

# Community Views on Criminal Justice: Quarter 3 Report

Working Paper #2016-11

July 2016



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This research is part of the Rochester area Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) Initiative, which is supported through the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

## COMMUNITY VIEWS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Quarter 3 Report

The Center for Public Safety Initiatives (CPSI)'s Community Views on Criminal Justice project records public perception of policing and the criminal justice system in Rochester, NY. This quarterly report discusses results from six focus groups on community relations and procedural justice. Research findings lay the basis for actionable recommendations to improve police-community relations. Groups surveyed include three community organizations<sup>1</sup> (reform-advocacy groups), two neighborhood organizations (a Northeast neighborhood association and Southwest business association), and one police-citizen group. Results indicate:

- 1) The majority of participants had contact with the RPD in the past six months. The neighborhood organization and police-citizen group reported more positive interactions than the community organizations. The following factors influenced groups' judgement of interactions: officers and citizens' attitudes, outcome, officers' actions, response times, poor treatment of minority groups, and disparities between officers and community members.
- 2) Most groups felt safe in their neighborhoods at night, with familiarity greatly influencing safety. Both neighborhood groups reported being desensitized to violence and crime since they live daily with these issues. Participants take steps to create safety (i.e., carry mace, approach drug dealers and users). A few groups also felt their safety is jeopardized by reporting crimes to police since they do not remain anonymous.
- 3) The main community concerns affecting all of Rochester are gun violence, drug issues and strained police-community relations with minority groups. Almost all groups were dissatisfied with police responses to community concerns, and disagreed that they trust

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<sup>1</sup> In this project, "community organizations" include respondents from across the city of Rochester; in contrast, "neighborhood organizations" have participants from a geographically bound area.

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the police to do what is best for the community. Groups reported strong frustration and disappointment that the community is not safer, and that police-community relations remain strained.

- 4) Most groups felt that police officers are not fair in the way they enforce the law. Many groups shared experiences where officers treated people differently due to race/ethnicity, economic status, gender, immigrant status, and/or neighborhood. Participants reported that police officers bring their bias and assumptions into situations, which negatively affects interactions with community members. Young people and neighborhoods with higher crime rates are reportedly at the highest risk for police profiling and bias.
- 5) There is relatively more trust and belief in RPD than in the justice system as more participants believed that the justice system does not try to do what is best for the community. Groups described the system as a broken loop that funnels the same people in and out without enough resources to prevent this cycle. Half of the groups said that neighborhoods and residents are “re-victimized” by justice system failings. The prison system and courts are seen as more problematic; probation, parole and, to a lesser extent, public defenders work more “for the people” yet are under resourced.
- 6) Almost every group agreed that body-worn cameras are good for the relationships between police and the Rochester community, though the neighborhood association was neutral. Some groups had questions and/or concerns regarding body camera policies. Groups felt positively that cameras will make misinterpretation of police-citizen encounters harder, yet some participants are concerned about the manipulation of camera footage.

### Interaction with Police

***Questions:** Have you had any contact or interaction with a member of the Rochester Police Department (RPD) in the past 6 months? Would you describe your most recent interaction with the police as good, bad, neither good nor bad, or no interaction? Did the interaction with the police get started by you calling or approaching the police or the police approaching you?*

The majority of quarter three participants had contact with the RPD in the past six months. Interactions were mixed as the neighborhood organizations and police-citizen group reported more positive interactions than the community organizations. Both reform-advocacy groups primarily interacted with police through work-related meetings, as do the police-citizen group though they also make calls for service. The neighborhood and life-skills training group mostly make calls for service or were approached by police officers. Business associations typically called RPD for help with people or problems surrounding their businesses. Though some groups reported positive or neutral interactions with officers, many participants discussed friends' or families' negative interactions which have influenced their views.

For almost all groups (all except reform-advocacy group #11<sup>2</sup>), the officers' and citizens' attitude made a difference in whether the outcome was positive or negative. The reform-advocacy group #13 felt a poor attitude towards citizens was more common among female officers. Some groups (life-skills and reform-advocacy group #13) agreed that when officers have a poor attitude it makes citizens feel that the officer is not listening to what they have to say. The outcome of interactions also impacted interactions (i.e., whether the individual got a ticket), with participants reporting that citizens being given a warning does not resolve the problem and is seen as a negative interaction. Business associations reported that when officers

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<sup>2</sup> Since two reform-advocacy groups were interviewed, we will refer to each by their focus group number to highlight differences in responses between these groups.

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show up to address loitering, the problem usually persists after they leave so interactions are rated as poor.

Almost all groups felt unhappy with the way that minority communities were treated by RPD (both reform-advocacy groups, the police-citizen, and neighborhood groups). The reform-advocacy group #11 reported that women are treated with bias by police; a participant shared how an officer was rude (i.e. sarcastic) and he acted as if he thought women were poor drivers. This group also shared how friends in the LGBTQ community are often treated poorly by RPD. The police-citizen group reported that immigrant communities' interactions with police are often poor as officers treat them disrespectfully by talking very loud, reported thinking this will help with the language barrier. Participants described how the lack of respect reinforces immigrants' distrust of police experienced in their home country.

Some groups were upset by the disparities between RPD officers and the citizens they serve. The reform-advocacy group #11 believed that many officers are Caucasian while most city residents are African-American or Black. The group believed this disparity is a factor in citizens feeling less safe with increased police presence. The neighborhood group discussed the disparity between where officers live and where they patrol. They felt that officers do not put effort into getting to know residents since they do not live in the community, and believed this creates negative interactions. Many participants agreed that, "You know your mailman, and the UPS man, but not the officers [in your neighborhood]."

### **Safety**

***Question: How safe do you feel in your neighborhood at night?***

In four out of the six groups the majority reported feeling safe (very or somewhat safe) in their neighborhoods at night. In contrast, the neighborhood and business associations

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reported feeling somewhat or very unsafe in their neighborhoods. Familiarity was a common factor that influenced feelings of safety. Groups reported that knowing and interacting with their neighbors increased feeling of safety. The police-citizen group discussed feeling safer because they have a personal investment in the area. One participant explained: “I may be naïve, but I feel safe because I have an investment, and I don’t want to feel unsafe in my neighborhood.” Another participant said he purposely walks around his crime-ridden area and gets involved because he wants the streets to feel safe.

The two largest issues brought up by groups who reported feeling unsafe were drug activity and robberies. Other factors that influence all groups feelings of safety included prior experiences and perceptions, vulnerability (i.e., women and those with disabilities as more vulnerable), and police patrols. For the police-citizen group, police patrolling the neighborhood them feel safer officers can address issues before they escalate. In other groups (life-skills and business associations) participants reported that even when police patrol they ignore criminal activity right in front of them (more on this in the satisfaction section below).

Some groups said they have become desensitized to violence in their neighborhoods because drug deals, people using drugs outside their houses, and shootings are part of their daily life (neighborhood and business associations groups). Both groups discussed trying to make themselves feel safer since most participants felt that RPD has not solved these problems. One business association participant reported carrying mace and no longer carrying a purse to avoid being a target for robberies near her work place. The neighborhood group often patrols their neighborhood and interacts with drug dealers or users, which they said helps them feel empowered and as if they have some control over neighborhood problems. People in these groups did not rely on police to help them feel safe in their communities.

### Community Concerns and Trust

*Questions: Overall, how satisfied are you with police responses to community concerns? (Responses range from very satisfied to very unsatisfied.) Rate how strongly you agree or disagree with these statements: I trust the police to do what is best for the community. Overall, the criminal justice system (police, courts, probation, prisons, parole, etc.) tries to do what is best for the community.*

Most groups were dissatisfied with police responses to community concerns (life-skills group, reform-advocacy focus group #11, the business and neighborhood associations). In contrast, half of the other reform-advocacy group #13 and the police-citizen group were somewhat satisfied with police responses. Many groups were dissatisfied due to RPD reportedly not prioritizing issues of violence and crime in their neighborhoods (life-skills, neighborhood and business associations). In half of the groups interviewed, stories where officers focused on a simple problem (i.e., issuing tickets) and ignored larger problems right in front of them (i.e., drug sales near officers or cop cars) were common. One participant shared how she was stopped for riding her bike without a helmet and as the officer was writing the ticket, a drug transaction was taking place right by them. Groups wanted RPD to address these larger issues plaguing neighborhoods so that community members can feel safe. As one person said: “[I wish I] could walk up and down the street without worrying who was coming up from behind.”

**Community concerns.** Strained police-community relations with minority groups (see the Dignity/Respect section), violence and crime issues were seen by almost all groups as major concerns impacting the entire Rochester community. The neighborhood and business associations described ubiquitous drug sales, frequent gun violence, loitering and robberies (reported by businesses) as affecting their daily life. Assaults, shootings, and drug sales are also reported as common issues by the life-skills, police-citizen and reform-advocacy focus group

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#11. Loitering was of particular concern to business associations who need customers' to believe their business and parking areas are safe places to stop.

Almost all groups reported strong frustration with police for not solving these problems and disappointment that the community is not safer. Reform-advocacy group #13 believed RPD did not want to respond to calls in violence-prone areas of the city and sympathized with police. Some business owners said they no longer report crimes they witness nor attend PCIC meetings because they felt it is ineffective and puts them at risk. In contrast, the police-citizen group felt the community is not good about voicing their concerns to the police.

About half of groups reported dissatisfaction with poor response times to calls for service (neighborhood association, business associations, and some participants in the police-citizen group). Participants believed response times are worse due to race, economics, and neighborhood (i.e., officers respond more quickly to Park Avenue than to Clinton Avenue), and not having a police section dedicated to responding to their neighborhood under the new five-section model. People with physical disabilities at a higher risk of getting mugged, and young people at higher risk of police contact were also common concerns. One reform-advocacy group reported disappointment in the lack of improvement in relations over the last few years despite participating in many police-community discussions with productive feedback.

**Satisfaction through collaboration.** Satisfaction with RPD was reported when police collaborate with citizens on community issues. The police-citizen group reported that RPD is responsive and reliable once the community initiates a direction (i.e., RPD involvement in reconciliation conversations between the African American and Nepali communities). The reform-advocacy group #11 also discussed productive conversations with RPD on policy or possible program topics (i.e., body-worn cameras and a civilian review board).



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A few groups also reported higher levels of satisfaction with officers they trust and who respond in a timely fashion. Though overall unsatisfied with RPD, the neighborhood association was relatively happier with Crime Prevention Officers (CPOs) who work with them to address neighborhood assaults and open-air drug dealing. One police-citizen participant wanted more residents to know about CPOs' because: "This cadre of officers is a way to make the justice system work for you." Others described trust in RPD built through PAC-TAC or more satisfaction when officers are friendly and helpful (reform-advocacy group #13).

**Citizens fear reporting.** Many business association members reported that they have stopped calling to report issues (i.e., drug deals or carrying weapons). Owners said that criminals leave by the time police arrive. Business and neighborhood association members said officers put them in jeopardy of retaliation by coming to the business or their homes for paperwork completion. Groups wanted to remain anonymous when they report to RPD.

**Trust in police?** Five out of six groups reported disagreement or strong disagreement (life-skills group and neighborhood association) that they trust the police to do what is best for the community. Several members of the life-skills group laughed out loud or sighed in disagreement at this question. In direct contrast, the police-citizen group agreed that they trust the police and believed that RPD knows what is best for the whole community because they see the big picture and are objective. They felt that RPD is trying to balance many priorities with limited resources. The police-citizen groups' trust in police developed through collaborative meetings, work with CPOs and/or through PAC-TAC. They linked trust in police having confidence in officers make the right call or offer the best judgment.

A few groups felt trust is about taking effective action on problems. The reform-advocacy group #13 felt that officers do not protect all community members equally, and often

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approach community members as if they are guilty or a criminal. The neighborhood association described officers in the following categories, with most falling into the last two groups: 1) those who “really care and do right,” 2) those who “intimidate and punish,” and 3) those who see policing as a “9 to 5 job.” The life-skills group believed some officers do not want to deal with citizens. Business owners said trust takes “a long time” to develop, and can be built through good relationships.

**Justice system not doing what is best.** Half of the groups interviewed disagreed or strongly disagreed that that the justice system tries to do what is best for the community (both reform-advocacy groups, and the neighborhood association). Of the other groups, half of the police-citizen and business associations groups, and some life skills participants agreed that the justice system does what is best. The police-citizen group believed that it is often unclear whose role it is to deal with community concerns: the community, RPD, or the justice system. They felt the justice systems as a whole needs to stop crime, and community members need to help change behaviors of offenders. In contrast, a few groups described the system as working for itself rather than the community (i.e., a “brotherhood” between the District Attorney’s office and police, or arresting people for job security).

**Neighborhoods victimized.** Business associations and life-skills training participants felt that the justice system agencies do not work well together. Groups described the system as a loop where people arrested are often released by courts. Some participants report officers that said they are frustrated the same criminals are back on the streets, and others felt there are not enough resources to prevent this cycle. One group believed it is difficult for the system to work well when many people know how to “work the system” (i.e., reportedly some officers let them off easy, or how much of a drug to carry to avoid jail time). Business owners described the

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relationship between officers and criminals on the street as “a cat and mouse game,” and report disappointment that RPD has not developed a strategy to throw the criminals off balance. Half of the groups (business associations, neighborhood association and police-citizen members) said that neighborhoods and residents are “re-victimized” by the “broken” justice system.

### **Dignity, Respect and Fairness**

***Questions:*** *Rate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements: Police officers in my community are generally fair in the way they enforce the law. The police in my community generally treat people with dignity and respect. The criminal justice system generally treats people fairly.*

The majority of groups disagreed that police officers are fair in the way they enforce the law (both reform-advocacy groups, the neighborhood association and life-skills group). The police-citizen group agreed that police are fair in their enforcement, and business owners were split between agreement and disagreement. The police-citizen group stated that the question phrasing police as “generally” fair greatly influenced their answers towards the positive since fairness is affected by race, and most participants answered from their experiences as white males. One person stated of police-community relations: “I know that there is a very serious problem in race relations in the city [Rochester] and that saddens me and I hibernate from it because it sickens me. [It’s] a tender issue.”

For most groups, discussions indicated that fairness, dignity/respect and equality are closely related. Groups also disagreed that police officers in the community treat people with dignity and respect (both reform-advocacy groups and the neighborhood association), and many participants of the life-skills group strongly disagreed. Only the business associations rated police higher for treating people with dignity and respect than in fair enforcement of the law.

**Dignity/respect.** The police-citizen group felt that dignity and respect are often culturally defined, and can be dependent on the community member. Participants agreed that

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awareness and cultural competence are very important for police. Community members need to be “acknowledged, recognized and heard,” and talked to as if they are “a human being.” The neighborhood association said what matters is the way the community member feels after the officer leaves the situation.

The neighborhood association felt a lack of respect from officers who patrol their neighborhood and had stories of disrespect in other parts of Rochester (i.e., feeling disregarded, or the officer made her feel “like a second grader”). One participant’s story included officers pointing guns in his children’s faces (ages six to fourteen) though they did not provoke officers; police were at the wrong house for an incident that happened up the street. Business associations members felt disrespected when an officer interacts with them in a positive manner face-to-face but does not solve the problem they were called to address.

**Children playing violent cops.** A neighborhood association participant reported witnessing excessive force as his children and neighborhood friends played cops and robbers. Instead of simply cuffing the “robber,” the “cops” threw them to the ground and kned the “robbers” in the back. Respondents felt officers are “supposed to be the good guys,” there to protect and serve. Instead, the group saw this as “cops” using excessive force, and reported that the children were imitating police behaviors they had personally witnessed.

**What is fairness?** For officers to be fair, officers would have to hear both side of the story and observe what is going on before jumping into a situation (life-skills group and reform-advocacy group #13). Other groups felt that fairness was related to but different than dignity and respect. Some believed dignity and respect are about courtesy (reform-advocacy group #11) while fairness is about upholding the law and treating everyone the same without discretion (reform-advocacy group #11 and neighborhood association). In contrast, the police-

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citizen group believed that fairness is relative to the situation and the person. Business owners added that fairness was about how officers address and resolve issue they were called for.

**Police lack fairness.** Many groups shared experiences where officers reportedly treated people differently due to race/ethnicity, economic status, or gender. A participant witnessed young white men smoking pot were told by officers to leave the area, whereas the group believed if they were Black/African American they would have been arrested. Reform-advocacy group #11 added their belief that police use of discretion often leads to not arresting people favored by society (i.e., beautiful people, women, or straight). Most groups wanted police to protect all community members equally (both reform-advocacy groups, police-citizen, and neighborhood association).

**Distrust/fear of police.** A few groups shared stories where police treated minority groups disrespectfully, which reportedly fostered distrust of police (see Interactions section above). Many groups believed police officers bring their bias and assumptions into situations, which negatively affects interactions with community members. One reform-advocacy group felt that many officers are afraid of African Americans, partly due to their inability to identify with minority groups. Most groups felt that training would help officers interact with minority groups (i.e., Black/African Americans, Latinos, LGBTQ individuals, recent immigrants). Groups felt trainings would help officers gain understanding and sensitivity for the backgrounds of minority groups' experiences with the justice system in the US and their home countries (both reform-advocacy groups, police-citizen and neighborhood association groups).

**At higher risk: young people and challenged neighborhoods.** Half the groups believed that young people were at higher risk for profiling and possible excessive use of force by police (both reform-advocacy groups and neighborhood association). Participants reported

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witnessing how RPD assumes a group of youth gathered together on the street were doing something illegal though youth were engaged in “innocent fun.” Participants discussed how Rochester parents and groups like Teen Empowerment teach young people of color how to protect themselves against the police. Groups would like to see police observe and listen to what young people have to say before assuming there was “criminal behavior.”

Some groups also felt that police enforce laws differently in different areas. The reform-advocacy group #13 believed that suburban and city police enforce laws differently, especially that suburban youth are rarely approached by police for just hanging out. Reform-advocacy group #11 believed poorer neighborhoods are targeted by police (i.e., through patrols and law enforcement in schools). Business association members wanted RPD to enforce laws (i.e., no loitering) and keeping people safe in their violence and crime-prone neighborhoods the same way officers do on Park Ave or in the South Wedge.

**Unfair justice system.** Every group disagreed that the justice system generally treats people fairly. The groups in strong disagreement were the neighborhood association, business associations, and reform-advocacy group #11. Almost all groups believed that money drives the system and race often influences decisions. Life-skills participants discussed the Charlie Tan case, and felt if the young man was from the city the outcome would have been harsher. The neighborhood association felt that whom you can afford as your lawyer is what matters, as in the Affluenza case of the young man in Texas. The neighborhood association and reform-advocacy group #13 felt that who you know or your neighborhood influences the system.

Some groups reported that people have the “cards stacked against them.” The reform-advocacy group #11 felt this was due to money issues, lack of support, the public defender system, and officers who provide or withhold information to lawyers and courts which can sway

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conviction and sentencing decisions. The police-citizen group believed that some sections of society are at a disadvantage because they do not know how to interact with the justice system (i.e., if a person is being disrespectful to an officer they may receive an additional or harsher arrest charge).

**Justice system agencies: fairer and of concern.** The police-citizen group believed the prison system is “not doing their job” of reforming people, and were concerned about the economic impact on tax payers and family members when offenders are unemployed (i.e., incarcerated and difficulty finding a job with a felony conviction). Half of the groups viewed probation and parole as doing a fair job yet are overloaded with cases and paperwork (both reform groups and police-citizen group). The life-skills group reported that probation gives people the opportunity to succeed. Reform-advocacy group #13 felt public defenders are “working for the people.” Reform-advocacy group #11 believed courts uphold what is constitutionally right, so tended to trust the justice system more than the police.

### **Body-Worn Cameras**

***Question:*** Rate how much you agree or disagree with this statement: *The use of body-worn cameras is good for the relationship between police and this community.*

The majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the use of body-worn cameras is good for the relationship between police and this community. About 26% of participants were neutral, but no one disagreed. Half of the groups brought up concerns about policies surrounding the use of body-worn cameras (both reform-advocacy groups and the police-citizen group). Reform-advocacy group #13 wanted to know how domestic violence issues would be handled, and when the camera would be allowed to be turned on. Two groups emphasized the importance of community input on camera policies (reform-advocacy group #11 and police-citizen group).

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Other groups felt that body-worn cameras would be good for police-community relations because cameras would catch a non-biased angle of interactions. One police-citizen participant explained how “nothing could be misrepresented” on either side of an interaction, and a life-skills participant said that “cameras don’t lie.” In contrast, the business associations group was concerned that cameras may only show the officer’s side of an interaction. The neighborhood group was worried that the footage may be manipulated after the fact. Reform-advocacy group #11 expressed that although body-worn cameras are a step in the right direction, the cameras should not be seen as the only solution for police-community relations.

### **Discussion**

This quarter the groups interviewed continued to expand our range of groups interviewed<sup>3</sup>. Six different subtypes of groups participated: three community organizations, two neighborhood organizations, and one police-citizen group. Not one participant this quarter reported that they were “very satisfied” with police responses to community concerns, though 31% of participants reported they were “somewhat satisfied.” Similar to quarter two participants, quarter three participants felt some of the most important community concerns had to do with drugs/drug markets and guns. Quarter three participants placed more emphasis on strained relationships between police officers and minority groups than participants from previous quarters. Participants this quarter also felt it was important for officers to collaborate with community members, and to develop ongoing relationships.

Participants in the neighborhood groups and reform-advocacy group #11 felt it was important to discuss the impact improper policing may have on children and youth. Reform-advocacy group #11 discussed a recent Sentencing Project report stating that 60% of juveniles

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2 for a complete list of groups interviewed since the beginning of this project.



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who are arrested deal with mental health issues. In one neighborhood group, participants discussed the negative images of policing children see daily in their neighborhoods, and how these images impact them. The other neighborhood group discussed the impact of trauma that can develop for anyone who lives or works in neighborhoods where crime is a daily occurrence.

Finally, some groups sympathized with RPD about the larger picture of policing. One reform-advocacy group discussed how media reporting makes it difficult for people to trust police since they reinforce stereotypes, overstate crime statistics and do not mention how crime has fallen since the 1990s. A few groups mentioned that media stories put more pressure on police. A reform-advocacy group also acknowledged that changing the culture of policing is a large undertaking, and personal experiences have shown improvement over the decades in RPD-community relations (i.e., since the 1964 race riots).

### **Actionable Recommendations**

Here we present recommendations for the justice system and RPD based on concerns and suggestions raised across all focus groups from this quarter.

- 1. To increase collaboration with police, RPD should develop a strategy that allows community members who report crimes to remain anonymous, and should consider community member critiques in a more positive light.** Some respondents felt that RPD seems to view critiques and dissatisfaction as community hatred of police. Participants see these as areas for improvement. Police should try to hear critiques as areas that people are willing to work with officers to address. To keep community members reporting on crimes, RPD needs a strategy for citizens to remain anonymous. Officers can meet citizens at a neutral location away from the scene of the crime or incident to complete paperwork, or discuss details over the phone.

- 2. RPD should encourage officers' investment in the neighborhoods they patrol, and possibly offer incentives for officers to live in city neighborhoods.** Participants believed that officers would have more investment in addressing neighborhood problems if they lived in the city. RPD should consider providing incentives (perhaps financial incentives or other benefits that the police union will allow) for officers to live in city neighborhoods, and/or explore ways to encourage officers' sense of ownership for areas they work in.
- 3. To increase views that people are treated with dignity, officers should try to: A) talk with community members in a respectful way, and B) gain more awareness and sensitivity for minority groups' cultural differences. RPD supervisors should consider monitoring these items and offer education on interacting with cultural minorities.** Important aspects for interacting with community members includes setting aside biases, approaching people with an open mind, and addressing problems in a timely fashion. Showing respect is especially important with minority cultural communities (i.e., recent immigrants as well as Black/African Americans, Latinos and LGBTQ). Respect involves listening, explaining things clearly, and treating people as "fully human" (i.e. like "family members" rather than as a potential criminal). Officers are not called on to solve the problems of history; simply to be aware of and sensitive to minority groups' collective experiences with the justice system, including police.
- 4. The most strained police-community relationships reported were with young people and challenged neighborhoods. RPD should consider increasing community policing efforts, especially in neighborhoods plagued by violence and crime. The department should also publicize their strategies.** RPD should develop local

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strategies to improve relationships with youth and children, especially those in challenged neighborhoods. RPD should also develop a plan for working with youth with mental health issues. Trust needs to be earned through officers establishing relationships with people in the communities they police, and continuing to collaborate with community members on problems. Officers should walk their beats more often, have more conversations with young people and adults, get to know people by name or home residence, and spend some time playing sports with youth. Sustained strategies that allow officers to spend time in positive interactions outside of calls for service are important. Transparency of strategies through media campaigns aimed at both youth and adults will develop faith that RPD is responding to some community concerns.

- 5. The criminal justice system should consider providing more resources to agencies community members view positively (i.e., public defenders, probation and parole). The DA's office and RPD should consider offering basic education workshops on how groups can best interact with the system, including police.** More time and resources for public defenders, probation and parole will likely help community members believe the system is working well for the public. Hiring more personnel and interns, and/or shifting paper work and less important tasks to others may allow more focused resources on cases. Basic information workshops on how people can make the system work for them will assist with dispelling myths. Education on your rights; how arrest, jury selection and sentencing occur; and how best to interact with police would be helpful topics. Information shared should be general and easily applied especially for recent immigrants and lower economic groups in society.

### **Appendix 1: Methodology - Demographics**

Third quarter focus groups were held from April to July 2016. Due to researchers' use of group feedback analysis, individualized demographic information was not collected (more information can be found in the forthcoming paper Community View on Criminal Justice: Methodology). General group demographic and descriptive information are listed below by group type and each group's subcategory.

- **Focus group eleven: Community Organization<sup>4</sup>- reform-advocacy participants** (3 participants). Most participants were women, approximate age ranged from 20 to 30 with one participant 65 and above, the dominant racial/ethnic group was Caucasian with one Asian-American, and all but one person lived in the city.
- **Focus group twelve: Community Organization – life-skills training participants** (9 participants). All but two participants were women, approximate age ranged from 20 to 30 with one person 60 to 65, the dominant racial/ethnic group was African American with one Caucasian, and all but one person lived in the city of Rochester.
- **Focus group thirteen: Community Organization - reform-advocacy participants** (4 participants). All participants were women, approximate age ranged from 45 to 70, the dominant racial/ethnic group was African American with one Caucasian, and all but one participant lived in the city.
- **Focus group fourteen: Police-citizen Organization - participants from groups around the city of Rochester** (4 participants). All participants were men, with half of

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<sup>4</sup> As mentioned above, for this project “community organizations” include respondents from across the city of Rochester; in contrast, “neighborhood organizations” have participants from a geographically bound area.

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participants age ranged from 30 to 39 and half 50 to 59, the dominant racial/ethnic group was Caucasian with one African-American, and all lived in the city of Rochester.

- **Focus group fifteen: Neighborhood Organization – participants from a neighborhood group in NE Rochester** (8 participants). All but one of the participants were women, approximate age ranged 40 to 65 with the majority 40 to 49, 50% of the group was African American and 38% were Latino with one Caucasian, and all lived in the city.
- **Focus group sixteen: Neighborhood Organization – participants from business associations in SW Rochester** (9 participants). The majority of participants (67%) were men, approximate age ranged from 30 to 65 and above with the majority in the 60 and above age range, and the dominant racial/ethnic group was African America with two Caucasians and two people of another ethnicity, and all have businesses in Southwest Rochester with many lived in or “are from” the city.

**Appendix 2: Methodology - Groups**

Groups were recruited to meet the goal of interviewing a wide variety in types of groups in the Rochester community (i.e., community versus reentry groups or various in geographic location). Community groups represent all of the Rochester community; in contrast, neighborhood groups are geographically bound (i.e., community organizers in NE Rochester neighborhoods). The group’s subcategory provides more information on what brings the group together and makes participants similar.

**Table 1. Types of Groups Interviewed by the Community Views of CJ Project**

<b>Focus Group Number</b>	<b>Type of Group/Organization</b>	<b>Group Subcategory<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Total Participants</b>
1	Reentry	Reentry organization staff	8
2	Youth	At-risk youth organization staff	12
3	Youth	At-risk youth organization staff in Northeast Rochester	2
4	Youth	At-risk youth organization staff	7
5	Community	Life-skills training participants	8
6	Reentry	Reentry participants	9
7	Youth	Young people from Northwest Rochester	9
8	Neighborhood	Community organizers in Northeast Rochester	5
9	Police-Citizen	Police-citizen group from Southeast Rochester	5
10	Community	Reform-advocacy group	4
11	Community	Reform-advocacy group	3
12	Community	Life-skills training participants	9
13	Community	Reform-advocacy group	4
14	Police-Citizen	Police-citizen group from various areas of Rochester	4
15	Neighborhood	Neighborhood group in Northeast Rochester	8
16	Neighborhood	Business associations from Southwest Rochester	9

<sup>5</sup> The Rochester city quadrant is listed only for groups that are made up of people from a particular geographically area or serve a population in a specific area.

**Appendix 3: Focus Group Survey Questions with Corresponding Results**

**1) Have you had any contact or interaction (by phone, office, car, on the street, etc.) with a member of the Rochester Police Department (RPD) in the past 6 months?**

Responses	Yes	No	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	77%	23%	31
Total Percentage from all Quarters	75%	25%	93

**2) How did the interaction with the police get started?**

Responses	I called 911	A police officer approached me	No recent interaction	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	44%	19%	38%	32
Total Percentage from all Quarters	37%	32%	31%	91

**3) Would you describe your most recent interaction with the police as...**

Responses	Good	Bad	Neither good nor bad	No contact	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	44%	15%	12%	29%	34
Total Percentage from all Quarters	43%	16%	17%	24%	94

**4) How safe do you feel in your neighborhood at night?**

Responses	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	14%	54%	17%	14%	35
Total Percentage from all Quarters	35%	46%	10%	8%	96

**5) Overall, how satisfied are you with police responses to community concerns?**

Responses	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	0%	31%	37%	31%	35
Total Percentage from all Quarters	4%	33%	36%	26%	96

**6) I trust the police to do what is best for the community.**

Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	0%	24%	50%	26%	34
Total Percentage from all Quarters	4%	31%	41%	24%	98

COMMUNITY VIEWS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Quarter 3 Report

**7) Police officers in my community are generally fair in the way they enforce the law.**

Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	3%	29%	68%	0%	31
Total Percentage from all Quarters	5%	39%	40%	16%	95

**8) The police here generally treat people with dignity and respect.**

Response	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	3%	32%	47%	18%	34
Total Percentage from all Quarters	7%	32%	39%	22%	96

**9) Overall, the criminal justice system (police, courts, probation, prisons, parole, etc.) tries to do what is best for the community.**

Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	0%	27%	47%	27%	30
Total Percentage from all Quarters	4%	27%	39%	29%	92

**10) The criminal justice system generally treats people fairly.**

Responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	0%	12%	52%	36%	25
Total Percentage from all Quarters	0%	18%	45%	38%	85

**11) The use of body-worn cameras is good for the relationship between police and this community.**

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N
Quarter 3 Percentage	37%	37%	26%	0%	0%	27
Total Percentage from all Quarters	30%	32%	31%	5%	3%	88