



Findings and Recommendations of the Tulsa Commission on Community Policing

Executive Summary



Mission of the Tulsa Police Department

The Tulsa Police Department will apply all knowledge, skills, and available resources by working in partnership with our Community to provide quality service, protect life and property, prevent crime, and resolve problems, so people can live without fear in a safe environment.

Commission Members

Mayor G.T. Bynum
Chief Chuck Jordan
Aliye Shimi
Brian Beebe
Christina Starzl Mendoza
Corporal Mark Secrist
Councilor Connie Dodson
Councilor Jeannie Cue
Councilor Karen Gilbert
Councilor Phil Lakin
Councilor Vanessa Hall-Harper
Deputy Chief Dennis Larsen

Deputy Chief Eric Dalgleish
Deputy Chief Jonathan Brooks
DeVon Douglass
Francisco Trevino
Hannibal Johnson
Julie Wilson Skye
Major Laurel Roberts
Major Paul Fields
Major Wendell Franklin
Officer Jesse Guardiola
Sergeant Quentin Houck
Vincente Ruiz

Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy

Recommendation #1: Build on Tulsa Police Department's guardian mindset and culture by:

- Creating more safe and secure environments throughout Tulsa;
- Providing further transparency;
- Creating novel ways to engage the community;
- Working harder on procedural justice principles in training and in practice;
- Wearing body cameras.

Recommendation #2: Tulsa Police Department should continue to acknowledge the historical role of policing in shaping community perceptions about the work of police. This should include a list of initiatives that show how the Tulsa Police Department is working to change perceptions among citizen groups. Tulsa Police Department should also use resources through the COPS office that measure the extent to which community policing has been implemented.

Recommendation #3: Tulsa Police Department should engage with the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Centennial Commission to tell the story of the evolution of the Tulsa Police Department from the time of that event to the present.

Recommendation #4: Tulsa Police Department should work to better integrate its officers into the community by providing officers with information about community resources that can be shared with citizens with whom they come in contact. In addition, Tulsa Police Department should engage with citizens on community events as appropriate.

Recommendation #5: Tulsa Police Department should increase officer visibility in neighborhoods as its workforce allows.

Recommendation #6: Tulsa Police Department should work to engage more citizens in developing and understanding crime-fighting strategies. This can occur through regular town hall meetings. A Community Policing Calendar should be created.

Recommendation #7: Tulsa Police Department should continue to conduct surveys that measure citizen trust of the police, with a view toward collecting more district-centric data that highlight perceptions in particular communities and areas of the city. Consideration should be given to collaboration with universities that have expertise in surveys and sampling.

Recommendation #8: Tulsa Police Department should continue to work on the creation of a more diverse and inclusive workforce through enhanced outreach to, among others, Spanish-speaking communities in Texas and New Mexico as well as historically black colleges and universities. In the short term, the strategy should be designated travel to minority-serving criminal justice schools. In the long term, the strategy should be career and relationship presentations to students in Tulsa metro elementary, middle and high schools.

Recommendation #9: Tulsa Police Department should continue to innovate in terms of improving relations with immigrant communities through such practices as the increased use of translators and the addition of a separate Spanish language question and complaint line.

Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight

Recommendation #1: Tulsa Police Department should continue to collaborate with community members to develop policies and strategies in communities and neighborhoods disproportionately affected by crime for deploying resources that aim to reduce crime by improving relationships, greater community engagement, and cooperation.

Recommendation #2: Tulsa Police Department should continue to make its use of force policy accessible online and offer a frequently-asked-questions section.

Recommendation #3: Tulsa Police Department should continue nonpunitive peer review of critical incidents separate from criminal and administrative investigations.

Recommendation #4: Tulsa Police Department should continue its required annual Biased Based Police Training, and should follow through on its intention to implement outside instruction implicit bias training for all officers.

Recommendation #5: Tulsa Police Department should continue to report and make available to the public census data regarding the composition of the Department.

Recommendation #6: Tulsa Police Department should continue to collect, maintain, and analyze demographic data on all detentions (including stops, frisks, arrests, searches, etc.).

Recommendation #7: Tulsa Police Department should maintain policies for policing mass demonstrations that employ a continuum of managed tactical resources that are designed to minimize the appearance of a military operation and avoid using provocative tactics and equipment that undermine civilian trust.

Recommendation #8: Tulsa Police Department should establish civilian oversight of law enforcement through semi-annual community meetings and community advisory groups in each Tulsa Police Division.

Recommendation #9: Tulsa Police Department should continue to refrain from practices requiring officers to issue a predetermined number of tickets, citations, or arrests for the purpose of generating revenue.

Recommendation #10: Tulsa Police Department should continue to require that officers explain to the individual their rights to refuse a search without probable cause or a warrant. Ideally, the officer should seek both verbal and written consent.

Recommendation #11: Tulsa Police Department should continue to require that officers identify themselves by their full name, rank, and command and provide that information in writing to individuals. In addition, officers need to state the reason for a stop/search if one is conducted.

Recommendation #12: Tulsa Police Department should maintain policies that establish search and seizure procedures for the LGBTQ and transgender community.

Recommendation #13: Tulsa Police Department should continually reinforce, through training, its policy which states “There shall be no bias in the operations of the TPD. The Department is committed to unbiased policing and will provide service and enforcement in a fair and equitable manner.”

Pillar Three: Technology and Social Media

Recommendation #1: Tulsa Police Department should participate in national organizations that assist in the development and delivery of training to help law enforcement agencies learn, acquire, and implement technology tools and tactics that are consistent with best practices of 21st Century Policing.

Recommendation #2: Tulsa Police Department should adopt policies and accreditations that address technology's impact on privacy concerns in accordance with protections provided by constitutional law.

Recommendation #3: Tulsa Police Department should deploy smart technology that is designed to prevent the tampering with or manipulating of evidence in violation of policy.

Recommendation #4: Tulsa Police Department should encourage public engagement and collaboration—including the continued use of community advisory bodies—when developing a policy for the use of a new technology.

Recommendation #5: Tulsa Police Department should include an evaluation or assessment process to gauge the effectiveness of any new technology, soliciting input from all levels of the Department and from members of the community.

Recommendation #6: Tulsa Police Department should adopt the use of new technologies that will help them better serve people with special needs or disabilities.

Recommendation #7: Tulsa Police Department should consult with civil rights and civil liberties organizations, as well as law enforcement research groups and other experts, concerning the constitutional issues that can arise as a result of the use of new technologies.

Recommendation #8: Tulsa Police Department should utilize the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Body Worn Camera Toolkit to assist in implementing body worn cameras.

Recommendation #9: Tulsa Police Department should encourage federal, state, and local legislative bodies to update public record laws.

Recommendation #10: Tulsa Police Department should adopt model policies and best practices for technology-based community engagement that increases community trust and access.

Pillar Four: Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Recommendation #1: Tulsa Police Department should continue to develop and adopt policies and strategies that reinforce community engagement in managing public safety.

Recommendation #2: Tulsa Police Department should continue to identify and implement "least harm" resolutions, such as diversion programs or warnings and citations in lieu of arrest for minor infractions.

Recommendation #3: Tulsa Police Department should engage in multidisciplinary, community team approaches for planning, implementation, and responding to crisis situations with complex causal factors.

Recommendation #4: City of Tulsa should involve peer support counselors as part of multidisciplinary teams when appropriate, partnering with Oklahoma Mental Health Association or other entity to lead this initiative.

Recommendation #5: City of Tulsa should evaluate the efficacy of crisis intervention team approaches and hold agency leaders accountable for outcomes.

Recommendation #6: City of Tulsa and its citizens should support a culture and practice of policing that reflects the values of protection and promotion of the dignity of all, especially the most vulnerable. Community education relative to the practice of policing is crucial in this regard.

Recommendation #7: Tulsa Police Department should continue working with neighborhood residents to co-produce public safety solutions for the community.

Recommendation #8: Tulsa Police Department should schedule regular forums and meetings where all community members can interact with police and help influence programs and policy.

Recommendation #9: Tulsa Police Department should engage youth and communities in joint training with law enforcement, citizen academies, ride alongs, problem solving teams, community action teams, and quality of life teams.

Recommendation #10: Tulsa Police Department should work with Chief of Economic Development and Chief Resilience Officer to adopt community policing strategies that support and work in concert with economic development efforts within communities.

Recommendation #11: City of Tulsa should adopt policies and programs that address the needs of children and youth most at risk for crime or violence and reduce aggressive law enforcement tactics that stigmatize youth and marginalize their participation in schools and communities.

Recommendation #12: City of Tulsa should work with school districts to reform policies and procedures that push children into the criminal justice system.

Recommendation #13: Tulsa Police Department should work with schools to encourage the creation of alternatives to student suspensions and expulsion through restorative justice, diversion, counseling, and family interventions. To accomplish this, an increase in the number of school resource officers over time is also recommended.

Recommendation #14: City of Tulsa should work with schools to encourage the use of alternative strategies that involve youth in decision making, such as restorative justice, youth courts, and peer interventions.

Recommendation #15: Tulsa Police Department should work with schools to adopt an instructional approach to discipline that uses intervention or disciplinary consequences to help students develop new behavior skills and positive strategies to avoid conflict, redirect energy and refocus on learning. To accomplish this, the feasibility of a Tulsa Police Department mentorship program should be researched. Additional school resource officers will also be needed.

Recommendation #16: City of Tulsa should work with schools to develop and monitor school discipline policies with input and collaboration from school personnel, students, families, and community members. These policies should prohibit the use of corporal punishment and electronic control devices.

Recommendation #17: City of Tulsa should work with schools to create a continuum of developmentally appropriate and proportional consequences for addressing ongoing and escalating student misbehavior after all appropriate interventions have been attempted.

Recommendation #18: City of Tulsa should work with communities to plan a role in programs and procedures to reintegrate juveniles back into their communities as they leave the justice system.

Recommendation #19: Tulsa Police Department and schools should evaluate and possibly update existing memoranda of agreement for the placement of school resource officers that limit involvement in student discipline.

Recommendation #20: City of Tulsa should affirm and recognize the voices of youth in community decision making, facilitate youth-led research and problem solving, and develop and fund youth leadership training and life skills through positive youth/police collaboration and interactions.

Recommendation #21: Tulsa Police Department should restore and build trust between youth and police by creating programs and projects for positive, consistent, and persistent interaction between youth and police.

Recommendation #22: City of Tulsa should develop community and school-based evidence-based programs that mitigate punitive and authoritarian solutions to teen problems.

Pillar Five: Training and Education

Recommendation #1: Tulsa Police Department should continue extensive use of scenario-based training throughout the academy, including instruction for mental health response, defensive tactics, de-escalation, patrol tactics, and report writing.

Recommendation #2: Tulsa Police Department should explore additional partnerships with academic institutions focused on training, evaluation, and other evidence-based practices.

Recommendation #3: Tulsa Police Department should expand access to Citizens Police Academy by developing a condensed 8-hour one-day curriculum and inviting community leaders to participate. Greater involvement in the Citizens Police Academy will increase understanding of policing methods and will give officers insight into citizen opinions on practices.

Recommendation #4: Tulsa Police Department should expand leadership training beyond academies to offerings for all officers.

Recommendation #5: Tulsa Police Department should expand participation in external leadership programs beyond Leadership Tulsa to other programs such as Leadership Oklahoma and Lead North.

Recommendation #6: Tulsa Police Department should continue its practice of sending senior managers to the FBI's National Academy, PERF's Senior Management Institute for Police, and others.

Recommendation #7: Tulsa Police Department should expand Crisis Intervention Training beyond current academy to requirement for all patrol officers.

Recommendation #8: Tulsa Police Department should continue its basic academy curriculum focused on social interaction, communication, and de-escalation as components of tactical and overall police skills.

Recommendation #9: Tulsa Police Department should include discussion with those affected by addiction during basic academy training.

Recommendation #10: Tulsa Police Department should offer implicit bias training for all officers and City of Tulsa should offer for all employees and elected officials.

Recommendation #11: Tulsa Police Department should continue its practice of basic academy instruction that includes: a focus on cultural diversity; history of race relations in Tulsa; interaction with Hispanic community; interaction with non-English speakers; immigrant culture; and interaction with Muslim community. Tulsa Police Department should add interactions with LGBTQ community to this curriculum.

Recommendation #12: Tulsa Police Department should continue basic academy curriculum instruction on legal basis and practical interaction, including terry stops and the Fourth Amendment.

Recommendation #13: Tulsa Police Department should continue the routine evaluation of its Field Training Officer program, including updated training on adult education, current academy instruction, and training the next generation of police officers.

Recommendation #14: Tulsa Police Department should continue its historic standard of 40 in-service hours of training. Recent reductions have been made due to manpower levels, but the above recommendations reinforce the importance of continued in-service training for TPD officers to remain prepared for an ever-changing law enforcement environment. A reduction in hours does not afford officers the time to participate in the range of training sessions identified on top of those already mandated.

Pillar Six: Officer Wellness and Safety

Recommendation #1: Tulsa Police Department should formalize an internal policy and response procedure for the Blue Alert system.

Recommendation #2: Tulsa Police Department should collaborate with local entities to offer wellness programming to officers. Examples include nutrition, financial fitness, stress and coping workshops, and collaboration with the OSU Center for Family Resilience.

Recommendation #3: Tulsa Police Department should pursue grant funding for equipment and training that allows officers to serve as safety and wellness instructors within the Department.

Recommendation #4: Tulsa Police Department should consider providing ergonomic work places, such as stand-up work stations.

Recommendation #5: Tulsa Police Department should provide better nutritional selections in work places.

Recommendation #6: Tulsa Police Department should complete its evaluation of shift lengths within a 24-hour period.

Recommendation #7: Tulsa Police Department should establish a committee to examine best practices relative to injuries and “near misses” of other law enforcement agencies.

Recommendation #8: Tulsa Police Department should follow through on its Peer Support Group by selecting members to be part of Peer 2 Peer and training peer counselors.

Recommendation #9: Tulsa Police Department should continue to promote on-going officer family wellness and resilience opportunities.