CPS HR CONSULTING

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City of Lathrop

Police Chief and Department Policing Philosophy Survey

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Your Path to Performance

Table of Contents

City of Lathrop Police Chief & Department Policing Philosophy Survey

Respondent Demographics

The City of Lathrop reached out to the community, internal staff, and the City Council to obtain feedback on the new Lathrop Police Department's policing philosophy, provided services, and the desired qualities and characteristics for the new Chief of Police. The information collected will be considered in crafting the Police Department's philosophy and operations and help with the recruitment process of Police Department staff.

The survey, consisting of 11 scaled or multiple-select and 3 open-ended questions, was available from March 14th through June 11th. A link to the survey was posted on the City website and provided directly to the staff and City Council, with paper copies available upon request. A total of 525 complete and 14 partial surveys were submitted, including 124 online and 415 paper surveys, with the results summarized in this report.
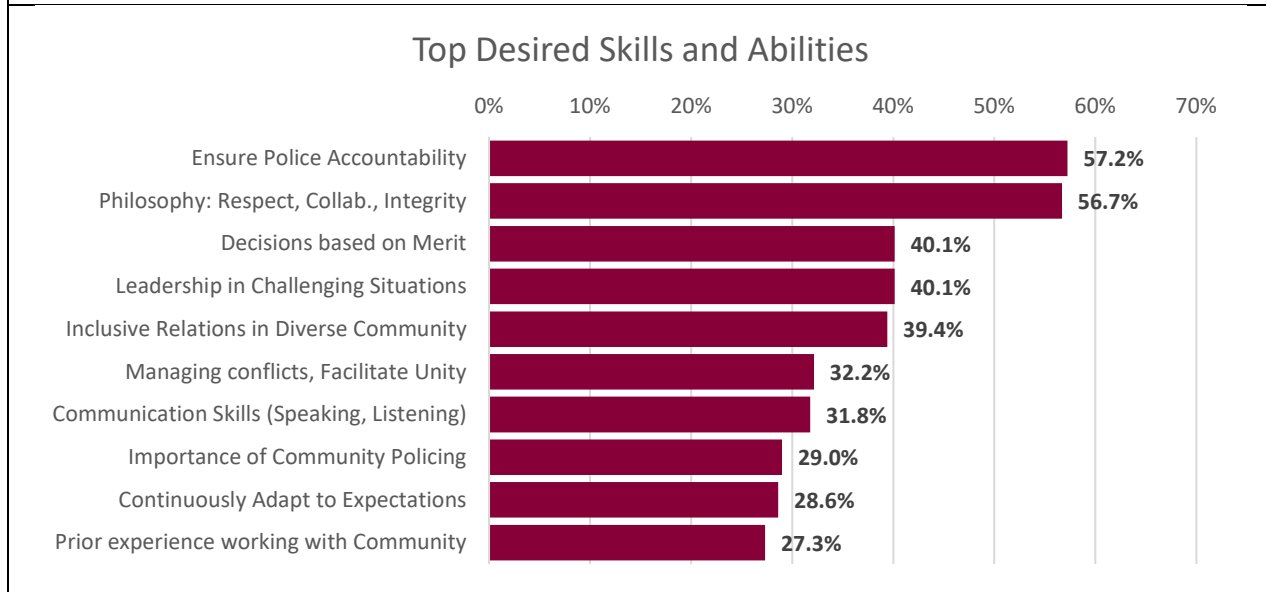
Section I: Police Chief Recruitment Feedback

Respondents provided feedback on the top five skills or abilities and the top five personal characteristics that would be essential for the Police Chief to be successful. The following tables outline the presented options along with the frequency and percentage of respondents selecting each option. The top ten are further outlined in the accompanying graphs.

Skills and Abilities

| Skill or Ability	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Ability to ensure police accountability/follow-through on behavior concerns	308	57.2%
Embracing a philosophy of respect, collaboration, and integrity	305	56.7%
Ability to make decisions based on merit and the "right thing to do"	216	40.1%
Skill in showing leadership skills in challenging situations	216	40.1%
Ability to build inclusive relationships spanning the diverse segments of the community	212	39.4%
Ability to managing conflicts and facilitate unity within various community groups or stakeholders	173	32.2%
Demonstrating communication skills including speaking and listening effectively	171	31.8%
Demonstrating the importance of Community Policing	156	29.0%

Skill or Ability	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Ability to continuously learn and adapt to current public safety expectations and standards	154	28.6%
Demonstrating prior experience working with the community to address concerns	147	27.3%
Interpersonal ability to work with City staff, elected officials, and the community	129	24.0%
Being a Visionary, able to provide direction in creating a new Department	125	23.2%
Forward-thinking, bringing fresh ideas to move the Department forward	102	19.0%
Ability to encourage consistent growth in officers using defined performance metrics	92	17.1%
Being comfortable in a public-facing role, interacting with various stakeholders	49	9.1%
Other:	51	9.5%
Included Ability to enforce current laws fairly and consistently, having diverse staff, not getting caught up in politics, ensuring officer safety/supporting officers.		

Top Desired Skills and Abilities

Ensure Police Accountability	57.2%
Philosophy: Respect, Collab., Integrity	56.7%
Decisions based on Merit	40.1%
Leadership in Challenging Situations	40.1%
Inclusive Relations in Diverse Community	39.4%
Managing conflicts, Facilitate Unity	32.2%
Communication Skills (Speaking, Listening)	31.8%
Importance of Community Policing	29.0%
Continuously Adapt to Expectations	28.6%
Prior experience working with Community	27.3%

Overall, the most desired skills or abilities centered around ensuring police accountability and embracing a philosophy of respect and collaboration with more than half the respondents identifying these skills as being in the top five. This was followed by being able to demonstrate leadership in challenging situations, making decisions based on merit, and building inclusive relationships with the community.

Personal Characteristics

Personal Characteristic	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Trustworthy / Integrity	395	73.4%
Calm and respectful in challenging situations	265	49.3%
Passion / Enthusiasm for providing the best in public safety services	240	44.6%
Empathetic / Understanding/Compassionate	211	39.2%
Transparent	208	38.7%
Humility / Ability to accept constructive feedback	204	37.9%
Dependable / Follows through	182	33.8%
Respectful of Others	176	32.7%
Commitment to job and the staff	174	32.3%
Solution-Oriented	141	26.2%
Ability to Command Respect	103	19.1%
Inspirational / Motivational	95	17.7%
Sense of humor / good natured	74	13.8%
Innovative / Visionary	54	10.0%
Interpersonal Skills	52	9.7%
Collaborative	38	7.1%
Other:	25	4.6%

Included Ability to be tough/consistent in enforcing laws, cognizant of diversity, respectful of others, approachable, and ability to consistently do what is right.

Top Community Concerns
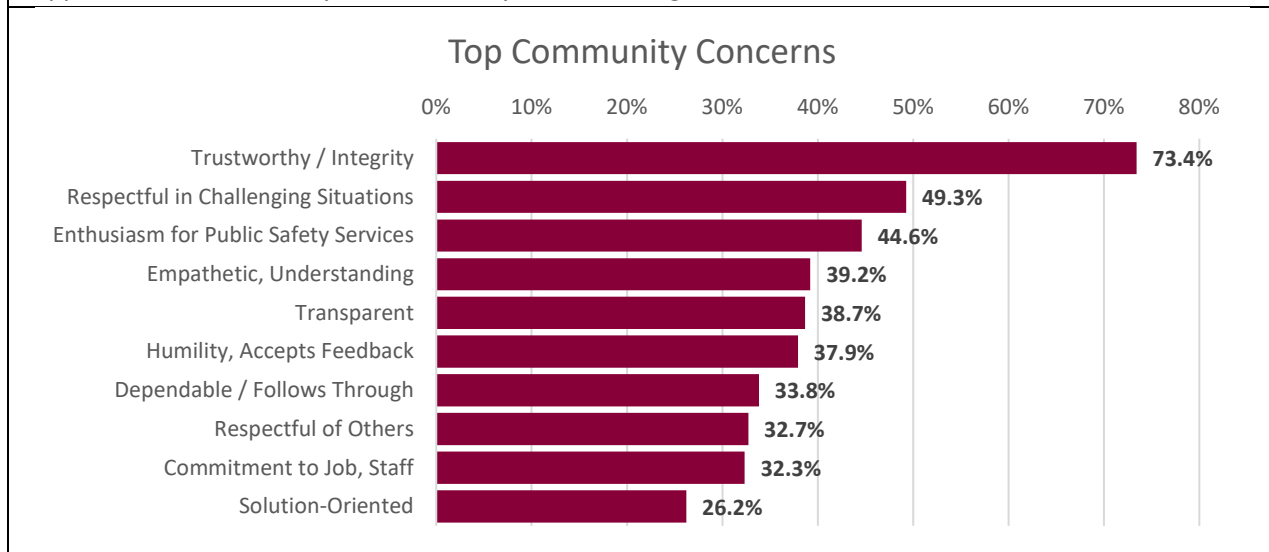
Overall, the most desired personal characteristic by far with almost three-quarters of respondents selecting it was being Trustworthy and having Integrity. This was followed by being respectful in the face of challenges and showing enthusiasm for providing the best in public safety services.
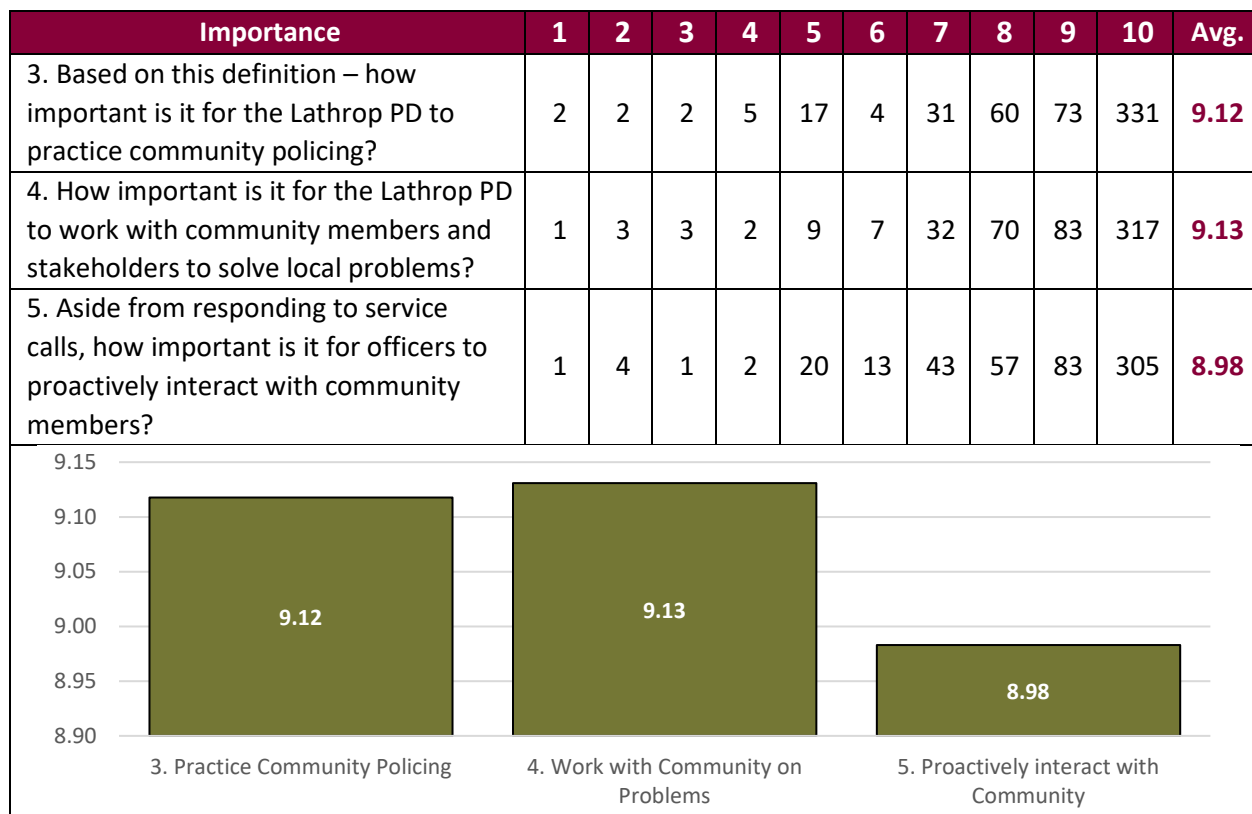
Section II: Service Philosophy Feedback

Importance of Community Policing

The respondents provided feedback on the desired service philosophy and how the police should prioritize services over nine scaled or multiple select questions. The importance of three aspects of community policing was assessed on a scale from 1 (not important) to 10 (critically important) with consideration to the following definition of Community Policing.

> *"Community policing promotes a developed partnership between law enforcement and the served community. Law enforcement officers get to know and work with the community to identify and solve problems or to address conditions leading to public safety issues."*
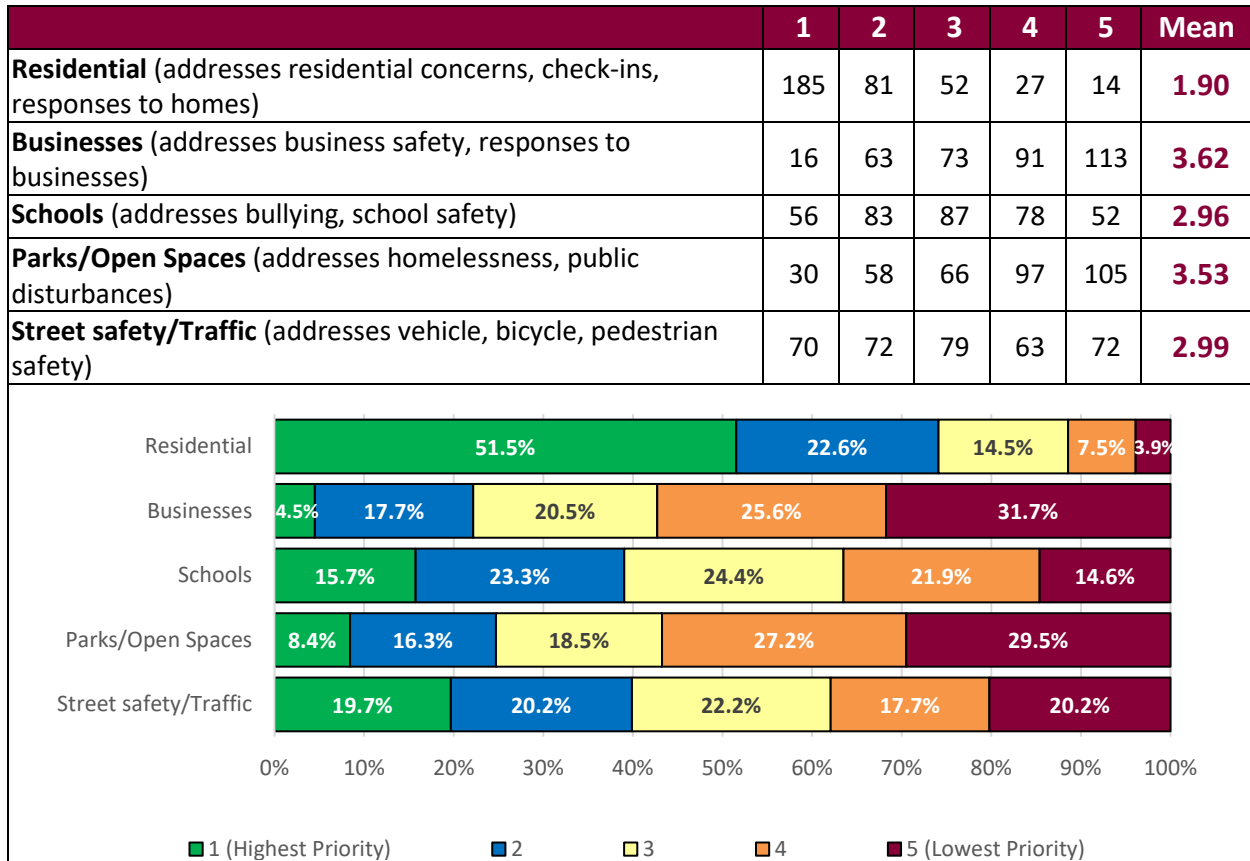
The following table outlines the frequency of each importance rating and overall average rating for each item followed by a graph showing the average importance.

Importance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Avg.
3. Based on this definition – how important is it for the Lathrop PD to practice community policing?	2	2	2	5	17	4	31	60	73	331	**9.12**
4. How important is it for the Lathrop PD to work with community members and stakeholders to solve local problems?	1	3	3	2	9	7	32	70	83	317	**9.13**
5. Aside from responding to service calls, how important is it for officers to proactively interact with community members?	1	4	1	2	20	13	43	57	83	305	**8.98**

Overall, feedback indicated it was very important and nearing critical that the City of Lathrop Police Department practice community policing (average 9.12) with similar importance on the officers working with the community to solve local problems (average 9.13). There was slightly less importance (but still very important) placed on officers proactively interacting with the community (average 8.98).

Focused Efforts

Respondents reviewed five community groups or service areas and ranked them from highest priority (1) to lowest priority (5) on where the police should focus their efforts. The following table outlines the frequency of each ranking and overall average ranking for each area with **lower averages reflecting higher priority to align with the scale**.

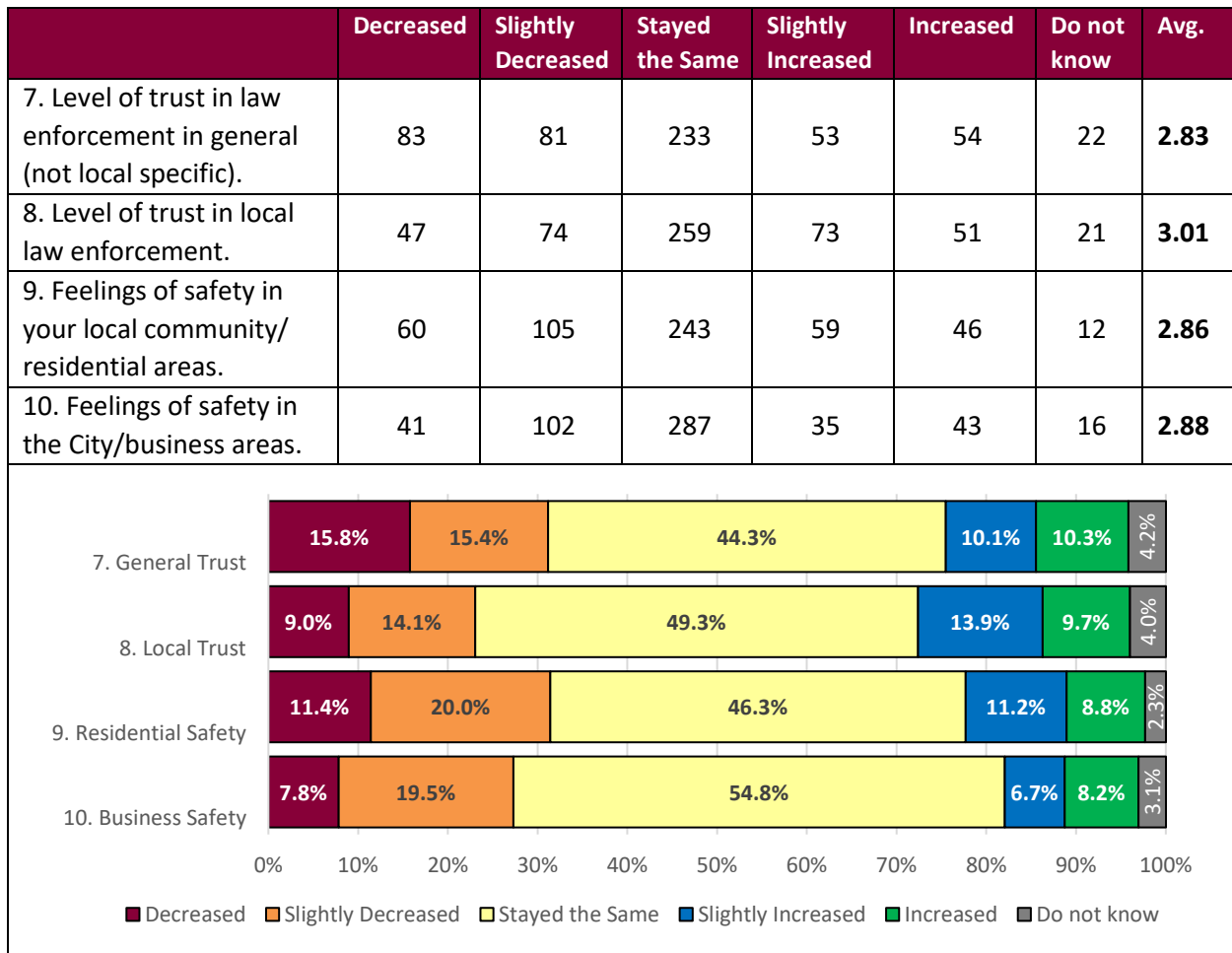|	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Residential (addresses residential concerns, check-ins, responses to homes)	185	81	52	27	14	**1.90**
Businesses (addresses business safety, responses to businesses)	16	63	73	91	113	**3.62**
Schools (addresses bullying, school safety)	56	83	87	78	52	**2.96**
Parks/Open Spaces (addresses homelessness, public disturbances)	30	58	66	97	105	**3.53**
Street safety/Traffic (addresses vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian safety)	70	72	79	63	72	**2.99**

Overall, feedback indicated the police department should primarily focus on residential safety concerns (average rank of 1.90) followed by a focus on school safety (average rank of 2.96) and street safety/traffic (average rank of 2.99). While parks/open space safety (average rank of 3.53) and business concerns (average rank of 3.62) were ranked as the lowest priority, this does not mean they were not important as respondents could only use each rank once, so the ratings are only presented as relative importance to one another[1]. Residential concerns were consistently ranked the highest priority by just over half the respondents while Street safety was more evenly distributed across all ranks.

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[1] The online survey restricted responses to only use each rank once, however the paper copies did not have this capability. Any paper copies that did not follow instructions and used the same rank on multiple items were removed to avoid skewing the data – this resulted in the removal of 169 of the 416 paper responses.

Degree of Change in Perceptions

Respondents reviewed four statements assessing if feelings of trust or safety had changed over the last 12 months on a five-point scale from Decreased (1) to Increased (5) with an option to indicate *Do not know* if the respondent was not sure how to answer. The following table outlines the frequency of each response and overall average level of change, excluding those who indicated they did not know.

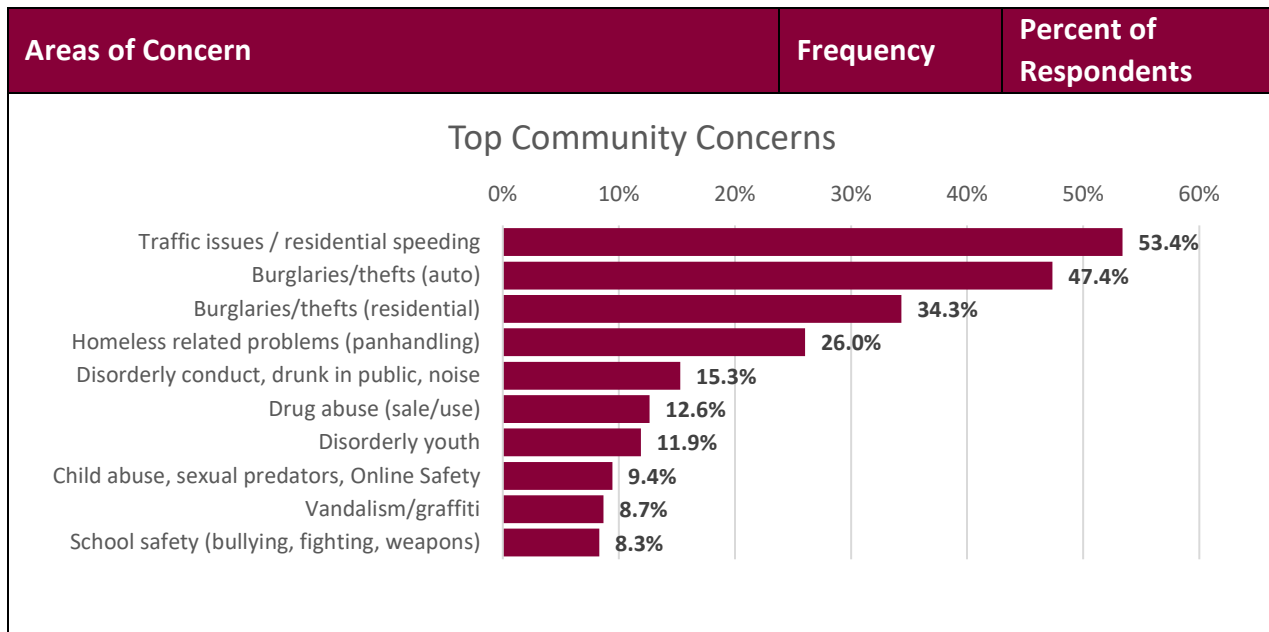|	Decreased	Slightly Decreased	Stayed the Same	Slightly Increased	Increased	Do not know	Avg.
7. Level of trust in law enforcement in general (not local specific).	83	81	233	53	54	22	**2.83**
8. Level of trust in local law enforcement.	47	74	259	73	51	21	**3.01**
9. Feelings of safety in your local community/ residential areas.	60	105	243	59	46	12	**2.86**
10. Feelings of safety in the City/business areas.	41	102	287	35	43	16	**2.88**

Overall, feedback indicated that respondents mostly indicated there was no change in levels of trust or feelings of safety, however there was a slight negative trend with more respondents indicating a decrease in trust and safety than an increase. There was a slight decrease in trust in law enforcement in general (average of 2.83), however there was no change in the trust of local law enforcement (average of 3.01). In contrast to the consistency of trust in local law enforcement, there was a decrease in both feelings of residential and business safety (averages of 2.86 and 2.88, respectively).

Areas of Community Concern

Respondents provided feedback on the top three issues that they perceived to be the greatest problems or issues in their community. The following table outlines the presented options along with the frequency and percentage of respondents selecting each option. The top ten are further outlined in the accompanying graphs.

Areas of Concern	Frequency	Percent of Respondents
Traffic issues / residential speeding	283	53.4%
Burglaries/thefts (auto)	251	47.4%
Burglaries/thefts (residential)	182	34.3%
Homeless- or transient-related problems (panhandling)	138	26.0%
Disorderly conduct / public intoxication / noise violations	81	15.3%
Drug abuse (e g , manufacture, sale, or use of illegal/prescription drugs)	67	12.6%
Disorderly youth (e g , cruising or gathering)	63	11.9%
Child abuse Child sexual predators / Internet safety	50	9.4%
Vandalism/graffiti	46	8.7%
School safety (e g , bullying, fighting, or weapons)	44	8.3%
Driving under the influence (i e , alcohol or drugs)	38	7.2%
Gang activity	36	6.8%
Hate crimes	23	4.3%
Gun violence	21	4.0%
Fraud / identity theft	18	3.4%
Homeland security problems	14	2.6%
Domestic violence (adult)	12	2.3%
Underage drinking	8	1.5%
Physical assault	6	1.1%
Sexual assault / rape (adult)	5	0.9%
Homicide	2	0.4%
Mugging	2	0.4%
Prostitution	2	0.4%
Other - Briefly Describe	68	12.8%
Included concerns on street racing/donuts in the street, catalytic converter thefts, noise disturbances (parties, dogs), and porch thefts.		

Areas of Concern	Frequency	Percent of Respondents

Top Community Concerns

Concern	Percent
Traffic issues / residential speeding	53.4%
Burglaries/thefts (auto)	47.4%
Burglaries/thefts (residential)	34.3%
Homeless related problems (panhandling)	26.0%
Disorderly conduct, drunk in public, noise	15.3%
Drug abuse (sale/use)	12.6%
Disorderly youth	11.9%
Child abuse, sexual predators, Online Safety	9.4%
Vandalism/graffiti	8.7%
School safety (bullying, fighting, weapons)	8.3%

Overall, the largest area of concern was traffic issues, speeding in residential areas with just over half of respondents identifying it as a top concern. Similarly, burglaries/thefts related to vehicles as identified by just under half the respondents. These top two concerns were followed by residential burglaries/thefts and homeless related issues were identified as top concerns with approximately one third and one quarter of respondents selecting them, respectively.

Section III: Open-Ended Feedback

The respondents provided feedback on three open-ended questions asking for suggestions to improve police services, describing what respect and fairness looked like, and describing how to build community trust and rapport. The comments were reviewed with the frequent themes and sample comments summarized below.

Suggestions to Police Chief for Improved Services

Respondents provided a total of 440 suggestions for improved services with the following themes with select quotes emphasizing each theme. The first two were mentioned at notably higher volumes.

- Get to know the community, understanding the needs of the community.
  - *"Don't operate in a silo. Have or get involved in community activities. Get to know your community. Have police volunteers who act as community liaisons between the police & the community. Listen to the needs of the community you serve."*
  - *"The Chief to encourage officers to be proactive and visible in our residential neighborhoods. Seeing patrol vehicles regularly helps establish trust and community partnership."*

- Increase the amount of patrol in residential areas, reported problems often go unaddressed – especially in the evening/early morning hours.
  - *"Police presence in my neighborhood is virtually zero. On Jasper Street we feel abandoned. 2 am dirt bikes, fireworks, cars racing. PLEASE HELP PLEASE"*
  - *"More routine patrol in neighborhoods, faster response and solution to complaints."*

- Increase emphasis on safe driving through enforcement of speed limits, stop signs, addressing the street racing.
  - *"Address the citizens not stopping at Stop signs & the constant drag racing."*
  - *"Speeding, cruising, racing, lack of yielding to pedestrians, lack of stopping at stop signs is prevalent in the River Islands area. It is unsafe and I was almost hit in a cross walk by a sleeping parent going to one of the schools."*

- Encourage officer customer service, promoting friendly and respectful interactions so the officers are seen as part of the community and not just enforcers.
  - *"All staff should not have the us vs them personality. The chief should be open and honest to the members in the community with minor and major incidents. The police officers should make regular patrols to meet with citizens as a friendly contact."*

- Incorporate mental health and social services in the provided services to help reduce crime by addressing underlying issues.
  - *"Ensuring understanding that there should be a collaborative effort policing and social services. Criminalizing/ penalizing grouping in socio-economic disadvantage situations is sometimes counter-productive."*

Fairness and Respect in Interactions

Respondents provided a total of 423 comments on what fairness and respect look like in interactions with the Police with the following themes with select quotes emphasizing each theme. The first one was mentioned at much higher volumes.

- Treating everyone the same regardless of race, gender, sexuality, disability, or role in the city.
  - *"Cultural awareness; listen and respect others values/beliefs"*
  - *"All parties should be treated with the same respect not dependent on address, ethnicity, language, education, who you know"*
  - *"Having empathy, trusting judgment, and treating all people with honestly and compassion while still doing a tough job."*

- Taking time to actively listen to all sides, gather required information to make decisions
  - *"Active listening, ensure integrity within department, work with community leaders"*
  - *"Equal and dignified treatment of all people that is fact based. Reasonable, evidence based explanations for inequities."*
  - *"Allow opportunity to explain and be heard before forming conclusion"*

- Using language and mannerism that are respectful, courteous, and empathetic, not aggressive or demanding
  - *"Approach incidents calmness and patience listening and understanding situations in a non judgmental way. Treat everybody equally."*
  - *"I know police have a big job, I've felt better when police show compassion over sternness and a higher than thee attitude, I met both in my 65 years"*

- Ensure accountability and transparency in police actions to build community respect/trust
  - *"Respect is earned, officers need to show the community that they are trustworthy by interacting with the community."*
  - *"The police chief should hold all officers accountable and require all officers to be approachable for members to contact them with any needs or concerns. Its how the chief trains and leads the department."*

- Consistent application of laws based on facts and not pre-conceived notions.
  - *"Statistics may prove one race has more DUIs than another; however, it does not mean every man or woman in that race drink and drive. Don't allow your daily job duties to cloud your judgement or categorize people. Open mind, transparent actions and positive intent."*
  - *"Consistent enforcement of laws, be they traffic enforcement infractions or penal code violations. A willingness to hear all sides of the situation and act based on facts and not emotion."*

Building Community Trust and Rapport

Respondents provided a total of 360 comments on what building community trust and rapport look like in interactions with the Police with the following themes with select quotes emphasizing each theme. The first one was mentioned at much higher volumes.

- Get involved in the community, community events in non-enforcement manners; more social building opportunities.
  - *"Building community trust and rapport is purposefully and intentionally engaging with all Lathrop regardless of nationality, race, gender, and social-economic status. Taking time out to get to know the people, citizen of this great city and not as your enemy. Demonstrate a love for the community in actions that are reflected in one looking to build and support the community."*
  - *"Building community trust and rapport would center around following through with commitments and being involved in activities beyond just law enforcement."*

- Have officers be approachable, friendly to encourage communication
  - *"Saying hello, introducing yourself, smiling, positive intent attitude, whether in a park, school, business, or on the street."*
  - *"Attendance in community events approachable demeanor (…when police arrive to investigate something, I maintain a friendly demeanor, smile and wave, and they do the same for me, which makes me feel safe)"*

- Keep community informed of what is happening, what is being done.
  - *"The police department should provide monthly meetings with citizens in the community to discuss concerns and to resolve crime detection."*
  - *"Maybe have a newsletter or community board w/ information for our citizens."*

- Fulfill expectations of law enforcement, follow-through on promises; ensure officers are accountable for meeting expectations.
  - *"Building community trust and rapport looks to me like following through with your words or promises, having understanding and compassion."*
  - *"Be tough on crime; actively patrol the community; follow up on cases"*

- Seek community feedback, acknowledge community concerns
  - *"Being able to engage community in discussions about how best to address policy problems."*
  - *"Build trust and rapport, think of the issues the community cares about and address them. Having our own police force will help with the image of the city"*

- Engage the youth through programs, activities to start good relationship when young.
  - *"Police being present in as many community and recreation activities as possible - youth especially where there are kids & youth/ young."*
  - *"I think building presence in our schools and youth is a good place to start. Building from the ground up so our younger generation learns to respect our police force."*