



## POLICE DEPARTMENT MASTER PLAN “REIMAGINE POLICING”

### WINDOW II YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

Growing Up Boulder + MAYAMOTION Healing

October 29, 2021

#### Overview of Youth Engagement in Police Department Master Plan (PDMP), Engagement Window II

During Window II engagements, Growing Up Boulder and MAYAMOTION Healing (GUB/MMH) worked virtually with young people to update them on the Reimagine Policing planning process, share the Systems Overview Report (which identified draft value statements and focus areas regarding safety based on input from Window I community engagements), and gather young people’s feedback.

GUB/MMH’s primary goal for the Window II engagements was to determine whether the draft *values and focus areas* developed by the City accurately reflected the feedback that young people gave GUB/MMH during Window I. A secondary goal was to gather additional comments or suggestions for the Reimagine Policing process going forward.

## A note on which youth groups participated in Engagement Window II

For a variety of reasons, many of the groups from Engagement Window I chose not to participate, or to participate differently, in Window II. Boulder Journey School decided that due to their position of relative privilege in Boulder's society, their voices were not the most important to include in Policing discussions. BVSD's Youth Equity Council (YEC) and EXPAND parents chose to participate via individual surveys versus facilitated groups. Whittier Elementary School 5th graders were able to devote a class period to a facilitated survey and discussion.

MMH's engagement groups from Engagement Window I, which occurred during spring 2021, included young people from ELLOS, GENERATIONS, TGTHR and I Have a Dream Foundation. All MMH groups from Engagement Window I had *significant turnover* in youth participants (and many had staffing changes as well), and some had entirely new cohorts of young people enrolled during the fall of 2021. Due to the timing of student transitions and limited time capacity, only the ELLOS group participated in a facilitated follow up meeting. All young people in the remaining groups were encouraged to complete an online, adapted, youth-version of the city questions around the six safety values and focus areas.

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## Responses and feedback

GUB and MMH engaged 42 young people and parents via virtual live surveys or online surveys. Below are summaries for each group that GUB/MMH worked with during Engagement Window II. Two links provide additional information: 1) detailed [data](#) from survey responses and 2) [infographics](#) that represent the collective feedback of participants.

### Youth Equity Council

The Youth Equity Council was adamant about making policy changes within the police department to make them feel safe as teenagers in Boulder. Some respondents shared their anger with the injustice of the current state of affairs in policing and wanted to see change happen now. The Youth Equity Council believed that the values were representative of what they wanted, but they were still looking for more; 83% of

participants agreed with the safety value statements and 11% of participants disagreed with the safety value statements. For the focus areas, 92% of participants agreed with the focus areas and subtopics, 3% of participants disagreed with the focus areas and subtopics.

*"I want you to understand that I believe the police force can [be] better but that means that you will have to dig into deep roots of racism and sexism in the workforce and that a kid like me fears you, I don't respect the police. But we--and mostly you--can make a change. Recognize the racism and the harsh actions of the police. Realize that some (police) are not being punished for the murders and crimes they have committed."*

*"Leadership in crime prevention means sharing the lead with other organizations/initiatives that focus on addressing poverty and mental health rather than just policing."*

## **EXPAND**

EXPAND parents strongly encouraged the police department to partner with established sources within the disabled community and learn from cities which have implemented successful programs. Additionally, parents found a significant omission in that values and focus areas did not **name** the disabled community as a population to be aware of and work with. They expressed a desire for the focus statements in the Window II surveys to be more explicit (less vague) and expressed the need for more context in questions to make an informed response.

In terms of survey responses, 94% of participants agreed with the safety value statements, 6% of participants disagreed with the safety value statements, 69% of participants agreed with the focus areas and subtopics, 0% of participants disagreed with the focus areas and subtopics.

*"Spell out "different populations". Many other cities have developed specific outreach and training to their police, specifically with the Autistic and Intellectual Disability community..."*

## Whittier Elementary School

The fifth graders at Whittier Elementary School expressed excitement to see change in their communities, and they believe the Reimagine Policing process is a step in the right direction to see that change happen. Overall, students were quite supportive of the draft values and focus areas, with 94% of students agreeing with the safety value statements, and 88% of students agreeing with the focus area topics. Additionally, the students emphasized wanting to feel safe and not live in fear around the police.

*"I want to feel safe [with] a cop if something happens. I want to feel safe when a cop answers the phone. I want to know that they will help me and not something else. I want to be treated professionally and respectfully."*

## ELLOS

The ELLOS group of high school, male identified, Latinx youth participated in a virtual engagement to provide their feedback, share in dialogue, and review mental health strategies for self-care during activating conversations. The group stated they have strong interest in "re-imagining policing" and feel strongly about increasing the feeling of safety in the community. The group continued to also share their skepticism on what reimagining policing will look like in action; much of this skepticism stemmed from their experiences with implicit bias and racial profiling. When exploring what makes a situation 'dangerous' vs. safe, one youth shared:

*"A 'dangerous' situation can be viewed differently by police because of racism".*

These reflections provided continuous opportunities to return to the practice of noticing how emotions shift and are felt in our bodies as a parallel process to intense dialogue. Overall, the group highlighted their interest in this project and were eager to continue their engagement.

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## Final note

The Growing Up Boulder - MAYAMOTION Healing team looks forward to engaging young people in the upcoming Window III period of the Reimagining Policing/Police

Master Planning process. Given that this third window will be halfway through the school year, and therefore youth cohorts will be better established as cohesive groups, we expect continued and more robust participation in this next Window.