they just do there [sic] job and people scared of them.

#### **What questions or concerns are you leaving with?**

- That people won't change their personal opinion.
- None.
- I think the youth should be older to be involved in the listening circle 16 and up is a better age.
- It only seems that the residents of the neighbor who are truly concerned about the neighborhood are here to participate there has to be a better way to get those that are disinterested, to get involved. Also, it is too structured the facilitators should be allowed to deviate and instead have open conversations.
- We all need to get to know each other in our neighborhood.
- None.
- The social media was a big part in our conversations.
- New thing.
- Nothing really.
- Don't have any.
- Can police officers with prejudices not take violence out on others?
- How police have a lot of to be done.



- None for now.
- Everyone.
- How can more people find out about the circles?
- How to have more conversations like these? How to counter the negative affects of social media?
- NA.
- Nothing.
- None.
- I want to learn about police things because I always wanted to be one .
- Unknown.
- That I really like it here.
- None ready for next session.
- None really for the next session.
- Why do people kill police they help us?

**What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?**

- Longer periods of discussion.
- Having older youth in group.
- Help each other when needed. We all need to live and let live!
- We should focus on improving relationships between police and youth they don't trust the police.
- Keep it where the youth have a say in the dialogue. If 8th grade - 12th. Great showing!
- I thought it went well. Maybe individual rooms for each group.
- Police safe.
- Something that happened.
- Riots.
- Violence.
- Respecting your families and community.
- Reaching the younger people so their future will be brighter.
- Everything.
- The effect of drug trafficking in the community.
- Social media + Police/Community relations.
- More police community family.
- Police.
- Nothing.
- About life.
- Crimes.
- Unknown.
- Everything.
- Police and pedestrian contact.
- Police and good.
- I don't know.

## Listening Circle 2 Analysis – Healthy Relationships

**Question Round One:** *“Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What's something that you enjoy doing together?”*

Most participants described their friendship with a family member whom they perceived as trusted confidants. Some of these participants also described shared common interests and hobbies with their friends. These included sports and exercise, arts and culture, and travel. These anecdotes are described in the following sections.

### 1.1 Family Members as Friends

The majority of participants described a family member whose friendship means a lot to them. A few described their family in general terms.

*“I like spending time with my family because they show that they care about me. I like to hang around them. We liked going to the park. I like talking to them and being around them.”*

Several described their partners as their closest friend.

*“My husband is my friend too... I can talk to him about anything.”*

*“My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs, but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind, she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.”*

*“I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years.”*

These comments overlapped with other themes that emerged over the course of the discussion, which emphasized the length of friendships and the ability confide in their friends about anything. These themes will be discussed later in this report.

Participants also named other specific family members, such as siblings and cousins.

*"I have a close friendship with my cousin. We do everything with each other. I was homeless, and we got close. We like to play basketball and football together."*

*"The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door, and we did that on purpose. We talk every day and laugh and cry together... She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality..."*

The idea of trust as being essential to a friendship was reiterated by other participants, as described in the next section.

## **1.2 Trusted confidants**

A few participants discussed their closest friends by emphasizing the importance of trust and confidentiality.

*"Other close relationships that mean a lot to me include some people I can talk to about my day, about work, what is going on, and they're a safe person to talk to. These are people I like to go to the Bucks games with or the Brewers games. It's fun, stress free, and relaxing. Some of those same friends, I also go fishing and hunting with. It's peaceful and I enjoyed being with somebody that I can trust and depend on."*

*"I met my friend at my last job. We share core values, so I trust her opinions. I can vent to her when something is bothering me, and she will hear me out. When something good is happening, she cheers me on. I can trust that she will keep my confidence."*

Participants described their ability to "talk about anything" as an important reason for their friendship, indicating the importance of friends being able to confide in one another.

*"My sister. I consider her my friend. She lives in Minneapolis. We like to hang out and do anything... We can talk about anything. We help each other see what can't be seen."*

*"I have a few friends. Two of them, I have been friends with for 14 years—half of my life. We have been through so much together. I can tell her anything and she is non-judgmental. What do we talk about? Anything. We do everything together."*

### **1.3 Long-Time Friends**

Many participants described long-time friends by highlighting the length of time they had known each other. As mentioned earlier, participants who named their partner or spouse emphasized the length of time they have been together.

*"My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20."*

Others described friends whom they have known since childhood.

*"Me and my best friend have been together all our lives."*

*"I have a friend I grew up with. I lived with him. We do everything together..."*

### **1.4 Shared Common Interests**

Many participants described various shared interests and activities they enjoyed with their friends. These included physical activities, such as sports and exercise; arts and cultural activities such as theater; and traveling.

#### **1.4.1 Sports and Exercise**

A number of participants described a mutual interest in sports and fitness as a reason for their friendships. Several talked about playing basketball together with their closest friends.

*"My homie is like my brother. We like to play hoops."*

*"I enjoy my friendship with my nephew. I enjoy playing basketball with him, he's a lot of fun."*

*"We sit out and play games, play basketball."*

Other participants talked about enjoying being physically active in general with their friends.

*"I enjoy the seniors at the fitness gyms doing exercises and taking care of themselves."*

*"I enjoy walking with my friends at the lakefront."*

#### 1.4.2 Arts and Culture

A few participants described arts and cultural activities they enjoyed with their friends, identifying these activities as the source of their friendships.

*"My best friend. He came from Kentucky. We do theater together. We were in First Stage together."*

*"She is like a Godmother to me. A Wa'a (Ojibwe) She helps me on my path. We enjoy Native American traditional functions...Pow Wows, community-supporting activities."*

*"I have a group of women friends. We have known each other for a long time - we've been friends since the sixties. I call them my Jazz ladies. We like to go out and listen to Jazz music together."*

#### 1.4.3 Travel

A couple of the participants highlighted traveling as an important part of their friendships.

*"Me and my best friend have been together all our lives. We like to travel together out of town and out of the country. My favorite places so far were Mexico and Jamaica. She wants to go to Ghana next."*

*"I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home, we can tell if the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family."*

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### **Question Round Two:** *"What does a real friendship look like to you?"*

Participants responded to this second question with a variety of definitions and descriptions. However, many participants did overlap in their responses, suggesting that to a certain extent, participants had similar views of how "real friendship" should be defined. These definitions and characteristics of friendship included trust; helpfulness and reliability; good communication; being non-judgmental; and being understanding.

## 2.1 Trust

The majority of participants mentioned trust as an important quality in a friendship. Some participants defined trust as the foundation of friendships.

*"A real friendship is somebody I can trust."*

*"Trust. Having trust between you let's it be a relationship. You have the same interests, but not necessarily all of them."*

## 2.2 Helpful and Reliable

The second most common characteristic of friendship was helpfulness and reliability in a friend. In addition to trust, several participants named reliability or dependability as an important characteristic of a good friend.

*"Trust. You have spent time with them and have memories together. Someone you can count on, that is reliable."*

*"A real friendship is someone you can count on. A real friendship is someone that you can trust."*

*"Trust. The person always has your back. We have similar interests and probably come from the same background. Or maybe different."*

Reliability was often mentioned in conjunction with helpfulness.

*"A real friend is sort of like your conscience, they will always be there. A real friend is the kind that will help you move even though they would rather be doing something else."*

## 2.3 Good Communication

Several participants described good communication as a quality of a friend's reliability and helpfulness.

*"And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you."*

*"I real friend listens to you and helps you when you are in need. They like who you are and don't try to change you."*

## 2.4 Non-Judgmental and Understanding

A few participants considered real friendships to be with friends who are non-judgmental and accepting.

*"It is not someone who's going to judge you."*

*"They are trustworthy and not judgmental. They accept you for who you are."*

*"A friend does not stand in judgement. They listen to understand. They will not necessarily agree but they will understand."*

As illustrated especially by this last quote, participants also reflected upon the importance of tolerance and mutual understanding in real friendships.

*"It involves a lot of trust and loving one another. It's also about understanding each other. And you know when to stop joking and not to cross the line. Sometimes people cross the line and that's not friendship."*

---

**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?"*

Most participants focused on the importance of increasing communication in their communities. Some specifically highlighted the importance of getting to know one another, while others pointed to the event itself as an example of increasing communication between police and residents.

## 3.1 More Communication and Interaction

Most participants generally stated that more communication is necessary.

*"I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other."*

*"I think becoming more informed through community conversations."*

*"I think we should do more talking and breaking bread together."*

Some participants were more specific about why they think communication is important. For example, a couple of the participants explicitly stated a need for more communication and understanding between police and residents.

*"I think it all goes back to communication. I want people to have an opportunity to say what happened to their family, so I can understand why people don't like police. That would give me a chance to try and explain what might have happened from my viewpoint. "*

*"It helps to sit and break bread with officers in the community. I don't know what else I can ask officers to do—come to my job or school? I think it would help me see officers as helpers rather than the problem."*

A number of participants suggested the idea of getting to know one another.

*"If we get to know one another we will no longer be strangers."*

*"It's nice to get a chance to hear about each other on a personal level."*

Several participants stated that events like the Listening Circles could be a solution for more communication amongst community members.

*"By having listening circles. These are good to have in the community and to have the officers in the community. We are human too. Sometimes people see the uniforms on and they look at us differently. We have families like parents and kids. We care. We are all human. We are good at listening and these circles help. People may not feel comfortable around police and this is a good way to bridge that gap."*

As this quote illustrates, participants also saw a need to humanize each other, a theme that emerged from other comments as well.

### **3.2 "We're all human."**

A few participants who described the importance of communication also relayed the importance of humanizing each other.

*"I think there should be more communication between us and the officers because they are human beings just like us."*

*"We keep saying "those people" when people don't get to know each other. We are all human."*



These comments reflect the overall optimism and hope expressed by participants.

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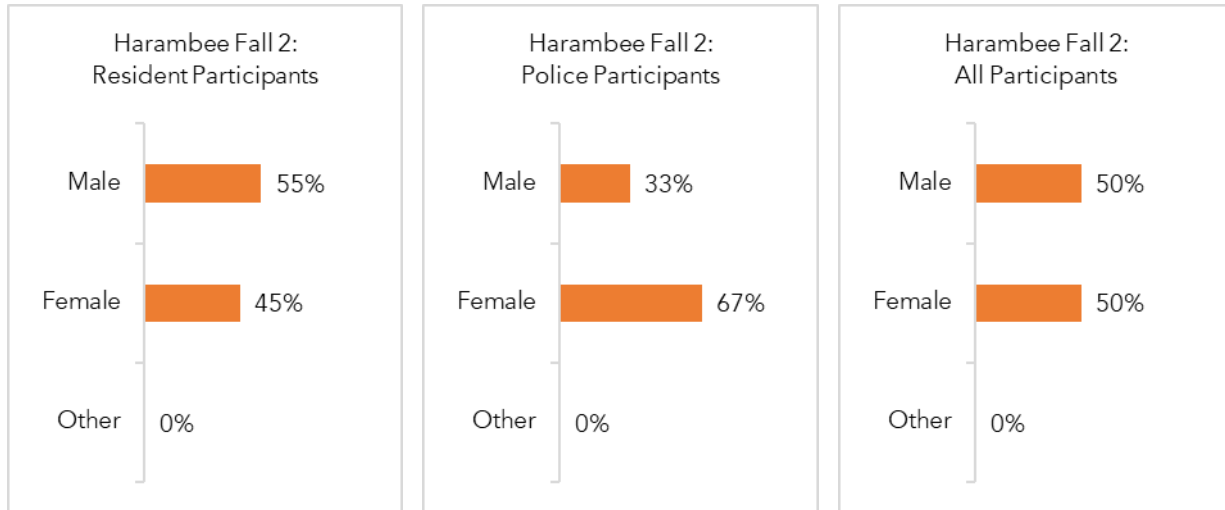
### **Parting Words**

Participants generally left positive feedback. Overall, all participants indicated that the event was a positive experience.

## Feedback Forms

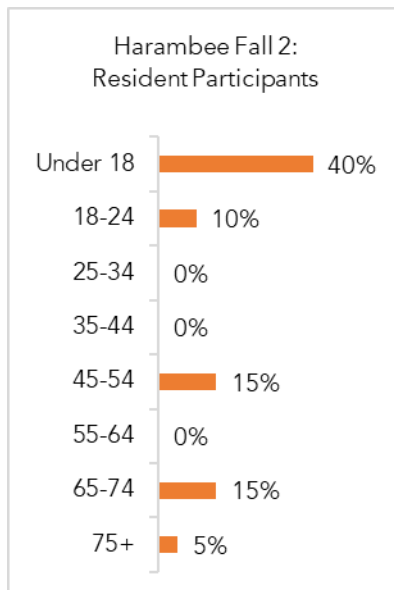
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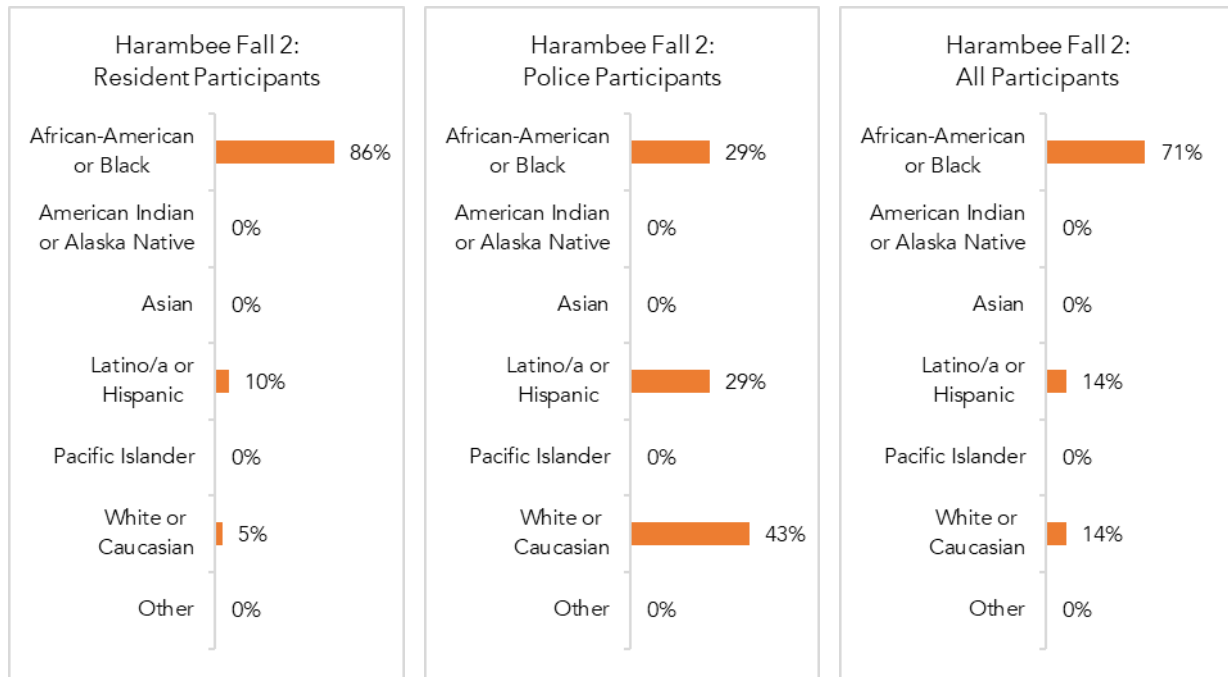


Age Range:

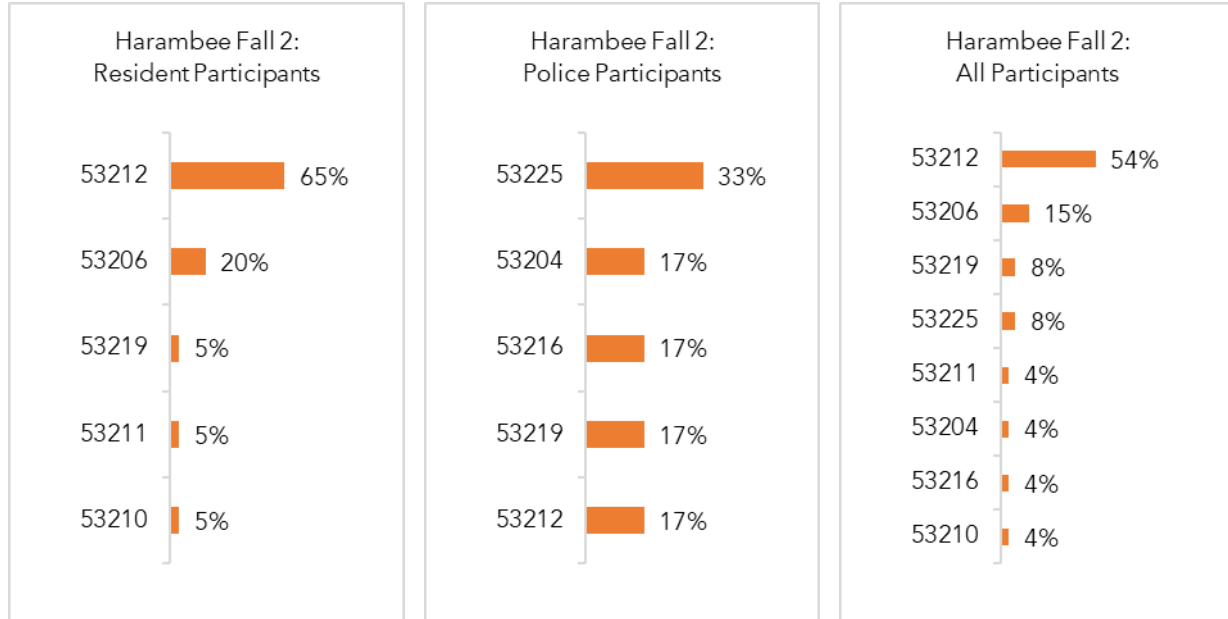
(Note: Age range data was not collected for police officer participants.)



## Race/Ethnicity:



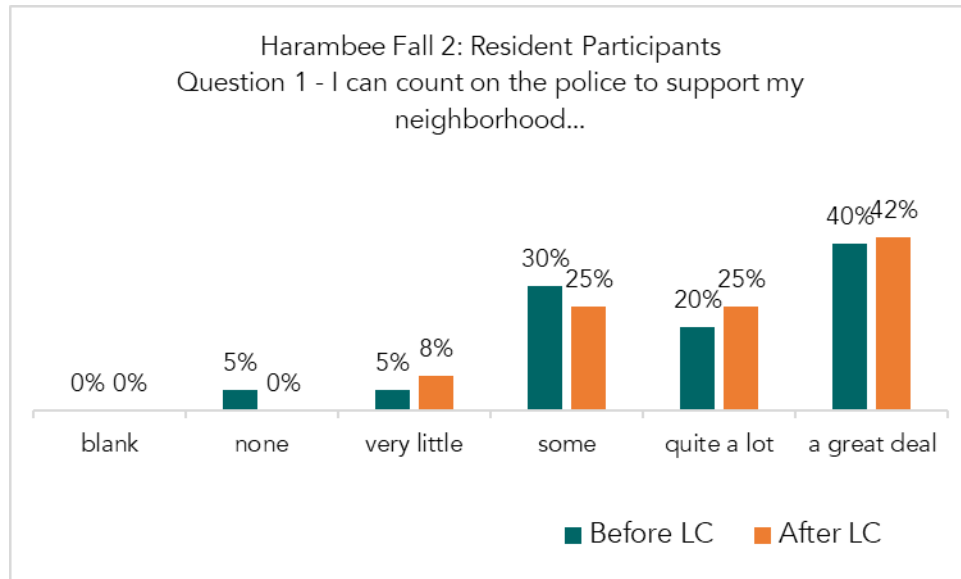
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## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys

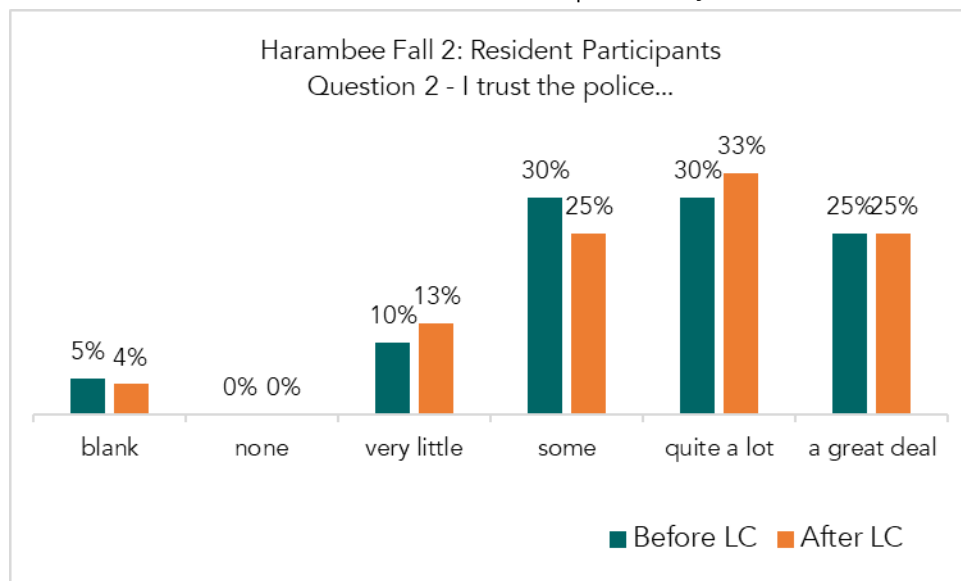
Question 1 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 1 was asked of Resident Participants only.

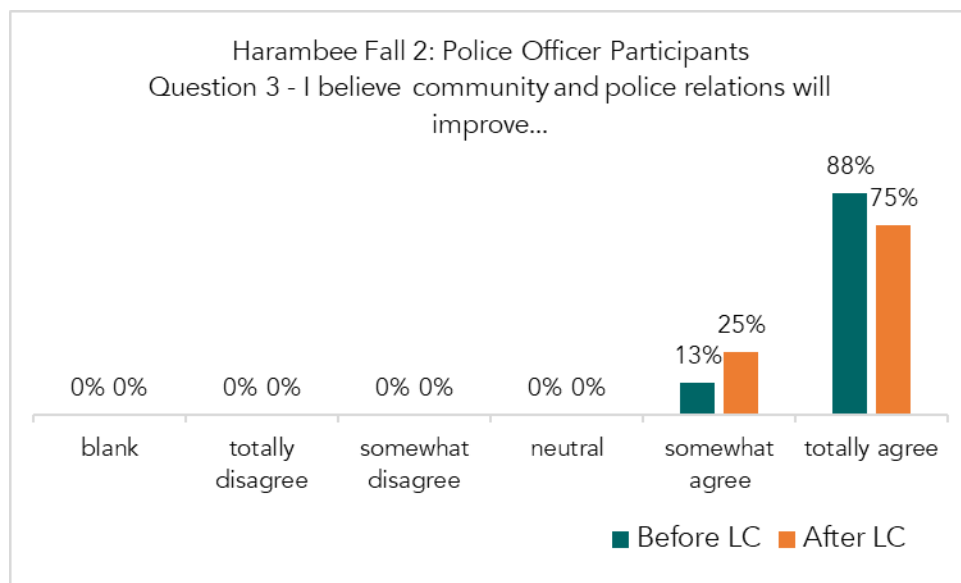
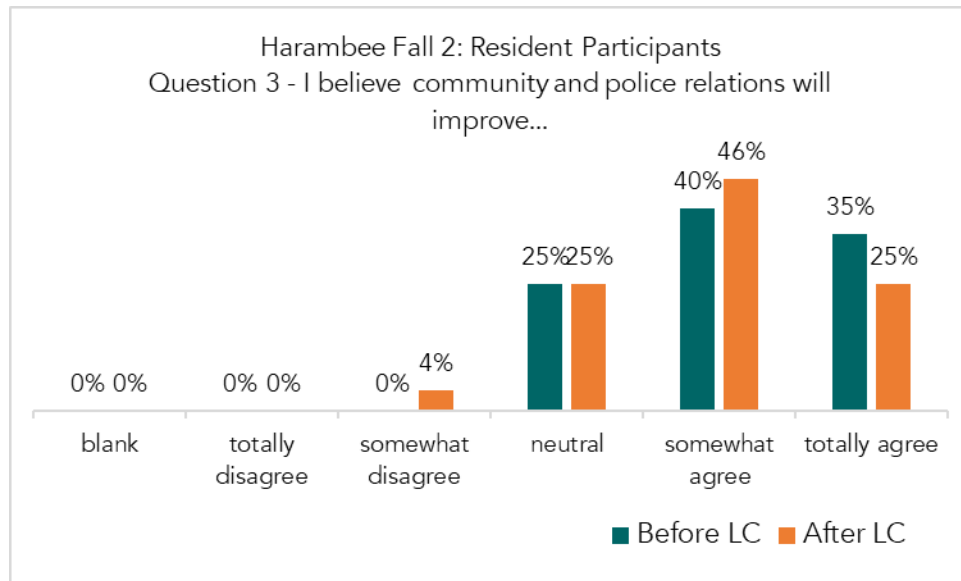


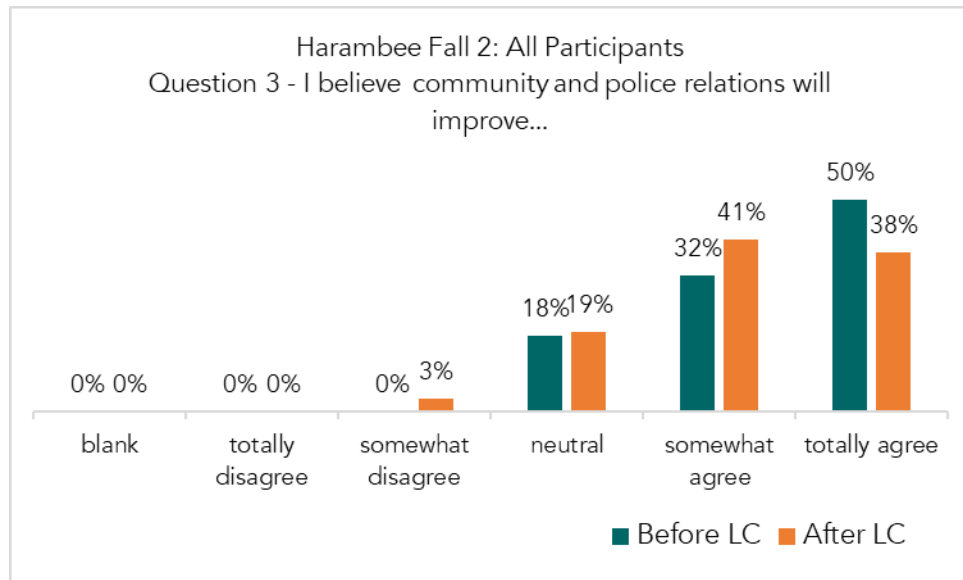
Question 2 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 2 was asked of Resident Participants only.

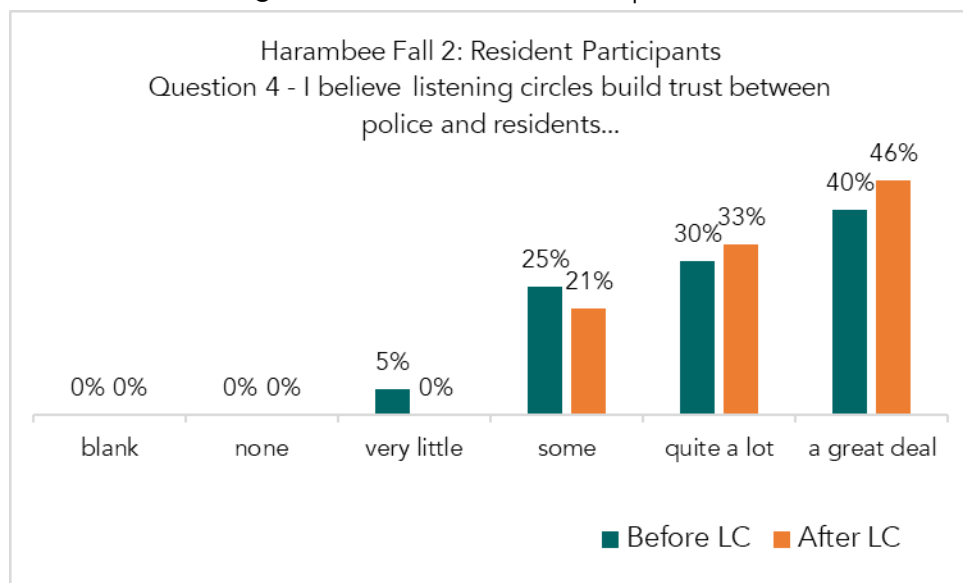


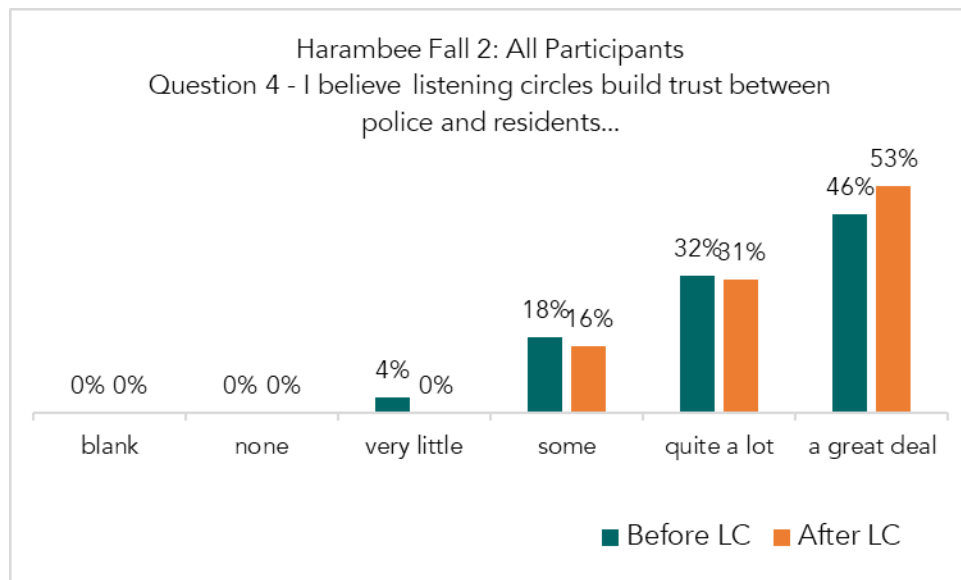
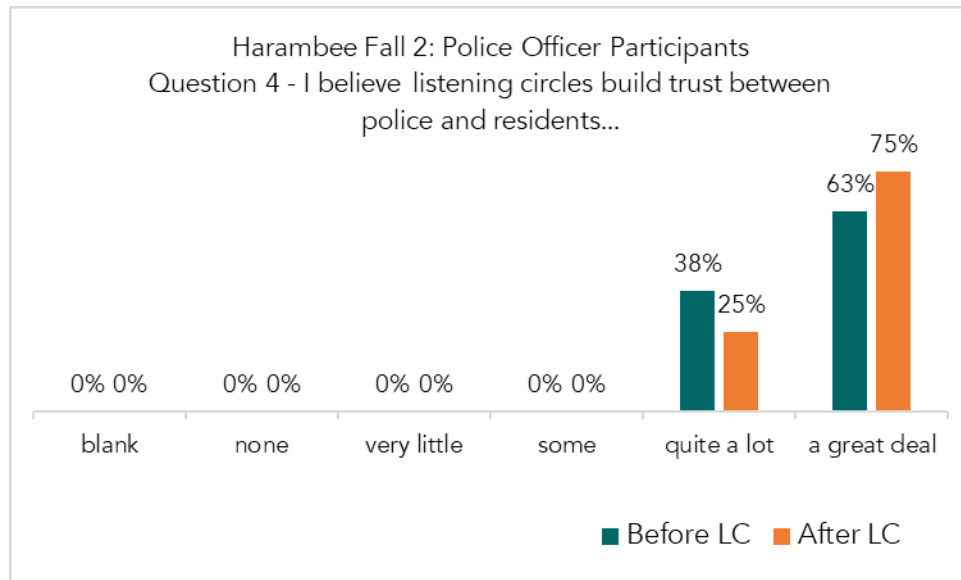
Question 3 – I believe community and police relations will improve...





Question 4 – I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...





### Qualitative Data – Answers to Open-Ended Questions

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community today?

- Listening to the youth open up
- People talking to each other
- Enjoying hearing the youth's opinions
- We have to keep up the good work
- Positive comments
- I enjoyed getting the opinions of the young people

- I learned that everyone wants to have good communication and not be judged on clothes or race
- We are very similar
- You don't always have to be rude to the police
- Talk to everyone
- They are willing and ready to be helpful whenever a resident calls for support
- That MPD has more family/community events than CPD
- Young folks participation, just talking in a relaxed manner
- They do care
- We were able to see that we are all human and are more alike than different
- That the police are there to help and you don't have to be afraid of them and you can count on them
- I learned the value of friendship
- Police are simply doing their jobs
- All police aren't bad
- I got to learn all police are not the same
- After the meeting I felt a sense of hope for the future and the community
- That they're not all bad
- The police want to serve as we need them to serve us
- They are not bad people
- It was satisfying hearing an adult's/police officer's point of view about what they do
- I don't know
- About friendships
- Putting a face on people in my community
- Make people new friends talk thing
- Super good people, care about people
- Getting to know them

#### **What questions or concerns are you leaving with?**

- How to teach youth to get through and deal with their pain
- N/a
- None
- I enjoy the listening circles
- None
- Will the younger participants use the info they just listened to?
- None
- Some people/youth don't actually want to be here, only for the money and don't want to participate very much
- How police work with rude residents
- Is your job hard?
- More residents being part of the group
- None



- --- must be continued; how do you heal/deal with folks you are not familiar with
- The way they feel
- How to get out the word to the rest of the community
- Have more listening circles
- I don't know what this means, i might come back and visit
- I will like to come to more meetings
- How do you get more people to trust police?
- How can we become closer with law enforcement as a community?
- None
- None, all of my questions were answered
- None
- None
- How often does this happen
- I don't know
- A lot
- How to make these more widespread, what did young people in our group think
- N/a

**What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?**

- Keep having these
- Nothing, very good conversation
- Smaller questions for the youth
- Keep an open mind
- Motivating the younger people to speak more
- Larger groups to hear more perspectives
- See answer to previous question
- You should have police walk or ride the bike in the environment
- Young people need more help
- Youth jobs
- How to handle folks who seem excluded or fearful; knowledge if folks who may turn emotional and seem dangerous
- I don't know
- How to get more people involved
- How to get more people to come out
- Public safety
- How could we change the community?
- I don't know
- What will happen next - what is the action from this talk
- Bonding with police
- N/a
- I don't know
- I don't know

- None
- How to deal with conflict
- Friendships

## Listening Circle 3 Analysis – Gratitude

**Question Round One:** *“What’s a memorable situation you’ve had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?”*

In response to Question Round One regarding memorable experiences with authority figures, respondents’ answers fell into two broad categories of authority: Parents and Teachers; and Law Enforcement/Fire and other Government Officials. Respondents relayed negative, mixed and positive experiences within each those categories.

### 1.1 Parents and Teachers

Respondents’ experiences in the Parent and Teacher’s category were mixed fairly evenly between positive and negative experiences, though experiences with parents were relayed more negatively overall than experiences with teachers. Respondents relayed stories of negative parenting (violence) and distrust of friends’ parents, as well as several positive stories about teachers coming to their aid, and especially teachers who served as a reminder or reality check to help them stay on track. There was one story involving mixed feelings for a teacher that both disciplined a respondent and built him/her back up.

*“My mother was my figure. We traveled to Chicago for dance troops. I didn’t ask. I hopped on the bus without permission. My aunt beat me and sent me back to Milwaukee. My mom then beat me. I never acted out again. My parents are the authority.”*

*“My memorable situation with an authority figure was a reality check. I won first place in something and got stuck on that for a while. My grades started to slip because I lost focus. A teacher reminded me of my other responsibilities and got me back on track.”*

### 1.2 Law Enforcement/Fire and Other Government Officials

The biggest category of responses was respondents telling stories about their experiences with police officers, fire personnel and other government employees. Again, responses were fairly balanced between positive and negative experiences, with a few stories of mixed feelings. The responses overall (negative, positive and mixed) varied between personal anecdotes of traffic stops, medical and other incidents, as well as incidents involving family or community members with authority figures. Respondents relayed feelings of gratefulness for government intervention in crisis and also feelings of sadness and misunderstanding for escalated incidents that often involved someone they cared about getting hurt or in trouble. One respondent relayed a story about appealing to a county board and having a positive experience as well.

*"My mama got in a fight with a neighbor. The police came. My mama got tazed and went to jail. Everybody felt bad and cried."*

*"Years ago, I saw my brother get arrested for everything like robbing banks. The police came into the house and broke things while looking for him. I never had a father figure, so my brother was like a father figure to me. It hurt my heart to see him treated that way."*

*"When I was in college, I had an experience with the law enforcement. There are two sides of a story. The two cops that were there: one was down to earth. He told me to relax about my tail-light situation. I got to see both good/bad in the authority in same situation. Bad cop maybe had a bad day."*

*"It was about 24 years ago. I failed the background check to become a police officer because of my speeding record. At first, I didn't know I could, but when I found out I appealed to the Fire and Police board. They listened to me and let me become a police officer. I felt very grateful."*

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**Question Round Two:** *"How have you been grateful for someone in authority?"*

Question Round Two responses about gratefulness for authority fell into three broad categories: Parents, Family and God; Supervisors and Teachers; and Law Enforcement and other Government Personnel. Responses were fairly distributed equally across categories, with Parents, Family and God and Law Enforcement/Government Personnel having slightly more responses than Supervisors and Teachers overall.

## **2.1 Parents, Family and God**

Respondents stated feelings of gratefulness for parents and grandparents, feeling appreciative for their support, guidance and instillation of values, as well as discipline and "being hard on" them when they needed it. One respondent spoke of being grateful for family members who showed him how he didn't want to be, and a few respondents spoke about their growing relationship with God in the same way as others spoke about their family members.

*"I'm grateful to my mother and grandmother for instilling discipline in me. They taught me how to be the woman I should be and to develop the friendships I should have. They taught me values and morals but also let me figure out some things on my own."*

*"My grandparents are my second set of parents. My parents don't have resources. I can go to my grandparents."*

*"Over the last two years I've developed a strong relationship with God. It got me through many hard times and keeps me going."*

## **2.2 Supervisors and Teachers**

While supervisors and Teachers made up the smallest category of responses overall, the responses were very positive and life-altering. Respondents remembered very specific things that teachers said or did that impacted their lives. Other respondents spoke about superiors in employment and the military that had or have the same impact on their lives, specifically teaching them how to navigate situations and procedures.

*"My teacher taught several classes. He was socially aware. He sparked an interest in social justice. I protested about everything... "*

*"Common sense factors were that we read 'knowledge is power.' My best teacher said this. She was the backbone of my dancing career. She turned my vision for my education, career, and life."*

*"The sergeant in the Marine Corps was a teacher for me. I learned things for the police force. He called me [to] boot camp. I treat people with respect. I learned to have fun."*

*"My supervisors guided me in my career. They mentored me, helped me to do paperwork, taught me about procedures.... They were passing out knowledge to me."*

## **2.3 Law Enforcement and other Government Personnel**

Participants relayed stories about experiences they had with law enforcement and other government officials, relaying gratitude and thankfulness. Respondents spoke about medical incidents where they or someone they loved were helped by first responders, as well as officers that they knew as children that they respected and helped them find their way growing up. One respondent spoke about a specific government employee that make a big influence on minority businesses, and another respondent spoke specifically about Barack Obama's influence.

*"I was playing with my sister when we were kids on a fence with an electric gate. The fence started up and cut my sister's hand in half... They found us. I held her arm until they got there. She was OK."*

*"I remember Officer XX from my school who has the same last name as mine. I would see him in the hallway and he would give me a high five and talk with me for a little bit. I considered him a friend."*

*"From [an] earlier story about shoplifting: I was grateful to the officer for giving me a break. It helped me decide to become a police officer. And I've seen that same officer there again."*

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**Connected Conversation:** *What's one thing you are grateful for about this community? (One group discussed: As a community, what is a specific step that can be taken to help get Milwaukee to the place of positive police/community relations? What things personally can you do to make the community better?)*

When discussing gratefulness in the community (as well as suggestions and personal actions for building community, as one group did), respondents' responses fell into five categories: trust and gratefulness, generally; change, including change through generations; continuing responses related to relationships with law enforcement (positive and negative); information and responsibility, including the media; as well as suggestions and next steps to take.

### **3.1 Trust and Gratefulness**

On the topic of trust and gratefulness, respondents spoke about both law enforcement specifically and the greater community in general. Respondents spoke about trusting the police, mostly, and knowing that someone is always there to help them, be it law enforcement or someone else in the community. Respondents noted being thankful for safety and growth and security in the community as well.

*"We as a community work together with police. I'm a Malcom X fan. I was raised not to trust officers. I think this should be refocused. I now trust officers to help others. Make places safer. The Harvest Festival was key."*

*"Yeah, I don't agree with all the decisions that some officers make, but I talk with them. Most officers have told me they're happy to be here. I'm getting to know names and faces of people in the neighborhood and I hope you trust us to protect you."*

*"I am grateful and I like the revitalization in this community..."*

*"I am grateful for being in Harambee for 30 years now and personally not having had any problems. I enjoy my community even though the crime goes up and down. I am happy that if the police are called they come."*

### **3.2 Change through Generations**

Along with relaying feelings of trust and gratefulness, some participants spoke of generational change in the same light, as well as differences in how young people view the community. Respondents spoke about generational change in views of, and experience with, police, specifically, noting a much more positive viewpoint in current times. One group had a short discussion under this topic about why or why not young people attended the discussion.

*"An officer checked out our home when my mom passed away. A change is coming. There will be a connection with community and cops. It's a different atmosphere – respect in the community when there's respect for cops."*

*"We are at that space, it's time. I had a lot of anger when I was a kid. I grew up in a hostile environment."*

*"Do all of your friends know you're here tonight? Why are they not here?...I was with my friends when I was asked to come here."*

### **3.3 Relationships with Law Enforcement**

The largest category of responses was continuing comments and experiences related to relationships with law enforcement. Respondents continued to relay both positive and negative experiences, as well as discussion about changing attitudes and specific neighborhoods and types of policing. Police respondents spoke about the value of getting out into the public and its value, and residents spoke about wanting more of a view of what police officers did.

*"I grew up around a tall officer named Mike. We had the Frank Jude and Ernie Lacy cases. Officer Mike treated me with respect. I have been treated well and poorly. I see officers beating blacks. I have seen them save lives."*

*"I get to see how people interact and get to know people in the neighborhoods and parks."*

*"I'm a bike cop in summer. I get to see them (residents) more."*

*"I want to see more of what you do in the community to make an impact as an officer... You can do a ride-along and see for yourself. No, it's not like the movie at all."*

### 3.4 Information and Responsibility

Some respondents spoke about the relationship between law enforcement, community and information, specifically about the responsibility of information and the media's role. Police respondents indicated that they do things outside their job description, including explaining where they are coming from to bridge the gap. Community respondents noted that the rate of information is faster, and media (social and otherwise) has an impact. A few respondents spoke about the responsibility of parents on young people and where that responsibility ends.

*"Being a cop, people look from the outside in. I tell young guys that I grew up in the city and raised three kids here. In my day, there was no social media. Your generation is dealing with information at the drop of a hat. We have to learn to filter...."*

*"I think a lot of the violence is because we get information so quickly. It's hard to have time to stop and think. My mom used to say you go to street life and end up in jail or hell."*

*"The media doesn't give all the details, so I understand why people might jump to conclusions."*

*"I think it's the parent's responsibility to teach their kids reality and right from wrong."*

### 3.5 Suggestions and Next Steps

Many respondents made suggestions for next steps in improving the relationship between law enforcement and the community and making other positive changes within the community aimed at strengthening relationships. Both police and community respondents spoke about how important it is for officers to get out and into the community and build personal relationships. Other respondents spoke more generally about respect and communication and noted that listening circles and similar events are incredibly helpful in building these important relationships. Some participants also noted ways that they personally intend to make a difference, including inviting others to events and communicating about law enforcement relationships.

*"Just being outside the squad car is night and day difference. So much better."*

*"It's like voting, if you get out there and talk to people up close and personal it works better."*



*"I think there should be more participation from the residents because nothing will get better if everyone is not engaged to find solutions and be better together."*

*"I think the listening circles are good and I think the event that District 5 just had in the community was a good start. I feel the more they are able to talk to us in calm moments the residents will become more comfortable..."*

*"I can tell more people about events like this. Stay positive and spread the word."*

---

### **Parting Words**

When asked to note how they felt after participating in the event, many participants noted feelings of hope and positivity, indicating they were grateful to have a conversation with law enforcement and other people.

*"There's nothing that beats personal contact."*

*"I'm grateful they added another neighborhood to this program."*

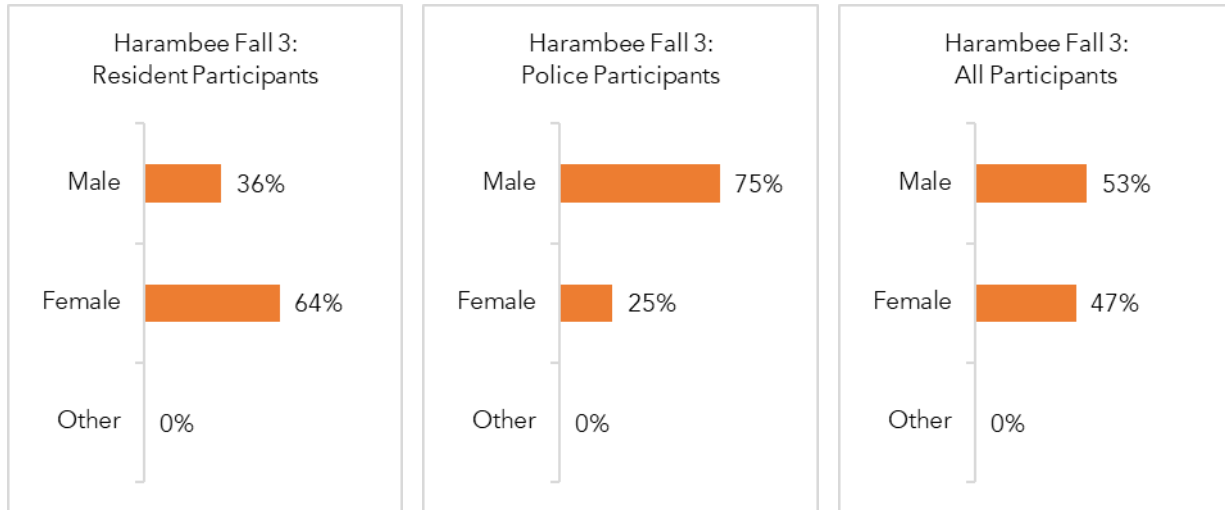
*"It's nice to see police officers having more involvement."*

*"I enjoyed answering the questions and being able to ask questions of my own to the officers."*

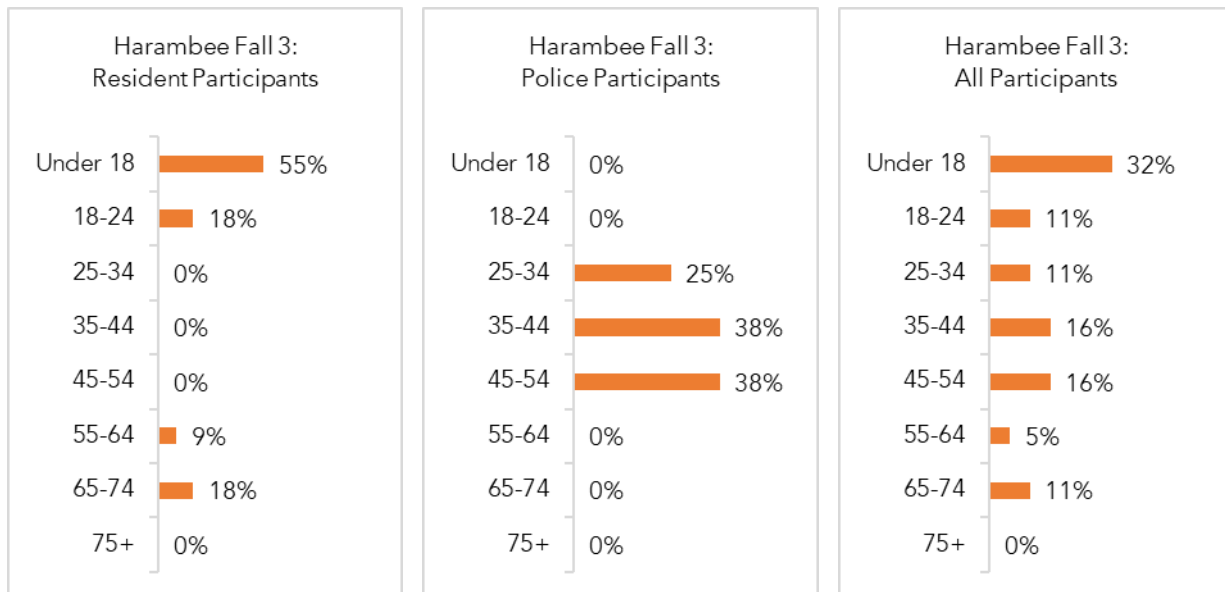
## Feedback Forms

### Demographics

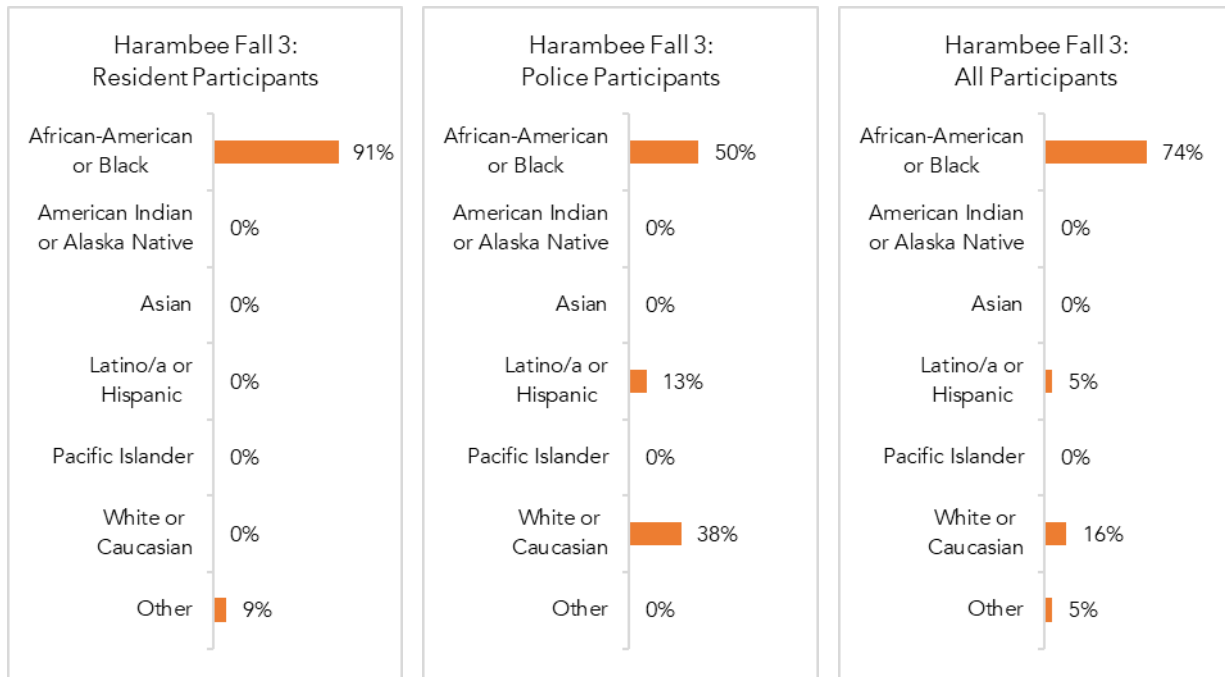
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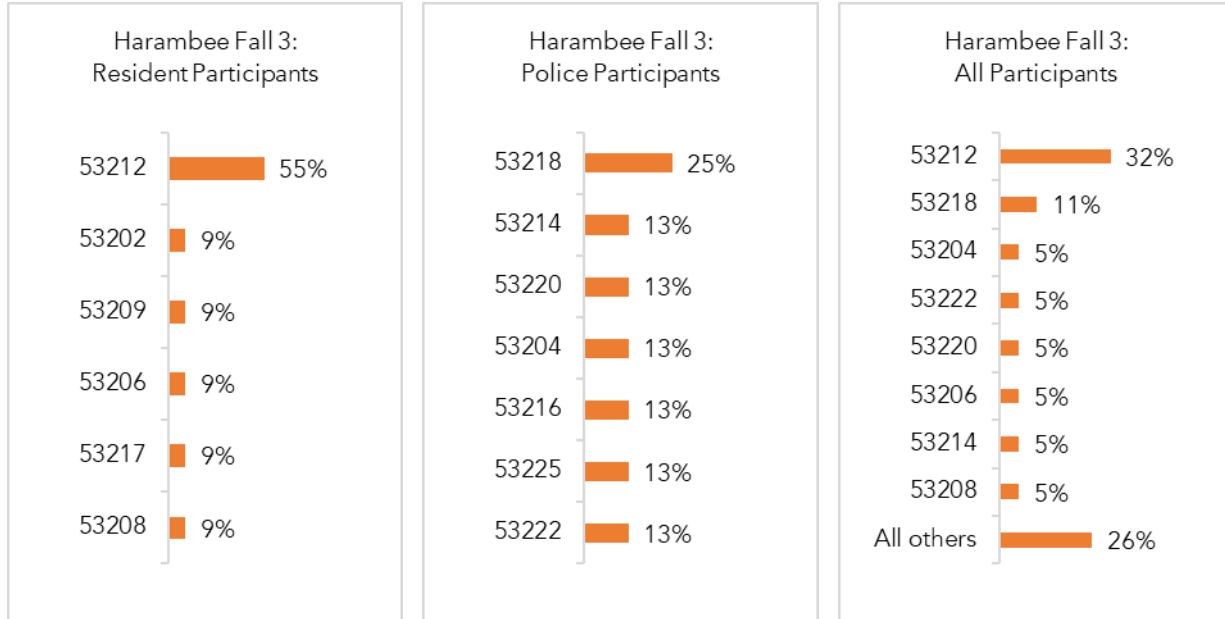
Age Range:



## Race/Ethnicity:



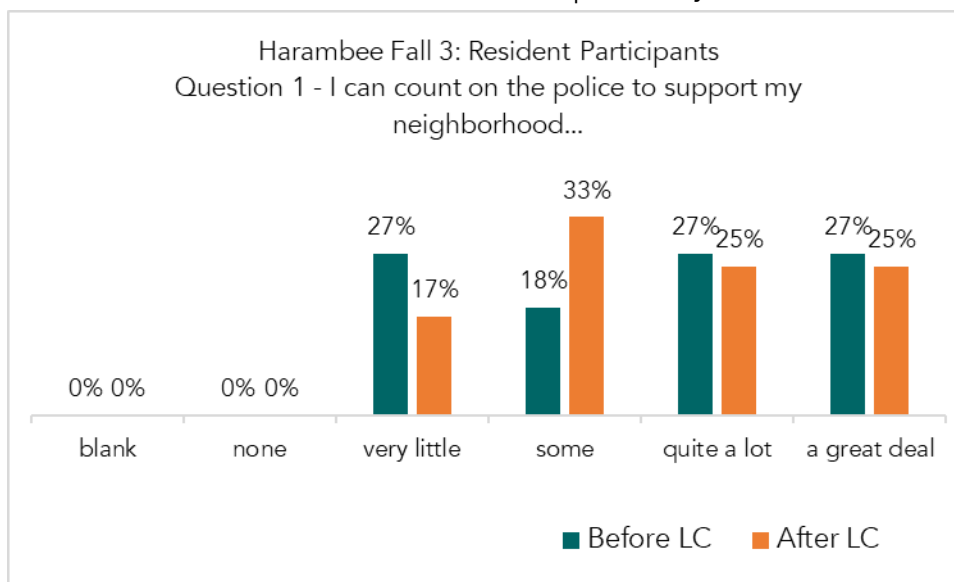
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## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys

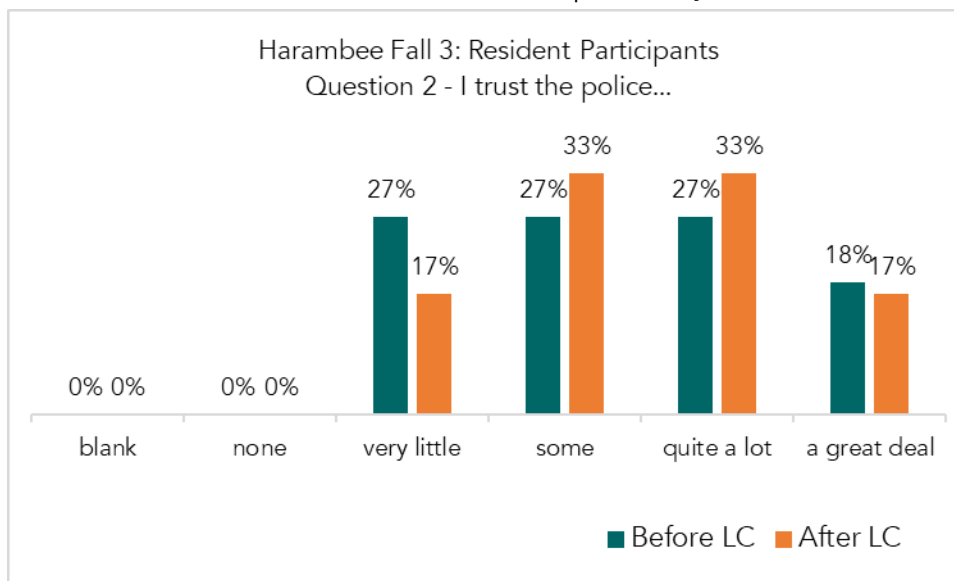
Question 1 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 1 was asked of Resident Participants only.

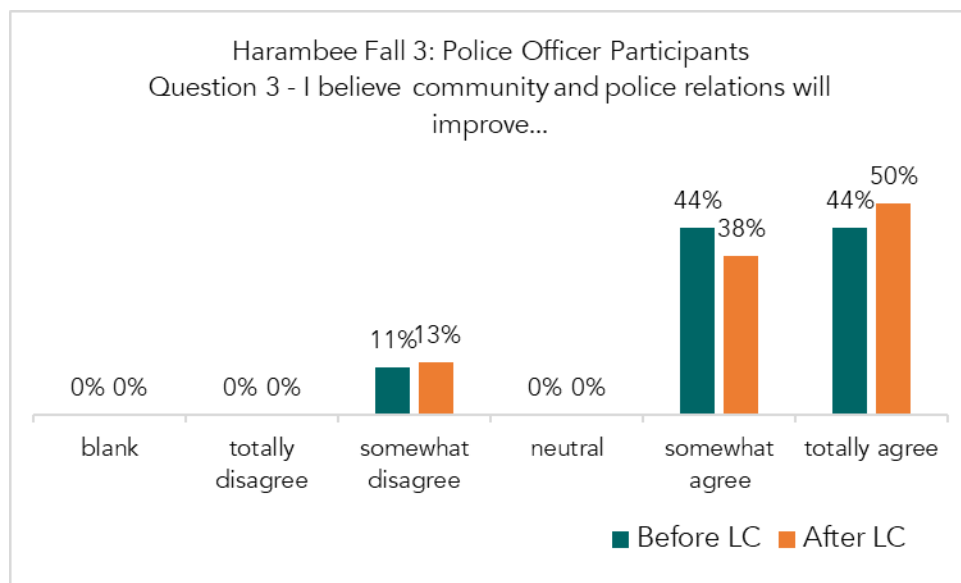
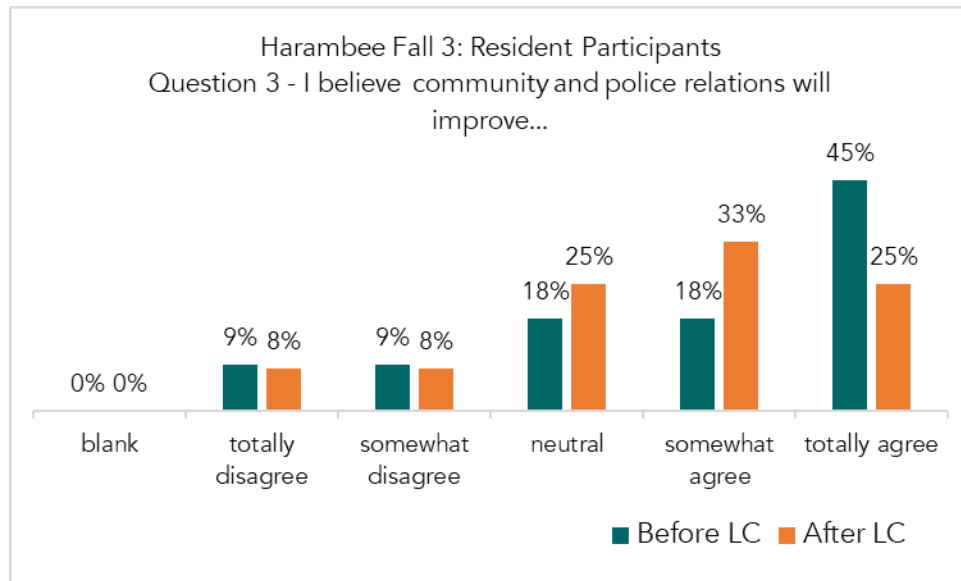


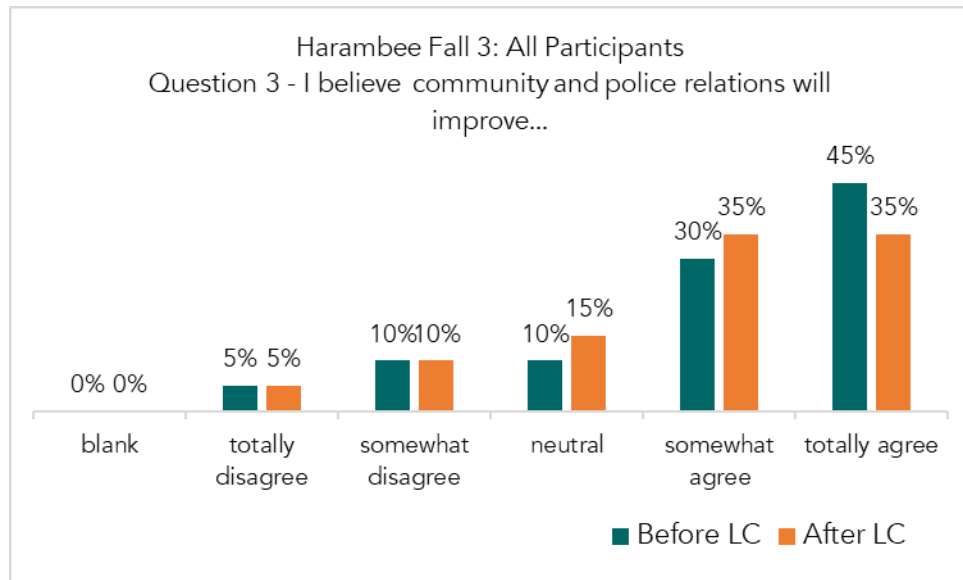
Question 2 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 2 was asked of Resident Participants only.

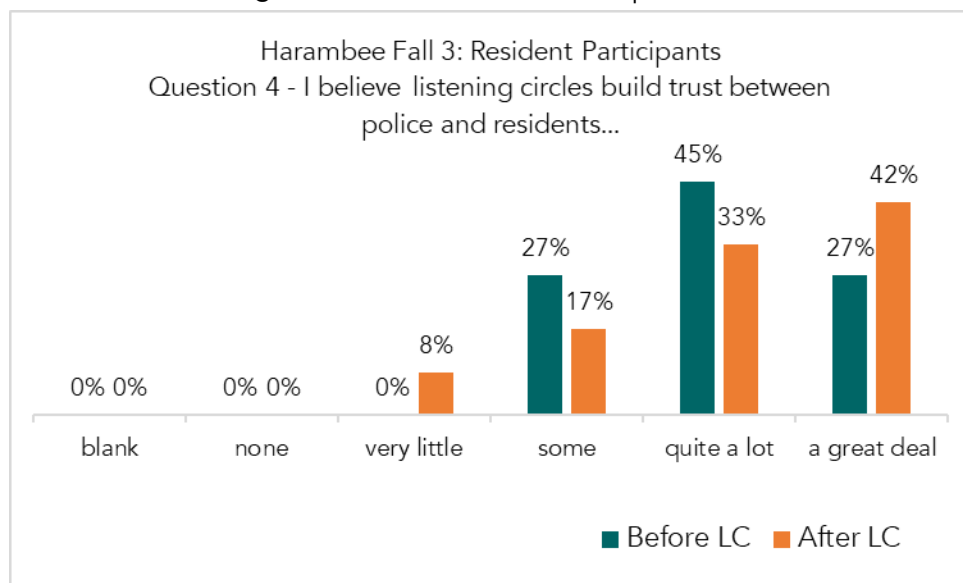


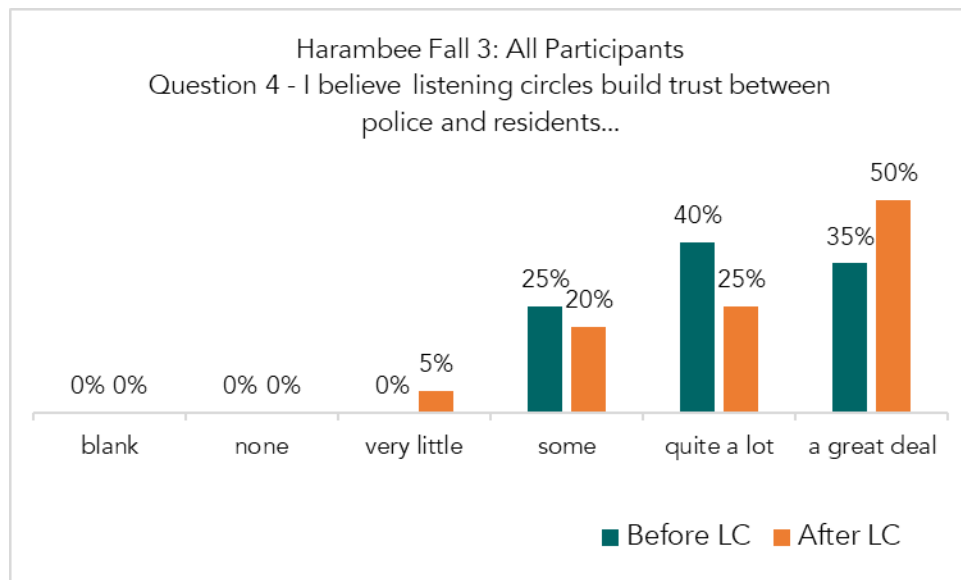
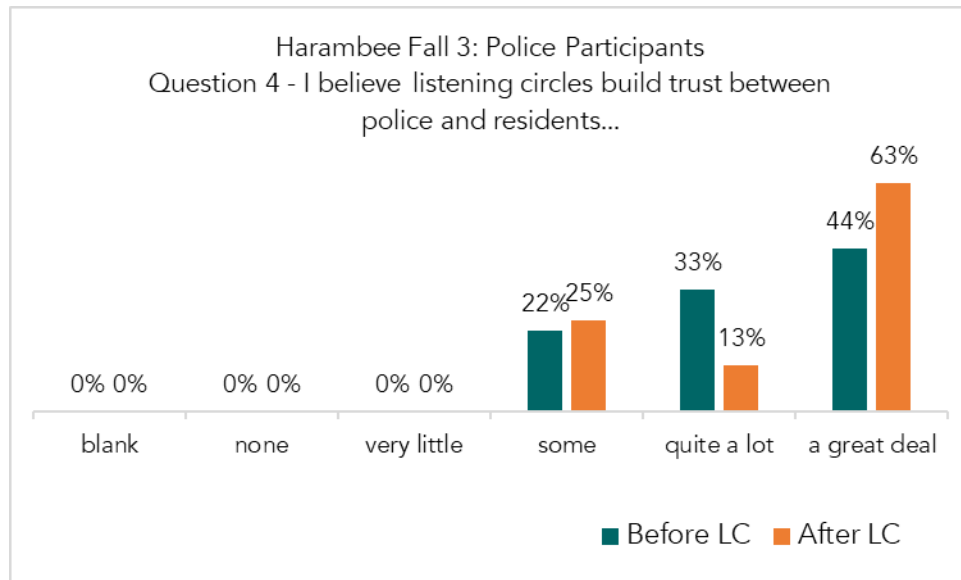
Question 3 – I believe community and police relations will improve...





Question 4 – I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...





### Qualitative Data – Answers to Open-Ended Questions

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community or police today?

- Listening to the youth speak.
- That everyone makes mistakes and a lot of people don't know much about us.
- Meeting new people and having the opportunity to have a candid conversation with residents.

- Listening to youth. I learned that our youth need to trust the police and others in the community.
- Keefe Ave school has a rap class.
- Communication with citizens
- Having time to sit and interact with people in the community. Yes, that we are all human.
- Interacting with teens.
- That everyone is not the same.
- People must connect person to person. Break bread and relax.
- Coming together, this was very helpful.
- That there is hope, there is change.
- That the police have hard times too.
- I've learned that police are not all the same as people have so many negative comments but not many good comments.
- That they take care of people.
- Don't drive fast.
- They treat people equally.
- Speaking to people who I don't normally speak to.

#### **What questions or concerns are you leaving with?**

- That we have to build a better relationship with the community.
- Are we showing the youth positive role models?
- If the community will ever be able to trust the police again.
- I have no question, I would love to see this again.
- There is hope for tomorrow.
- Being humble.
- I'm afraid that police will not be nice.
- Nothing.
- Do y'all like y'all job?
- N/A
- N/A
- None (x6)

#### **What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?**

- Make the youth actively participate and speak.
- None.
- Keep up the good work.
- Continue here with small groups.



- Attempting to draw more people from the community that generally wouldn't attend a circle.
- Better questions.
- Less structured conversations
- What's the changes that was made?
- Creating such among offender and guard staff.
- Different arrest outcomes.
- Community sports.
- What are some activities that can be built in the neighborhood to help trust between policemen and residents?
- Coming together.
- I like to talk about how police solve problems.
- How much do we trust police?
- Answering questions.
- Community.
- N/A

## Listening Circle 4 Analysis – Positive Police and Resident Interaction

**Question Round One:** *“Describe a time where you’ve seen the police and community work together well in Harambee or somewhere else. What were they doing and what was the impact?”*

During Question Round One, participants shared a variety of personal experiences and encounters that impacted them at Harambee or somewhere else in the community. A common sentiment echoed was positive outcomes and a better community are developed when there is a level of understanding, respect and trust from the whole community.

### 1.1 Supporting/Involving Youth

Participants shared personal stories of how gatherings or interactions that support youth becoming involved in their community makes for a better overall community.

*“The police academy does a lot in the neighborhood. We went to the Boys and Girls Club. We talked to the kids in the program. We hung out without our uniforms on. We (officers) were on their level. They got to know us. I think this was a good experience for the officers and the kids.”*

*“I am a 23-year vet on the force. A relevant thing that happened in the community is that we have community-based liaisons. There are also block watch captains. We all work together. We also work with neighborhood services. Each district has one. We all work with the blocks. We also work with the TABS [Truancy Abatement and Burglary Suppression] program. This program is within the MPS district. This program addresses truancy. We are currently in the process of revamping it to deal with the elementary schools. TABS mainly focus on high schools as of to date.”*

### 1.2 Community Involvement

Participants shared personal stories of how gathering or interacting within the community makes them feel proud to live in the community. When special gatherings are held, or opportunities arise when police officers can mingle with the community it leads to a positive view and a better community.

*“I enjoy when the police hang out at the Street Festivals in the community.”*

*“I participated with the community in what was called ‘Coffee with a Cop.’ We met with residents at a popular fast food restaurant. I enjoyed sitting around talking to*

*people and it felt good and warm as they were happy to have the police there. We took pictures and made videos. The impact was good and positive.”*

### 1.3 Helping One Another

Participants shared their experience and interactions with the local police officers, agreeing that police officers have a lot of different duties, but it is always to serve, protect and help the community.

*“In the past week I have seen many community members’ support of law-enforcement. People brought food down to the district office. This gave me affirmation of why I am doing this job. It was really nice to see law enforcement and community get together. Members of the auxiliary program, they’re all volunteers, directed traffic for 13 hours during the funeral of the fallen police officer. They were just helping out.”*

*“I look forward to Juneteenth Day when the police are out in full force. There’s really nothing that they say, it’s just their presence gives the sense that everything is under control.”*

*“A few weeks ago, there was a person that was brutally murdered in the area and we were having some difficulty solving the case. A couple of middle-aged men came around and gave us some information regarding that case.”*

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**Question Round Two:** *“What projects would you like to see police and residents work on together to improve or beautify the neighborhood? What projects would you personally want to get involved in?”*

During Question Round Two, respondents shared their ideas and views of projects that police and residents can work on together to improve the neighborhoods. Most participants agreed they are willing to take part in neighborhood cleanups to beautify the neighborhood. They feel this type of interaction with community members and police officers joining in on the effort will bring everyone together and also benefit the neighborhood as a place to be admired and desirable to live in. Other ideas included gardening, playing basketball together and other activities to get everyone involved.

### 2.1 Activities to Bring One Another Together

Participants shared their ideas of the types of community activities that could be hosted to bring the community together.

*"When we were younger on Walnut at Washington Park, we used to do relay races. The police would come out. We would do the 50-yard dash and the 100-yard dash. I was 9, 10, or 11. There were prizes for all the different games. There was the sack race, the strong woman arm wrestling, jumping jacks and more. It was all physical play at the park and we did it with the police. The kids came out and had fun. I'm sure the kids today would like this. No one comes out now. It's not like it used to be. We used to have leagues and we would play against the police and the police would play each other in the 1960s. The different police precincts would come out. We would all come home with the ribbons. I haven't seen any kids out playing in the snow."*

*"I would like to see interactions in the park too, like they used to. We used to see the police at XXX on 27<sup>th</sup> and Vliet. It was an ice cream place. There is also a place called Red's on 24<sup>th</sup> that catered to kids. The police would go in for lunch. The kids would follow the police over and they would all be in there together. They would get sundaes called dusty's. This is part of our childhood, but it's different for babies now. I would also like to see a cleanup and garden with the kids. When kids plant and grow things, then have a cookout at the end of the grow season, they build better relationships. I can contribute to that. It's wonderful when kids see flowers and gardens and it's clean. The education is powerful. I also think it's important to walk and bike together. Speeding cars are dangerous and it's no joke. I ride on the sidewalk. I won't ride in the street."*

Another participant said more cultural events/activities that involved all different ethnicities and races would be beneficial.

*"I would like to do more culturally based events/activities with the officers. All communities should be involved. Not just black and white citizens should be there. We should include Asians, Hispanics, and others. This influences the connections between the people. This is positive, and this would prevent collisions between the races. I would like things such as artistic and cultural awareness to be involved to bring everyone together."*

## **2.2 Looking Out for One Another**

Participants shared their idea of doing more neighborhood watches as a way to feel safer while also looking out for your neighbors.

*"I am interested in being a beat cop, so I can get to know the neighbors before a crisis situation."*

*"This past summer the alderman representatives and the mayor and the police all came together for the Promise Zone in high crime areas. Officers are sent to walk the beat in areas such as this (Harambee). I understand issues. By walking the beat, I can get to know the residents, business owners, and school areas. Huge relationship-building opportunities are present. This usually occurred between 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. It would also help if we could work later in the communities (evenings)."*

### **2.3 Making of a Beautiful Place to Live**

Many participants shared ideas of cleaning up the neighborhoods, including fixing up boarded houses, picking up trash and fixing any other damage help make the city a beautiful place to live.

*"I would like to see an organized cleanup to get people out in the neighborhood and to clean it up as soon as the snow melts. When people come out and help cleanup, they'll be more aware of their surroundings and not want it to be full of litter. I also teach kids at Morrison Middle School how to play chess. It's a great program. We work together and help them win tournaments. I go in once a month. The girls from Morris won first place in the last tournament. Yeah, it's really great."*

*"I would like to team up with the police to come up with a solution for drivers that run through stop signs and traffic lights. This is causing too much damage in the neighborhood. I would also like the police and residents to come together and pick up the trash together."*

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What would motivate you and/or what would hold you back from getting involved? What other ideas do you have to beautify the neighborhood? What's your role?"*

During the Connected Conversations, participants shared the ideas on what would motivate or hold them back from becoming involved, and what role they would take on to help beautify the neighborhood. Most participants said holding these types of open communication events is needed and appreciated, but more importantly, more people need to become involved.

Two participants mentioned the Keefe Avenue Safety Committee as a motivation.

*"I would say that you all motivate me a lot [referring to the participants in the Keefe Avenue Safety Committee]. I see you all often and sometimes I see you more than my family. The Keefe Avenue Safety Committee keeps growing and you all do such good work."*

*"You all should join the Keefe Avenue Safety Committee. We can do a cleanup at your house. I've been a part of the committee for a while. People talk and work together. Someone shoveled the snow at my house today. When people see each other picking up, does it not make you think? You start to ask, is that how I want to treat my house?"*

This led a participant in one of the groups to open up the discussion for others to follow up with, *"I would like more outreach," "We need more young people," "Teenage members would benefit from this too."*

One participant left it best stated when they said, *"Hopefully we can be more open-minded when moving in the future."*

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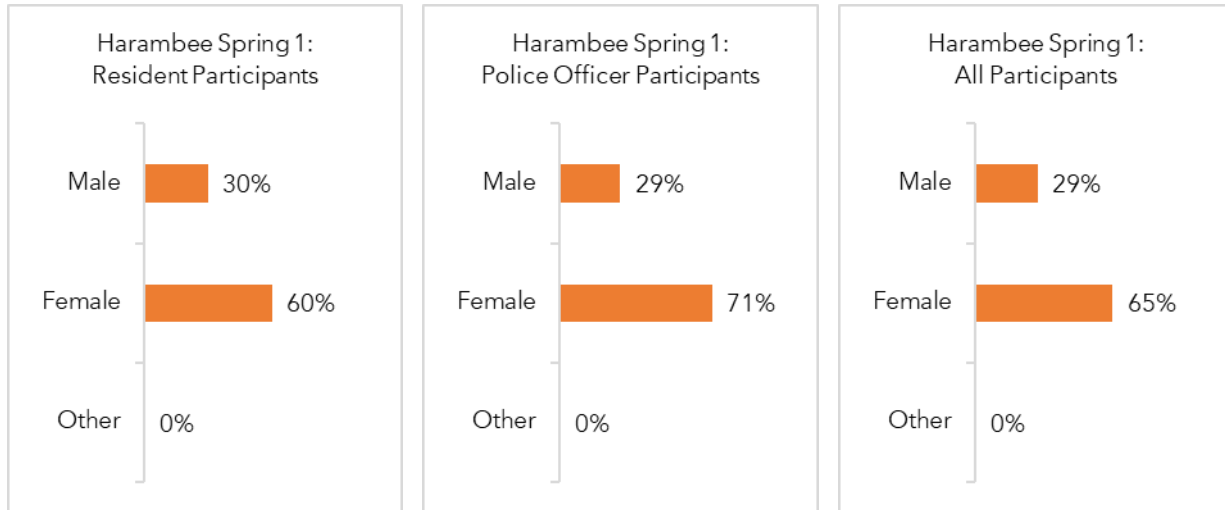
### **Parting Words**

After participants completed Connected Conversation, they were asked to think of a word that would describe the listening circle they had just participated in. All participants' words showed the listening circle was enjoyable, appreciative and more importantly an effective step in building a great community.

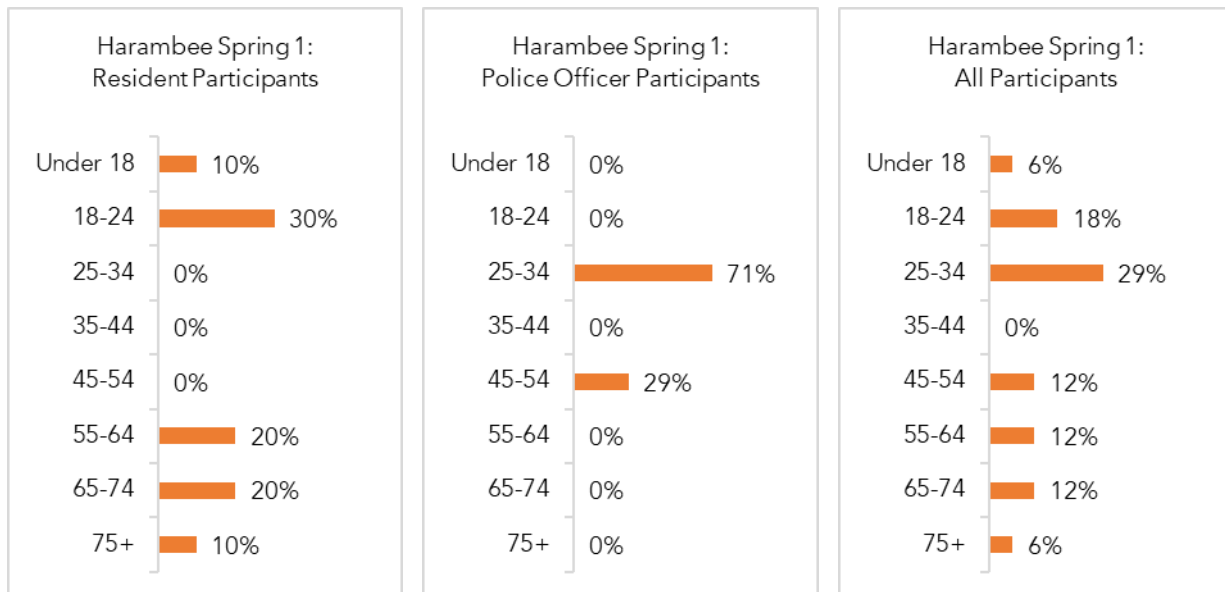
## Feedback Forms

### Demographics

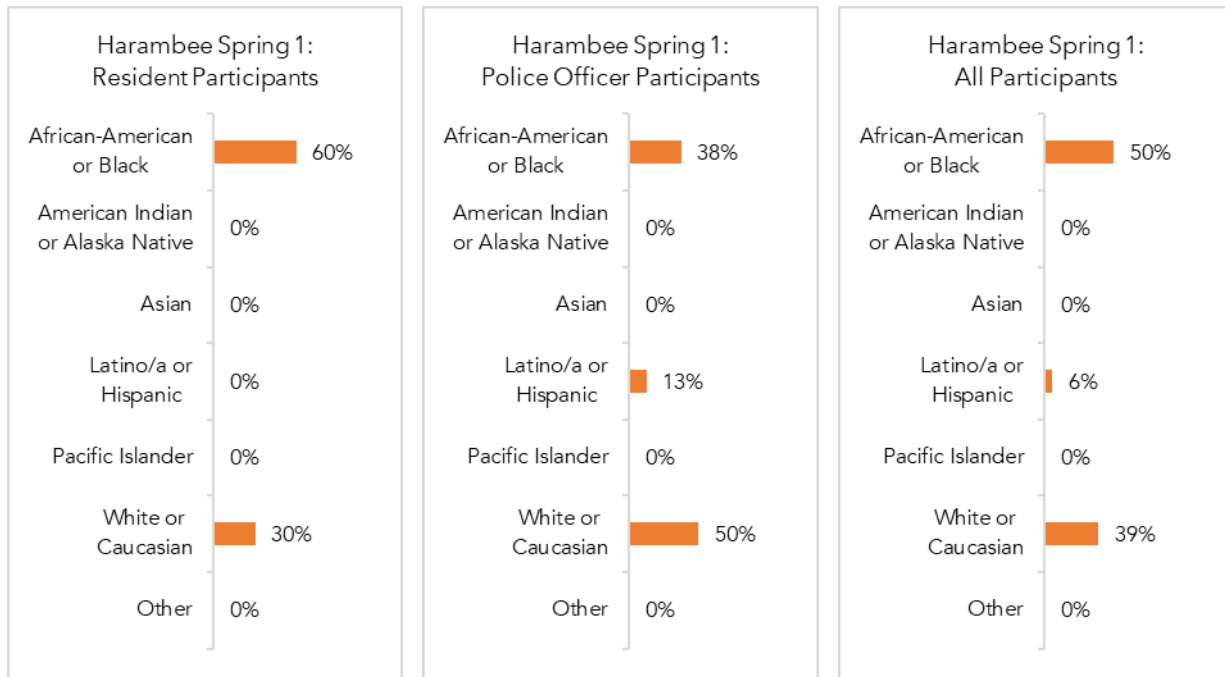
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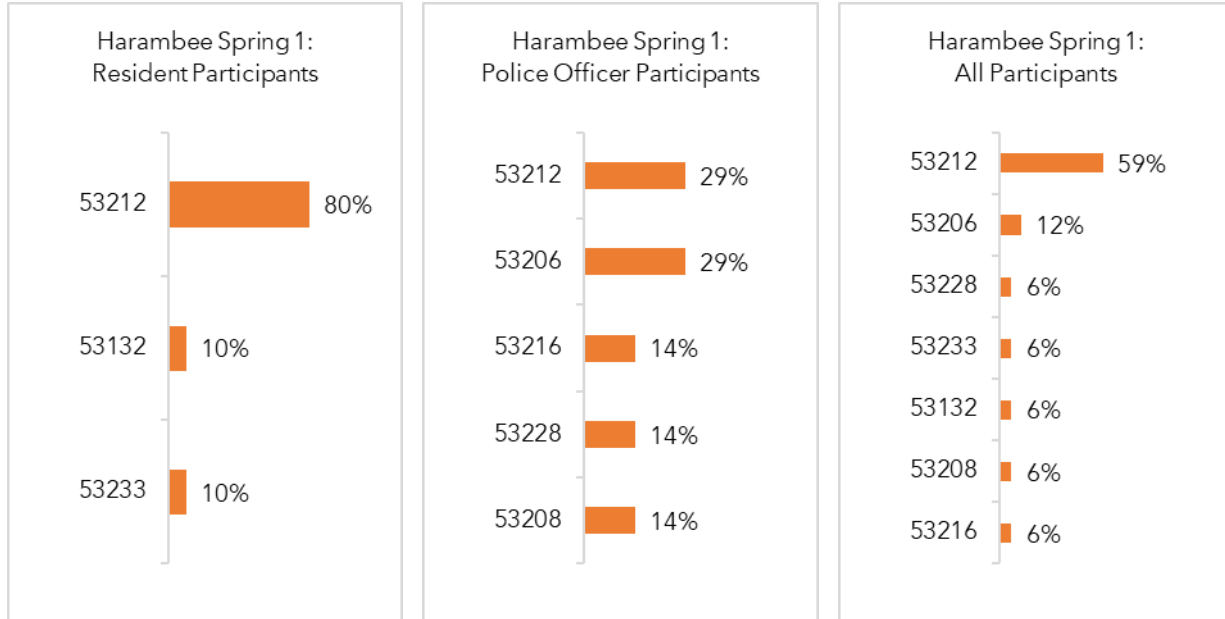
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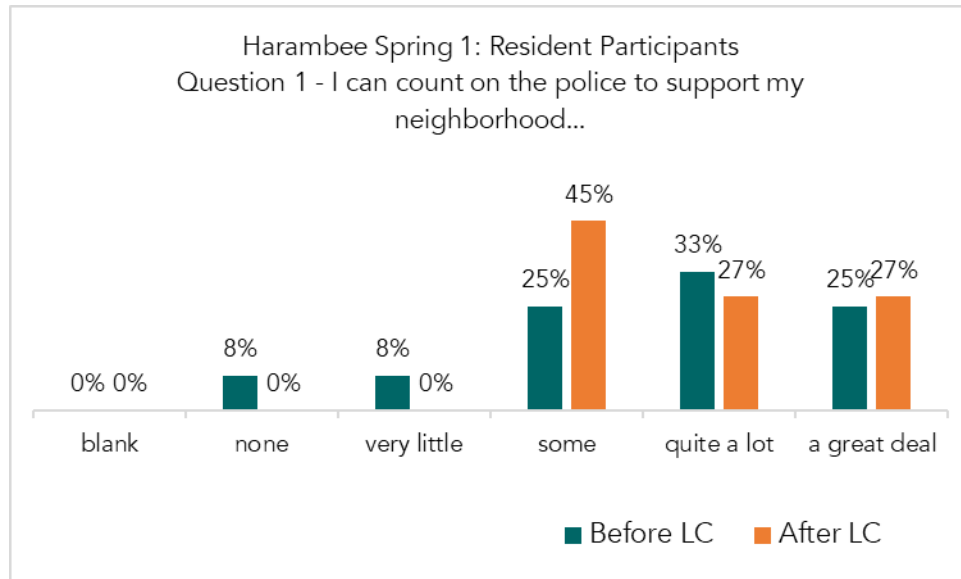




## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys

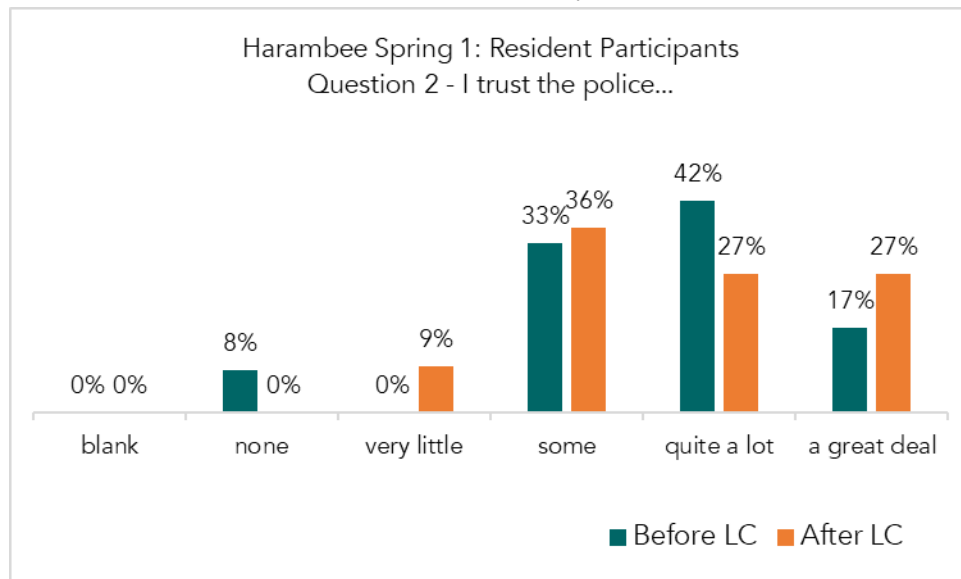
Question 1 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 1 was asked of Resident Participants only.

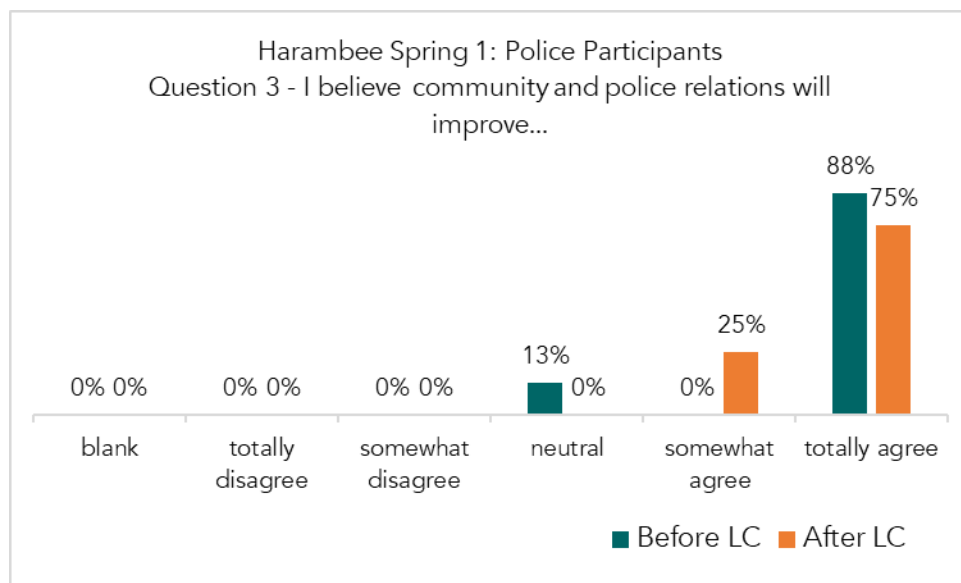
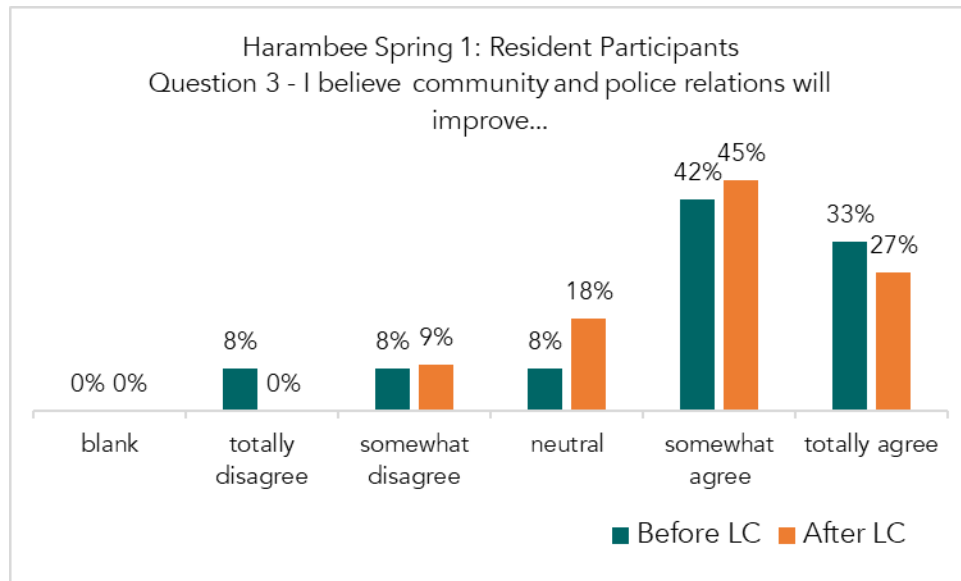


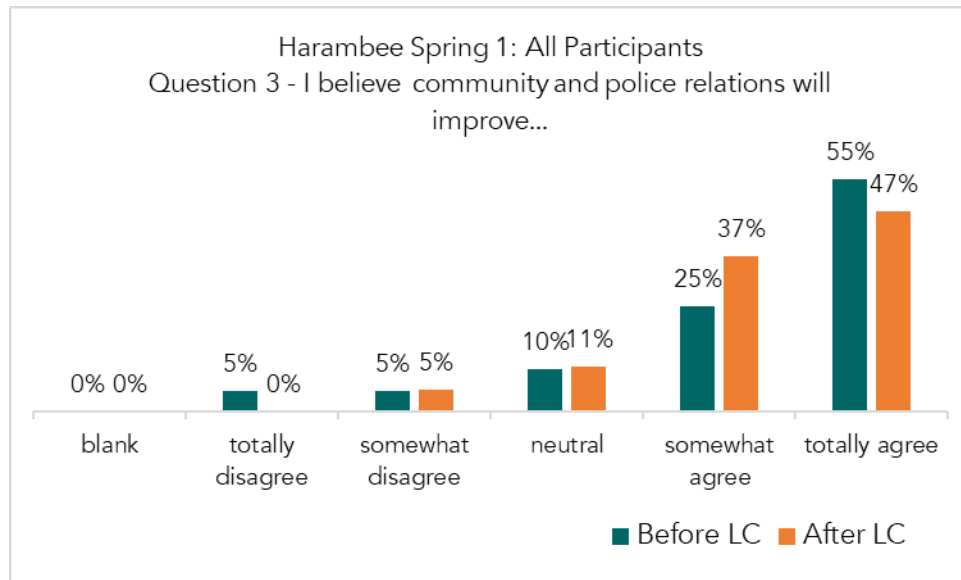
Question 2 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 2 was asked of Resident Participants only.

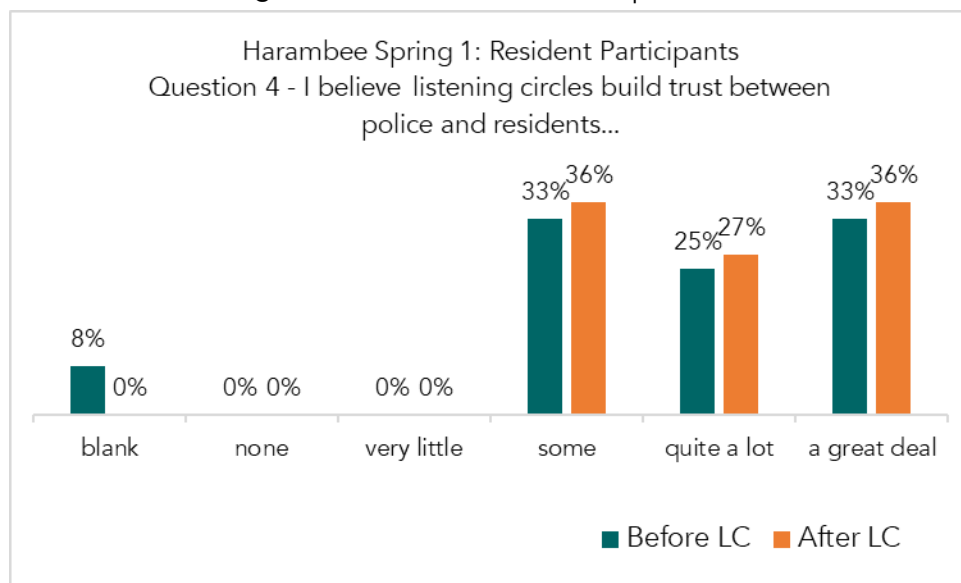


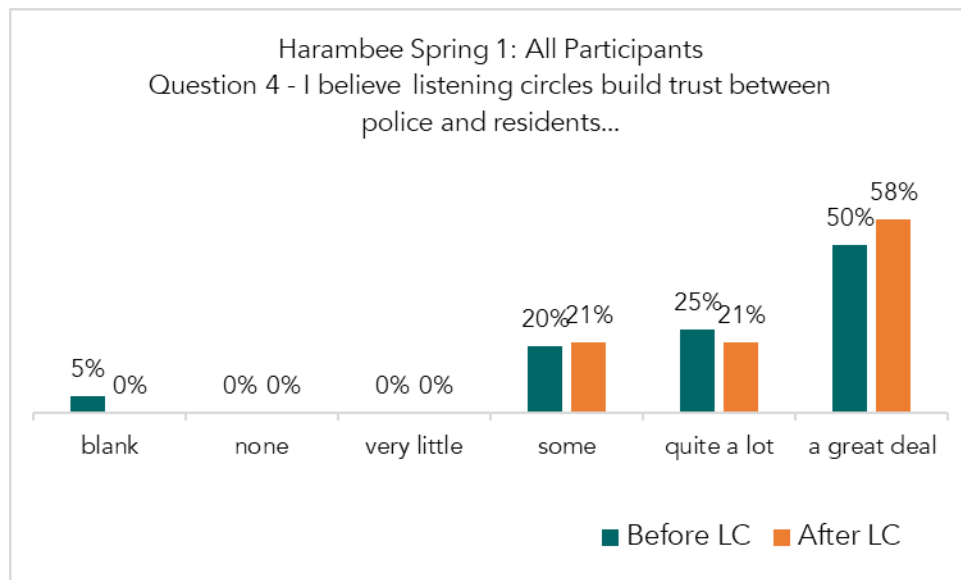
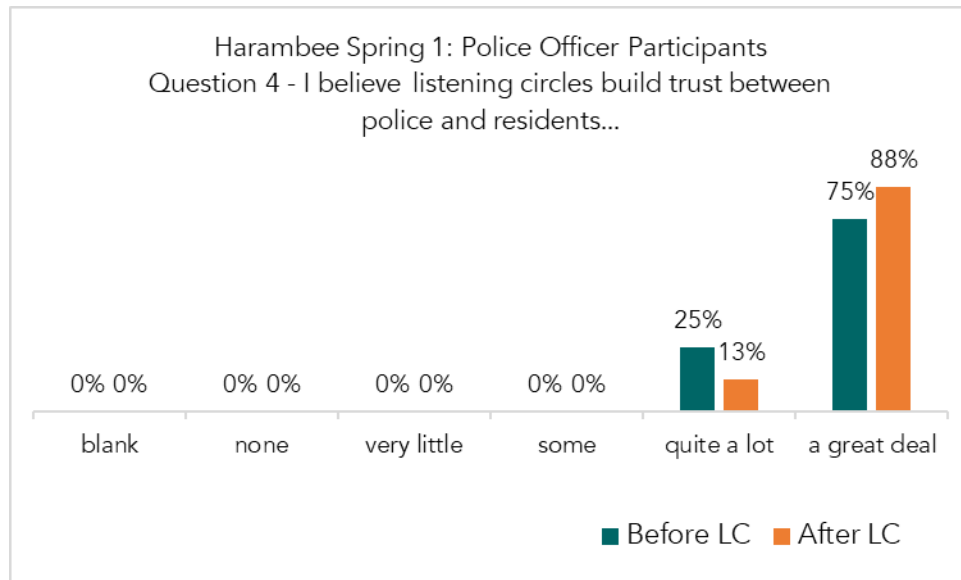
Question 3 – I believe community and police relations will improve...





Question 4 – I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...





### Qualitative Data – Answers to Open-Ended Questions

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community or police today?

- I like hearing other citizens perspectives.
- Hearing what others had to say.
- Community and police speaking directly with each other is a great idea.
- Diversity of group.
- Interacting with XXX.

- Hearing stories from older generations.
- I felt valued by the group.
- Listening to members of Harambee speak about desires they have for building relationships.
- Being able to hear from others who are not like me and help me see things from another perspective.
- It was great to hear about the views of the police and see that they are real people.
- The people were great.
- On the final question where everyone asked each other a question.
- We are all humans and in this "thing" together. We must help and serve each other.
- Interesting conversations.
- Building relationship, how to better communicate with police.
- I learned about different community opportunities that police do. I felt as if I was not always aware of the outreach that was done.
- People are people.
- Hearing police and residents share.
- Blank

#### **What questions or concerns are you leaving with?**

- I would like to see more citizens and police show up.
- How people think, and I learned something new.
- That some members only come to argue and not listen to everyone.
- How do people in the Harambee community usually react to police in their community - --> parole vs. community engagement.
- When will be the next meeting? What follow-up will there be? What will happen with the data collected? How can I see the pictures which were taken?
- More attendance from community.
- Continuing to build relationships.
- I still have a concern about police being seen outside of the vehicles within the community.
- What projects will be done with police and the neighborhood?
- Blank (x2)
- None (x4)
- N/A (x2)

#### **What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?**

- I like the topics presented today.
- What to do when you're stopped by the police.
- Why people are angry with the police specifically.
- What do the citizens in the area need or want from the police?

- How to support each other better.
- Youth in our community.
- Bridging the age gap.
- What's holding you back from being and making a change.
- Community engagement programs that are run by the police.
- Events.
- Trust and equality!
- Addressing perceptions.
- Can't think of one at this time.
- Trying to understand.
- Solid plan for a project.
- Blank (x3)

## Listening Circle 5 Analysis – Mental Health in the Community

**Question Round One:** *“Describe a time where you witnessed or heard a conversation or situation where someone’s mental health played a role in the moment or in the outcome.”*

### 1.1 Work

Many participants witnessed situations where mental health played a role while at work. Situations ranged from suicide attempts to trauma-induced outbursts. Many of the participants spoke about interacting with the individuals dealing with mental health. They recalled speaking with them, trying to get information about the situation and trying to de-escalate the situation. By listening, participants were able to keep the situation under control, and often were able to get help for the individuals. One participant shared the following account of a situation:

*“Last summer I answered a call to a suicidal person on a bridge, according to witnesses. I went because I was close. We ran up to him. He was on the other side of the fence. I reached out and took his hand and held it while I talked to him until he came down. It was scary.”*

Another participant shared an account where he/she helped a mother at her child’s school who was dealing with a mental health crisis.

*“While on duty last week I was called to a school regarding a mother trying to pick up her children, but I later found out the mother did not have custody or permission to pick up the children. After some time listening, observing patiently, I noticed she was having an episode. I have had lots of training to handle such situations involving mental health issues. MUDD was on the scene as well. As we let her talk and calm down a bit we were able to transport her to a mental health facility to get checked out. Later she was released back into our custody as she was due in court for setting her boyfriend on fire.”*

During these situations at work, some participants recalled interacting with people who were not getting the help that they needed. One participant remembers a man whose caseworker was not providing help:

*“We get lots of mental health calls. There was one man who was calling 5 times a day. He heard things in his cupboards, lots of stories. It turned out he was lonely and his caseworker wasn't helping him. We helped him get a caseworker who cared about him.”*

Another participant shared a similar story:

*"I used to work for four years with homeless people. There was a guy who ended up in jail because of his outbursts. It wasn't his fault. He couldn't get the help he needed so they put him in jail. He may still be there."*

## **1.2 Family and Neighbors**

Several participants shared situations involving family members and neighbors from their community. Some participants recalled providing support for their family members and neighbors. Like participants with experiences at work, these participants also stopped and listened to the individuals in crisis, hoping to de-escalate the situation.

*"I have dealt with mental health within my family and persons on the street. I do as my dad taught me to do – I feel things out, look at the situation objectively, empathize and then try to connect."*

*"I have a brother that is dealing with issues of depression. My brother has a history of running away and threatening suicide. When my brother is having a moment I try my best to let him know I care and give him empathy."*

One participant described a woman in crisis in their neighborhood and how the community helped her:

*"We have a lady in our neighborhood – and I've lived here for 40 years – who sometimes sits on her porch nude or will throw flour and act very strange. People who don't know her may not know how to help. Neighbors who have been here a long time do know her, and they can help out. They may be able to calm her down and be able to bring her back in the house. Sometimes we have to promise her that we're not going to call the cops. You know, sometimes people who are having mental health issues can check themselves out of the hospital. There was a time when she did check herself out of the hospital and her mother would not let her back in her house, so she came over to my house."*

Other participants shared that when a family member or neighbor was in crisis, they left them alone.



*"I have a cousin, he doesn't want anybody to mess with him. He has anger management problems. When he is home, we have to stay away from him. Sometimes he wants to play with us but sometimes he does not. He does take medicine."*

### 1.3 Themselves

Respondents shared situations where they themselves were dealing with mental health crises. Participants shared dealing with trauma-induced mental crisis.

*"I have PTSD. I need people to talk to. I felt suicidal. I need to come to places like this where I can talk to people and be with people."*

*"I've witnessed it in myself since I recently lost my brother. I feel like I'm starting over and I can't get my rhythm back. Sometimes I feel all right and then others I don't. I was supposed to celebrate my birthday with my brother and now I cannot so I am just acting like everything is OK but it's not."*

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**Question Round Two:** *"What steps do you think should be taken by the community and law enforcement to help ensure a positive outcome when dealing with someone in a mental health crisis? Name some specific actions you can take to be part of the solution."*

### 2.1 Connect and Support

In Question Round Two, respondents discussed steps they could take to do more to ensure positive outcomes in a mental health crisis. Many participants suggested talking and listening as the most effective step in dealing with a mental health crisis. Communicating and building a relationship shows individuals they are supported during their crisis. Some participants wished they had talked to the other party more. One participant said this:

*"I think police and community members need to stay calm, and when they see something is going on, listen and hear the person out. I had a cousin who was an alcoholic and he would get really angry and he just wanted people to listen to him."*

A few other participants echoed similar sentiments and said things like, *"I think it's all about communication, patience and building relationships so one will know what to do or respond."*

Other participants made general comments about staying calm during situations.

*"When dealing with mental health issues remember to stay calm. If you react it's going to make it worse. Like the officer said, family dealing with this ahead a time can help more because the family knows them better. The family will know what will calm them down. Maybe they like basketball and that might help them calm down or blow off some steam. If you try and you don't get anywhere with helping the person then call the police. If I call the police as my first reaction it may cause more problems."*

Several participants encouraged positive communication and respect. They said it was important to speak to others respectfully, even during a contentious situation. Along similar lines, some participants advised being unbiased when dealing with conflict. Participants suggested that keeping emotions under control during an argument would make it easier to resolve it. One participant said, *"Put feelings aside. Don't be biased."*

## **2.2 More Information**

Several participants advised community members to cooperate with officers dealing with mental health crises and to give officer any information about the situation and the person that may assist them in dealing with the crisis. Participants also said that officers should seek out this information from family members and others near the situation.

*"Police officers are crisis intervention trained. We try to gather as much information as we possibly can about an individual. We'll try to get an officer to their house and gather even more information. And if we don't know the person, we have another officer on standby. We try to get as much information as we can so that we know what we're doing."*

*"In the community if there is a situation (and) we have to call the police we should be very clear and give the police as much information as we know. Then they will know what they're stepping into. Maybe as a person who's helping, you can describe what you are wearing so that when the police arrive they know that you were there to assist them."*

## **2.3 Training**

A few participants suggested that mental health training needs a bigger focus. Individuals need to understand mental health and its intricacies before attempting to help anyone.

*"I think a step should be to learn and become knowledgeable about systemic and traumatic health issues. Learn before you try."*

Some participants emphasized mental health training for police specifically.

*"For police officers there should be biannual training in dealing with mental health crises. And the dispatchers should be updated as to what the triggers are, what usually helps de-escalate, etc. Just the badge itself can cause escalation. Just our presence can cause harm."*

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What do you plan to do to become more knowledgeable about mental health and its effects on the community? What are your thoughts about being a 'trauma-informed community?'"*

### **3.1 Don't Be a Bystander**

Many participants called each other to action. When dealing with mental health, they felt that they needed to step up and be more active in helping others. Suggestions on how to actively help varied. Some participants suggested volunteer work and being mentors. Others said talking to individuals struggling with mental health issues shows them support and aid they may not have otherwise had. One participant asked:

*"I think, when it comes to mental health, people need to take more action. Community leaders and organizations need to find ways to help members of the neighborhood with mental health issues."*

### **3.2 Insufficient Training**

A conversation about training occurred after one participant asked, *"Do you have mental health training?"* Respondents revealed they've had very little training in mental health. The longest amount of training a participant had was *"40 hours of CIT training"* – Crisis Intervention Team training. One participant explained why they've had little training:

*"It's difficult for us to find time for everyone to get training and not be understaffed."*

### **3.3 Police**

Many participants discussed the police. Some participants gave suggestions on how to improve police interactions during mental health crises. Mental health professionals should accompany police officers when handling mental health calls.

*"A doctor is paired with an officer. Two other officers accompany them. When there is a 'safe' feeling the doctor takes over."*

Other participants spoke about their previous interactions with the police. Some did not trust the police due to past experiences. Others have had mixed experiences.

*"I try very hard to never have police contact because of my two experiences I shared earlier and I can't forget about as a young black man."*

*"I've had both positive and negative experiences with police officers. They've mostly been positive. I had one negative experience with police officers, and it was my fault. I got into a fight at school when I was going to Homestead. The liaison police officer told me to go see the principal. The principal told me to go to the police department and that I was going to have a ticket. I was fingerprinted. Now I'm in the system, I've got something with my name on it. I went to court and they gave me year to see how I do."*

One participant said that police officers are trying to have a better relationship with the community and youth by talking to them more.

*"We ask questions of young people to find out if they've had good or bad experiences with police. We are school officers and we try to talk to as many young people as we can because I believe there are misconceptions out there that police are robots, that we are subhuman. We are just like you."*

### **3.4 Mental Health Reporting System**

A few participants discussed a mental health reporting system.

*"I wonder if there's a way that we could have a list of people in the neighborhood who have mental health issues so that's available for police."*

Others responded that such a system already exists, but it is not efficient.

*"We just got a new reporting system and now we have another reporting system that we use. The department can only look at one at a time. If you want more access, we have to pay more money. The police are stewards of tax dollars and that's why there's a budget. Better systems for us to use would be a great idea and if the government entities can communicate with the mental health department it would be helpful. However, there is HIPAA and we don't want to violate any privacy laws. Those things are in place for good and there's some bad with it. Additionally, there're differences for state and federal laws. We can only do what the laws allow us to do. We are law enforcement."*

*"Having a list of people in the neighborhood with mental health issues would really help a lot. Unfortunately, the funding for our work comes from the city, and there's only so much money for technology. It would be nice to have that type of information on the computer screens or if dispatch would be able to see if there's a mental observation of the individual or be able to look up the specifics of what that person has going on. From there it is great to see if there're specific contacts. It takes a lot of time to make sense of the information. The systems are not organized at all."*

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## **Parting Words**

### **4.1 Communication**

A majority of participants ended the conversation by emphasizing communication and support during mental health crises.

*"Communication is key in everything. And you can't fix others."*

### **4.2 Learned More about Mental Health**

Several participants shared what they learned about mental health from the discussion. They expressed now being knowledgeable enough to help someone during a mental health crisis.

*"What I'll take with me from tonight is steps to dealing with mental health issues."*

### **4.3 Beneficial Conversation**

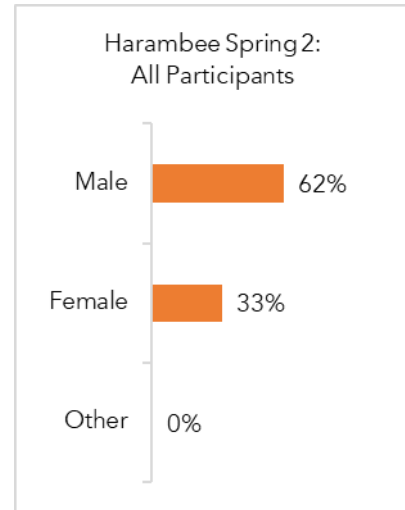
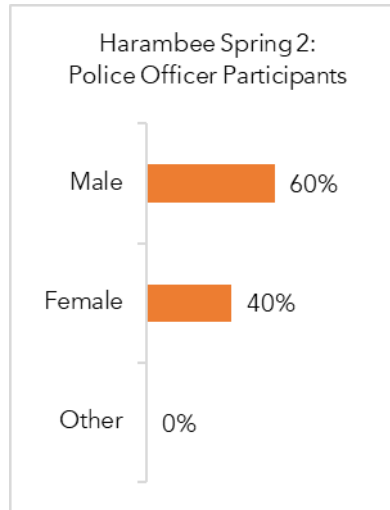
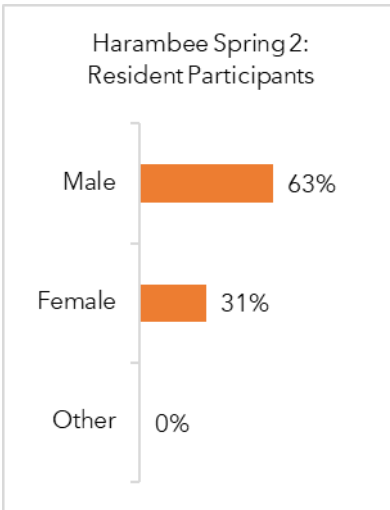
Overall, participants enjoyed the discussion. Participants liked hearing from different perspectives regarding mental health.

*"I appreciate everybody coming out and hearing both sides. When we see things on the news, we rarely hear from police officers. It's good to hear both sides, it'll help us solve problems."*

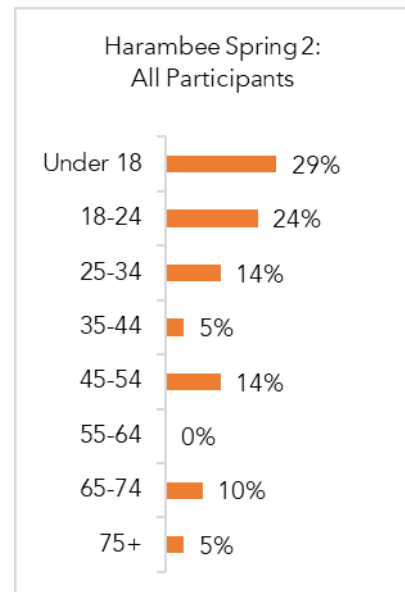
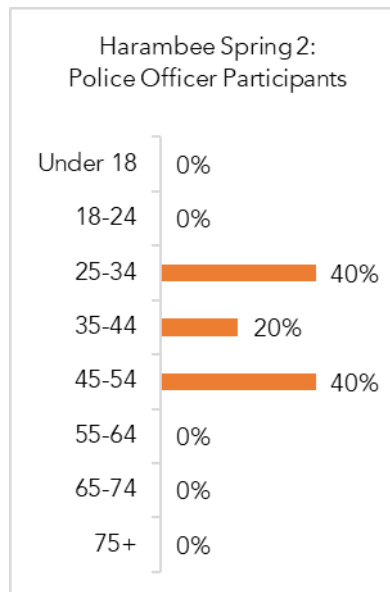
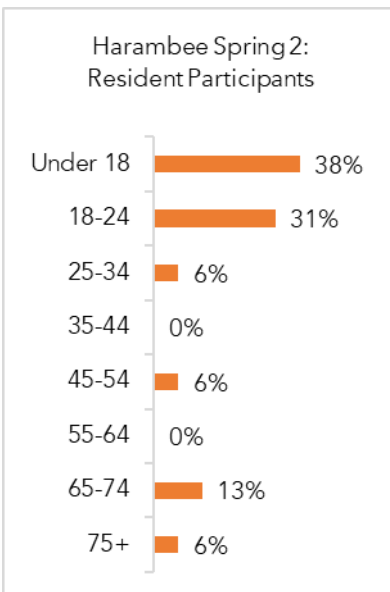
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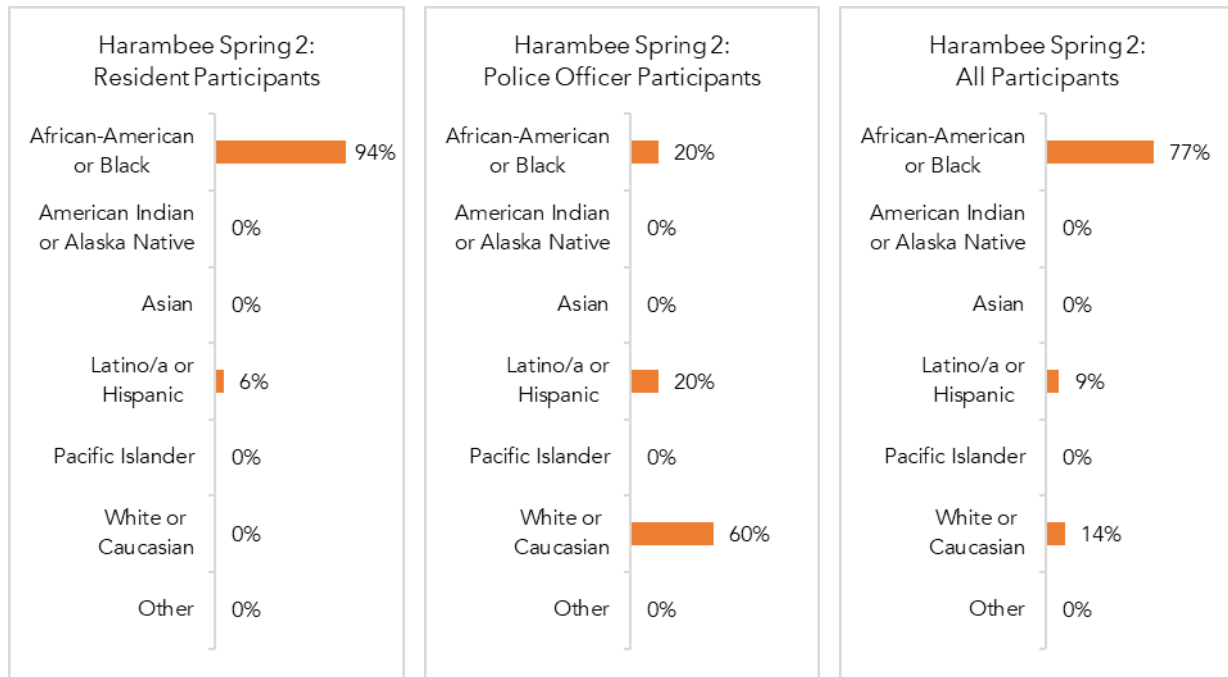
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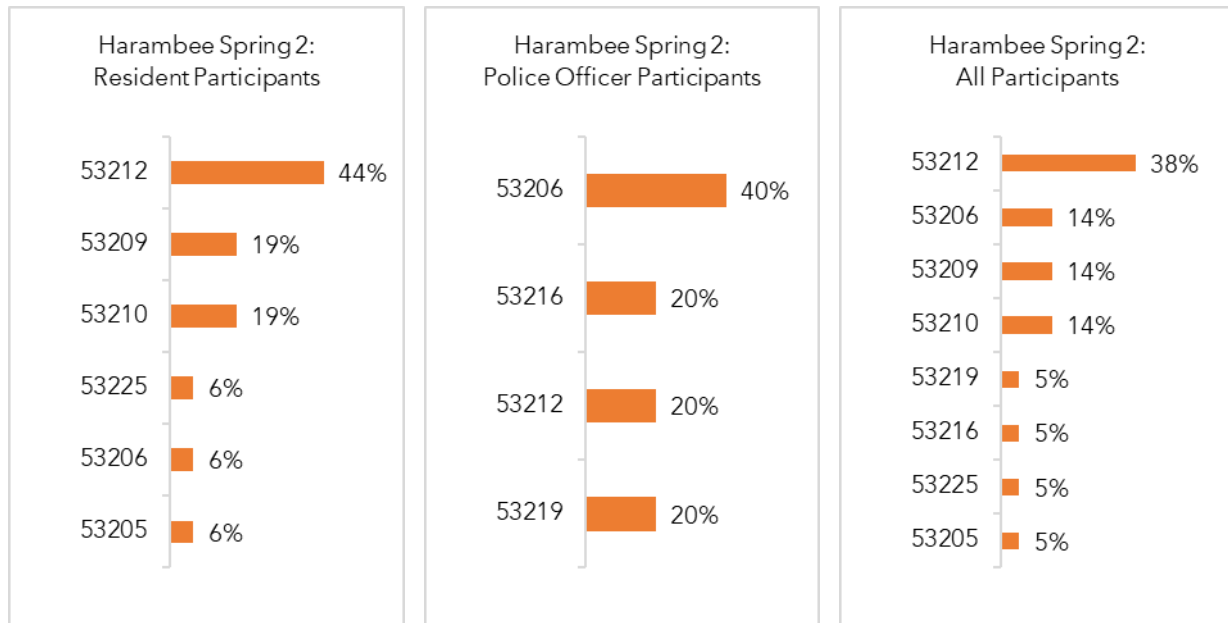
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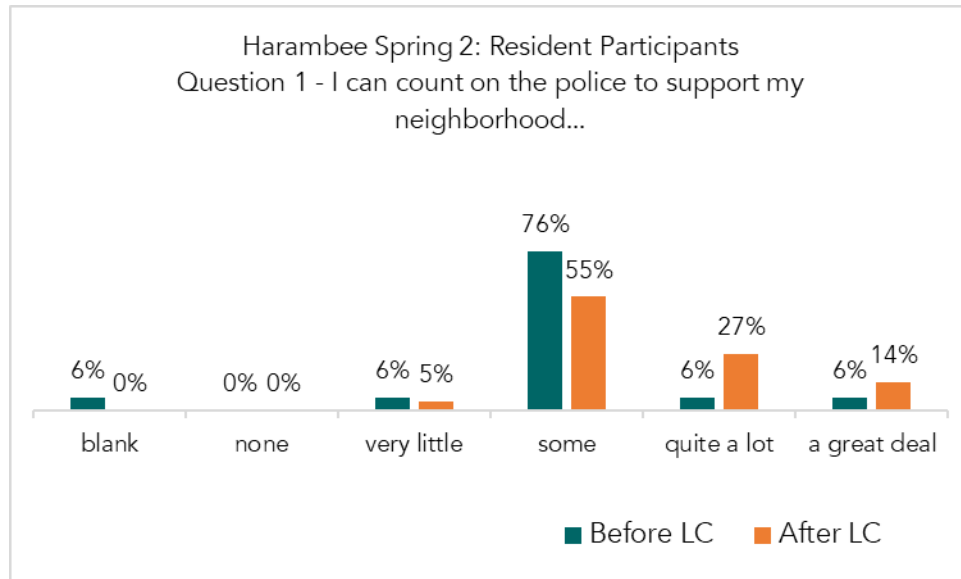
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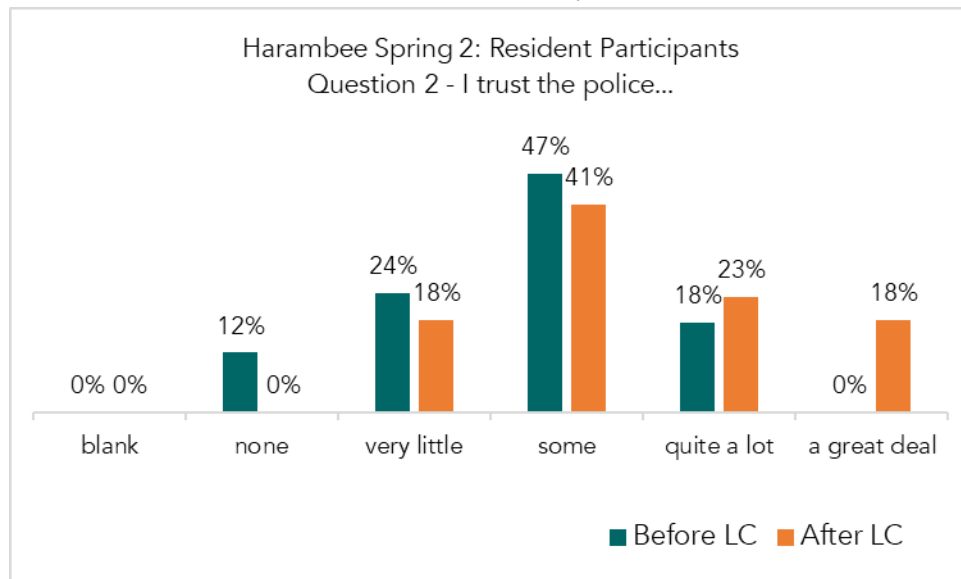
Question 1 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 1 was asked of Resident Participants only.



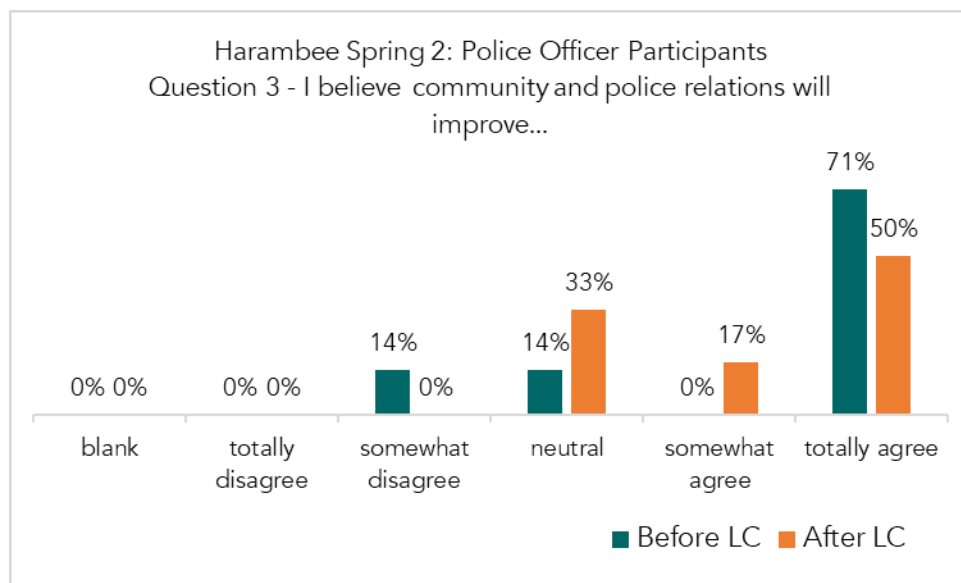
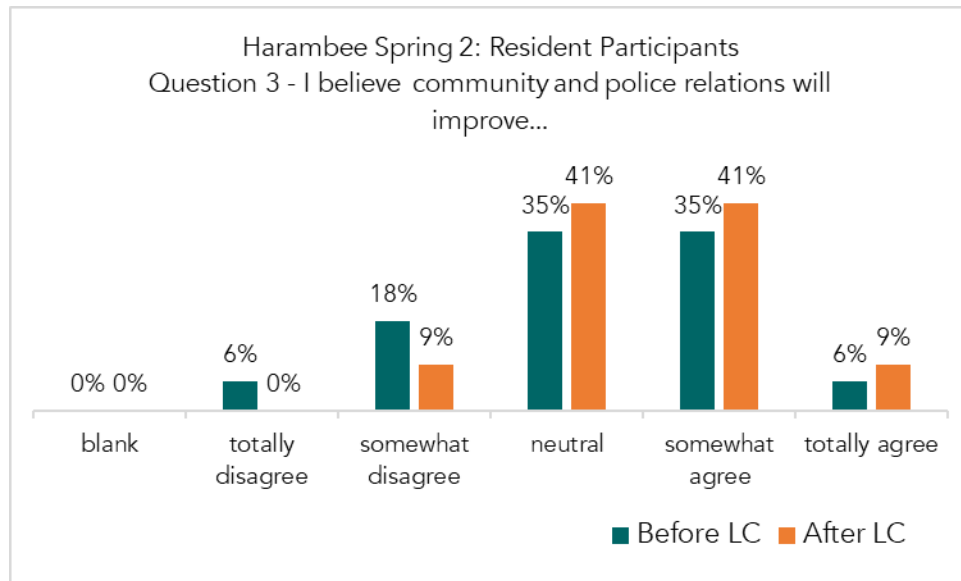
Question 2 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

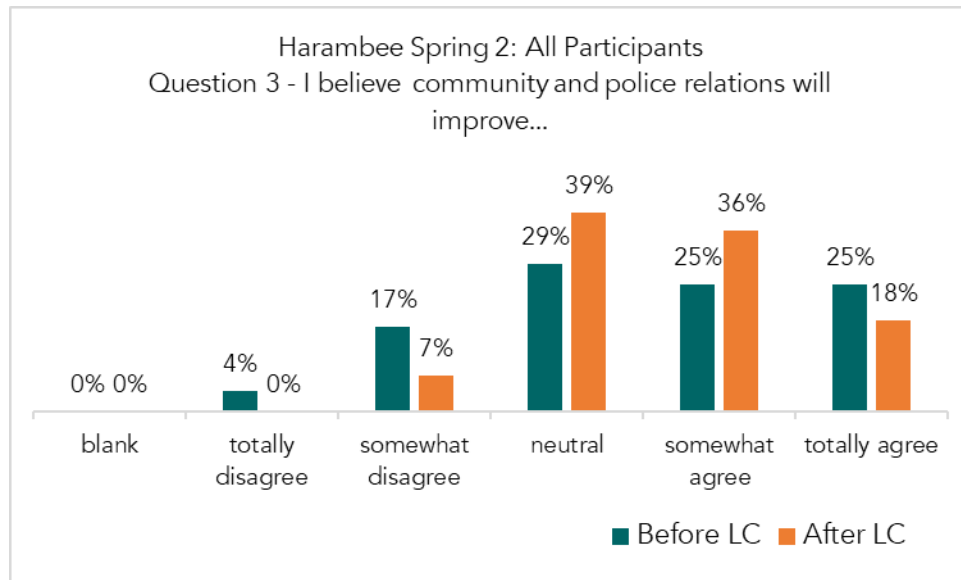
Note: Question 2 was asked of Resident Participants only.



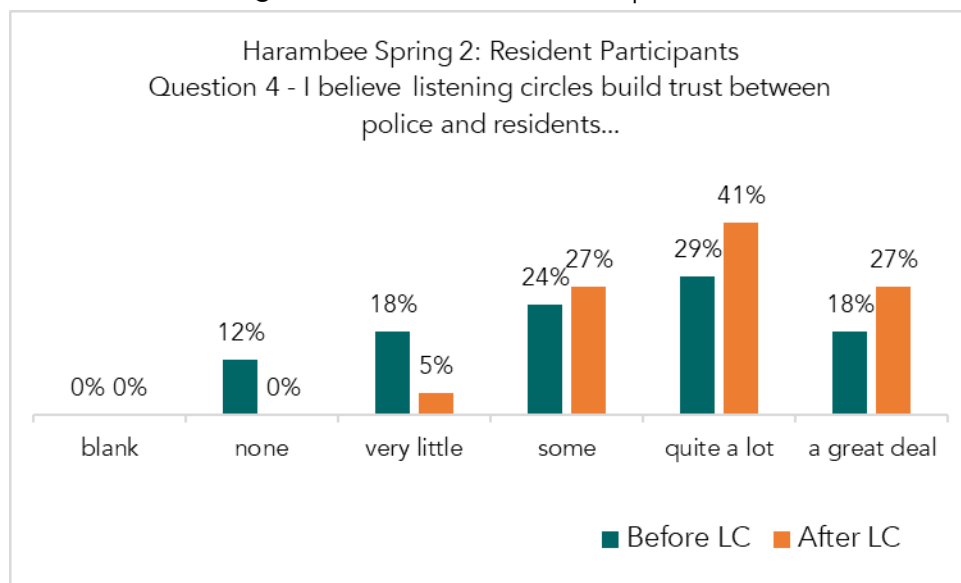


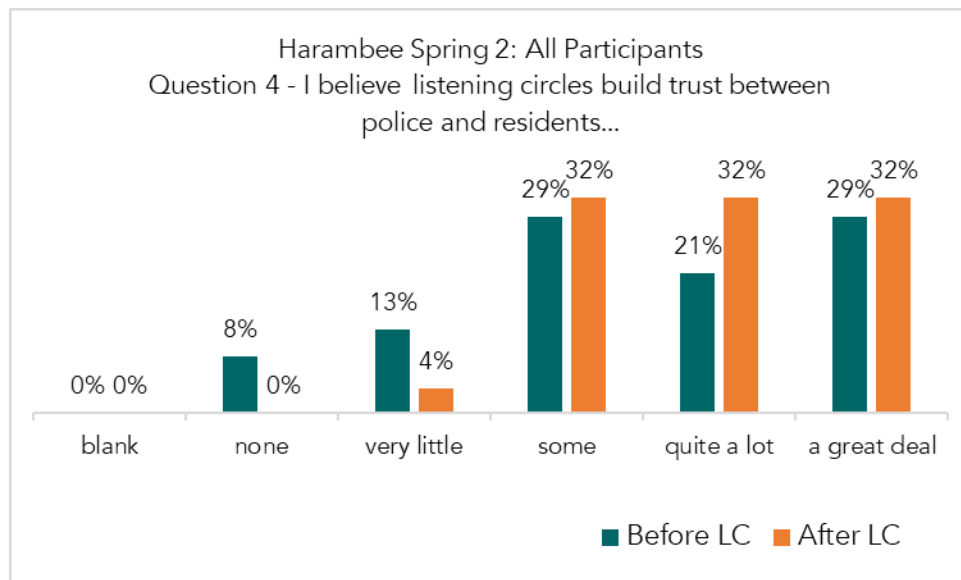
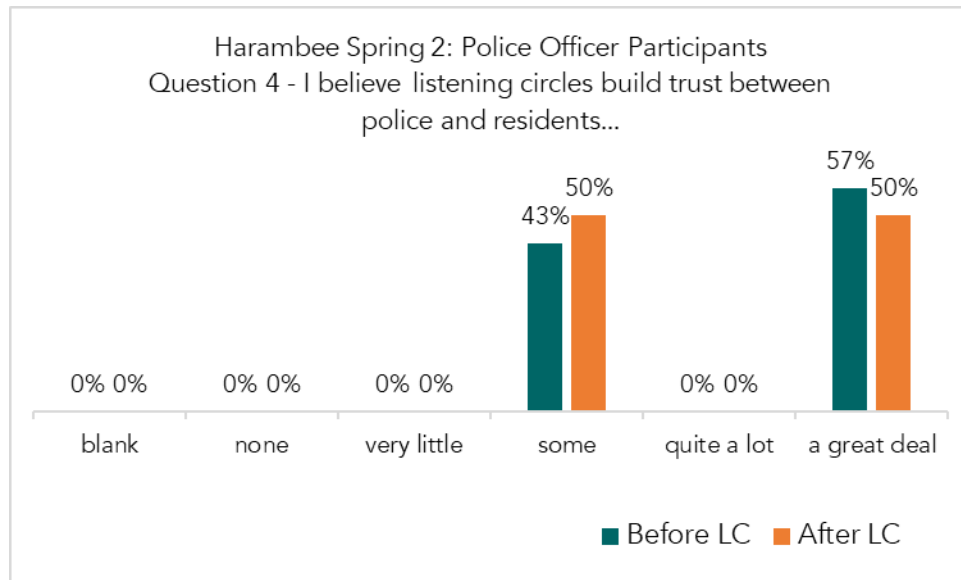
Question 3 – I believe community and police relations will improve...





Question 4 – I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...





### Qualitative Data – Answers to Open-Ended Questions

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community or police today?

- Seeing young members of the community here
- Dialogue with attendees
- They are compassionate
- The youth are great
- It was good group with the youth. I think we all learned something this evening.

- How everyone else defines mental illness
- N/A
- Blank
- Hear both sides of the problem
- If mental crisis talk to him
- Have an ear for listening
- Learning that police are just like us, they just have a harsh job
- Blank
- I learned that they aren't all angry
- Yes, I have learned that not all police are the same. Some policemen deal with mental illness in a good way.
- That they will try their best to understand both sides of the story
- They go about things a different way
- That everyone engaged and spoke
- That they can help with community mental illness problems
- That they [are] just like us
- I learn how they deal with mental people
- Blank
- N/A
- They have a career and do it well
- That they will actually try to help
- I learned all officers aren't bad
- Youth folks present
- That I heard both sides

#### **What questions or concerns are you leaving with?**

- Better attendance with young people.
- The more youth we have in group brings knowledgeable thoughts and ideas to the circle.
- Not enough focus on what the community can do for those who have mental health issues.
- Concerns - patience of facilitator.
- If some wrong figure it out.
- Too loud room.
- Will the relationship between the community and police get better?
- What is the everyday life of an officer?
- Actually, all mine were answered.
- N/A

- Mental health more explanation.
- N/A
- How will I move on?
- Empathize, listen, communicate, seek understanding.
- That all police aren't bad.
- Blank (x4)
- None (x9)

**What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?**

- Drug abuse.
- Parents' concerns of the children in the community.
- Action steps.
- Police brutality.
- Mental crisis talking to them.
- The thoughts of officers.
- What do police do when they get into a heated argument with people?
- Police and neighbor relationships.
- I don't know.
- Police brutality.
- I don't know yet.
- I really don't know.
- None.
- Racial.
- N/A
- Bullying.
- Building yourself as an individual.
- Blank (x10)
- School behavior.

## Listening Circle 6 Analysis – Does It All Really Matter?

**Question Round One:** *“How have you seen this community talked about on social media? Share about a video/post you read on social media that directly affected you.”*

Participants described experiencing or encountering a negative portrayal of their community through social media. Even among participants who did not engage in social media, several described encountering negative portrayals of their community in the news media. A few shared stories of positive portrayals of their community; however, the vast majority of responses described negative portrayals of their community.

### 1.1 Negative Social Media

The majority of participants described encountering negative portrayals of their community in social media. Some participants specified the negative views of youth in social media.

*“The young people, 16 to 20, on social media are portrayed as being car thieves, etc. That has a bad effect on me because I am in that age group.”*

*“On social media kids are always cussing each other out, fighting each other. I go out on my own and try to stop people from harming each other.”*

As this latter quote illustrates, participants bemoaned the ways in which social media has been used to showcase violence in their neighborhood. This was echoed by other participants as well.

*“I am not from here [Harambee]. Mostly what I see on social media is fights, like that one that happened at the store down the block a couple weeks ago. There were people fighting out there, and then the police snipers showed up.”*

*“My friend sent a video, via social media, of my friend jumping on another kid at a playground. I didn’t like that video because I was scared with the thought that it could be me being jumped on at the playground.”*

These quotes highlight the overall sentiment expressed by participants who found not only negative portrayals of their community and neighborhood on social media, but also in the general media. This is best summed up by a participant commenting on Milwaukee overall:

*"Regarding what's on the regular media about Milwaukee. It's all very negative, about shootings and other bad stuff. It doesn't shed light on the great things Milwaukee has to offer. I see from social media that other people think it is awful here while it really has much to offer."*

## **1.2 No Social Media Engagement**

Many participants said they did not participate in any form of social media. Some of them admitted they did not know how their community was being depicted on social media.

*"I really don't hear much. I would rather stay to myself and focus on my life."*

*"I don't know what others say on social media about our community."*

However, despite not engaging in social media, many participants still described a negative portrayal of their community in other forms of media, as highlighted in the following section.

## **1.3 Negative News Media**

Participants who did not engage in social media described what they encountered in the news media instead. Similar to the participants who used social media, these participants described frequently seeing a negative depiction of their community in the news.

*"I don't use social media. I see TV, but it's always negative images. I'm not much affected by it."*

*"I am not on social media, but I watch the news. I think the news only shows Milwaukee communities as bad or only shows the bad things. I came here from Madison, and that is all I saw, and I came here because I didn't want that to be the only view I had of the city. I don't want to see only negative when there are far more positive things happening."*

This desire to see more positive images of the community was echoed by a few other participants as well, as illustrated in the following section.

## **1.4 Positive Social Media**

A few participants described positive portrayals of their community on social media.

*"I saw a video on social media. Officers were playing basketball with neighborhood kids. It was very positive, and I enjoyed it."*

*"I saw a video on social media of a car accident, and the whole community came running to help, to lend a hand to make sure the people were safe, unlike what is depicted."*

A couple of these participants also pointed out the positive benefits of social media communication for outreach.

*"I am not a fan of social media, but I did hear through social media about a Habitat for Humanity cleanup that was happening and now I am a volunteer. We are doing a cleanup in the community soon, actually. In that way, I think social media can be good."*

*"We used social media to advertise a community marathon that was going to take place in my neighborhood. The race brought people together. I, with so many others, were out there supporting those that participated in the marathon race."*

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**Question Round Two:** *"Who is someone you know personally in the neighborhood who you think makes the neighborhood great? Why?"*

Many participants identified either a family member or an unrelated community member. Some participants talked about neighbors while others named specific individuals and community leaders. Among these unrelated community members, participants generally described two types of people: those who helped maintain the cleanliness of their neighborhood, and those who remained actively involved in mentoring or helping the neighborhood youth. A few participants also mentioned police officers as community members who made their neighborhood great.

## **2.1 Family**

Participants described different family members and relatives whom they felt made their neighborhood great. Most of these participants described female family members, among whom grandmothers were mentioned most often.

*"My grandma also because she is a peaceful person."*

*"My pops and grandma make my neighborhood great. She hosts parties and stuff. She also helps the neighborhood by selling clothes and jewelry to the locals."*

Others described female family members such as aunts and cousins.



*"My cousin, Theresa Scott, with Safe & Sound. She is always doing things for the community."*

*"My auntie – she has cookouts for everybody on the whole block. We have fun at her place."*

As this latter quote illustrates, the most common quality highlighted by participants is their family member's hospitality in the community. This was also true for male family members mentioned by participants.

*"My uncle makes my neighborhood great. He is a man you can't get mad at. He invites others from around the block over for dinner and often looks after neighbors' pets and/or kids. Through these kind actions, he is building trust amongst the neighbors."*

## **2.2 Neighbors and Community Leaders**

Participants identified various neighbors and community leaders who made their neighborhood great. Some participants identified anonymous neighbors while others specified named individuals. In general, participants identified these individuals by the actions they performed, either by helping maintain the cleanliness of their neighborhood or by mentoring and helping the youth.

### 2.2.1 Those who keep the neighborhood clean

Several participants described people and individuals who actively help keep their neighborhood clean.

*"Community groups that do neighborhood cleanups, have food pantries, and things like this. Those groups create the people who individually do good."*

*"I have a neighbor who keeps the community clean. She picks up trash, rakes, shovels snow for others. She is the only person I know who does that."*

*"I don't know a lot of people around here, but Uncle Frankie is definitely one. I mean, you see him out here and when the ice cream truck comes, he buys ice cream for all the kids. He helps keep the place clean."*

As this last quote illustrates, participants also identified individuals based on how they support and help the youth. This theme is discussed in the following section.

### 2.2.2 Those who mentor and help the youth

A number of participants identified community members due to the ways in which they mentor and support the youth in their neighborhood. Some were identified as community leaders while others were mentors to the participants themselves.

*"The director of the Running Rebels. Founder and director Victor Barnett Sr. He helps kids get on a good path and stay there."*

*"My mentor – he takes kids off the streets and helps them get on in good ways."*

As these quotes illustrate, these participants primarily focused on the positive influence on youth.

### **2.3 Officers**

A few participants also identified officers as positive contributors in their neighborhood.

*"There is an officer (who is one of the Running Rebels leaders) who is always there for me. He can fix problems and helps me out when I want to make something happen. He guides me, and it means a lot to me."*

*"A veteran officer with MPD 5, who after many years on the force still chooses to work the late nights, is hands-on in the community, cares about dealing with major issues, and has a strong work ethic."*

Similar to the previous responses, these participant responses about police officers tend to focus on the positive actions they perform as well.

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one thing that makes you feel connected to other people in the neighborhood? What are your ideas/suggestions on how to increase community engagement and build mutual respect between youth, adult residents, and law enforcement?"*

Most participants followed up with one another from their earlier discussions during this open portion of the event. Many comments focused on a desire for more community events that could facilitate communication and discussion. A few participants mentioned the positive side of their community while another couple of participants reemphasized the negative side of social media.

### 3.1 More Community Events and Discussion

Many participants expressed a desire for more community events and opportunities for discussion.

*"We want more people to hear and be involved. We can talk and share and bring more people into these groups."*

*"We need to open up more events around the community. Any sorts of groups that can share a bond, share how hard things can be."*

*"Groups like this all are very beneficial for the people here. But there are thousands who aren't getting the opportunity and need it. I get to sit next to a cop and know him/her. But lots of people never get that opportunity."*

Many participants suggested that it is the lack of opportunities for community discussion that hinders their community from increasing engagement and building respect among their community members.

### 3.2 Positive Side of The Community

A few participants highlighted the positive side of their community, reminding everyone that positive aspects of their neighborhood should be acknowledged.

*"Lots of people see how the neighborhood is presented as negative. There's always another side, and our community has that, too."*

*"These circles show me how much compassion there is in the community. I go back and share with my other officers about the compassion I see in these young people."*

### 3.3 Negative Side of Social Media

One listening circle was prompted with questions about their attitudes towards social media. Participant responses were generally negative toward social media.

*"I see that all the time, with fights being put on social media. Physical ones, but also verbal ones, and I think that escalates things. The fights should be fixed between the people involved, then you have everyone on social media giving their opinions and making it worse. Nothing gets resolved like that."*

*"I think it can be positive for communication, for example you (motioning to participate number three) learned about the neighborhood cleanup through social*

*media. But I think it can be bad, too, like for the reasons we mentioned earlier. It all depends how it is used for sure.”*

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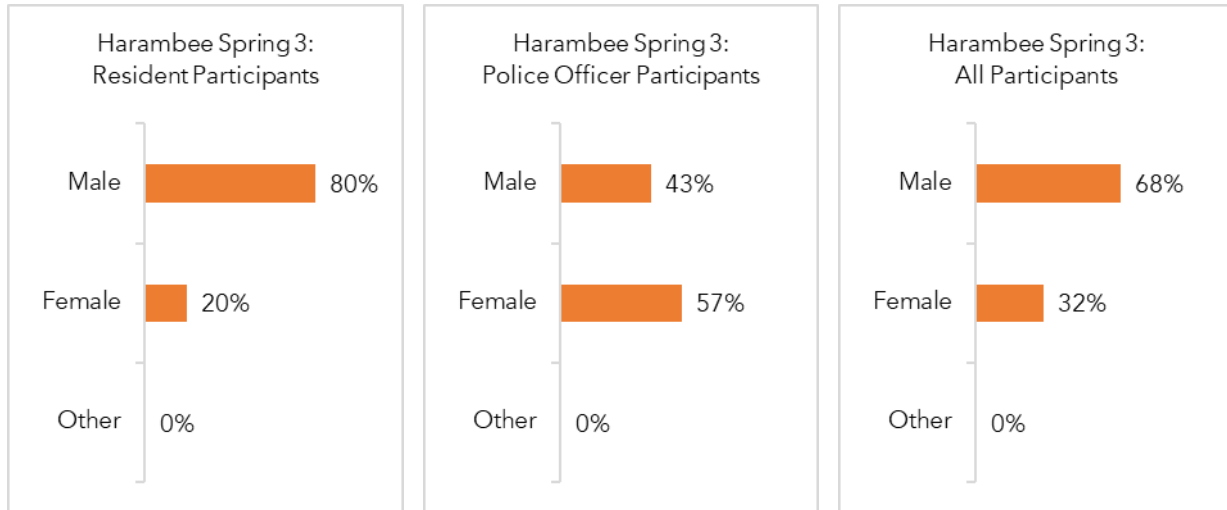
### **Parting Words**

Although only two of the four listening circles had time to conclude with Parting Words, these two groups of participants all expressed positive sentiment, indicating that the event had elicited a fruitful discussion overall.

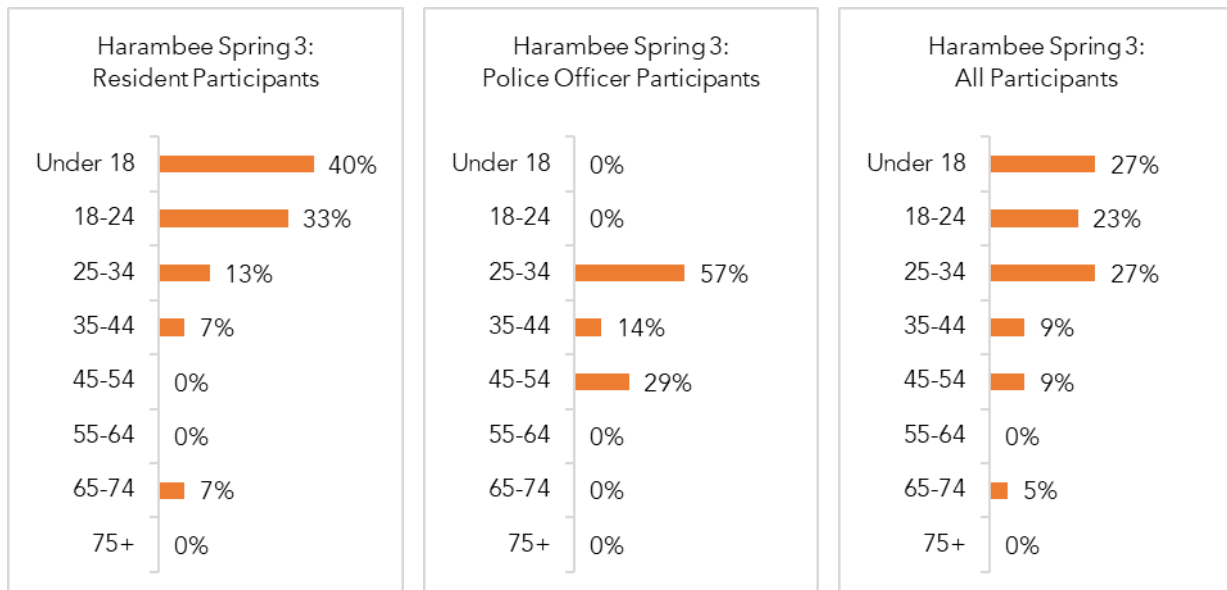
## Feedback Forms

### Demographics

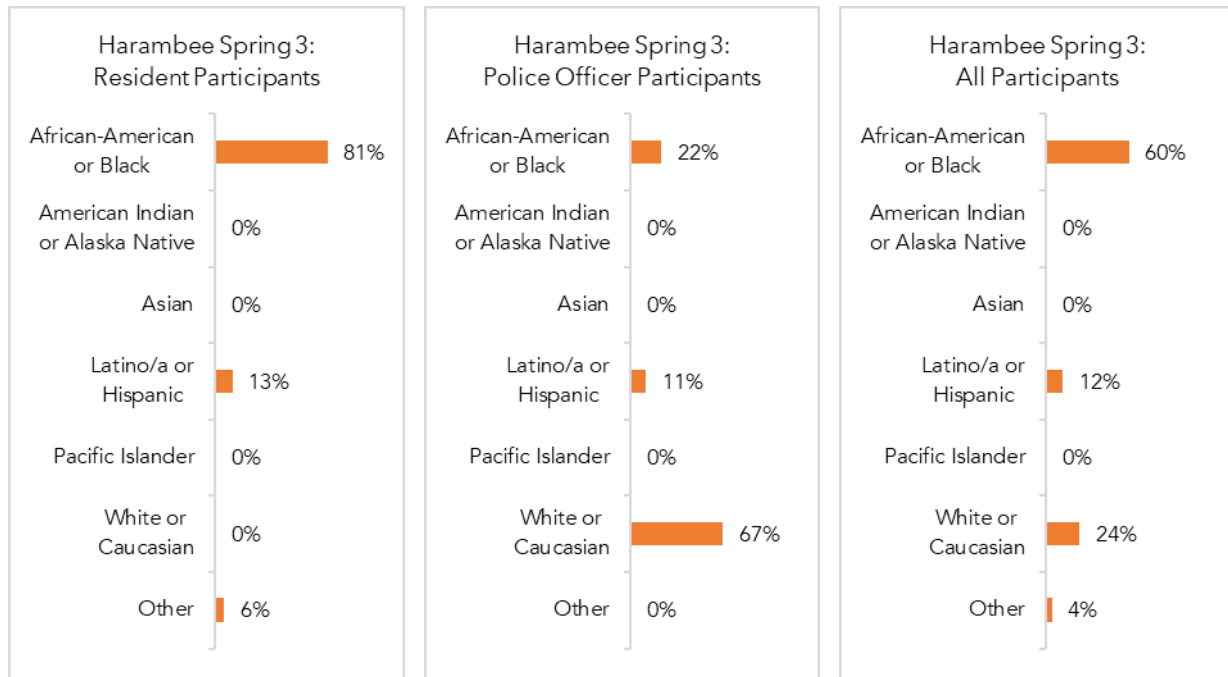
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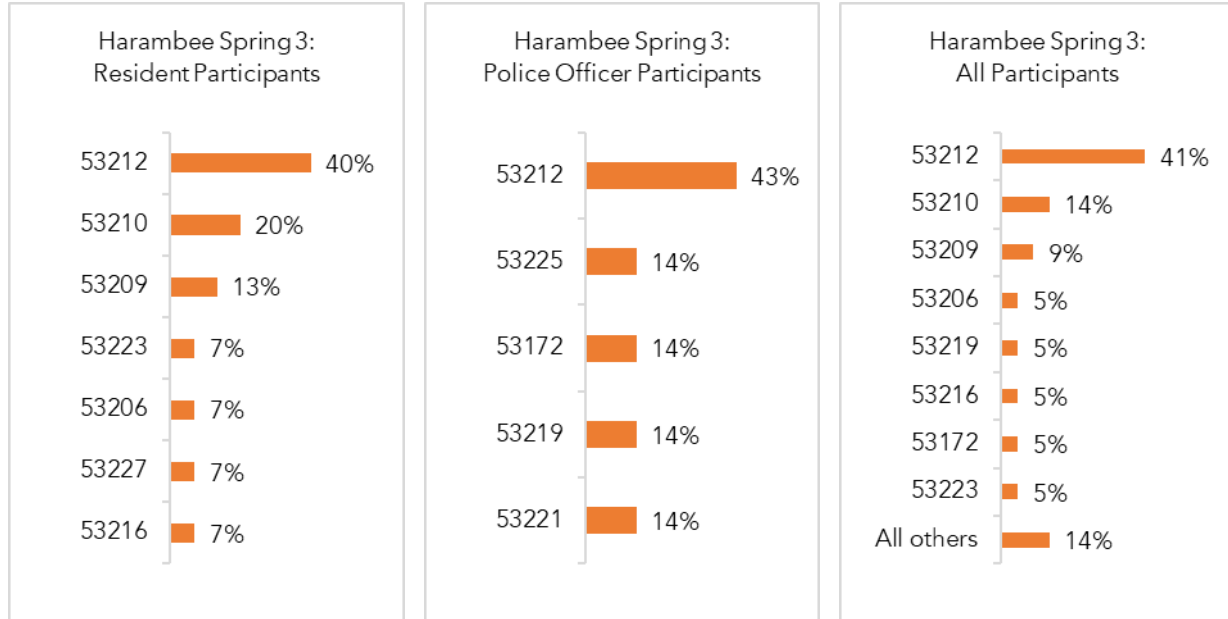
Age Range:



## Race/Ethnicity:



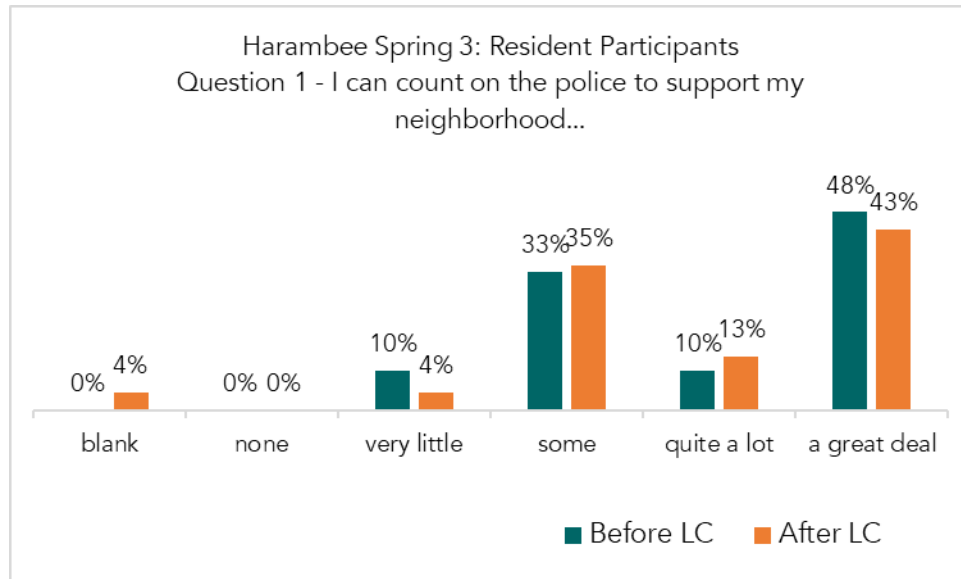
## Zip Code:



## Quantitative Data – Pre/Post Surveys

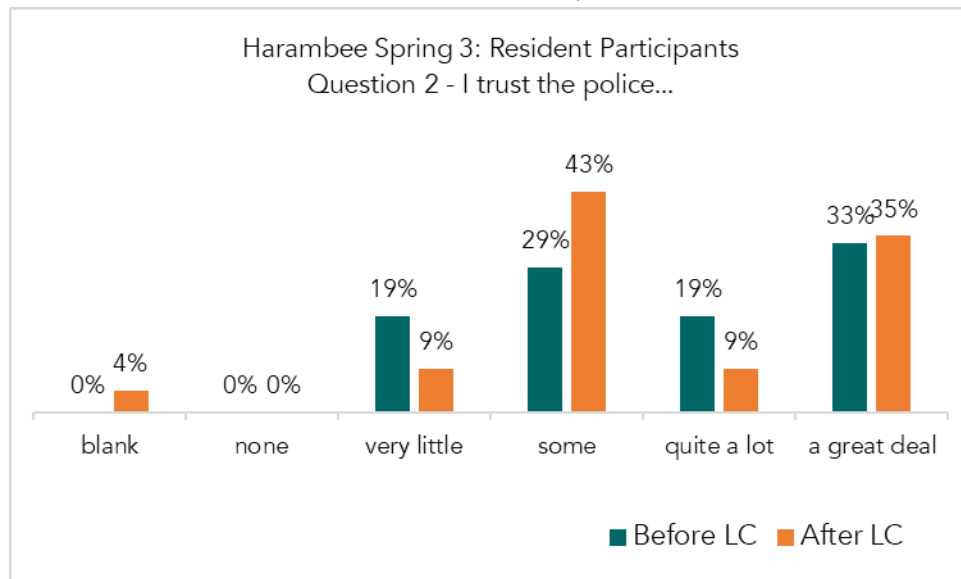
Question 1 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

Note: Question 1 was asked of Resident Participants only.

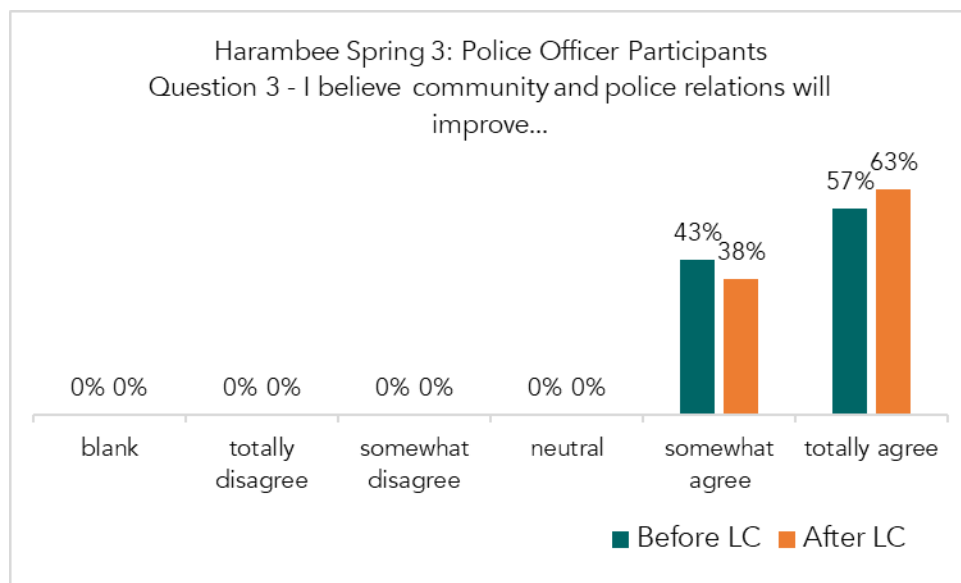
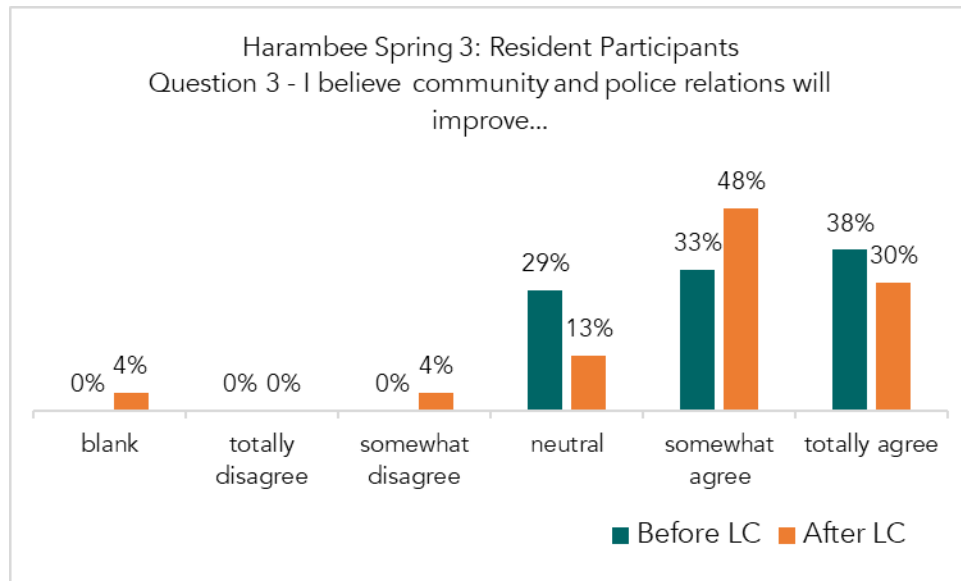


Question 2 – I can count on the police to support my neighborhood...

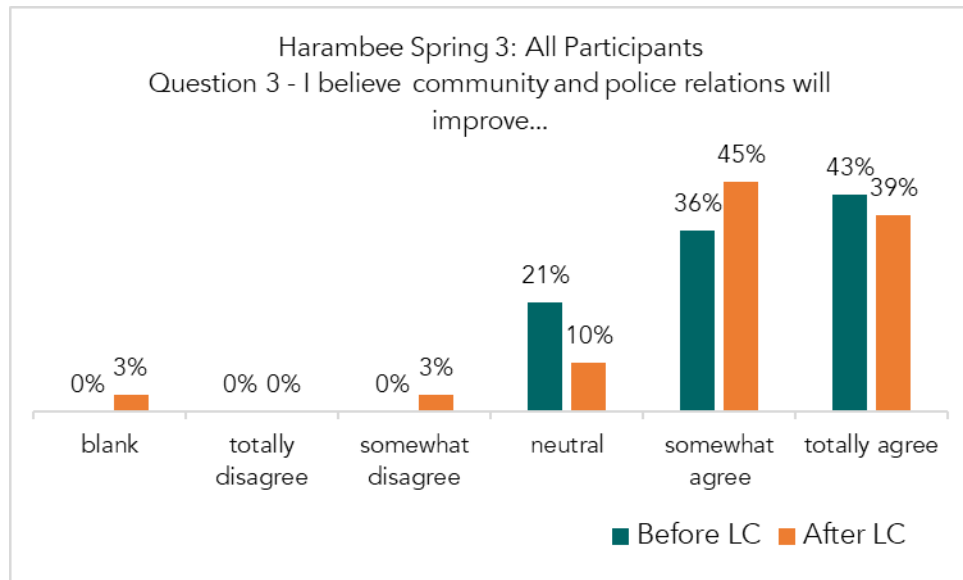
Note: Question 2 was asked of Resident Participants only.



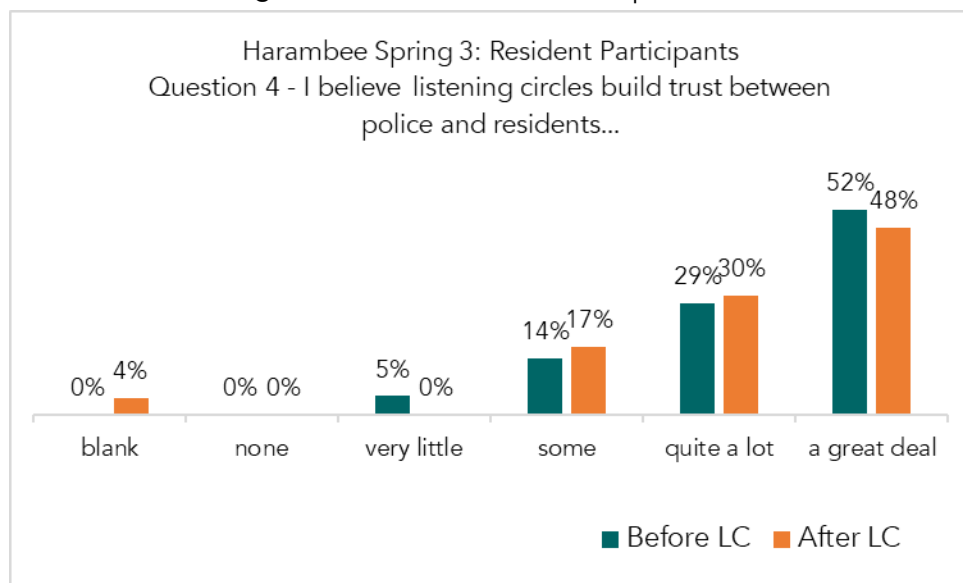
Question 3 – I believe community and police relations will improve...

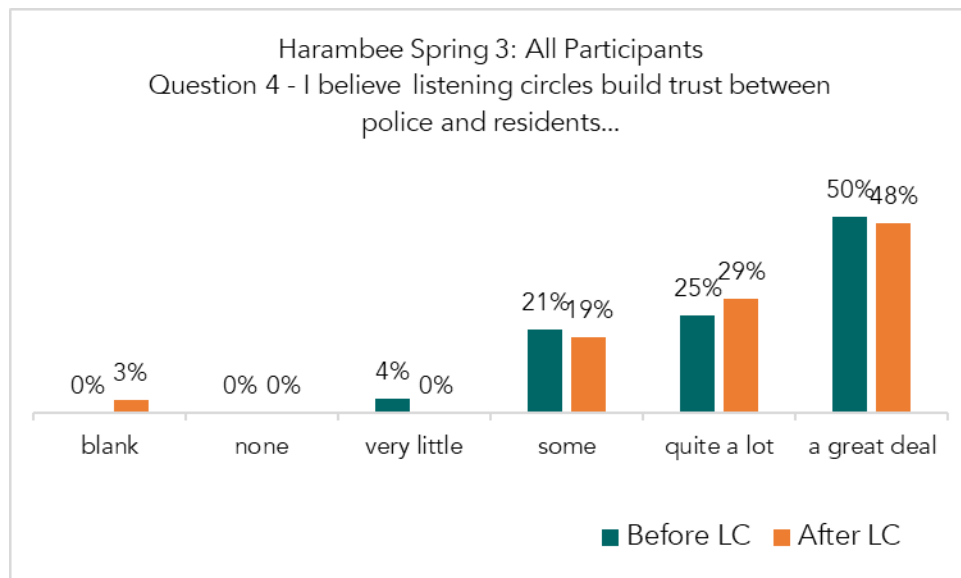
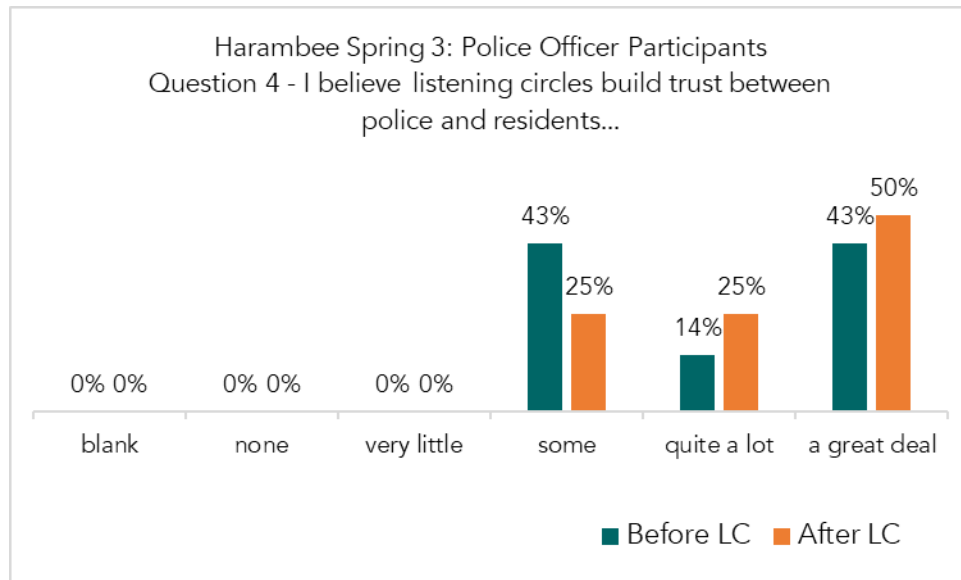






Question 4 – I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents...





### Qualitative Data - Answers to Open-Ended Questions

What was the most satisfying or valuable about this experience? Did you learn anything about the community or police today?

- Hearing the young adults talk about their community.
- That there are youth willing to rebuild relationships with law enforcement.
- Everyone respected each other and everyone was engaging.
- Good ideas for events.
- Interest.
- More youth are trying to be role models than I thought.

- Respect and compassion for each other.
- Officer, "We are here to protect, not attack."
- That I learn about the city.
- They all aren't different cops.
- Expressing.
- That social media can have positive influences if someone step up and post it.
- Social media effects everyone, especially when there's something negative.
- Not all police officers are bad.
- That people go through different things.
- To be nice and they were respectful.
- I learned that they are trying to build trust.
- Listening.
- About the circle.
- Hearing all the different stories from people within the circle.
- Everybody seemed to actually want to better the community but didn't blame anyone specific.
- That everyone had an idea or something that changed the world.
- Most satisfying was knowing the police think like us and have similar views.
- Got some insight into their perspective.
- Blank (x6)

#### **What questions or concerns are you leaving with?**

- How can we get more young people out here?
- The questions regarding social media were not able to be answered by people who don't use social media.
- Better questions or topics.
- None, our group was great.
- Being positive.
- These groups are great, but how do we get more people involved?
- How can we expand this?
- How can I do better to make sure we can make more of these?
- Does this reach back to the other officers?
- N/A (x4)
- None (x10)
- Blank (x6)

#### **What's one important suggestion you have for future dialogues, or steps going forward?**

- Not sure.
- How to get more young people to get more involved with making the community better.
- Issues with the news.
- More info regarding police and citizens engagement.
- Unsure.
- Race relations.

- Learning.
- Family.
- N/A
- Can't wait until next season.
- N/A.
- I'll ask next year.
- Trust between both worlds.
- Keep communicating over food etc.
- How to keep Milwaukee safe.
- Neighbors.
- Community.
- How can the community change?
- What makes family stick together.
- How can we bring neighborhoods and police more together?
- Opportunity.
- What would I say making people start strong?
- Solutions for violence.
- Current events specifically.
- Blank (x8)

## Annex 1 – Listening Circle 1

***Question Round One:** Tell a story of a time you experienced or witnessed a situation escalate in public? What kinds of actions caused the escalation?*

### 1.1. Group Escalation

- Once I had to go answer a call where a person had passed away. Gathering around outside the home were 25-30 people. I could not allow them inside to see the body. As more people were showing up, they began to cuss and kick at the door, and break bottles.
- At my old house, when I used to live in Sherman Park, I found that I couldn't go enjoy the park because of all the people rioting. I didn't understand what that was all about.
- While working with my four-member team at one of the big summer events there were people walking and passing by regularly then I noticed one young lady walked over and reached and grabbed another girl and began fighting with her. While the two girls were fighting more and more people came over and the situation kept escalating out of control
- I was walking around the neighborhood meeting people and I heard this woman from church with a friend of hers in the far distance talking very loudly to some teenage girls and the conversation became heated.
- The young man that was being detained began to get angrier the longer he was detained. The crowd around us grew larger and some began to shout out comments.
- This happened when I was about two or three years on the job. I was sent out to a domestic violence argument, the neighbors were there and everything, and instead of breaking it up they instigated it!
- This was a personal experience that I was in, it was a fight going on me and my guys was into it or whatever, but it ended in the shooting where somebody tried to shoot me and he ended up getting shoot himself, it was a crazy situation that I ended up doing a 12-year bit in prison for.
- There was a school basketball game one time where people arguing over a bad call they were all friends, but it got out of hand they were ready to fight each other.
- Just yesterday, I responded to an auto collision call, the victim (person not at fault) thought the police wouldn't assist them because the other person was white it was a really bad car accident and third parties from the family of the person that got hit kind of automatically thought that the police would take the side of the white person that hit them I feel like it got out of hand for no reason I was just trying to help.
- Three years ago, there was a fight down at Juneteenth. It was some youngsters, like they was [sic] about eighteen or nineteen. There were like forty people standing around with their phones out no one was trying to break it up though and it was crazy because most of them were adults this was like in front of a bar.

- Two years ago, my brother's girlfriend and him [sic] had been fighting all day. Anyway it escalated so bad that she broke all the dishes in my house and called her mom over and they came over and fought my whole family. They pulled my mom's hair out and beat up her boyfriend
- Before the Riots in Sherman Park, I had noticed a week or two before the youth were running around out of control and smoking weed on people's front porches and they seemed all hyped up? I called the police to notify them of my concerns but they did not seem interested? One week later the riots took place...I believe it could've been prevented?
- Kids on Facebook, chatting back and forth on social media...he-said-she-said turned into a senseless killing at the lakefront. I was there when the fourteen-year-old was shot because of Facebook threats.

## 1.2 One-on-One Escalation

- One time, after work, I was hanging out, and saw two guys talking. They were arguing, actually. Apparently one guy owed the other some money. The other guy was telling him he needed that money, but he wasn't going to rob him for it, even though he did have a gun. He pulled the gun to show it, and then proceeded to say that as a matter of fact maybe he should rob him anyway. So, I had to intervene. I reminded the guy with the gun about his daughter. I asked him to think about what would happen to her if he went to jail. Think about some other man raising your daughter. I was able to calm him down and got him a drink. It's about helping people see the context and keep things in perspective with the bigger picture.
- About a month ago inside of a store on the east side I witnessed an argument between two young ladies that continued to escalate for ten minutes. There was a man that tried to come in between to de-escalate the situation, but he was not successful because the child that one of the ladies was carrying had gotten hurt.
- My mom and I were at the laundromat and as we were coming out we saw a lady arguing with another lady who was sitting in a car. The lady inside the car threw a cup of water at the lady standing outside as they continued to argue.
- I was at open gym playing basketball and one guy fouled another guy and they starting [sic] arguing. Security came over and broke it up and put one of the guys out of the gym.
- At school I saw a boy and girl get into a fight because the boy spit water on the girl.
- I was at the park the other day and there was a fight about some basketball shoes. The fight happened because someone came to the park with somebody else's shoes on that were missing meaning that he stole them and tried to pass them off as his.
- I witnessed somebody on basketball court get fouled and there was pushing and shoving then the guy went to his car and got a gun and started shooting.
- We were at an outdoor event at a park and everything was going well. Then all of the sudden a guy went and got his gun and shot his girlfriend dead right in front of us! He

just stood there and no one tried to take the gun away...he thought his girlfriend was making eye contact with one of the band members!

### 1.3 Other Incidents of Escalation

- When I was an officer, I saw many situations that escalated because of someone being disrespectful, whether that was an officer or a resident.
- I was riding my bicycle and I stopped to assist with a traffic stop. The young man that was being detained began to get angrier the longer he was detained. The crowd around us grew larger and some began to shout out comments. After finally getting the handcuffs on the young man and putting he inside vehicle the crowd began to disperse.
- This was a personal experience that I was in. It was a fight going on, me and my guys was into it or whatever, but it ended in the shooting where somebody tried to shoot me and he ended up getting shoot himself. It was a crazy situation that I ended up doing a twelve-year bit in prison for.
- Just yesterday, I responded to an auto collision call, the victim (person not at fault) thought the police wouldn't assist them because the other person was white it was a really bad car accident and third parties from the family of the person that got hit kind of automatically thought that the police would take the side of the white person that hit them I feel like it got out of hand for no reason I was just trying to help.
- There was a conflict one time because a person was jealous because I was friends with someone else and tried to start a fight with them out of that jealousy
- At my age I have seen a lot... a young man was running from someone in our neighborhood. It was somebody after him that pulled out a gun and just shot and killed him in broad daylight this happened in our neighborhood a few years ago and it was one of the most horrible things I've ever saw.
- Kids on Facebook, chatting back and forth on social media...he-said-she-said turned into a senseless killing at the lakefront. I was there when the fourteen-year-old was shot because of Facebook threats.
- Five summers ago, my cousins stole a vehicle which the police tried to stop but a chase began, he kept driving and I jumped out at a turn, the car crashed on Capitol and my cousin split his head in two and died and my nephew died in the hospital later.
- Some youth stole a mini-van for joyriding and a thirteen-year-old girl ended up dead in a crash!

### 1.4 Not Escalation but Violent

- I saw a car crash last week Friday. (But it didn't escalate or de-escalate really, it just occurred as a traumatic event, and people responded to handle it. Maybe that's how more interactions could be understood, giving the benefit of the doubt that maybe these

things just happen sometimes, and it's more important to fix the immediate problem than to find fault?)

- At my age I have seen a lot... a young man was running from someone in our neighborhood. It was somebody after him that pulled out a gun and just shot and killed him in broad daylight this happened in our neighborhood a few years ago and it was one of the most horrible things I've ever saw.
- My eleven-year-old brother and I were walking to the [sic] and I saw someone get shot and it was sad!
- My cousin was out walking and tried to cross a busy street but was hit by not one not two but three cars! And they all drove away...none stopped to check on her
- Me and my grandmother say some guys rob an old lady of her purse at the gas station and she fell down and had to go to the hospital

### 1.5 Participant Attempt to De-Escalate

- Once I had to go answer a call where a person had passed away. Gathering around outside the home were 25-30 people. I could not allow them inside to see the body. As more people were showing up, they began to cuss and kick at the door, and break bottles. Well, I know the question didn't ask about deescalating, but the way I deescalated was to find someone older, respected, who knew everyone there, to help everyone understand.
- One time, after work, I was hanging out, and saw two guys talking. They were arguing, actually. Apparently one guy owed the other some money. The other guy was telling him he needed that money, but he wasn't going to rob him for it, even though he did have a gun. He pulled the gun to show it, and then proceeded to say that as a matter of fact maybe he should rob him anyway. So, I had to intervene. I reminded the guy with the gun about his daughter. I asked him to think about what would happen to her if he went to jail. Think about some other man raising your daughter. I was able to calm him down and got him a drink. It's about helping people see the context and keep things in perspective with the bigger picture.
- Three years ago, there was a fight down at Juneteenth. It was some youngsters, like they was [sic] about eighteen or nineteen. There were like forty people standing around with their phones out no one was trying to break it up though and it was crazy because most of them were adults this was like in front of a bar. Me and my friend broke it up and after everything was good the police rolled up and they didn't want to hear me out at all in fact they just ignored me they looked right past me and they picked people at random to arrest. And the adults there just watched! This was a horrible situation that was first of all escalated for no reason because grown-ups didn't get involved and the police in my opinion didn't do their job properly!
- While working with my four-member team at one of the big summer events there were people walking and passing by regularly then I noticed one young lady walked over and



reached and grabbed another girl and began fighting with her. While the two girls were fighting more and more people came over and the situation kept escalating out of control and my team of officers moved in quickly and began the de-escalation of the situation.

---

**Question Round Two:** *“What can officers and residents do to prevent escalations when they meet in the neighborhood?”*

### **2.1 Increase Police Involvement**

- When stuff happens, the police need to come and come right away instead of taking their sweet time!
- We have to learn to call the police when something dangerous happens instead of just standing around.
- Take them to jail! Call the police and warn them of [the] situation happening.
- Take them to jail! The police need to have more undercover cops to catch people speeding in the neighborhoods putting everybody lives at risk!
- More people should call 911 before it escalates and the police can defuse the situation before it blows up!
- BLOCK WATCH. They are positive and each district has liaison officer to work with communities.” “In the old days we had third shift ride-alongs with the police.
- We should come together and MORE bikes on patrol in the neighborhoods!

### **2.2 Take Initiative to De-Escalate**

- Okay I'm going to just pick up from my story earlier. I think appropriate measures from the start are important first of all adults should have gotten involved during that fight (at Juneteenth) Residents have to recognize their power and it didn't help that they felt disrespected and the officers were not efficient when they just walked right by me and just grab random people that didn't help anything!
- In our neighborhoods when things happen, we can't be afraid to say something we have to be brave enough that when we see things escalating that we get to our kids right away we have to learn how to call for help instead of pressing record all the time on our phones.
- We going to have to work together and stop the violence we have to learn how to call for help when folks are fighting instead of just watching.
- Cell phone recording is a major problem I feel like instead of calling police people are taking out their phones and recording stuff I'm a talker for example and I have been able to deescalate a lot of situations with just words. Me and my partner had a situation not too long ago where everything went south because people wanted to stand around and aggravate and record the situation instead of trying to help people are instigating and saying things like “I wouldn't take that sh-- etcetera” “we're going to record this and put it on Facebook” “police brutality” where we went from talking... to a shouting match.. to

a situation where we had to use physical force! It didn't have to go that way and I don't feel like it would have went that way had things not been spotlighted at the way that it was!

- We have to learn to call the police when something dangerous happens instead of just standing around.

## 2.3 Trust and Respect

- So I passed last round, and I'm eager to contribute to the question this time. When I know something's escalating, typically what happens is that some person or person starts raising their voice. They start yelling. To get their attention, regain control of the situation, and deescalate, I just stay with a low voice, and speak softly. This lets them break out of the mode of screaming, and gets them to listen to me, carefully, and heed my words. It's really just about being respectful and trying to understand where the other person or people are coming from.
- Well, I've seen a lot of things, and it's really about respect and explaining the situation. There's three steps, or parts to this. First, I tell them how it is. Then I'll tell them what's going to happen, what I'm going to do or what I'm asking them to do. Lastly, I explain why that's the case.
- We'd ask that you try to treat every officer as an individual and give each one a fair chance to show their light.
- I agree that it's all about respect. One story I can share was from a few years ago, on Juneteenth Day. I was on my way to work, driving in my car. There was a traffic cone blocking my way to where I needed to go. A police car was right there, so I asked the police officer if he could please move this cone, so I can get to work. Now he could have just said no, I can't do that. But instead he responded with verbal abuse, calling me hateful names for even asking such a thing. I felt such disrespect from that police officer.
- I think being respectful and not rude would and will be helpful.
- Residents have to recognize their power and it didn't help that they felt disrespected and the officers were not efficient when they just walked right by me and just grab random people that didn't help anything!
- From my point of view this ain't going to change right away! The hood can't trust you right away (lookin' at officers) the police is going to have to learn how to be more strategic and less aggressive. We feel oppressed by the officers we have mental and drug abuse in our in our community. Take me for an example I'm an ex-con I am a victim of the predators of my day...the drug pushers and the gangs! A lot of time, folks prejudice me but I am a walking testimony! I feel their respect is key but it's going to be a long road to get to it.
- We need to remember the importance of respect we need to remember treating people as human beings is important. That's the problem with this rift between people.

Sometimes fear gets in the way of respect and I think that's why things are the way they are.

- When we first started biking in some neighborhoods, people were a little apprehensive but then they would meet us in an alley to talk about criminal activities going on, it's about trust.
- There must be more trust...Milwaukee is very segregated but my experience with the police here is that most of them are very cool...I was even stopped a couple of times.
- MORE consideration on both sides! I was acting like a knucklehead and snatched out of the car by officers...common sense and STOP TEACHING OUR KIDS TO HATE THE POLICE!

## 2.4 Communication

- In my view, in any interaction within the community, it should feel like talking to a family member.
- I was walking around a neighborhood in Milwaukee and talking to people in the neighborhood and this couple who were walking as well said I should get to know the police and build a good relationship.
- I think there must be better communication by educating each other (police and residents) I come to events like this because the education of things changes the whole attitude and prevents clashes and wrong understanding.
- We have to learn to communicate with each other and talk to each other when you sit down and talk to people you can see where the we have a uniform on or not that we have more in common then we don't have in common.
- When we first started biking in some neighborhoods, people were a little apprehensive but then they would meet us in an alley to talk about criminal activities going on, it's about trust.
- Meetings like this are good...listening circles to break down barriers. People can now call anonymous phone number and ask for officers not to come to their house.
- MORE consideration on both sides! I was acting like a knucklehead and snatched out of the car by officers...common sense and STOP TEACHING OUR KIDS TO HATE THE POLICE!
- I think Block Parties are a good way of coming together so everyone can see their kindness and generosity. This would help us get to know one another.
- We need to work together like brothers and sisters, police and neighbors have to develop real, real relationships before things escalate and not after.
- We going to have to work together and stop the violence we have to learn how to call for help when folks are fighting instead of just watching.

## 2.5 Other Suggestions

- MPD does a lot of de-escalation trainings. We spend a lot of time learning and practicing how to remain calm and handle various situations. We learn to listen in order to grab onto something, to learn something, to help the conversation.
- We start every day off with roll call. Often, we watch videos of officers doing things that they shouldn't be doing. We learn from these mistakes.
- Another example of cultural differences, and coming together in understanding, from my life is when I used to live nearby a thriving Jewish community. Every year they seemed to be doing some kind of renovation or remodeling, and I never understood why it was like this again every year. Then I asked one day, and a neighbor explained to me that it was just part of their religious observance.
- "Say Hello" I think an appropriate greeting is always good.
- I think either police or resident should be rude to each other.
- I was walking around a neighborhood in Milwaukee and talking to people in the neighborhood and this couple who were walking as well said I should get to know the police and build a good relationship.
- I think it would be good to remain calm and do what is asked. (Try not to push any buttons).
- I think staying calm, following directions and cooperating with the police will be helpful and not adding to the problem.
- I had an incident with bi-polar uncle and felt the police should be better prepared to respond to situations with people on, off medication!

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**Connected Conversation:** *"Discuss possible action steps you (and other residents/officers) can take immediately or soon after a situation has occurred. Suggest some ways that de-escalation can begin."*

## 3.1 More Communication

- I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other.
- I think becoming more informed through community conversations.
- I think by building trust with each other.
- I thought the STOP Program that was once connected with MPS was a good tool for the students. It was a six week program of students talking it over but the program ended for several reasons.
- MPD has limited staffing at this time so we can't do a lot of social and recreational things like we use to.
- I believe you have to set a standard of conduct in the schools, neighborhoods, etc.
- I think the parents should volunteer at the schools to help with the children.
- I have a positive relationship with both because I introduce myself to the people in my community and police officers and I tell them thank you.

- I would suggest saying "Hello, how are you"?
- I would suggest letting them know you are there for them.
- "There's a lot of fear out here because of the code and that's why people don't try to help."
- I would help but I don't know what they might do because I tried to help.

### 3.2 Addressing Issues of Bias

- I want to get more inside around that story that you told earlier about the accident because I've been in that situation where that happened myself where police come on the scene, and yeah there's obvious racial bias based on how I look and how the other person looked, and I feel like they jumped right to the other person's side, and it's maddening because we're citizens too!
- Officer- Determining fault is not always easy. In fact, it's one of the tougher jobs that we have sometimes. We show up on the scene, we don't know anything about anything, and yeah I would be less than honest if I didn't say their personal biases come into play.
- Yes we do come in to bad situations with mistrust, and it works the other way too. I can't tell you how many houses I have been to where folks just wouldn't cooperate, and I felt like it was because I was white, and they didn't feel like I understood them. Sometimes when we get there to wall is already up!
- I see how you can say that because you look like an officer that I had to file a complaint against. You are not her obviously (laughing), but there are too many criminal officers out here, and officers with mental health issues that have killed others and themselves because everybody can't handle the job. I think that they need to be more heavy-handed on criminal officers. I think that sometimes there is excessive policing in our neighborhoods like for example, Juneteenth they come down with the armored vehicles intimidating people one time they ran some people over.
- It didn't happen that way! I can tell you I have worked Juneteenth many times, and I was there when that situation broke out where the guy got hit by the police vehicle. People were really acting unruly and it was very hard to control.

### Other comments

- What's it like being in the police?
- Oh, it has its ups and downs like any other line of work. Some days I just want to yell and scream. But other days feel great when I get to do my job well and help people.
- And how's your life?
- I'm going to become a millionaire.
- Well, you've got to stay in school to become a millionaire!
- The teachers annoy me.
- The teachers annoy you? What do you think you do to them?

- I was the officer that the young man kept running from while I was trying to put cuffs on. More squads came and they watched out for me as the crowd grew.
- Social Media does not help the situation
- I feel like with the ability to text and being on the phones all the time are hindering us from having real conversations.
- MPD has limited staffing at this time so we can't do a lot of social and recreational things like we use to.
- I have a positive relationship with both because I introduce myself to the people in my community and police officers and I tell them thank you.

### 3.3 Parting Words

- ALL OFFICERS ARE NOT RACISTS! I was told wrong! Every officer is not bad!
- The police should carry more BUCKS cards with them to pass out.
- To ALL the young people... Hold your head up...You are the Future...Take the Helm!
- Gangsta Rap is causing a lotta gang banging that is going on!
- I appreciate my experience to heal. I feel we were all open & honest. Very Educational.
- I got to speak to young people. I feel it was a good night. I will definitely come back.
- Beneficial for the community. I'm glad that I came...something new!
- Relaxed
- Hopeful
- Open
- Good, Relaxed
- Informed
- Relaxed
- I feel like I want to know more.
- I feel a sign of hope
- This is a great opportunity, because how often do young people get the occasion to say their piece in a public space, and adults just listen to whatever they have to say? Don't pass up your chance to speak.
- It was so nice to meet and talk with you all.
- I hope we meet again someday.
- If people just know how to treat each other right... That'll be the key. I've been here since 1968. I've got knits and ties all over the place.
- After this whole experience, I learned that everything happens for a reason. I was thinking about it and it's not really your guys' fault that my family member was murdered. Maybe not all crimes can be solved, or at least not right away. I should try to treat people as individuals and give everyone their fair chance.

## Annex 2 – Listening Circle 2

**Question Round One:** *“Talk about a friendship in your life that means a lot to you. What's something that you enjoy doing together?”*

### 1.1 Family as friends

- My grandma. She lives in Georgia. We have long telephone conversations that I really enjoy a lot. She has a lot of wisdom to share with me.
- My homie is like my brother. We like to play hoops.
- The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door and we did that on purpose. We talk every day and laugh and cry together. We support each other, and we share meals. She's a better cook! She always has plenty of food. When my sister comes over, she says that I never cook enough. She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality. We can get angry with each other and then we come back together. Friendship means that you can say things to each other that you can't with everybody. Trust is important. I've had relationships without trust and it made me withdraw. I've had people who I thought were my best friend and they were not, because of trust. As you get older you don't need a lot. With my sister I don't like to shop so we shop together, and I hate exercise, but we do go to the gym together. Sometimes we go out to dinner.
- I enjoy playing basketball. I enjoy playing video games with my cousins. I enjoy going to play with my cousins. When I spend time with my cousins it makes me feel good.
- I like spending time with my family because they show that they care about me. I like to hang around them. We liked going to the park. I like talking to them and being around them. Yeah, we just like talking and going to the park.
- Friendships that mean a lot to me are my family and my friend Denisha. I enjoyed being around them because there's less drama. We go on outings, take the kids to the park. I like the support and the company. Even when we get mad we're still there for each other. I like hanging out the grownups and going out. We go out to eat and to the bar. We're always sitting around playing cards at the park and barbecuing which now that it's cold I will be in the house more.
- I enjoy the same as what the others have said. I really enjoy family holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of the aunties will rotate cooking food, the nieces and nephews will bring side dishes. We like to spend time together have fellowship with each other and spend time catching up. Sometimes we will be watching basketball or relaxing and talking. Some might be in the other room listening to music. It's very happy and comfortable to be around family. Sometimes I'll bring friends over and they say “Man I like this. These are good times”. It's important to be around family. Other close

relationships that mean a lot to me include some people I can talk to about my day about work what is going on and they're a safe person to talk to. These are people I like to go to the Bucks games with or the Brewers games. It's fun, stress free and relaxing. Some of those same friends I also go fishing and hunting with. It's peaceful and I enjoyed being with somebody that I can trust and depend on. A friendship is someone who likes you and that is important. We need someone in our life that we can talk to or even text. Someone who can tell when you are down and even brighten your day just by sending a text. Sometimes you can feel it if you really know that person. It's important and it means a lot to me, friendship. Having family and a few friends, we need that to get us through. Everyone has a bad day, so we need someone who we can depend on thick or thin.

- I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home we can tell if the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family. I really love hiking outdoors and she loves to fish and hike with me. It's really nice to have that person, starting as friends and then turn into family. I also have friends, guys from the military unit, that are important to me. My family is close but to go away to training and have that group there, it's a very special bond. It was important for me to have good relationships when I was the military and, in the police, the people that I work with.
- I have a close friendship with my cousin. We do everything with each other. I was homeless, and we got close. We like to play basketball and football together.
- My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs, but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.
- I enjoy my friendship with my nephew.
- I like hanging out with my mother and going around with her and seeing so many beautiful things.
- I am friends with my cousin. We like to jump off the garage.
- I have a friend that moved to California. We get together whenever we can and meet for a glass of wine. My husband is my friend too. Sometimes he will have dinner ready. I can talk to him about anything.
- I play games with my cousin. We sit out and play games, play basketball.
- My sister. I consider her my friend. She lives in Minneapolis. We like to hang out and do anything. She does all the cooking and I just watch her make the magic. We were roommates together in college, too. We can talk about anything. We help each other see what can't be seen.



## 1.2 Trusted Confidants

- The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door and we did that on purpose. We talk every day and laugh and cry together. We support each other, and we share meals. She's a better cook! She always has plenty of food. When my sister comes over, she says that I never cook enough. She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality. We can get angry with each other and then we come back together. Friendship means that you can say things to each other that you can't with everybody. Trust is important. I've had relationships without trust and it made me withdraw. I've had people who I thought were my best friend and they were not, because of trust. As you get older you don't need a lot. With my sister I don't like to shop so we shop together, and I hate exercise, but we do go to the gym together. Sometimes we go out to dinner.
- I enjoy the same as what the others have said. I really enjoy family holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of the aunties will rotate cooking food, the nieces and nephews will bring side dishes. We like to spend time together have fellowship with each other and spend time catching up. Sometimes we will be watching basketball or relaxing and talking. Some might be in the other room listening to music. It's very happy and comfortable to be around family. Sometimes I'll bring friends over and they say "Man I like this. These are good times". It's important to be around family. Other close relationships that mean a lot to me include some people I can talk to about my day about work what is going on and they're a safe person to talk to. These are people I like to go to the Bucks games with or the Brewers games. It's fun, stress free and relaxing. Some of those same friends I also go fishing and hunting with. It's peaceful and I enjoyed being with somebody that I can trust and depend on. A friendship is someone who likes you and that is important. We need someone in our life that we can talk to or even text. Someone who can tell when you are down and even brighten your day just by sending a text. Sometimes you can feel it if you really know that person. It's important and it means a lot to me, friendship. Having family and a few friends, we need that to get us through. Everyone has a bad day, so we need someone who we can depend on thick or thin.
- I met my friend at my last job. We share core values, so I trust her opinions. I can vent to her when something is bothering me, and she will hear me out. When something good is happening, she cheers me on. I can trust that she will keep my confidence.
- My husband is my friend too. Sometimes he will have dinner ready. I can talk to him about anything.
- I have a few friends. Two of them, I have been friends with for 14 years - half of my life. We have been through so much together. I can tell her anything and she is non-judgmental. What do we talk about? Anything. We do everything together.

- My sister. I consider her my friend. She lives in Minneapolis. We like to hang out and do anything. She does all the cooking and I just watch her make the magic. We were roommates together in college, too. We can talk about anything. We help each other see what can't be seen.

### 1.3 Long-Time Friends

- I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home, we can tell if the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family. I really love hiking outdoors and she loves to fish and hike with me. It's really nice to have that person, starting as friends and then turn into family. I also have friends, guys from the military unit, that are important to me. My family is close but to go away to training and have that group there, it's a very special bond. It was important for me to have good relationships when I was the military and, in the police, the people that I work with.
- I have a friend at school. We were always close. I like to learn with him, play with him and have a good time.
- I have a friend I grew-up with. I lived with him. We do everything together, but he didn't come tonight.
- My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs, but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.
- Me and my best friend have been together all our lives. We like to travel together out of town and out of the country. My favorite places so far were Mexico and Jamaica. She wants to go to Ghana next.
- My best friend of 16 years is deployed overseas right now but I enjoy doing facetime with him and my daughter because that's her God Father.
- I have a group of women friends. We have known each other for a long time - we've been friends since the 60's. I call them my Jazz ladies. We like to go out and listen to Jazz music together.
- I have a few friends. Two of them, I have been friends with for 14 years - half of my life. We have been through so much together. I can tell her anything and she is non-judgmental. What do we talk about? Anything. We do everything together.

### 1.4 Shared Common Interests

#### 1.4.1 Sports and Exercise

- My homie is like my brother. We like to play hoops.
- The friendship that means a lot to me is my older sister. She came here tonight. We do everything together. She lives next door and we did that on purpose. We talk every day

and laugh and cry together. We support each other, and we share meals. She's a better cook! She always has plenty of food. When my sister comes over she says that I never cook enough. She is my best friend, especially when we lost many family members within a few years. We knew we needed each other at a young age, to lean on each other. It's important to have that support. It is important to have someone that you can trust and have confidentiality. We can get angry with each other and then we come back together. Friendship means that you can say things to each other that you can't with everybody. Trust is important. I've had relationships without trust and it made me withdraw. I've had people who I thought were my best friend and they were not, because of trust. As you get older you don't need a lot. With my sister I don't like to shop so we shop together, and I hate exercise but we do go to the gym together. Sometimes we go out to dinner.

- I enjoy playing basketball. I enjoy playing video games with my cousins. I enjoy going to play with my cousins. When I spend time with my cousins it makes me feel good.
- I have a close friendship with my cousin. We do everything with each other. I was homeless and we got close. We like to play basketball and football together.
- I enjoy my friendship with my nephew. I enjoy playing basketball with him, he's a lot of fun.
- I enjoy the seniors at the fitness gyms doing exercises and taking care of themselves.
- I enjoy walking with my friends at the lake front.
- We play kickball together with my friends.
- We sit out and play games, play basketball.

#### 1.4.2 Arts and Culture

- Carol, my friend. She is like a Godmother to me. A Wa'a (Ojibwe) She helps me on my path. We enjoy Native American traditional functions...Pow Wow's, community-supporting activities.
- J.T. My best friend. He came from Kentucky. We do theatre together. We were in First Stage together. I've always been here for him since he got here. We hang out, talk about girls.
- My best friend is my wife. We have been married for 17 years and were together for 20. We have 2 kids. There are ups and downs but we have a really good relationship. When I'm getting off-track or I have something on my mind she will sit me down and talk to me. We like to go to comedy shows and out to eat together.
- I have a group of women friends. We have known each other for a long time - we've been friends since the 60's. I call them my Jazz ladies. We like to go out and listen to Jazz music together.

#### 1.4.3 Travel

- I'd say a friendship that is really important to me as my fiancé. We have been friends since high school and have had a strong bond for nine years. When we get home we can tell if

the other one has had a bad day and we try to fix it. We help each other. We both love to travel and have been to Arizona, Atlanta, and to Ohio to visit family. I really love hiking outdoors and she loves to fish and hike with me. It's really nice to have that person, starting as friends and then turn into family. I also have friends, guys from the military unit, that are important to me. My family is close but to go away to training and have that group there, it's a very special bond. It was important for me to have good relationships when I was the military, and in the police, the people that I work with.

- Me and my best friend have been together all our lives. We like to travel together out of town and out of the country. My favorite places so far were Mexico and Jamaica. She wants to go to Ghana next.

#### Other

- My best friend, Jada. We enjoy face time together, hanging out. We go to the library together.
- I have a friend at school. We were always close. I like to learn with him, play with him and have a good time.
- I have a friend I grew-up with. I lived with him. We do everything together but he didn't come tonight.
- Me and my friend were enemies at first. We grew-up, matured and now things are much better. We can talk through issues and she appreciates my flaws. I also have another best friend – I am friends with myself.
- My best friend and I like doing Hotel Parties where we get to use the hot tubs and the swimming pools.
- Play together

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#### Question Round Two: "What does a real friendship look like to you?"

##### 2.1 Trust

- Trust. The person always has your back. We have similar interests and probably come from the same background. Or maybe different.
- Trust. You have spent time with them and have memories together. Someone you can count on, that is reliable.
- Trust. Having trust between you let's it be a relationship. You have the same interests, but not necessarily all of them.
- A real friendship is somebody I can trust. Someone I like. It is somebody that I like to spend time with. It's like when I was craving something sweet to eat and my mom baked a cake. It's about hanging out with friends and having a good time, laughing and joking. And no one is getting mad. Friendship is about bringing up memories and sharing and

joking. It's a good time. Friendship is also sharing time with their families. The kids become friends and grow up together. It involves a lot of trust and loving one another. It's also about understanding each other. And you know when to stop joking and not to cross the line. Sometimes people cross the line and that's not friendship.

- Well I'm really glad I went towards the end so I can steal some ideas from others. A real friend is somebody who has the same interests. It's also somebody who listens as well as talks. They are trustworthy and not judgmental. They accept you for who you are. A friend is positive, has a positive influence. When you talk to them you feel better versus a person who makes you feel worse. You don't need them. They're not someone who brags or gossips. I hate gossip, unless it's really juicy. A friend is there for you no matter what and is there for your interest. They are someone that you are sure they care about you and love you. You know that and you don't have to guess. They're not overly sensitive or easily bruised. They don't have a chip on their shoulder. I don't have time for that
- It is somebody that you share with and you invite them over to your house. You let them go places with you. You do stuff with them. And they don't talk about you behind your back. They are someone who looks up to you and makes sure that no one does anything to you
- A real friend is someone you can trust and they trust you. They support you and they are there for you. You can trust the person. And it is about spending time with somebody
- A friend will love you unconditionally. They will speak positivity into you. Friendship is loyalty, unity, honesty, trust and growing together
- Friendship is being honest, helpful and cheerful
- A real friend is someone you can trust with your thoughts and secrets and not have them go behind your back and tell your business.
- A real friend always tells the truth.
- I consider a friend someone who you can trust and someone who is not judge-y. Because if someone judges you, you won't be able to be open and honest.
- Someone who is loyal.
- Someone that you can trust, and you can relate to.
- Friends that are happy to see each other. They really see each other for who they are. No matter what, we all call each other. We can confide the most personal things and go to each other for advice. There will be no judgement. We are casual when we are together. Personalities are alike.

## 2.2 Helpful and Reliable

- Trust. You have spent time with them and have memories together. Someone you can count on, that is reliable.
- When they are there for you when you need them most. They don't let you down.
- A real friendship is someone who is always there. It is someone who won't turn their back on you. A real friendship is someone you can count on. A real friendship is someone that

you can trust. A real friendship of someone you enjoy spending time with. It is someone to talk to you when you're going through tough times and you don't have to worry about them telling others. A real friendship as someone who calls you up, out of the blue, just to check in on you.

- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on
- I real friend listens to you and helps you when you are in need. They like who you are and don't try to change you.
- Friends have your back through whatever. It is someone you can call when you need them.
- Pretty much the same as others have said: Someone you can call when you are going through stuff. Someone who will step-in and help re-direct you
- A real friend is sort of like your conscience, they will always be there. A real friend is the kind that will help you move even though they would rather be doing something else.
- Someone that you both have anything to give to each other. Makes you feel good to say something nice to each other.
- A person who is emotionally reliable. They can have a bad day and it's ok. You will find friends that will last you a lifetime. After not having seen each other in a while, you can go back and pick it up. People that I have known since grade school.

### 2.3 Good Communication

- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on
- I real friend listens to you and helps you when you are in need. They like who you are and don't try to change you.
- A real friend is playful and always willing to communicate.

- A real friendship never grows old. I have friends that I grew up with and we are still in communication with one another.
- A real friend accepts you for who you are and each of you are able to give constructive feedback.

## 2.4 Non-Judgmental and Understanding

- All the others made good points. Also, they are non-judgmental and take me where I am at the moment. You spend time with the person.
- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on.
- Well I'm really glad I went towards the end, so I can steal some ideas from others. A real friend is somebody who has the same interests. It's also somebody who listens as well as talks. They are trustworthy and not judgmental. They accept you for who you are. A friend is positive, has a positive influence. When you talk to them you feel better versus a person who makes you feel worse. You don't need them. They're not someone who brags or gossips. I hate gossip, unless it's really juicy. A friend is there for you no matter what and is there for your interest. They are someone that you are sure they care about you and love you. You know that, and you don't have to guess. They're not overly sensitive or easily bruised. They don't have a chip on their shoulder. I don't have time for that.
- A friend does not stand in judgement. They listen to understand. They will not necessarily agree but they will understand. A friend will be consistent, stay around and be there. You are not always in battle because you have the same core values.
- I consider a friend someone who you can trust and someone who is not judge-y. Because if someone judges you, you won't be able to be open and honest.
- Friends that are happy to see each other. They really see each other for who they are. No matter what, we all call each other. We can confide the most personal things and go to each other for advice. There will be no judgement. We are casual when we are together. Personalities are alike.
- A real friendship is somebody I can trust. Someone I like. It is somebody that I like to spend time with. It's like when I was craving something sweet to eat and my mom baked a cake. It's about hanging out with friends and having a good time, laughing and joking. And no one is getting mad. Friendship is about bringing up memories and sharing and joking. It's a good time. Friendship is also sharing time with their families. The kids

become friends and grow up together. It involves a lot of trust and loving one another. It's also about understanding each other. And you know when to stop joking and not to cross the line. Sometimes people cross the line and that's not friendship.

- A real friendship is with somebody who gives back to the relationship. It's about friends who equally care about you. It is somebody who won't talk behind your back or with disrespect. In a friendship you might have an argument and take a day and then come back. It's with people that you have the same interests. Someone you like to joke around with and push each other's buttons in a friendly way. And in friendship you can communicate with each other. A friend will communicate with you if you're going through a rough patch and they will be there to help you. It is not someone who's going to judge you. If you are going through a rough patch they will be understanding and help find a solution to what's going on
- A friend does not stand in judgement. They listen to understand. They will not necessarily agree but they will understand. A friend will be consistent, stay around and be there. You are not always in battle because you have the same core values.

#### Other

- A friend will love you unconditionally. They will speak positivity into you
- Basically, what she said: Someone who goes out of their way to make sure you're okay
- Someone that you both have anything to give to each other. Makes you feel good to say something nice to each other.
- A person who is emotionally reliable. They can have a bad day and it's ok. You will find friends that will last you a lifetime. After not having seen each other in a while, you can go back and pick it up. People that I have known since grade school.

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one way that officers and residents can build stronger relationships?"*

#### 3.1 More Communication

- More of these conversations.
- More outreach to young people to get them involved.
- There needs to be more interaction, so we can get to know each other.
- More events with police and community.
- More basketball with cops.
- These circles need more advertising. I learned about this from Facebook.
- Police don't come to the schools to just say hi. They only come for incidents. They should come to just say hi.
- By having listening circles. These are good to have in the community and to have the officers in the community. We are human too. Sometimes people see the uniforms on and they look at us differently. We have families like parents and kids. We care. We are



all human. We are good at listening and these circles help. People may not feel comfortable around police and this is a good way to bridge that gap.

- It helps to sit and break bread with officers in the community. I don't know what else I can ask officers to do—come to my job or school? I think it would help me see officers as helpers rather than the problem.
- I think it all goes back to communication. I want people to have an opportunity to say what happened to their family, so I can understand why people don't like police. That would give me a chance to try and explain what might have happened from my viewpoint.
- After Dontre Hamilton police did a lot of activities to get to know people. There was a lot of outreach and one-on-one discussions in a larger setting. I think that needs to start happening again.
- I think we should have more dialogue in the community and with each other.
- I think becoming more informed through community conversations.
- I think we should do more talking and breaking bread together.
- I think there should be more communication between us and the officers because they are human beings just like us.
- I agreed with the comment on communication and not yelling on both ends.
- I'd like to play basketball with the police
- We need to take the time to learn about people. To get a different perspective.
- It will help us be a better community when we talk to teach other.

### 3.2 "We're all human."

- Not all police are bad. We work a 9-5, we have families and kids, I don't want to shoot anybody.
- We are not superheroes. We are human. I grew-up in the same community and I made some of the same mistakes. I got through my pain and my journey.
- I think there should be more communication between us and the officers because they are human beings just like us.
- We are all people, just like everyone else.
- We all have friends and a family and kids.
- We keep saying "those people" when people don't get to know each other. We are all human.
- We are all onions and when we peel each back each layer, you are more than what you wear. We all believe what we see.

### Other

- It has to work both ways.
- Maybe a youth representative of the police to talk to other youth. I'm more likely to listen to someone my own age.

- The Christmas “Shot with a Cop” is a good thing.
- Not for all, the police has a Facebook page it’ll show new graduates. It’ll also show information on someone who needs to be caught for a crime. That is a big thing I have noticed in the district. And I understand. Neighbors are afraid to call the police. I have not had to have that experience [being afraid of neighbors]. Like if you see drug deals in your neighborhood. You can call and say to the dispatcher ‘don’t come to my house’ and they won’t. The people won’t know a neighbor called the police. We can just say we drove by and stopped. Another big thing, not everything you see on TV we do. A lot of that they make up. I don’t get that. Sometimes when we go to crimes and people say why don’t you do this, this and this! We can’t do those things. It is hard. We are trained on very specific things. We don’t have drones that can fly in.
- I just had a problem this last week and I got mad. I went to the station on 46th and North, and they said I had to go to Sojourner Truth house. I went there and they said I had to go to the court. I went there and said I have a woman following me. Then they told me to go to the fifth district police. The police there made me so mad. I cussed him out and then left the building when they said they can’t help me! But I did file a report.
  - We are doing the best we can. Sometimes victims are screaming at us and it is hard to help. Sometimes we go to a call and people are bouncing off the walls with anger and we tell them to calm down. Then they tell us to leave. Like if we have to go to an event where someone is shot and we are swarmed by the family. We often cannot share information. I have not had to go through that situation myself [family member being shot]. The detectives are the ones that can talk to people and answer questions.
  - What were you trying to get?
  - A restraining order. I maced her.
  - This is what you need to do...
  - But I am at my kids school until 5:20 and the court is closed. I have the pink slip.
  - Oh you have the pink slip
  - Try to go in when your kids don’t have school, like Monday.
  - Would one of your family member be able to watch the kids?
  - I can take them
  - [Facilitator intervened and suggested they meet outside the circle for specific advice or police reporting procedure.]
- How does it feel to work in a dangerous field—especially like in Milwaukee?
  - I grew up here so I know what to expect. I get a call and I have to go in. I don’t think about the danger.
  - I don’t think about the danger either. Who else is going to do this job? Sometimes after-the-fact when I’m safe I think, Oh My God...I can’t believe that happened!

- Do you like your job?
  - Overall I like it but not always. Coming to events like this is the good part. We don't get calls saying come and see the "A" I got in school. We are usually there at a bad time or the worse time in someone's life. It's saddening...
- How many high speed chases have you been in?
  - I have been in about 20. About 50% get away.
  - I don't do many. Some got away. I was never the initial car. I sometimes stop for safety.
- What prompted your question?
  - It happens all the time going up Locust.
- How does that make you feel? Why are you laughing?
  - I just assume it makes you pretty mad when people get away.
  - I don't feel mad or pissed. I feel bad. Anyone could be on the street and get hurt.
- I find social media is so negative. I'd like to see more stories presented about the positives of police, so people can see that we're human.
- I need to see more positivity. I don't like watching the news because it's negative and always talking about killings, beatings...So I go to social media but I have to figure out what's true and what's not.
- It's not just that you guys have to work at it, we do too.
  - Very well put.
  - I never met any cool police officers.
  - You mean until today?
  - Yeah...I have an uncle who is a sheriff and I don't even like to hang out with him.
- I think people do a job because they want to see positives in the community. It's just like with some rappers who just want to shine a light on a problem with their words – just like Martin Luther King. They are helping in the best way they know how.
- What can I call you for? In Glendale I can call the police if I get locked out of my car, if I need help changing my tire, etc.
- They are probably not as busy as the Milwaukee police.
- Actions speak louder than words. If I see officers doing good, I will believe they are good.
- What do you want the community to do to have a better view of you?
- After Dontre Hamilton police did a lot of activities to get to know people. There was a lot of outreach and one-on-one discussions in a larger setting. I think that needs to start happening again.
- What myths about police do you want cleared up?
- Not all police are bad. We work a 9-5, we have families and kids, I don't want to shoot anybody.

- In the black community I want to see us do better. How do you feel if you see someone who is deliberately making you look bad?
- Don't judge me by what someone else is doing. If someone in school is doing something wrong does that mean I should blame you?
- When we can't say something publicly, we still address the issue internally in the way we can.
- I think by building trust with each other.
- I believe both officers and residents have to be aware of their tone when speaking to one another.
- I think we should have more officers that walk or ride bikes to make the neighborhoods safer.
- I was triggered by the suggestion of more police walking or riding bikes to make neighborhoods safer.
- There was a young lady that I was trying to arrest at the high school and she was so upset, yelling, pushing, fighting. I tried to talk with her and asked her "why are you upset?" By talking to her, I got her to calm down and get into the back of the squad car. She was mad that she was being arrested in front of her friends. She felt she was being disrespected. Just by talking to her and asking her was wrong and listening to her, she eventually calmed down.
- What the media can do to you to blow out the human in each other
- My brother has mental problems. One time he got out of control and the police were called. They were able to take of him. He was jacked up on whiskey and they were able to take him to detox.
- It was nice to talk to everybody.

### Parting Words

- I enjoyed listening to the young people giving their feedback to the group.
- Hopeful
- I feel pretty good about the conversation.
- Great
- Great
- I like that I got some answers.
- Starting to heal
- More positive
- Good
- I feel good
- This was good.
- It's good for us to do these kinds of things .
- I'm glad I did this

- Keep up the work officers and community. Even if only one or two show up, you have the best interest.
- Just be human. Just like we are. I really heard that message here. We can be rowdy out there.
- I enjoyed coming and all the information. I will be back to a listening circle. It is one good positive in police and community building.
- It is nice to see all the residents come out. They care about bridging the gap and community relations. All cops aren't bad people.
- I think these are good discussions that need to be had. But I hope for action too.
- I got to talk to adults that didn't talk down to me.
- Very good conversation. I like hearing what youth have to say.

## Annex 3 – Listening Circle 3

*Question Round One: What's a memorable situation you've had involving someone in authority? What happened and how did it make you feel?*

### 1.1 Parents and Teachers

#### Negative Experiences

- As a 16-year-old I had a classmate that stayed in a foster home. I called her home and my friend had run out. Her mother thought that I had planned it. The mother thought that I helped. The mother got quiet. She believed that I was a part of the plan. I had to tell her the truth. I felt bad that the mom did not believe me and had a negative opinion of me.
- My mother was my figure. We traveled to Chicago for dance troops. I didn't ask. I hopped on the bus without permission. My aunt beat me and sent me back to Milwaukee. My mom then beat me. I never acted out again. My parents are the authority.
- Me and my friend got into a fight. She hit her head and busted it. A teacher came to help. I felt sad for my friend.

#### Mixed Feelings

- I had a high school math teacher who suspended me for speaking up to stop some others from fighting. I was angry. But later I was asked to be the keynote speaker at a special event and felt good about that.

#### Positive Experiences

- When I was in high school we interacted with a mix of recruiters. I got a lot of inspiration. I don't have a specific example.
- My memorable situation with an authority figure was a reality check. I won first place in something and got stuck on that for a while. My grades started to slip because I lost focus. A teacher reminded me of my other responsibilities and got me back on track.
- I recall back in my college years one day I and some friends were sitting in front of the student union. As we sat there talking I noticed this prominent person walking towards me and it seemed as though he was actually coming towards me personally while he was talking and shaking hands with others. He stopped in front of me and asked, "Did you vote?" [and] "Why didn't you vote?" and then he went into the speech saying do you understand how many people died for your right to vote? He directed us to get up and we went around the campus getting students to vote. It was a powerful experience and from that day until now I cast my vote in each election.

## 1.2 Law Enforcement/Fire and Other Government Personnel

### Negative Experiences

- I was 21 or 22 and speeding on the freeway. I was pulled over by a State Patrol deputy, a lady. She asked me why I was in such a hurry and I told her I had to get to a college exam. It was my birthday and she noticed that when she looked at my license. When she gave me the ticket it was folded like a birthday card. I thought it was a warning so I thanked her for letting me off with a warning. She said, "No, it's a ticket. Happy Birthday." I thought it was very rude.
- My mama got in a fight with a neighbor. The police came. My mama got tazed and went to jail. Everybody felt bad and cried.
- I was walking to the store with friends and there was a shooting by the gas station. The police rolled up and searched us. We let that go. When we got home, we realized we had forgotten some things at the store so we went back – we drove that time. The police pulled us over saying they thought the vehicle was stolen. I think they waited for us to come out of the house so they could follow us. Then we were really irritated.
- Years ago I saw my brother get arrested for everything like robbing banks. The police came into the house and broke things while looking for him. I never had a father figure so my brother was like a father figure to me. It hurt my heart to see him treated that way.
- My experience happened in this neighborhood across the street. My cousin was outside making threats to a lady and she proceeded to call the police. The police came and tried to calm my cousin down but she just kept threatening and being confrontational with the officer. Eventually my cousin's arm was hurt, she was put in handcuffs and taken away. I cried because of what had happened.

### Mixed Feelings

- When I was in college, I had an experience with the law enforcement. There are two sides of a story. The two cops that were there: one was down to earth. He told me to relax about my tail light situation. I got to see both good/bad in the authority in same situation. Bad cop maybe had a bad day.
- As an 18-year-old I had a creepy car. A cop car pulled up and screamed at me. He also put me on the curb. I started going to school.
- I have always had good experiences with authority figures as an adult but not as a kid. A couple of officers taught me how I wanted to be as an officer. I could follow the good examples of the good officers or the bad examples of the bad officers. I don't want to share anything specific.

### Positive Experiences

- When I was in sixth grade my sister had an accident on the bus. My sister had rolled off the seat. They helped clean up my sister. The firefighters then and now are helpful. I have a good opinion about firefighters to this day.
- My cousin threw a rock at my hand. I had to find a police officer to help. I had to get stitches.
- When I was younger I was with a friend in a store. He was gathering cards that he collected and gave me some to put in my pocket. They fell out of my pocket and we were going to be arrested for shoplifting but after I explained what happened the officer let me off. I was grateful and relieved.
- It was about 24 years ago. I failed the background check to become a police officer because of my speeding record. At first I didn't know I could, but when I found out I appealed to the Fire and Police board. They listened to me and let me become a police officer. I felt very grateful.
- Growing up I had run-ins with good and bad cops. A detective came to my job to question me. My boss assumed that I had done something wrong. The detective thought my car had been used in a crime. I had the make and model of car they were looking for but it was not the same color. I had to leave work and take the detective to see my car. Once he saw that it could not have been the car he was looking for he apologized to me. I cooperated knowing I had not done anything wrong and I just went on with my life from there.
- I recall a day when the smoke detector at my home kept going off and I kept wondering who I should call. Finally, I decided I would call the police and as I was standing outside I saw an officer and I told him what was going on with my situation. The officer came inside my home and went through the house checking for smoke or trying to find out the reason the alarm started. The officer did an excellent job and he was very professional.
- I thought about a time before coming on the job as an officer I was downtown driving west at night and the light turned red and I drove through without stopping. I was pulled over and received a ticket, and while the officer was writing me the ticket I shared with him that I was on my way to the police academy soon. The ticket was worth 3 points from my license so I went to court and it was documented as a nonmoving violation. After I finished at the academy I was assigned to the officer that had given me the ticket and I reminded him of that night.
- I used to work for the county. We had an event at the War Memorial and I tried to set it up with a caterer who was familiar with the site. The caterer said they wouldn't accept the contract because the county had never paid them for an outstanding bill. I went to the authorities who could fix this and they paid the bill, after much talk. The caterer took our event. It was very satisfying.



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## **Question Round Two:** *“How have you been grateful for someone in authority?”*

### **2.1 Parents, Family and God**

- My parents – they’re always supportive. They understood me. They wish me happy holidays.
- My grandparents are my second set of parents. My parents don’t have resources. I can go to my grandparents.
- My parents because I can talk to them about anything. There is nothing I couldn’t talk to them.
- When I was going to go to my friend's house after dark my brother felt it was unsafe and made me come back.
- I'm grateful to my mom for everything she does.
- I am grateful to my sister, godmother and grandma. My grandmother showed me how to follow my dreams and to think before I speak.
- My dad built skills about technology in me. That's why I want to be an engineer.
- I am grateful for my mother who raised me well, as I was her only child. I am grateful for how she corrected me when I was wrong and taught me how to talk about things that was going on around me.
- Over the last two years I've developed a strong relationship with God. It got me through many hard times and keeps me going.
- I'm grateful to my mother and grandmother for instilling discipline in me. They taught me how to be the woman I should be and to develop the friendships I should have. They taught me values and morals but also let me figure out some things on my own.
- My dad was a strict Army veteran. I am grateful for him being hard on me. He helped me become a better parent. His discipline kept me out of trouble and I never even got a ticket. I was not grateful at the time but I am now.
- I am grateful to all the men in my family, or at least some of them. Most of the men in my family are pimps or drug dealers. I don't want to follow in their footsteps but I don't judge. I don't know how they got to a place where they decided to do those things but their example has shown me that I want something different.

### **2.2 Supervisors and Teachers**

- My teacher taught several classes. He was socially aware. He sparked an interest in social justice. I protested about everything...
- Common sense factors were that we read “knowledge is power.” My best teacher said this. She was the backbone of my dancing career. She turned my vision for my education, career, and life.
- The sergeant in the Marine Corps was a teacher for me. I learned things for the police force. He called me [to] boot camp. I treat people with respect. I learned to have fun.
- I'm very grateful for the Director of Programming at where I work. I work two jobs and go to school. I get very stressed. She makes me take time to breathe and de-stress.

- My supervisors guided me in my career. They mentored me, help me to do paperwork, taught me about procedures... They were passing out knowledge to me.
- I am grateful to all my bosses of the past. I didn't always agree with them but I appreciate their decisions now.

### 2.3 Law Enforcement/Government

- I was playing with my sister when we were kids on a fence with an electric gate. The fence started up and cut my sister's hand in half. I was really scared and ran to find someone. I found a car and the man had a car phone. We called 911 and I didn't know where we were but the person helped me figure out where it was. They found us. I held her arm until they got there. She was OK.
- From [an] earlier story about shoplifting: I was grateful to the officer for giving me a break. It helped me decide to become a police officer. And I've seen that same officer there again.
- I was dealing with the Milwaukee County Board of Building Trades. They are required to use minority businesses for 25 percent of their construction contracts. But they didn't because they said they didn't exist. A man who worked with me for many years helped to open the contracts up to minority businesses he found.
- I have been grateful for so many people in authority. My first is one of the old chiefs of police here in Milwaukee. He was my uncle's neighbor and a very down -to-earth guy with a lot of power. When I became an officer I saw him and he remembered who I was and he was personable.
- I remember Officer XX from my school who has the same last name as mine. I would see him in the hallway and he would give me a high five and talk with me for a little bit. I considered him a friend.
- I am grateful for the officers because they do good work whether in solving crimes or being kind when I see them.
- Obama was an influence. I thought when he won, it was a joke. He showed there were no limits.

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one thing you are grateful for about this community?"*  
*(One group discussed: "As a community, what is a specific step that can be taken to help get Milwaukee to the place of positive police/community relations? What things personally can you do to make the community better?")*

### 3.1 Trust and Gratefulness

- We as a community work together with police. I'm a Malcom X fan. I was raised not to trust officers. I think this should be refocused. I now trust officers to help others. Make places safer. The Harvest Festival was key.

- Do you trust District 5 police? I cannot generalize. I don't trust all my family members so.... Everyone has a different intent.
- I don't think you would give your word to protect people by taking the job and giving an oath if you didn't mean it.
- I do and don't. Some officers want to jump out and act bad.
- Yeah, I don't agree with all the decisions that some officers make but I talk with them. Most officers have told me they're happy to be here. I'm getting to know names and faces of people in the neighborhood and I hope you trust us to protect you.
- I am grateful I know my way around my community because this is where I grew up and I have lots of family around me here. I am grateful to know that there is always someone there for me.
- I still have friends in the neighborhood that I grew up with as I've been coming to this area of Harambee since high school. I noticed that some of the children and grandchildren of my friends now live on the block. I am grateful for the Bader Foundation building in Harambee and how they have embraced the neighbors.
- I am grateful and I like the revitalization in this community. My father used to talk to me about an old store called Gimbel Schusters and the Palmer House which was owned by a wealthy family and now I see this new building, Clinton Rose [Senior] Center. I am grateful for the captain of 5th District and the compassion he brings to the job.
- I am grateful for being in Harambee for 30 years now and personally not having had any problems. I enjoy my community even though the crime goes up and down. I am happy that if the police are called they come.

### 3.2 Change and Generations

- Chief Breier worked in a racist era. More beatings of black men. We came from an oppressive era. It was more difficult than Cicero, IL. This conversation today couldn't have happened. This session is healthy.
- An officer checked out our home when my mom passed away. A change is coming. There will be a connection with community and cops. It's a different atmosphere – respect in the community when there's respect for cops.
- We are at that space, it's time. I had a lot of anger when I was a kid. I grew up in a hostile environment.
- It takes a lot for me to stand up to my friends and say I'm not going to participate in everything they do.
- I used to be Mr. Popularity in school, and the kids would follow my lead.
- Do all of your friends know you're here tonight? Why are they not here?
- I was with my friends when I was asked to come here.
- I will be at the next meeting to see if they show.

### 3.3 Relationships with Law Enforcement

- I grew up around a tall officer named Mike. We had the Frank Jude and Ernie Lacy cases. My sister was assaulted by an officer. My sister went to jail .... Again, this is a two-sides

story. Officer Mike treated me with respect. I have been treated well and poorly. I see officers beating blacks. I have seen them save lives.

- I get to see how people interact and get to know people in the neighborhoods and parks.
- I'm a bike cop in summer. I get to see them (residents) more.
- When I see killings on TV it's hard to be grateful but I have to think positively. Look at all the teachers who returned to their classrooms after school shootings.
- The community is not bad but sometimes people do dumb things. If my family member got shot and the person who did it didn't go to jail my relatives are going to act dumb and retaliate. Only afterwards [will] they think about the consequences and then either go on the run or hide out.
- If you don't like officers and the job they do, step into their shoes and do it the way you believe it should be done.
- I want to see more of what you do in the community to make an impact as an officer.
- You can do a ride-along and see for yourself. No, it's not like the movie at all.
- I have never run from the police but I know some people get scared to the point where they make themselves look guilty.
- That's true.
- You should be a cop.
- You said I should be a cop but I don't want to fight. I have a sensitive side. I used to get suspended all the time in school to the point where my mom thought I was mentally ill. Now that I'm in touch with my sensitive side I just can't fight. I don't know my own strength. I don't know if I'm just going to hit someone or beat them to death.
- I don't like District 5 because I've been there too much.
- Doing something you shouldn't?
- Yeah.
- *Resident to officer:* Where do you work?

*Officer:* I work as a TABS officer out of the academy and we cover all districts north and south. We spend a lot of time motivated and encouraging the students who are having some problems through TABS, Truancy Abatement [and] Burglary Suppression.

### 3.4 Information and Responsibility

- I do things not in my job description. Videocams help. Do cops catch cases?
- Being a cop, people look from the outside in. I tell young guys that I grew up in the city and raised three kids here. In my day there was no social media. Your generation is dealing with information at the drop of a hat. We have to learn to filter. There is good news. People want to shoot up, deal drugs.... That's what I want to protect you from. Yes, sometimes you may get caught up in an investigation, but if you're not involved just give your name and move on.
- I think a lot of the violence is because we get information so quickly. It's hard to have time to stop and think. My mom used to say you go to street life and end up in jail or hell.

- The media doesn't give all the details so I understand why people might jump to conclusions.
- It is frustrating to me when I was there and know the details but see it presented in a skewed manner.
- Yeah, media can make it look like it was all one person.
- I sometimes wonder if kids are brainwashed by TV. Do they think TV shows are reality?
- I think it's the parent's responsibility to teach their kids reality and right from wrong.
- I think parents support and raise their kids but that they can't be blamed for everything their kids do. I used to do some bad things because bad things that happened to me and because I was following my friends.

### 3.5 Suggestions and Next Steps

- More beat patrols, especially in high crime areas.
- When we do patrol cars "3 deep" it is a strategy that people don't understand. It confuses people. But it really works for us.
- I think anything community-oriented helps. Cook-outs, etc.
- Recommendations on how to prevent crime helps.
- Just being outside the squad car is night and day difference. So much better.
- It's like voting, if you get out there and talk to people up close and personal it works better.
- We used to do more work in schools. It helped to get kids to see us in a different light. Unfortunately, everybody is too busy now.
- Respect one another, communicate better and say you're sorry if you were wrong.
- I think there should be more participation from the residents because nothing will get better if everyone is not engaged to find solutions and be better together.
- I feel the hearsay has to be addressed so the truth will bring healing and us together as a community.
- I think we need more events like this in the community. I think officers and residents coming to a safe place to have intimate conversations and learning we are all human. I think we can all benefit from the positive interactions with each other.
- I think the listening circles are good and I think the event that District 5 just had in the community was a good start. I feel the more they are able to talk to us in calm moments the residents will become more comfortable. I'd like to be able to do something through social media with the youth encouraging them to become police aids and ambassadors.
- I can come to participate and listen. I can feel free to communicate and talk so the officers can have a chance to explain what was seen on the news or heard on the radio.
- I can tell more people about events like this. Stay positive and spread the word.
- I am putting my best foot forward as an officer. I have to be cognizant enough to know that some things are said out of anger and not towards me personally. As an African-American male I must put my best foot forward and be a positive role model. As a son I keep my dad's name proud. I am representative of every male in my family.

- I will start telling my friends to come and tell them how the program works and what they can get out of participating for their improvement. And getting to know the officers.

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### Parting Words

- I learned "Don't drive fast."
- There's nothing that beats personal contact.
- Same as above.
- Officers can do the same things we do.
- I'm grateful they added another neighborhood to this program.
- Not to fight.
- No final comments.
- Getting to know people.
- Going forward, getting to know one another.
- People coming together, talking it out.
- It's nice to sit and talk to people without trying to fit it in between calls.
- This discussion makes me question what I have done to make an impact.
- If you have a question or concern go and talk to a community liaison officer. Every district has one.
- It's nice to see police officers having more involvement.
- I enjoyed answering the questions and being able to ask questions of my own to the officers.
- I enjoyed talking to the officers.
- I feel pretty good about the conversation.
- I am hopeful.

## Annex 4 – Listening Circle 4

**Question Round One:** *“Describe a time where you’ve seen the police and community work together well in Harambee or somewhere else. What were they doing and what was the impact?”*

### 1.1 Supporting/Involving Youth

- The police academy does a lot in the neighborhood. We went to the Boys and Girls Club. We talked to the kids in the program. We hung out without our uniforms on. We (officers) were on their level. They got to know us. I think this was a good experience for the officers and the kids.
- I am a 23-year vet on the force. A relevant thing that happened in the community is that we have community-based liaisons. There are also block watch captains. We all work together. We also work with neighborhood services. Each district has one. We all work with the blocks. We also work with the TABS program. This program is within the MPS district. This program addresses truancy. We are currently in the process of revamping it to deal with the elementary schools. TABS mainly focus on high schools as of to date.
- The first circle I went to was lovely. The next day I got a call from Harambee. When I got there, I saw a participant from the circle who said, “Hi.” His buddy asked why he was speaking to me and the participant said it was because I listened to him. A mom asked if we would come to her house to surprise her son for his birthday. It was such an amazing feeling to see the happy look on his face.
- There are business owners and community people who come together to host a huge picnic. MPS and MPD all come together for the community officer program. We also develop relationships with the kids. We again come to these events to be on the level of the kids.
- I have only been here since July, so I’ve had no opportunity to see police in the community outside of this circle. This is a nice, positive, casual way to get to know officers. I appreciate the officers taking time out of their day. I used to work at UMOS where I planned events. Police would come to protect but also to interact. It was good for kids to see that the officers were there not because something bad was happening but to have fun. It was very welcoming.
- I grew up in Franklin and go to Marquette. I view Milwaukee police and campus police differently – I see the campus police as friendly and there for our safety but the Milwaukee police as the real enforcers who are there when something bad happens. I think that is mostly because of what I see in the news.

## 1.2 Community Involvement

- I cannot think of anything right now. The law enforcement and community relationships are not perfect. I do not live in the community (Harambee). I was invited to this session because of a project at Marquette University. Marquette is in the middle of a bubbled environment. This session was a reason for me to come and listen to see what this is all about.
- These (Zeidler Center) meetings are helpful. The police also provide protection at such events as carnivals and public events. They are there to protect and serve citizens in the community.
- I agree with what the other officer said about the support that the community has given the police department the last few days. Also, my job as a community liaison officer is important. It helps us communicate and get the word on the street. We do walks with the alderpersons or representatives and police with other members of the neighborhood. We walk and say hi to people and find out how we can help them with different services. This helps the community's resilience to grow. It helps us help those in need. That is the best help for the city. For example, we might see that there's a light out (and) we can ask how long has this been out and work to get it fixed. We can ask people, what would you like to have change. Alderman Coggs does a handful of walks, but I would like to see more. Residents do respond to this when we knock on doors. I will admit, it is not that I like doing these walks with a 20-pound belt, but I think we can share our resources and learn more from each other if we do more of these walks.
- I participated with the community in what was called "Coffee with a Cop" – we met with residents at a popular fast food restaurant. I enjoyed sitting around talking to people and it felt good and warm as they were happy to have the police there. We took pictures and made videos. The impact was good and positive.
- This is my first community event as an officer and I have been really looking forward to it because usually there is a crisis situation and not enough time or opportunity for positive exchange in those moments. I am looking forward to walking the beat, so I can mingle and get to know the people in the neighborhoods.
- We actually did some cleanups more recently and it was nice. I am more than my uniform. I want to see the community and police working together.
- Years ago, officers used to help clean up in the neighborhood. It seems to have since been forgotten. Back in Siefert's day the community got along well. That was better than 30 years ago.
- I enjoy when the police hang out at the street festivals in the community.
- The opportunities afforded to me in the Keefe Avenue Safety Committee, make building relationships with the police great. Breaking bread with people matters. You see people



as people. We need to interact, and we need to talk. I also really enjoyed when the police had a giveaway and rummage sale. That was really wonderful, and I got some great things.

### 1.3 Helping One Another

- In the recent snow there was a person who had trouble with her car. The police saw this and saw that she had her young daughter in the car with her. They stopped and helped her get out of the snow and they followed her home to make sure she got home safe. My cousin picked me up the other day and there was so much snow on the corner of the road (and) he said his car was a lemon car. This then made me worried about our car stopping or getting stuck in the snow. But then I thought about what the police did to help that woman. We need to have the positivity when there's so much dark stuff. There is a lot of dark stuff on the news and I want to hear the good stuff, like this woman being followed home to make sure she's safe. On the news last week, on the east side near Sciortino's Bakery, there was a story about somebody who got stuck in the snow. The sheriff was behind them and they were able to use their bumper on the front of their squad car to push the person up the street. If they can, they help others out.
- In the past week I have seen many community members' support of law enforcement. People brought food down to the district office. This gave me affirmation of why I am doing this job. It was really nice to see law enforcement and community get together. Members of the auxiliary program, they're all volunteers, directed traffic for 13 hours during the funeral of the fallen police officer. They were just helping out.
- I can think of two instances of police and community working together. One recently, sadly my brother passed away a couple of weeks ago. He died alone in his apartment. My niece went there, and she called me and said auntie you need to get here quick. I think he's gone. We flew down the street. When we got there, we could see police all up and down the street and there were six officers inside the apartment. I said this is my brother and I would like to see him. They let me know that I couldn't touch him until the coroner came but I could see him. They were so personable. The police officer started a conversation with me and ask me questions about my brother and they found out that we are a tightknit family. Apparently, he had been in the apartment for two days before he was found. We had called several times but didn't hear from him. After the coroner came, they allowed me to touch him. One of the officers stayed behind with me. It was not impersonal. It was very personal, and the police were very kind to my family. The second instance happened last spring in Home Depot. An older man had an epileptic fit and I knew what it was. I knew that he could hear us, but he couldn't communicate with us. I asked the cashier to get something to support him. I had a rubber stress squeezey

thing in my bag and I used that with him so that he would not choke and bite on his tongue. I pulled his tongue out and I put the rubber in his mouth to protect him. The police came first before the paramedics and they took over. They were very cool. They appreciated what I did. The experience with helping the man was positive. No one was pushing me around. It was nice how we can all help out.

- Never seen it. My brother and I saw a crime. A neighbor also saw it. It was a dope deal gone bad. I stay away from negativity in the neighborhood.
- I remember an incident that happened approximately five years ago on a quiet Sunday – there was a body found in a garage and the garage had no doors. The police came around asking questions. I remember the police being calm as they went through questioning everyone, but no one really knew what had happened. I thought the police did a really good job.
- I look forward to Juneteenth Day when the police are out in full force. There's really nothing that they say, it's just their presence gives the sense that everything is under control.
- A few weeks ago, there was a person that was brutally murdered in the area and we were having some difficulty solving the case, a couple of middle-aged men came around and gave us some information regarding that case.

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***Question Round Two:*** *"What projects would you like to see police and residents work on together to improve or beautify the neighborhood? What projects would you personally want to get involved in?"*

## **2.1 Activities to Bring One Another Together**

- I like the Idea of cleanups, but I prefer to support flower gardens and vegetable gardens. I would also support fixing boarded windows and painting, so homes don't look vacant.
- I like the idea of repairing vacant homes, but there may be others who need support to do home projects. Maybe officers and youth could go around the neighborhood to help out. I work in schools and officers participate in basketball and other activities with the kids. I think it makes officers seem more welcoming to them.
- I'd like to participate in cleanup of vacant lots and streets and I'd like to be involved in the community gardens, planting flowers and playing basketball. I think it's enjoyable and smart.
- I would like to play basketball with the police at school and on the playgrounds in the park.

- When we were younger on Walnut at Washington Park, we used to do relay races. The police would come out. We would do the 50-yard dash and the 100-yard dash. I was 9, 10, or 11. There were prizes for all the different games. There was the sack race, the strong woman arm wrestling, jumping jacks and more. It was all physical play at the park and we did it with the police. The kids came out and had fun. I'm sure the kids today would like this. No one comes out now. It's not like it used to be. We used to have leagues and we would play against the police and the police would play each other in the 1960s. The different police precincts would come out. We would all come home with the ribbons. I haven't seen any kids out playing in the snow.
- I would like to see interactions in the park too, like they used to. We used to see the police at XXX on 27<sup>th</sup> and Vliet. It was an ice cream place. There is also a place called Red's on 24<sup>th</sup> that catered to kids. The police would go in for lunch. The kids would follow the police over and they would all be in there together. They would get sundaes called dusty's. This is part of our childhood, but it's different for babies now. I would also like to see a cleanup and garden with the kids. When kids plant and grow things, then have a cookout at the end of the grow season, they build better relationships. I can contribute to that. It's wonderful when kids see flowers and gardens and it's clean. The education is powerful. I also think it's important to walk and bike together. Speeding cars are dangerous and it's no joke. I ride on the sidewalk. I won't ride in the street.

## 2.2 Looking Out for One Another

- I am interested in being a beat cop, so I can get to know the neighbors before a crisis situation.
- This past summer the aldermanic representatives and the mayor and the police all came together for the Promise Zone in high crime areas. Officers are sent to walk the beat in areas such as this (Harambee). I understand issues. By walking the beat, I can get to know the residents, business owners, and school areas. Huge relationship-building opportunities are present. This usually occurred between 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. It would also help if we could work later in the communities (evenings).
- One of the projects that I would like to see is the community doing more block watches. This is something we could implement together. We could do adopt a block, do craft projects with kids and families. One example would be to make new numbers to put on the front of houses – instead of plastic sticker numbers maybe we could do wood numbers. They would be beautiful and artistic. That helps people take more ownership of their house. Another project that I'm working on is the National Night Out and I would love to get others involved. But I am not sure how to do that. I am not a party planner,

and this is outside my comfort zone. But if more residents can get involved there would be more investments and more support. It would be a little less stressful for me.

- I live in an older community and we have very few homeowners, so I would like the police to come around the neighborhood more often. We have a lot of children from other neighborhoods that come and play in the park, hang out talking, and it would mean a lot to have the police drop by and visit sometimes.

## **2.2 The Making of a Beautiful Place to Live**

- I would like to see open lines of communication. I have not always been treated well by officers. There have been times when I have tried to talk to officers about what I saw and they question me. I think we would come together better if we return to doing projects together in the community like cleaning up the neighborhood. I would be willing to do that.
- Cleanups are a good idea. I see a whole lot of things for improvement and cleanup. But police are busy addressing community needs. That leaves little time for beautification. Maybe there is a staffing issue? I saw all of the officers here and hoped there were still enough in the community to meet the need. Maybe through circle outcomes teens might get involved in cleanup projects. I would be willing to support that.
- I agree with cleanups, but it should be an extension of something else like working on houses. Working together on a project like that would help to build relationships. I would be willing to help out. I don't see enough officers in the community and in schools interacting with kids.
- There are too many boarded-up homes. I would fix them up. It would help with crime-infested areas.
- I don't want to say what the police should do, and pile more on them. They already have a lot to do. I talk to the police a lot, I know District 5's phone number by heart, and I cannot stand it when they send me to the switchboard. So, I can't say what more they should be doing than what they already are doing. Jobs just keep being added to what they already do, and we take that for granted until someone gets killed or bad things happen again. We don't know what's going on with these cops. They could have bad backs and bad feet and we ask them to do more. I see some police on bikes in the area often where there's high crime. One of the things that bothers me is when people get food at KFC and then park along the side streets here and they leave their garbage and bones on the street. I ask myself should I call the police? But sometimes I'll call and ask them if there's a car already in the area to come and look for the people dumping food. There used to be a place called the Oasis, next to Pete's Pizza. When I was a kid, I was eating a doughnut that I got from there and walking down the sidewalk. As I was walking,

I knelt down and put the container from the donut on the ground. The next thing I knew there was a police officer and he had my arm. He took me right back to the container to pick it up. The police, I hope, do the best they can. My sister and I grew up here in the '60s and '70s and everyone used to care. At the bus stop over by the record shop you would see all kinds of people. Now I look around and I wonder how can you live in a house with that bald grass? Go get some grass seed. Some police know me now, my neighbor's music is so loud. I called Alderman Coggins and she called the people in that house and told them to leave. I call the landlord. Two years have passed and now there's garbage everywhere. How do we deal with these thugs? But I see the police around the neighborhood sometimes, I see them exercising on the playground.

- I would like to see an organized cleanup to get people out in the neighborhood and to clean it up as soon as the snow melts. When people come out and help cleanup, they'll be more aware of their surroundings and not want it to be full of litter. I also teach kids at Morrison Middle School how to play chess. It's a great program. We work together and help them win tournaments. I go in once a month. The girls from Morrison won first place in the last tournament. Yeah, it's really great.
- I would like to team up with the police to come up with a solution for drivers that run through stop signs and traffic lights. This is causing too much damage in the neighborhood. I would also like the police and residents to come together and pick up the trash together.

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**Connected Conversations:** *"What would motivate you and/or what would hold you back from getting involved? What other ideas do you have to beautify the neighborhood? What's your role?"*

- I was not sure what to expect. I thought this would be a large group session. This format is very comfortable.
- I would like more outreach.
- More citizen participation would be nice.
- We need more young people.
- Teenage members would benefit from this, too.
- This helps with breaking the ice and down walls.
- Hopefully, we can be more open-minded when moving in the future.
- All of us are here to make a difference.
- What are the issues in Harambee?
- In the summer there are too many drug deals.

- A lot of gun shots are prevalent.
- I have gotten used to it. This is not normal. I hope we are progressing.
- Private donors are looking to fund relationship building events within the community.
- Two more neighborhoods were added to this format (police/community discussions).
- I would say that you all motivate me a lot [referring to the participants in the Keefe Avenue Safety Committee]. I see you all often and sometimes I see you more than my family. The Keefe Avenue Safety Committee keeps growing and you all do such good work.
- You all should join the Keefe Avenue Safety Committee. We can do a cleanup at your house. I've been a part of the committee for a while. People talk and work together. Someone shoveled the snow at my house today. When people see each other picking up, does it not make you think? You start to ask, is that how I want to treat my house?
- I want to ask Alderman Coggins about the camera program. Money was allocated for that. We can have what Chicago is doing. You drop something or do something wrong you get a ticket.
- I like anything that brings us together and food does that well. It would be nice to have "Cooking with a Cop."
- I enjoy attending these listening circles as they give me the opportunity to listen and hear what people are thinking.
- I want to see us working together with a positive vibe and holding each other accountable.
- I invite diversity into my community, the idea of officers riding their bikes and those officers that walk the beat because some neighborhoods have lots of children and they need to develop relationships with the police as well as the old.
- I wish there were more people here tonight.
- I loved how transparent the conversation was in the circle.
- Is it hard to divide your time? Do you have room in your schedules for community projects?
- Yes. Part of our job is to spend time in the community. I sometimes do community work on weekends. We are shorthanded and it's busy but there is time. We are in the process of hiring so that there is an opportunity to have more officers in the community.
- What do you do in schools?
- I pick up truants.
- I am a community liaison officer, so I am in meetings all day. I have time on Mondays and Fridays for community outreach and to talk to residents.
- Nothing would hold us back from doing an event. It's just a matter of finding the time.
- If you gave us two weeks' notice, we would have time to arrange for staffing in the community and at your event.

- Do you think the demographics of the police department is an accurate reflection of the community?
- As a school officer, yes.
- At a district, no. Officers get transferred out and in so the demographics are different all the time.
- Districts 2 and 6 have many Spanish-speaking residents so the officers there do reflect the Spanish-speaking population.
- It also depends on the shift.
- Sometimes a district or a shift may not be diverse, but due to transitions it might be, six months later.
- Around Marquette the bike police are 50-50.
- But Marquette police are a separate entity so that doesn't count.
- It seems that Marquette residents are more afraid of Milwaukee police over Marquette police.
- The ice cream truck is run out of the academy. We did 84 events last year. We were at block parties and other events.
- The ice cream truck is something we have in common. It is neutral ground and a great place to start a conversation.
- I think sometimes residents want to talk with us, but they are afraid to come out. Having the ice cream truck in the neighborhood gives people a safe opportunity to come out and talk with us.
- I can't speak for all officers, but some are not so great.
- But, that's true with everything.
- There are times when, as an officer, I need to be nice...more flies with honey.

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### Parting Words

- Communication.
- Togetherness.
- Understanding
- Listening.
- Taking action collectively.
- I feel more knowledgeable.
- I feel good.
- I have perspective.
- I like the timing.
- I feel very good.

- It was a pleasure meeting you all. I respect everyone. This helps keep hope alive. And the sandwiches were good.
- Appreciative.
- Encouraging.
- I enjoyed myself.
- Food always helps build relationships.
- I feel like I have got to know officers better. You are not lording over us.
- My attitudes have improved. I was neutral.
- We have good and bad officers. We can get it wrong sometimes as citizens.
- We (officers) can be transparent during these sessions. We are all human.
- The media affects our experiences.
- We have started ice cream giveaways in the summer.
- We do giveaways (books, teddy bears) to kids when we arrest their parents. It is still sad.
- "Coffee with a Cop" is also starting. We do this at Senior Citizen Centers.



## Annex 5 – Listening Circle 5

**Question Round One:** *“Describe a time where you witnessed or heard a conversation or situation where someone’s mental health played a role in the moment or in the outcome.”*

### 1.1 Work

- Last summer I answered a call to a suicidal person on a bridge, according to witnesses. I went because I was close. We ran up to him. He was on the other side of the fence. I reached out and took his hand and held it while I talked to him until he came down. It was scary.
- I used to work for four years with homeless people. There was a guy who ended up in jail because of his outbursts. It wasn't his fault. He couldn't get the help he needed so they put him in jail. He may still be there.
- I was working at a used furniture store. I waited on a man and woman who needed help. I extended them credit for their first purchase even though I never did that. I could feel something was wrong. When we tried to deliver the furniture no one was there to take it. We found out the man had killed himself.
- When I first started I had a call to a lady who thought she had snakes in her stomach. At first, I thought it was funny, but then I realized she had mental health issues. We took her to the M.M.H. It turned out she had recently lost her husband and that triggered an episode. She was OK later.
- We get lots of mental health calls. There was one man who was calling five times a day. He heard things in his cupboards, lots of stories. It turned out he was lonely and his caseworker wasn't helping him. We helped him get a caseworker who cared about him.
- There was a time when I was on patrol and there was a man who was very angry and upset. My partner knew who he was and said that he repeats his behavior over and over. He was also intoxicated. So, the history of this person is that he repeats the same behavior over and over and others just used to take him somewhere to dry out. But this doesn't change things. This time I really focused on listening to him to find out why he was doing when he was doing. When I listened to him, I found out more about what was going on for him and also found out that he was a veteran. We were able to get him to the VA to get the help that he needed. It was an excellent feeling to see him get better help.
- We often respond to calls that have mental health concerns. It is quite common, sometimes multiple times a day. We had a resident who has mental health issues and tried to jump off a bridge. Someone who was near the bridge knew who it was and called us to let us know they had mental health issues. Outside of work in my own family I have a sister who I've seen in crisis. The first time I saw her in a mental health crisis was really shocking. But we are able to get help. It is better for families to help their family member with mental health issues, but it often falls to the police to support the individual when they're in crisis. We may have to force that person into a situation if they are a threat to

themselves or to others otherwise. We really do prefer being able to communicate with a person so that they can make decisions what to do on their own.

- I spent many years within the department of social services working with victims of a very famous serial killer here in Milwaukee. I saw the effects of the murders on the families of the victims, they were traumatized. There were some who were unable to handle the grief and the police needed to be called on occasion to intervene. The next year there was a place set up by police and social services agency for each of the survivors to get the help they needed to deal with the trauma.
- While on duty last week I was called to a school regarding a mother trying to pick up her children but I later found out the mother did not have custody or permission to pick up the children. After some time listening, observing patiently I noticed she was having an episode. I have had lots of training to handle such situations involving mental health issues. MUDD was on the scene as well as we let her talk and calm down a bit we were able to transport her to a mental health facility to get checked out. Later she was released back into our custody as she was due in court for setting her boyfriend on fire.
- I received a call to go to a school where a student was damaging school property. I locate the student and assess the situation before I approach the student that stood 6 feet, weighing about 280 pounds. It was hard to watch his aggression but I began to talk to him and he said he didn't want to talk to me. I said to him obviously you're having an episode (this student is autistic, suffers from depression and hears voices). He said the voices was telling him to do the things he was doing. The school wanted him arrested but instead I took the student to a good hospital for issues in mental health instead so he could get help.

## 1.2 Family and Neighbors

- Two years ago, I used to hang with my cousin. Her mom and dad were never at home because they were always working. One day she was crying and tried to kill herself. When her mom and dad returned they talked with her about it and changed their schedules around so she wouldn't be alone all the time.
- We have a lady in our neighborhood – and I've lived here for 40 years – who sometimes sits on her porch nude or will throw flour and act very strange. People who don't know her may not know how to help. Neighbors who have been here a long time do know her, and they can help out. They may be able to calm her down and be able to bring her back in the house. Sometimes we have to promise her that we're not going to call the cops. You know, sometimes people who are having mental health issues can check themselves out of the hospital. There was a time when she did check herself out of the hospital and her mother would not let her back in her house, so she came over to my house.
- I have a family member who walks up and down the street and acts crazy. Most of the families on the block know who she is and don't let it bother them. But some people don't know. I feel like everyone has one of those people in their family.
- I have a neighbor with autism who doesn't like noises and so he's not outside very much. Seems like he's kind of shut out of the world. It seems like he doesn't have very many people to play with. Kids at school can sometimes can be in moods and they can react

and all kinds of ways. The hard part is to not knowing when somebody's in a mood at school.

- I have a little brother who has anger issues. If you touch him or tap him gets very upset. So, I just mind my own business around him.
- My big brother has already graduated from high school but he was recently diagnosed with schizophrenia. He tried to hurt my mom. He goes in and out. It's weird to grow up and have him not be like that before and now he is different. I have to get used to that. He has medication but he doesn't like to take it because it makes him drowsy. He has to be forced to take it. And if he is not in his right mind it is tough to get him to do that.
- We often respond to calls that have mental health concerns. It is quite common, sometimes multiple times a day. We had a resident who has mental health issues and tried to jump off a bridge. Someone who was near the bridge knew who it was and called us to let us know they had mental health issues. Outside of work in my own family I have a sister who I've seen in crisis. The first time I saw her in a mental health crisis was really shocking. But we are able to get help. It is better for families to help their family member with mental health issues, but it often falls to the police to support the individual when they're in crisis. We may have to force that person into a situation if they are a threat to themselves or to others otherwise. We really do prefer being able to communicate with a person so that they can make decisions what to do on their own
- I have a cousin he doesn't want anybody to mess with him. He has anger management problems. When he is home, we have to stay away from him. Sometimes he wants to play with us but sometimes he does not. He does take medicine.
- We had a girl in our neighborhood once, she had some issues. And one night in the summer she walked down the block on the lawns of the houses. I guess she walked down to the gas station. But she never came back and they had to report her to the police. Somebody must have taken advantage of her. She is gone.
- I have dealt with mental health within my family and persons on the street. I do as my dad taught me to do, I feel things out, look at the situation objectively, empathize and then try to connect.
- I have a brother that is dealing with issues of depression. My brother has a history of running away and threatening suicide. When my brother is having a moment I try my best to let him know I care and give him empathy.

### 1.3 Themselves

- I have PTSD. I need people to talk to. I felt suicidal. I need to come to places like this where I can talk to people and be with people.
- I've witnessed it in myself since I recently lost my brother. I feel like I'm starting over and I can't get my rhythm back. Sometimes I feel all right and then others I don't. I was supposed to celebrate my birthday with my brother and now I cannot so I am just acting like everything is OK but it's not.

## Miscellaneous Responses

- I deal with lots of people like that. It depends on how deep the issues are. Some people can't control it. Some are in my classes. Some are labeled as having a disability.
- In my day when people had tantrums or whatever we just dealt with it. This mental health crisis thing is a new thing to me.
- I cannot come some up with a story about mental health, personally. I have lived in my neighborhood for over 40 years. When you live somewhere that long you know everybody. If there's an incident or issue in the neighborhood I may be able to say to the police that I know that person and they have some mental health issues. But we do have some people that are in transition, people moving in and out of the neighborhood. So, then it is hard to know about them. But I think another thing that's important to consider is that a person having an issue might be drinking and so it's really hard to know if it's a mental health issue or something like drinking.
- We often have incidences where we get someone who is in a mental health crisis. We are trained on how to help individuals who are in crisis. I think one of the most difficult mental health situations I was in was dealing with a very young person. They were 9 years old. I found myself wondering how can a 9-year-old have so many issues and be thinking the things he was and saying what he was saying. How does a 9-year-old think about suicide? When I was 9 years old that word didn't even exist in my vocabulary. We had to bring the young man to Milwaukee mental health department. It was unfortunate because he was so young.
- I feel like there's a difference between depression and trauma as I question the treating of each with and without medication. I've heard some of the medications have severe side effects.

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***Question Round Two:*** "What steps do you think should be taken by the community and law enforcement to help ensure a positive outcome when dealing with someone in a mental health crisis? Name some specific actions you can take to be part of the solution."

## 2.1 Connect & Support

- Talk more. Get to know more of the story. Try to calm them and get to the problem.
- Better communication. I'm not "mental" but I sometimes do what I know I should do instead of what my mind says to do.
- I try to debrief about what could have been done better. I look at communication, open conversation, positive words towards one another and I try to make every situation better than the last.

- When you come in contact, try to listen. Find common ground. How can I help? And call a professional.
- Get them to laugh.
- If I did see this I would try to talk to them. I would offer assistance and if I couldn't help I would leave them alone.
- Talk to the person and see what frame of mind they are in. Check to see if you can approach them. Talk to them and see where their head is at. Some people may not be in the right state of mind, but you can still be nice and try to talk to them.
- My thoughts around this issue is that the community and the family need to try to do everything that they can (to) help an individual's mental health issues. Only get the police involved if you have to. It's hard when there's been issues that have been going on for years and then the police have to come. If the person has been brought to a doctor and has a medical history, that will help in supporting us getting that person the proper help. The Milwaukee public health department is government run and I believe it would be better if it was not government run, if it was privately run. My thought is that if somebody in my family had a mental health issue, I would want to help them as much as I can. I get that sometimes things get out of hand and police need to be called, but the best help is taking care of things before they get out of hand.
- I think the main thing that law enforcement and community members can do during mental health crisis is to remain calm and not agitate the situation. It's important to remember that when somebody's in crisis they're not in a normal state of mind. We do have police officers that are specialists when it comes to mental health crisis. We have a crisis assessment and response team, but there're only three people on it. They specifically go to the calls or in some situations do have a psychologist that goes with them. They have more training and the psychologist has access to records that the police do not, so they can get a better sense from history what is going on.
- I think police and community members need to stay calm, and when they see something is going on, listen and hear the person out. I had a cousin who was an alcoholic and he would get really angry and he just wanted people to listen to him.
- I think people should try to hear others who have mental health problems and talk to them. Hear what's going on in their life. Even if it is not your family you should still talk to them.
- If the police have to come, take the individual somewhere they can be safe. A one-on-one conversation especially if there could be a psychologist on hand, that would be helpful. Somebody having an issue might think that something bad is going to happen so you need to be able to talk to them somewhere safe.
- When dealing with mental health issues, remember to stay calm. If you react it's going to make it worse. Like the officer said, family dealing with this ahead a time can help more because the family knows them better. The family will know what will calm them down. Maybe they like basketball and that might help them calm down or blow off some steam. If you try and you don't get anywhere with helping the person then call the police. If I call the police as my first reaction it may cause more problems.

- One of the things police can do is stay calm and stay off the street when talking to the person. If you need to arrest them don't do extra, like cuffs. If they have issues then they're going to react.
- I think one step would be to figure (out) the problem or what's wrong by talking and asking questions.
- I think one step would be to pull the person aside and ask them if they are all right, check for any bruises and observe the body language.
- I think it's all about communication, patience and building relationships so one will know what to do or respond.
- I think you have to talk to them, be calm and be chilled.
- One of my family members needed to go get some health for their issues and I supported them.
- I just think one needs to take their time and be patient with the person.
- I think if a police officer is having a bad day they should be sent home. Otherwise while on duty the officers should be patient and not as physical as I have had three such encounters with the police for suspicion of carrying a firearm. I try my best to avoid contact with the police.

## 2.2 More Information

- Friends and family of the people with the MH crisis can give us more info on what is going on. We are able to send people to the MH institution. That's more than we are trained to do. We are CIT-trained, but we are not psychologists. If voters would push this we could see it improved.
- Police officers are crisis intervention trained. We try to gather as much information as we possibly can about an individual. We'll try to get an officer to their house and gather even more information. And if we don't know the person, we have another officer on standby. We try to get as much information as we can so that we know what we're doing.
- In the community if there is a situation we have to call the police we should be very clear, and give the police as much information as we know. Then they will know what they're stepping into. Maybe as a person who's helping, you can describe what you are wearing so that when the police arrive they know that you were there to assist them.
- The community cannot be afraid to give the officers that arrive on the scene a heads-up if mental health is a factor in the crisis.
- I have a family member that suffers from mood swings and depression. One day my family member had an episode and the police were called in – (it) was increasingly turned into a volatile situation and so I asked the officers to let me help and allow me to take him back to the institution and they did. There are several people in the community with mental health issues but I've never seen them beat down by the officers that come to help.

## 2.3 Training

- The mental health department needs to be revamped, needs more revision. We (police) need more training. There are care teams with a police officer and a psych worker to help solve the problems right on the scene. We need to staff that department up more.
- For police officers there should be biannual training in dealing with MH crises. And the dispatchers should be updated as to what the triggers are, what usually helps de-escalate, etc. Just the badge itself can cause escalation. Just our presence can cause harm.
- I think a step should be to learn and become knowledgeable about systemic and traumatic health issues. Learn before you try.

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**Connected Conversation:** *“What do you plan to do to become more knowledgeable about mental health and its effects on the community? What are your thoughts about being a ‘trauma-informed community’?”*

## 3.1 Don’t Be a Bystander

- Offers of volunteer work – supportive talk. You are a resource. Use your experience.
- Be a mentor.
- Help me with my work (says an officer).
- One of the common themes I heard talked about was to talk to people and then hear them out. Find out what is going on in their life.
- I think when it comes to mental health, people need to take more action. Community leaders and organizations need to find ways to help members of the neighborhood with mental health issues.
- I am in dismay at how some do not try to help a person that might be having a problem or in crisis. My husband and I were shopping at a store one day and we saw a person having a medical crisis and from across the room we saw the person going down to the ground. I noticed that no one was trying to help, just standing and looking, not even trying to get help from staff members. I feel we have to become more sensitive to one another and seek out information so we can help when needed.

## 3.2 Insufficient Training

- I myself have only had one week in five years.
- We receive 40 hours of CIT training.
- We get very little training on exactly this issue.
- It's difficult for us to find time for everyone to get training and not be understaffed.

## 3.3 Police

- In situations of the police with psychologists, the psychologist talks to the person first.
- A doctor is paired with an officer. Two other officers accompany them.
- We ask questions of young people to find out if they’ve had good or bad experiences with police. We are school officers and we try to talk as many young people as we can,

because I believe there are misconceptions out there that police are robots, that we are subhuman. We are just like you.

- I've had both positive and negative experiences with police officers. They've mostly been positive. I had one negative experience with police officers, and it was my fault. I got into a fight at school, when I was going to Homestead. The liaison police officer told me to go see the principal. The principal told me to go to the police department and that I was going to have a ticket. I was fingerprinted. Now I'm in the system, I've got something with my name on it. I went to court and they gave me year to see how I do.
- I've been a school officer for five years and it seemed to me that the schools call the police for everything. I do believe certain things require mandatory reporting, but there're many things that can be dealt with by the school. Schools put us in a bind when they call us and pressure us to give a citation. School boards need to develop better policies. We don't want to issue citations if there're alternative ways in which the school can handle the issues.
- I try very hard to never have police contact because of my two experiences I shared earlier and I can't forget about as a young black man.
- My son went through the same thing of being arrested for suspicion of having a gun.
- I was born and raised in Chicago and just seeing or being pulled over by the police my heart would be racing and there were lots of emotions were going through my mind while being questioned by the police so my answers and conversation had to be correct as I tried to remain calm on the outside.

### 3.4 Mental Health Reporting System

- I wonder if there's a way that we could have a list of people in the neighborhood who have mental health issues so that's available for police.
- Having a list of people in the neighborhood with mental health issues would really help a lot. Unfortunately, the funding for our work comes from the city, and there's only so much money for technology. It would be nice to have that type of information on the computer screens or if dispatch would be able to see if there's a mental observation of the individual or be able to look up the specifics of what that person has going on. From there it be great to see if there's specific contacts. It takes a lot of time to make sense of the information. The systems are not organized at all.
- We just got a new reporting system and now we have another reporting system that we use. The department can only look at one at a time. If you want more access, we have to pay more money. The police are stewards of tax dollars and that's why there's a budget. Better systems for us to use to be a great idea and if the government entities can communicate with the mental health department it would be helpful. However, there is HIPAA and we don't want to violate any privacy laws. Those things are in place for good and there's some bad with it. Additionally, there're differences for state and federal laws. We can only do what the laws allow us to do. We are law enforcement.

### Miscellaneous Responses

- I was sent straight to the mental institution.



- Do you have mental health training?
- We also have to deal with something called “excited delirium.” It is not a mental health issue but it can be hard to tell them apart. The smoking of K2 often brings this about.
- We take them to the hospital.
- A panic attack is or isn't a MH crisis. They go to the hospital usually.
- Describe depression.
- Not eating or drinking for days, not leaving the house. Taken to the hospital for diagnosis.
- I was in an institution and over-drugged. That was in Memphis.
- We do our best.
- I have PTSD. I hung by a purse strap from a bridge. My medication doesn't help
- Please come to the MPD. We will share job stuff, etc. with you.
- We all have anger issues.
- I hadn't heard about people with mental health issues or other issues not wanting to take their medicine because they don't feel good when they take them, like when you said your brother doesn't like to take them because it makes him feel drowsy.
- My brother's really strong and is very athletic and when he has to take his medicine for schizophrenia, he doesn't feel strong anymore. He feels tired. He doesn't like how he feels.
- I am happy to have learned the difference between systemic and trauma induced mental health issues.

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## **Parting Words**

### **4.1 Communication**

- Communication is key in everything. And you can't fix others.
- Communication.
- Communication, and I learned what mental health is.
- We need families to be more supportive. Instead of calling the police they need to try to solve at home first.
- Communication between family members before you get the police involved.
- If someone in your family has mental health issues, talk to them.
- I think patience is very important on both sides.

### **4.2 Learned More About Mental Health**

- Communication, and I learned what mental health is.
- Everyone has feelings but not everyone expresses them.
- What I'll take with me from tonight is steps to dealing with mental health issues.
- I feel knowledgeable to help someone who might be having a moment.

### **4.3 Beneficial Conversation**

- Impressed by student's contributions.
- I'm glad we have youth to run for office.

- I've done a few of these circles and thought this was a good and engaging group of young voices.

#### **Miscellaneous Responses**

- Pass.
- Be compassionate with people and try to help people with mental health issues.
- I am glad to see so many younger people in the circle.
- Pass.
- I feel OK.

## Annex 6 – Listening Circle 6

**Question Round One:** *“How have you seen this community talked about on social media? Share about a video/post you read on social media that directly affected you.”*

### 1.1 Negative Social Media

- Regarding what's on the regular media about Milwaukee. It's all very negative, about shootings and other bad stuff. It doesn't shed light on the great things Milwaukee has to offer. I see from social media that other people think it is awful here while it really has much to offer.
- The young people, 16 to 20, on social media are portrayed as being car thieves, etc. That has a bad effect on me because I am in that age group.
- It is unfortunate that media presents such a negative image of all us young people.
- On social media kids are always cussing each other out, fighting each other. I go out on my own and try to stop people from harming each other.
- One I can think of was when I heard about the shooting on Fourth and Keefe. My mom doesn't live far from there and my siblings walk to school or the bus. It scares me, it makes me scared for them. It is relatable in a way. I always think about the innocent bystander who gets shot just for being there at the wrong time.
- At my school, there was these younger kids, like freshmen and sophomores, that had a YouTube channel and would blatantly put someone out there and share their business. Now our principal banned social media use in school.
- I am not from here [Harambee]. Mostly what I see on social media is fights, like that one that happened at the store down the block a couple weeks ago. There were people fighting out there and then the police snipers showed up.
- I have a bad habit when I wake up which is (to go) to my Facebook social media account to see the number of robberies in my area. It is disappointing. Also, I see police and citizens victimizing one another on Facebook. I think that cops' intention is to be friendly.
- My friend sent a video, via social media, of my friend jumping on another kid at a playground. I didn't like that video because I was scared with the thought that it could be me being jumped on at the playground.
- There are two households that feud with each other on my block, which then creates an inaccurate portrayal of my neighborhood on Facebook.
- My community, 53206, is worst in the nation. People think of us as ghetto, with no future. This is what is portrayed on social media.
- My community, 53206, is portrayed on social media as “ratchet.” No future.

### 1.2 No Social Media Engagement

- I don't watch much because it is so one-sided. I don't want to buy into it. You can make things as bad or as good as you want.
- I don't use social media. I see TV, but it's always negative images. I'm not much affected by it.

- I am not on social media, but I watch the news. I think the news only shows Milwaukee communities as bad or only shows the bad things. I came here from Madison and that is all I saw, and I came here because I didn't want that to be the only view I had of the city. I don't want to see only negative when there are far more positive things happening.
- I really don't hear much. I would rather stay to myself and focus on my life.
- I don't do social media, so I have no idea.
- On social media I have seen little about 53202 in comparison to 53206. I am not on social media. There are lots of community events in my zip code, but not lots in social media.
- I'm not on social media.
- I don't know what others say on social media about our community.
- I'm not on social media. I don't watch TV about any community. But when I do see something positive in my community, it impacts me. I want to take part.

### 1.3 Negative News Media

- I don't use social media. I see TV, but it's always negative images. I'm not much affected by it.
- I am not on social media, but I watch the news. I think the news only shows Milwaukee communities as bad or only shows the bad things. I came here from Madison and that is all I saw, and I came here because I didn't want that to be the only view I had of the city. I don't want to see only negative when there are far more positive things happening.
- So, I really only follow animals and funny things on social media. I also hate watching the news. I feel media only post things for viewership and what will get a response out of people. We have a lot of great stuff in Milwaukee, but the news really only shows the negative. I mean you don't see these listening circles on the news or hear about the Habitat [for Humanity] cleanups on the news. They don't show the positive.
- I saw on the news a bus crash and then I found out my brother and sister were in the crash and had died. That was the last thing I saw on the news.
- On the news, 53206 is associated with shootings and death. Not much positivity about 53206.

### 1.4 Positive Social Media

- I saw a video on social media. Officers were playing basketball with neighborhood kids. It was very positive, and I enjoyed it.
- I saw a video on social media of a car accident and the whole community came running to help, to lend a hand to make sure the people were safe, unlike what is depicted.
- I am not a fan of social media, but I did hear through social media about a Habitat for Humanity cleanup that was happening and now I am a volunteer. We are doing a cleanup in the community soon actually. In that way, I think social media can be good.
- We used social media to advertise a community marathon that was going to take place in my neighborhood. The race brought people together. I, with so many others, were out there supporting those that participated in the marathon race.

- On social media I've read and saw how Milwaukee is becoming a better city through organizations like Running Rebels. Running Rebels helps out families in the community.

#### Other comments

- There is this one kid at my school that is a bully in the hallways at my school. He is loud as classes are going on and makes it difficult for me to hear and learn.
- I don't like all the misrepresentation that I see on social media these days. I don't think social media does a good job of representing people's lives realistically.
- In our community, although people don't have money, they are trying to do their best. But slumlords and trash create a different climate.
- As a citizen, I don't mind calling for city services, but others in my community don't do that. They don't care about the community.
- I walk the beat in MPD 5. I selected to do this. I grew up on the north side of Milwaukee. During the months I walked the beat I tried not to generalize about the neighborhood. I did see lots of good people: home owners, business owners, residents who have lived there for generations. They were glad to see us walking the beat. People think that because there is high crime rate, then there aren't good people in the community, but I know this isn't true.
- I noticed businesses investing in the neighborhood, hiring from the neighborhood, giving people opportunities. I agree that there are lots of great people. But we need to bridge the communication gap.
- Talk about 53206 has died down, but that is because the situation with trash, car crashes, shootings, etc. is accepted as normal. There was a shooting on my street and I slept through it! We are getting too comfortable with the bad situation. Change is needed.
- In my neighborhood, there are decent, safe homeowners trying to take over the bad situation, but unfortunately there is so much negativity: drug dealers, violence, speeding.

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**Question Round Two:** *"Who is someone you know personally in the neighborhood who you think makes the neighborhood great? Why?"*

#### 2.1 Family

- Most of my family is in Tennessee, but I have some cousins in the neighborhood who know everyone. It is nice because we can go to each other.
- In my community, I would say my mom, but she usually just tells me how to raise my child. I don't know many people here [Harambee], but I want to know more people here. I want to do some of the cleanups, be friendly. It seems like everyone works hard to keep the community up.
- My grandma makes my neighborhood great because she will come to my house often and doesn't like nor create drama.

- My pops and grandma make my neighborhood great. She hosts parties and stuff. She also helps the neighborhood by selling clothes and jewelry to the locals.
- My grandma also because she is a peaceful person.
- My uncle makes my neighborhood great. He is a man you can't get mad at. He invites others from around the block over for dinner and often looks after neighbors' pets and/or kids. Through these kind actions he is building trust amongst the neighbors.
- My auntie. She has cookouts for everybody on the whole block. We have fun at her place.
- My old man—everyone in the neighborhood knows him as the go-to guy. He is peaceful. He grills for the neighborhood. He is known in the city. He brings positivity to our neighborhood.
- My cousin, Theresa Scott, with Safe & Sound. She is always doing things for the community.
- My auntie, who helps the homeless and people who are down get back up.

## 2.2 Neighbors and Community Leaders

### 2.2.1 Those who keep the neighborhood clean

- I have a neighbor who keeps the community clean. She picks up trash, rakes, shovels snow for others. She is the only person I know who does that.
- Community groups that do neighborhood cleanups, have food pantries, and things like this. Those groups create the people who individually do good.
- I don't remember his name, but he is the next door person, the one who is always around here [Bader center]. He is always walking around the community and telling people to clean up the neighborhood. He is an older guy, black. Do any of you know who I am talking about?

Is it XXX?

Yeah! That's him! Yeah, XXX, Uncle XXX is what we call him. We like him and people listen to him.

- I don't know a lot of people around here, but Uncle Frankie is definitely one. I mean you see him out here and when the ice cream truck comes is buys ice cream for all the kids. He helps keep the place clean.
- People who clean up the neighborhood. They come together to clean up.
- My neighbor, who cleans up and is open to other people.

### 2.2.2 Those who mentor and help youth

- The director of the Running Rebels. Founder and director Victor Barnett Sr. He helps kids get on a good path and stay there.
- My mentor. He takes kids off the streets and helps them get on in good ways
- I kind of know a neighbor. After there were multiple shootings in the park he brought out BB courts for the kids to play on and be safe.

- I don't know a lot of people around here, but Uncle Frankie is definitely one. I mean you see him out here and when the ice cream truck comes is buys ice cream for all the kids. He helps keep the place clean.
- I just moved here so I don't know a lot of people, but the owner at the Juice Kitchen, I don't remember his name. Saber, I think? [XXXX runs the Juice Kitchen.] I didn't know all he did for the community, especially black business, scholastic incentives for the neighborhood kids. You know if they get good grades he will give them something from the store. He also provides healthy foods for the community, I am a big juicer so he gave me some tips. He seems like he really helps the community.
- I have a mentor in the neighborhood that has helped me out. One way he has done this is by encouraging me to participate in more events.
- Vic, who runs Running Rebels. He helps kids, offering tutoring, teaching them to become better people.

### 2.3 Officers

- XXX is someone who has helped me. She is a police officer and has helped me a lot with my kids and my problems. I have had a lot of issues and she supports me.
- There is an officer (who is one of the Running Rebels leaders) who is always there for me. He can fix problems and helps me out when I want to make something happen. He guides me and it means a lot to me.
- A veteran officer with MPD 5, who after many years on the force still chooses to work the late nights, is hands-on in the community, cares about dealing with major issues, has a strong work ethic.
- I agree that this veteran MPD 5 officer is an excellent role model.

### Other comments

- I don't really know my neighbors. But this young man next to me is making a difference by helping others. My hat is off to him.
- A person I know is a rapper with a positive message. XXX (also a group member).
- No one in my community is trying to help. They just stay in the house because of what happens outside, you know. People scared to leave their house and don't want to be involved with that.
- We can come over and help you. We can help you be that person.
- I actually live on the south side; however, I volunteer with the neighborhood kids. Also, I know someone who started the neighborhood block party. He will pick up the kids so they can attend the block party, blocks off the street to make a block party safe for all, and invites all to participate in the event. Eventually neighborhood businesses started to pay for the party. The block parties have always served as a great way to build relationships and build trust amongst your neighbors. Also, my neighbor will help out with shoveling and plowing his neighbors' sidewalks, driveways, and alleyways during the winter season.

- I have many important people I'd like to acknowledge as people who make the district great. (A few people are named.) These people help remember details about everyone in the neighborhood, organize meetings, help facilitate dialogue, help out local organizations, organize volunteers for events and local organizations, and share resources to help those in need.

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**Connected Conversation:** *"What's one thing that makes you feel connected to other people in the neighborhood? What are your ideas/suggestions on how to increase community engagement and build mutual respect between youth, adult residents, and law enforcement?"*

### 3.1 More Community Events and Discussion

- Groups like this all are very beneficial for the people here. But there are thousands who aren't getting the opportunity and need it. I get to sit next to a cop and know him/her. But lots of people never get that opportunity.
- We want more people to hear and be involved. We can talk and share and bring more people into these groups.
- We need to open up more events around the community. Any sorts of groups that can share a bond, share how hard things can be.
- Have more events.
- Advertise with flyers that possibly target a specific community group.
- Have activities like games, video games, and/or a basketball tournament with police officer participants.
- Maybe have a basketball tournament at a nearby park and get some Buck players to join in.
- Have more events like this listen circle.
- Hold neighborhood BBQs, including PO, so people in the community and POs can get to know each other in a relaxed environment. Residents can see that we POs are humans, with the same issues as others.

### 3.2 Positive Side of The Community

- Lots of people see how the neighborhood is presented as negative. There's always another side and our community has that, too.
- These circles show me how much compassion there is in the community. I go back and share with my other officers about the compassion I see in these young people
- I can't think of one person. I think we all work together to keep the neighborhood clean. Maybe the people who participate in the clean-up.

### 3.3 Negative Side of Social Media



- Do you all think there are bigger problems related to the social media from your lives that aren't specific to the community?
  - Yes, Chicago. Someone got shot. There was someone videotaping it and I don't think that was right. No one thought about the family and how that would affect them. I mean, his child could see that, see they dad shot and bleeding. That is traumatizing to them, that is traumatizing to me. I don't get why people post that.
  - I agree with that. I see that all the time with fights being put on social media. Physical ones, but also verbal ones, and I think that escalates things. The fights should be fixed between the people involved, then you have everyone on social media giving their opinions and making it worse. Nothing gets resolved like that.
- Do you all think social media is good or bad?
  - *2 participants simultaneously:* Bad.
  - I think it can be positive for communication, for example you (motioning to Participant 3) learned about the neighborhood cleanup through social media. But I think it can be bad too, like for the reasons we mentioned earlier. It all depends how it is used for sure.

#### Other comments

- I found my mentor when the man came to talk to us after we got out of jail.
- So where is this Juice Kitchen?
  - I don't know off-hand, but I can look it up after and give you the information. It is a cool place.
  - Yeah, I want to check it out too.
- I want to see more opportunities to go to places like museum like that kids' one, what's it called? Betty something....Betty Brinn. I think that would be cool. You know that one, Discovery World. It would be cool if we could go there and see that stuff.
- What do you think is a good way to communicate? I don't know what young people use nowadays. Like Facebook?
  - Honestly, Facebook is for old people, no offense (everyone in the circle laughs). But I think that is what the crazy people use too. Instagram is what is popular now.
- What is Instagram?
  - Instagram is like photos with captions underneath. You can't post anything without a photo.
  - I like that. It means you have to own what you say.
  - My mom does that too actually.
- What can we do to stop the violence from your all's perspective?
  - I think if we had boxing gloves instead of guns. I think you just get it out there. There was that one case where a cop and a person boxed it out and they were good after. They got it out and they, and it was more positive, they were shaking hands after. I mean it is different when you're getting arrested. You can't

- just say to a cop when they have your face in the car, "Let's get the gloves on," put something other than having guns all around.
- I agree. I think cops should have more Tasers and less guns. But also we buy guns and pop off all over our own community. I mean I saw this the other day. Someone pulled out a gun because someone honked at them.
  - Yes! I remember that!
  - I mean that is some road rage. You just saw the other person hit them brakes real fast. This was over on Howell. And it is a domino effect. You see that and think you need a gun and then you buy a gun and you pull out your gun because you think someone else is going to.
  - *Facilitator:* We are getting close to the end of our dialogue and I want to pause and give the opportunity for those who haven't had a chance to share to add anything on their mind. Would any of you who haven't had a chance to speak like to add something?
    - I am really enjoying listening to the conversation, it is cool.
    - I agree, I am learning a lot about you all.
    - I have another question. Why do you all think there is so much anger in the community?
      - I mean I can't speak for anyone else, but I know for me I have a lot of anger because of past trauma. I have been through a lot and I put the blame on others.
      - I was crazy, I had to spend some time in the hospital, like serious anger.
        - How did you get over it?
        - I got locked up for a bit. I needed space to calm down and think. I am not that angry anymore. I had a lot of issues, but track helped. From first to seventh grade I always was angry and acted crazy. Then in eighth grade I got put in the "nut house" two summers in a row. Then I started track and I am good. I do the 100-meter dash and long jump.
  - *One of the Running Rebels teens was asked if he too wanted to eventually become a Running Rebels mentor. His response was: "I already am a homeboy from home to many in the neighborhood". There are other organizations that function as mentorship organization for young kids and teens; for instance, Girls and Boys Club. Another question for the teen was: "How do you do outreach for Running Rebels?"*
    - The main forms of outreach are through the website, word of mouth, and via the larger community of Milwaukee as a whole.
  - How to make them want to come.
  - Entertainment.
  - Different location than district.
  - A more homey location.
  - *A youth asked MPD how they handle their jobs. Answer:* I take one day at a time. Some days are difficult, and it is too easy to take the problems home, but I can't let a bad day or situation negatively affect how I serve others. I pray.

- Answer: I am a new PO. People advise me not to take my work home. I like helping people.
- Answer: Rather than yell, talk respectfully.
- I shoveled snow for an old man.
- I mowed lawns for free.
- Every summer I help my auntie sell “ices” to raise money.
- I’m 36 years old. I challenge myself to get to know people in my community. Even though I move a lot, I get involved in neighborhood events, and I encourage others to get involved too. I took part in the Riverwest trash pickup.
- At Sojourner Truth Peace Center, I took part in the Christmas 2018 drive to collect toys for the shelter, I read stories to kids at the shelter, and ate with the families at the shelter. It was a great experience.

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### Parting Words

- Leadership.
- Have respect for each other.
- Motivation.
- Encouraging.
- Inspiring.
- Hope.
- Powerful.
- Good.
- I felt like everybody got to express.
- I got a good idea.
- Pass.
- I felt great.
- I felt good.
- I’m good.
- Made me feel happy.