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IT TAKES A VILLAGE: INTEGRATING FIREHOUSE HUBS TO ENCOURAGE COOPERATION AMONG POLICE, FIRE, AND THE PUBLIC

by

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September 2018

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Tension and hostility between police officers and society seem to be on the rise, and officers and firefighters alike face violence and other threats on a daily basis. While these agencies strive to protect and serve, they often overlook each other, failing to recognize what a cooperative front might do to improve public relations. This thesis explores the idea of using firehouses as central hubs of collaboration to improve the trust, cooperation, and safety of police officers, firefighters, and the public. The research consisted of focus group discussions obtained from three specific Oklahoma groups: Owasso firefighters, Tulsa police officers, and Tulsa citizens. The research indicates that most participants are in favor of community-centered efforts, including the proposed firehouse hub concept. This study also reveals differing views among the groups regarding the benefits and challenges of such strategies, as well as insight and suggestions for their success. Showcasing Tulsa, Oklahoma, this thesis recommends using existing fire stations as catalysts to encourage police-officer foot patrols and to foster better relationships, cooperation, and safety among all groups. This thesis suggests that better collaboration between police officers and firefighters might significantly influence positive change and improve the relationships and safety of first responders and the public.

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IT TAKES A VILLAGE: INTEGRATING FIREHOUSE HUBS TO ENCOURAGE COOPERATION AMONG POLICE, FIRE, AND THE PUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

Tension and hostility between police officers and society seem to be on the rise, and officers and firefighters alike face violence and other threats on a daily basis. While these agencies strive to protect and serve, they often overlook each other, failing to recognize what a cooperative front might do to improve public relations. This thesis explores the idea of using firehouses as central hubs of collaboration to improve the trust, cooperation, and safety of police officers, firefighters, and the public. The research consisted of focus group discussions obtained from three specific Oklahoma groups: Owasso firefighters, Tulsa police officers, and Tulsa citizens. The research indicates that most participants are in favor of community-centered efforts, including the proposed firehouse hub concept. This study also reveals differing views among the groups regarding the benefits and challenges of such strategies, as well as insight and suggestions for their success. Showcasing Tulsa, Oklahoma, this thesis recommends using existing fire stations as catalysts to encourage police-officer foot patrols and to foster better relationships, cooperation, and safety among all groups. This thesis suggests that better collaboration between police officers and firefighters might significantly influence positive change and improve the relationships and safety of first responders and the public.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Alcoholics Anonymous
ALS	advanced life support
APO	apprentice police officer
CADS	Computer Aided Dispatch System
CAPL	Community and Police Leadership Collaborative
CLEET	Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training
CP	community policing
CPR	cardiopulmonary resuscitation
CRR	community risk reduction
CRT	community response team
DOJ	Department of Justice
EMS	emergency medical service(s)
EMT	emergency medical technician
FD	fire department
FFR	Fit First Responders
FRSS	First Responder Support Services
OKTFI	Oklahoma Task Force One
PD	police department
PTSD	post-traumatic stress disorder
SWAT	special weapons and tactics
TFD	Tulsa Fire Department
TPD	Tulsa Police Department

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tension and hostility between police officers and society seem to be on the rise, and officers and firefighters alike face violence and other threats on a daily basis. While these agencies strive to protect and serve, they often overlook how they might protect and serve one another. They also may fail to recognize what a cooperative, united front might do to improve public trust and relationships.

Community-oriented policing and fire service community-risk-reduction (CRR) strategies are distinct, but they share a notable similarity. Both strategies are aimed at building relationships, cooperation, and trust between citizens and either police officers or firefighters. While the secondary benefit of CRR is fire prevention, proponents of community-oriented policing—foot patrol operations in particular—maintain that a secondary benefit is the potential for reducing crime.[1] Advocates of CRR, especially those who propose the village fire-company concept describe similar notions, asserting that when firefighters become trusted neighbors to the citizens in their "village," knowledge between the groups increases, and the risk of accidents, injury, or death by fire decreases.[2]

While both models tout building trust and cooperation with citizens as well as preventing fire and crime as beneficial, neither addresses the potential advantages that a successful collaboration could also have for both disciplines. Neither model addresses the possibility of police and fire organizations joining forces to better cooperate, communicate, and ultimately protect each other. Finally, neither model recognizes the potential positive impacts that focused police and fire cooperation could have on the public.

Research Question

How might utilizing firehouses as central hubs for police officers improve and enhance cooperation and safety among officers, firefighters, and the community?

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[1] Brett M. Cowell and Anne L. Kringen, "Leveraging Foot Patrol to Strengthen Community-Police Relations," *Police Chief*, March 2017, 14, http://www.policechiefmagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/PoliceChief_March_2017_WEB.pdf.

[2] Paul Peluso, "Virginia, Oklahoma Fire Officials Push 'Village' Model," Firehouse, August 29, 2007, http://www.firehouse.com/news/10504665/virginia-oklahoma-fire-officials-push-village-model.

Research Design

This study focuses primarily on determining how existing community-centered approaches might be improved to enhance trust, cooperation, and ultimately the safety of police officers and firefighters by using firehouses as central hubs for officers located within the same geographical area. This study does not examine existing community-oriented policing or community risk-reduction models to determine whether they are successful at reducing crime, accidents, or fire fatalities. Instead, the focus is on agency and community relationships, particularly on how the cooperation and safety of police officers and firefighters may be improved.

The majority of this research centers on focus group interviews and discussions. Three specific focus group discussions were conducted to brainstorm ideas and to determine the perceptions and customer needs of police officers, firefighters, and citizens. The focus group interviews entailed meeting with three representative groups to determine what an improved joint community, police, and fire model using fire stations might look like, if applicable. Twenty-four out of 30 contacted subjects participated in the focus group discussions. The three Oklahoma groups represented Owasso firefighters, Tulsa police officers, and Tulsa citizens.

Findings

This study indicates that most of the focus group participants are in favor of community-centered efforts, including the proposed firehouse hub concept. Findings from this study also reveal differing views among the groups regarding the benefits and challenges of such strategies, as well as insight and suggestions for their success.

According to the agency groups, the biggest challenges of community-focused efforts in general are staffing and budgeting requirements needed to engage the public. In short, doing more with less is difficult. Fire and police agencies are often unable to contribute as much time to community strategies as they would like due to limited staffing and lean budgets. Citizens on the other hand, disagree, asserting that agencies do not need more money or resources—they only need to do things differently.

As for the fire-station hub approach, all of the firefighters, police officers, and citizens who made up the small sampling of participants reacted favorably to the proposed idea. All groups described benefits that could be gained from the approach. Regarding the foreseeable barriers, fire and police both delineated minor issues that would need to be resolved. The firefighter participants mostly expressed concern over the living arrangements although at least one referenced the loss of trust that might occur if community members perceived firefighters and police officers as sharing information more frequently. In contrast, the police officers were apprehensive about imposing on the firefighters' private space, and unsure about how to get past this issue. This group also indicated concern about differing personalities and achieving buy-in from both groups.

Recommendations

This thesis proposes a merging of community-oriented policing and community-risk-reduction philosophies by extending the village concept to include police officers. This proposal is not a program or policy that outlines specific components or requires training or changes in job descriptions or skills; it is simply a mindset and a more focused cooperative approach designed to create symbiosis between firefighters, police officers, and the communities they serve. This approach suggests utilizing existing fire stations as catalysts to encourage police officer foot patrols and to foster better relationships, cooperation, and safety among all groups. This thesis suggests that better collaboration between police officers and firefighters might significantly improve the relationships and safety of first responders and the public.

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I. THE VILLAGE

Fire Chief Robert Creecy had a vision. Thirty-six years ago, he and fellow fire recruit, Chris Garrett, sat side-by-side in a Richmond, Virginia, classroom, eagerly attending new firefighter training. Early on in his career, Creecy recognized that firefighters were nonchalant and careless with people's property during fire salvage and overhaul. During a phone interview, now-retired Chief Creecy recalled, "It always bothered me that we were there for the problem and not the people."[1]

Many years later, when Creecy became the chief of the Richmond Fire Department, he wanted to do something to change this culture. Creecy noticed that many small cities and towns were served by only one or two fire stations, which led to a novel idea. He and his former classmate—and newly promoted—Deputy Chief Chris Garrett forged ahead as leaders of a progressive idea that Creecy coined the "village fire-company" concept.[2] His notion was that firefighters should take care of their communities and become the "helpers" of the village much like the firefighters of old. Creecy and Garrett also realized that they were fighting 21st-century problems, yet fire service delivery in general had not changed much since the early 1900s. They perceived that fire departments as a whole seemed to be focused on fire suppression or the immediate emergency—and not much on prevention or people. Creecy also understood that while fires were not as frequent, they were still occurring. Moreover, he sensed a correlation between residential fires and poverty. For these reasons, he decided to change and improve his department's mission to include areas of prevention, education, and citizen relationships. Chief Creecy's philosophy was that firefighters had an obligation to engage the community to improve safety—and this is what he emphasized to his fire crews.[3]

In Creecy's village fire-company concept, the company officer of a particular firehouse acts as the fire chief of his or her area of response, or "village," and is responsible

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[1] Robert Creecy, interview, June 22, 2018.

[2] Creecy.

[3] Creecy.

for everything good or bad that happens to it.[4] The firefighters are given the freedom, authority, and—sometimes—the budget to address the specific needs of their community. These needs include everything from fire and accident education and prevention, fire planning, building code inspections, fire investigation, and emergency response. A significant component of the success of the concept relies on firefighters building relationships with the citizens in their village. The village fire-company concept is applicable to a small community with only one firehouse or to a large city with 50. The size of the city really does not matter—a large city can simply be divided into several small villages, based on the number and locations of firehouses.[5]

Today, Creecy's vision falls into the broader and more recognized model of fire prevention and education known as community risk reduction (CRR). While not quite as intimate as the village concept, the main idea is the same. Fire departments must shift their way of thinking, work diligently to identify what types of emergencies are occurring in their areas of response, and strive to prevent them. They must proactively engage in risk-management activities and citizen relationship building to accomplish this. Specific programs geared toward businesses, senior citizens, and youth are common such as workplace fire safety, senior fall prevention, and youth fire-setting intervention and prevention.

Community-oriented policing and fire-service community-risk-reduction strategies are distinct concepts; however, they have a notable similarity. Both strategies are aimed at building relationships, cooperation, and trust between citizens and either police officers or firefighters. While the secondary benefit of CRR is fire prevention, that of community-oriented policing, in particular foot patrol operations, is the potential for crime reduction.[6] Advocates for CRR models, especially those who propose the village fire-company concept, assert that when firefighters become trusted neighbors of the citizens in their

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[4] Christopher A. Garrett, interview, April 21, 2018.

[5] Creecy, interview; and Garrett, interview.

[6] Brett M. Cowell and Anne L. Kringen, "Leveraging Foot Patrol to Strengthen Community-Police Relations," *Police Chief*, March 2017, 14, http://www.policechiefmagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/PoliceChief_March_2017_WEB.pdf.

village, knowledge between the groups increases, and the risk of accidents and injury or death by fire decreases.[7] Similarly, when police foot-patrol officers become trusted neighbors of the citizens in their "beat" areas, knowledge between the groups increases, which potentially lowers the risk of crime.

Still, while both models tout building trust and cooperation with citizens and preventing fire and crime as potential benefits, neither addresses the possible advantages that collaborating could have for both police officers and firefighters. Moreover, neither model addresses the possibility of police and fire organizations joining forces to better cooperate, communicate, and ultimately protect each other. Finally, neither model recognizes the potential benefits of police and fire cooperation for the public.

This thesis proposes merging community-oriented policing and community-risk-reduction philosophies by extending the village concept to include police officers. This thesis does not propose a program or policy that outlines specific components, requires training, or changes job descriptions or skills; it simply proposes a mindset and a more cooperative approach to create symbiosis among firefighters, police officers, and the communities in which they serve. This thesis applies the approach to Tulsa, Oklahoma, police officers and firefighters.

A. RESEARCH QUESTION

How might utilizing firehouses as central hubs for police officers improve and enhance cooperation and safety among officers, firefighters, and the community?

B. THE PROPOSAL

This thesis explores the idea of cooperative partnerships between police and fire agencies and their positive impacts on each agency and community. In smaller cities and towns, police officers and firefighters often work hand-in-hand and may even be co-located in shared facilities. In larger cities, however, this dynamic is rare. In larger municipalities, firehouses are generally located strategically throughout the community and

[7] Paul Peluso, "Virginia, Oklahoma Fire Officials Push 'Village' Model," Firehouse, August 29, 2007, http://www.firehouse.com/news/10504665/virginia-oklahoma-fire-officials-push-village-model.

neighborhoods and could serve as central hubs of protection and collaboration for officers operating around them.

Since many of the recent violent assaults on police officers occurred while they were isolated and alone, firehouses located in areas where police are also operating could serve as safe havens for the officers. Since fire stations are often more numerous than police precincts or divisions and are commonly placed throughout communities, the police officers using them as hubs might also see quicker response times, as they would be in proximity to neighborhoods or beat areas. Such an arrangement would also bring firefighters and police officers together for meaningful dialogue and encourage informal peer support and resiliency—benefits that firefighters often enjoy but may be lacking for officers who patrol alone.[8]

Firefighters may also receive notable benefits from the setup. Increased communication and interaction between the two groups could promote friendships, cooperation, and informal information sharing as well as ultimately improve efficiency on emergency incidents. The arrangement may also lead to better firefighter situational awareness and quicker access to a police officer if needed, all of which could increase safety.

In such a partnership, police officers and firefighters would continue to work separately on agency-specific community-oriented strategies while also working cooperatively and using existing fire-station infrastructure as catalysts for increased collaboration and proximity to neighborhoods. In short, the symbiotic relationship that would develop from the arrangement may save the lives of police officers and firefighters as well as improve existing community-centered strategies.

C. THE MODEL

In a metropolitan city such as Tulsa, Oklahoma, different regions are often divided into areas of coverage for police and fire departments. For fire departments, these areas of

[8] Ellen Kirschman, *I Love a Firefighter: What the Family Needs to Know* (New York: Guilford Press, 2004), 176.

coverage are known as battalions or districts, and each one has several fire stations located within its boundaries. The stations and firefighters located within these boundaries have their own “first-in” areas of response, which are the areas and structures located in proximity to that particular station. The stations are strategically located throughout each battalion or district to provide fire and emergency response coverage to the entire city. They are based on the needs of the neighborhood and the anticipated response time required for firefighters to arrive quickly. In Tulsa, there are five districts and five to seven fire stations located within each district for a total of 30.

For police departments, areas of coverage are known as precincts or divisions, and in Tulsa, there are three large divisions—Gilcrease, Mingo Valley, and Riverside. Each division is broken down strategically to provide emergency coverage for the entire city through officer first-in “beat” areas. Each of the three police divisions has only one precinct building located within its boundaries for officers, compared to the five to seven firehouses located within each fire district (see Figure 1).

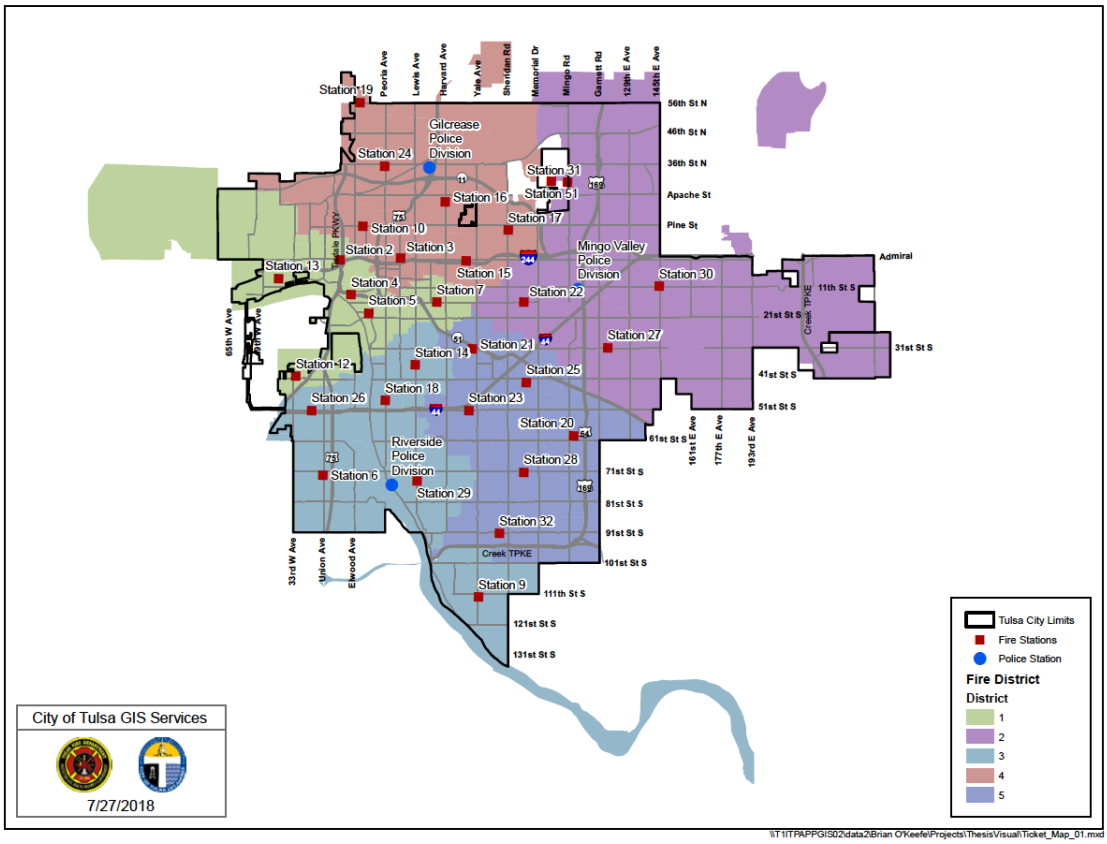

Figure 1. City of Tulsa Police Divisions and Fire Districts[9]

Tulsa, Oklahoma, has one police foot-patrol officer operating within the Riverside Division and Fire District Three. Currently, this lone officer parks his vehicle at various business locations within a designated high-crime area, or hotspot, and spends the majority of his time on foot interacting with community members. Funded by the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant, his sole duty is to develop relationships, assist people, and solve problems with the goal of reducing crime.[10]

In the new arrangement, any officer working in a specific fire district, especially those on designated foot patrol, could park his or her vehicle at one of the several fire

[9] Source: Brian O'Keefe, "City of Tulsa Police Divisions and Fire Districts" (unpublished map, City of Tulsa Geographical Information Systems, July 27, 2018).

[10] "BJA Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program," Office of Justice Programs, accessed June 22, 2018, https://www.bja.gov/JAG/.

stations and spend time on foot patrol in the community. One of the main differences in this new arrangement is that officers would be more efficient and effective as well as cover more ground by driving from fire station to fire station and then getting out and "walking the beat."

Another major difference in this type of arrangement, however, is that each time an officer moves to a new location, he or she has the option to park in a more secure location with safe access to Wi-Fi and other technology and to go inside for restroom facilities, coffee, and—more importantly—camaraderie. Existing fire-station community rooms may be used as quiet office spaces for officers or for joint police and fire community meetings or education. Officers using the stations would be more protected, and the informal interactions may lead to better communications and knowledge sharing between the disciplines. Improved communication could also lead to better efficiency for day-to-day emergency responses but, even more importantly, for complex, multiagency responses such as natural or manmade disasters.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section examines relevant literature relating to the concepts of community-oriented policing and village fire companies. The core consideration of both ideas is community relations, and the theory is that when police officers and firefighters become known, trusted neighbors of the citizens they serve, all groups become more knowledgeable and cooperate better, potentially reducing crime, accidental fires, and fire fatalities. While there is a multitude of literature specifically referencing community-oriented policing and community risk-reduction, information regarding the village fire-company concept, which is similar to CRR, is extremely scarce. Because of these challenges, the review of literature is broken down into specific topics: current public perceptions of police, the benefits of community-oriented policing and village fire-company concepts, and the challenges of both.

1. Public Perception

Because relationships and trust are central themes of both community-oriented policing and the village fire-company concept, this review includes relevant literature

describing the state of public trust and perceptions of police and firefighters. The literature base is relatively silent on information relating to negative public perceptions of firefighters, but there are many current articles and studies related to police organizations.

In recent years, there seems to have been a negative shift in the public perceptions of police, especially from the African-American community. Scholars attribute the negative perceptions to a historic distrust in law enforcement, which has only recently been exposed. These experts describe the African-American community as having an established history of distrust in police, which dates back to the slave era and has endured through Jim Crow laws and the police response to anti-war and civil rights protests.[11] Because of this long history of distrust passed down from family members and friends–not to mention an accumulated history of first-hand negative interactions—researchers have found that the African-American community, especially young males in underprivileged areas of large cities, are most likely to have negative perceptions and lack of confidence in police.[12] In contrast, some researchers insist that negative public opinions ebb and flow and are based on particularly controversial and publicly exposed instances in which police have used dangerous or deadly force.[13] For example, according to *Smithsonian* magazine, 26 people died and several were injured in Newark in 1967, during one of the deadliest riots in history, after African-American cab driver John Smith was beaten to death by police.[14]

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[11] George L. Kelling and Mark Harrison Moore, "The Evolving Strategy of Policing," *Perspectives on Policing*, no. 4 (November 1988): 8, http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/114213.pdf; and Tarrick McGuire, "Policing from the Inside Out: The Process of Restoring and Rebuilding Trust in Communities of Color," *Police Chief*, June 2017, 44–45, http://www.policechiefmagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/PoliceChief_June2017.pdf.

[12] Rod K. Brunson, "'Police Don't Like Black People': African-American Young Men's Accumulated Police Experiences," *Criminology & Public Policy* 6, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 71–101, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9133.2007.00423.x; Tom R. Tyler, "Policing in Black and White: Ethnic Group Differences in Trust and Confidence in the Police," *Police Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (September 2005): 322–42, https://doi.org/10.1177/1098611104271105; and Jihong Zhao, *Why Police Organizations Change: A Study of Community-Oriented Policing* (Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum, 1996).

[13] Peluso, "Fire Officials Push 'Village' Model."

[14] Katie Nodjimbadem, "The Long, Painful History of Police Brutality in the U.S.," Smithsonian, July 27, 2017, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/long-painful-history-police-brutality-in-the-us-180964098/.

Regardless, public perception is less about cultural groups than about perceived fairness. While white and Hispanic people generally have more trust in police than the African-American community does, these particular groups do not necessarily have high levels of confidence.[15] Brunson, McGuire, as well as Meares concur and emphasize that treating people with dignity, fairness, and respect—or procedural justice—seems to correlate with positive public perceptions from all groups.[16] Indeed, results from numerous studies also indicate that interactions between police and the public are directly related to levels of trust.[17]

Similarly, Jones and Supinski describe challenges in the relationships between police and Muslim communities following the September 11, 2001, attacks. These writers conclude that because officers' duties shifted to include counterterrorism efforts, many Middle Eastern and Muslim-Americans felt suspicion from others; thus, established trust was lost.[18] Jones and Supinski as well as Sun and Wu recommend that officers must work hard to win back and keep trust in these communities and describe that doing so requires transparency and a healthy balance of community policing and counterterrorism efforts.[19]

2. The Benefits of Community-Focused Strategies

This section defines and parallels community-oriented policing and community risk reduction to present the focus and benefits of the two agency-specific strategies.

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[15] Tyler, "Policing in Black and White," 323–24.

[16] Rod K. Brunson, "Focused Deterrence and Improved Police–Community Relations," *Criminology & Public Policy* 14, no. 3 (August 1, 2015): 507–14, https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12141; McGuire, "Policing from the Inside Out"; and Tracey L. Meares, "The Path Forward: Improving the Dynamics of Community-Police Relationships to Achieve Effective Law Enforcement Policies," *Columbia Law Review* 117, no. 5 (June 2017): 1355–68.

[17] Brunson, "'Police Don't Like Black People,'" 71–75; and Tyler, "Policing in Black and White," 326–27.

[18] Chapin Jones and Stanley B. Supinski, "Policing and Community Relations in the Homeland Security Era," *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 7, no. 1 (2010): 2–4, https://doi.org/10.2202/1547-7355.1633.

[19] Jones and Supinski, 9–11; and Ivan Y. Sun and Yuning Wu, "Arab Americans' Confidence in Police," *Crime & Delinquency* 61, no. 4 (May 2015): 501–2, https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128711420103.

a. Community-Oriented Policing

Nearly four decades ago, Herman Goldstein described a problem-oriented approach as a way to solve issues evolving from police agencies that had become preoccupied with the "means over ends syndrome."[20] Goldstein suggests that when agencies primarily focus on organizational improvements and the "running of the agency," efficiency and knowledge of the community as well as the associated trust and cooperation are lost. This author and others of that era, specifically Kelling and Moore, assert that police officers are actually problem solvers and that both law enforcement and the public would benefit from agencies shifting to more community-centered approaches.[21] Authors of this school of thought concur that when police officers abandoned "walking the beat" and began to focus on law enforcement and crime fighting, they were perceived as unapproachable, unjust, and even corrupt—especially during the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 1960s and 1970s.[22] Certainly, many researchers and writers have promoted the benefits of police agencies and officers returning to a more decentralized, humanistic approach and have suggested community-oriented strategies as a way to build relationships, foster trust, and enhance cooperation among police and citizens. For example, Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux describe how race relations and collaboration between citizens and police dramatically improved in the 1970s when Flint, Michigan, officers returned to foot patrol.[23]

A number of more recent philosophers have also described the benefits of community-oriented approaches, including those attained from foot-patrol encounters. Brady, Cowell and Kringen, and Eggers and O'Leary all suggest that when officers return

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[20] Herman Goldstein, "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach," *NPPA Journal* 25, no. 2 (1979): 238, http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001112877902500207.

[21] Kelling and Moore, "The Evolving Strategy of Policing," 1.

[22] William D. Eggers and John O'Leary, "The Beat Generation," *Policy Review* (Fall 1995): 4, https://www.hoover.org/research/beat-generation; and Jack R. Greene, "Community Policing in America: Changing the Nature, Structure, and Function of the Police," *Criminal Justice* 3, no. 3 (2000): 306–8, https://www.ncjrs.gov/criminal_justice2000/vol_3/03g.pdf?q=understanding-community-policing.

[23] Robert Trojanowicz and Bonnie Bucqueroux, *Community Policing and the Challenge of Diversity* (East Lansing, MI: National Center for Community Policing, 1991), 14, https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/Photocopy/134975NCJRS.pdf.

to the streets, they gain personal knowledge of the people in their communities, and those increased interactions reduce crime.[24] Proponents of this idea insist that daily interactions enlighten both groups to view each other as human beings instead of stereotypes, and better relationships increase trust and cooperation, which encourage information sharing.[25] For this reason, a 15-week project in Baltimore, Maryland, in 2016 brought police officers, students, and community leaders of color together for dialogue focused on breaking stereotypes and changing perceptions.[26]

Scholars who recognize the potential benefits of community-oriented policing emphasize that citizens must also engage and take ownership of their communities. For example, Brady describes that in Camden, New Jersey, police officers who returned to foot patrols brought in ice-cream trucks in an effort to draw people outside.[27] The officers theorized that if criminals no longer owned the streets, crime would go down, and the ice cream was a way of encouraging citizens to get outside, visit with each other, and ultimately take back their neighborhoods.[28] Many analysts also suggest that if they are carefully planned and implemented and achieve officer/agency buy-in, these types of strategies often positively influence other issues such as officer health and wellness and race relations—even in areas where distrust in police is historical.[29]

The Department of Justice (DOJ) defines community policing as follows: "A philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of

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[24] Jeff Brady, "Obama: Camden, N.J., Police a Model for Improving Community Relations," NPR, May 22, 2015, http://www.npr.org/2015/05/22/408824877/obama-camden-n-j-police-a-model-for-improving-community-relations; Cowell and Kringen, "Leveraging Foot Patrol," 14–15; and Eggers and O'Leary, "The Beat Generation," 3.

[25] Brady, "A Model for Improving Community Relations"; Cowell and Kringen, "Leveraging Foot Patrol"; and Eggers and O'Leary, "The Beat Generation," 2–3.

[26] McGuire, "Policing from the Inside Out," 47.

[27] Brady, "A Model for Improving Community Relations."

[28] Brady.

[29] Tony Zimmerman and Ron Kness, "Building Trust in Law Enforcement through Service: Giving Back and Fostering Confidence through Outreach, Education, and Prevention Programs," Fire Science Online, accessed September 10, 2017, http://www.firescience.org/building-trust-in-law-enforcement/; Cowell and Kringen, "Leveraging Foot Patrol"; and Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, *Community Policing*, 1–26.

partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime."[30] The DOJ's description centers on relationships and encompasses three main components: community partnerships between law enforcement and individuals or organizations, organizational transformation, and problem solving.[31] A focus of this strategy is building relationships between police officers and the public, so both are empowered and actively engaged in solving problems.

A current point of concern for many is the lack of trust between the public and law enforcement, and community-policing practices are often implemented to address this problem.[32] Both citizens and city leaders alike agree that implementing more community-centered strategies often make a difference in this area.[33] In 2015, in response to intense and difficult interactions between law enforcement officers and the public, the Community Oriented Policing Services in conjunction with former President Barack Obama presented the implementation guide for the Task Force on 21st Century Policing.[34] The guide was developed by a committee of professional law enforcement officers, legal experts, professors, and scholars with the intent of restoring public trust and providing tools for law enforcement to initiate positive change.

Even before these suggestions were made, many agencies were already making concerted efforts to implement community-focused strategies by incorporating back-to-basics approaches reminiscent of the officer–citizen relationships portrayed in the beloved 60s television series, the *Andy Griffith Show*. Each episode follows the daily interactions

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[30] Community Oriented Policing Services, *Community Policing Defined* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2014), 1, https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf.

[31] Community Oriented Policing Services, 2.

[32] Brunson, "'Police Don't Like Black People,'" 73–75; and Brunson, "Focused Deterrence," 510.

[33] Kevin Canfield, "NAACP Legal Defense Fund along with Community Leaders Demand Changes to Tulsa's Policing Practices," Tulsa World, May 31, 2018, http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/naacp-legal-defense-fund-along-with-community-leaders-demand-changes/article_9c76d005-68a6-54a1-80a9-013539509882.html.

[34] Community Oriented Policing Services, *The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing: Implementation Guide* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2015), http://noblenational.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/President-Barack-Obama-Task-Force-on-21st-Century-Policing-Implementation-Guide.pdf.

of Sheriff Andy Taylor, Deputy Barney Fife, and the citizens, business owners, and criminals of Mayberry, USA.[35] It provides a comical, yet enlightening, view of the relationships that may be formed when officers and citizens know and trust each other.

Police agencies that have returned to community-centered approaches strive to develop relationships between officers and the public as well as concentrate on cooperative citizen/officer approaches to solving problems and reducing crime. These programs seek to improve public trust and the perceptions of law enforcement officers through increased positive interactions between the officers and the public. These departments often employ strategies to develop partnerships with businesses and non-profit organizations, such as schools and places of worship, and engage in practices that improve positive public relations. Proactive endeavors such as public service announcements, informational press releases, and social media campaigns serve to accomplish these objectives while increasing agency transparency, which is another crucial component.

b. Community Risk Reduction

Community-oriented fire programs are designed to help firefighters connect with and educate the public. This idea, also known as community risk reduction, is similar to community-oriented policing except that instead of focusing on preventing or reducing crime, the main goal is to prevent or reduce accidents, injuries, and fire fatalities.[36] The central theme of building relationships and trust with the public is the same in community risk reduction, which departments accomplish based on individual community needs. Also, as in community-oriented policing, partnering with local businesses, places of worship, schools, and other entities is a critical component for success.

Vision 20/20's national strategies for loss prevention, a community risk reduction model, outline several activities in which fire departments must engage to make an impact on prevention. The organization defines community risk reduction (CRR) as follows: "The

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[35] Wikipedia, s.v. "The Andy Griffith Show," accessed July 27, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Andy_Griffith_Show.

[36] "NFA's Growing Impact on Community Risk Reduction," International Fire Chiefs Association, October 2016, https://www.iafc.org/on-scene/on-scene-article/nfa-s-growing-impact-on-community-risk-reduction.

identification and prioritization of risks followed by the coordinated application of resources to minimize the probability or occurrence and/or the impact of unfortunate events.[37] Simply stated, CRR is community-centered, data driven, "emergency" prevention.[38] It does not diminish the need for emergency response because, unfortunately, accidents and emergencies continue to occur—just as crime does. The main idea, however, is that fire departments shift their way of thinking and work diligently to identify what types of emergencies are occurring in their areas of response as well as strive to prevent them. They must proactively engage in risk-management activities including public education, code-enforcement, smoke-detector programs, and other initiatives that engage and encourage citizens to take a role in preventing accidents, fires, injuries, and death.[39] CRR is a not a new concept and many fire departments have informally engaged in various aspects of prevention for years. Other departments have fully and formally embraced the concept and enjoyed the benefits of CRR by incorporating the three main objectives of Vision 20/20's guidelines: "Identifying fire risks at the operational level (preferably by fire-station response area), prioritizing the risks to be addressed, and coordinating elements of emergency response with preventive tactics that mitigate risks."[40] Certainly, CRR is a model that many fire agencies try to incorporate even at a basic level. While there is a significant amount of literature that addresses the concept, information describing the village fire-company concept is limited. In fact, the only departments that seem to have implemented this particular concept are the cities of Richmond, Virginia, and Owasso, Oklahoma.[41] This limited application may be because Chris Garrett—having worked as deputy chief under Richmond Fire Chief Robert Creecy, the creator and originator of the

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[37] "Community Risk Reduction," Vision 20/20, accessed February 7, 2018, http://strategicfire.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/V2020-CRR_overview.pdf.

[38] "V2020 Community Risk Reduction 2015," YouTube video, 7:09, posted by StrategicFire May 27, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/embed/gxun3Lb7I9k?enablejsapi=1&autoplay=0&cc_load_policy=1&iv_load_policy=1&loop=0&modestbranding=0&rel=0&showinfo=1&fs=1&playsinline=0&controls=2&autohide=2&theme=dark&color=red&.

[39] Vision 20/20, "Community Risk Reduction."

[40] Vision 20/20.

[41] Peluso, "Fire Officials Push 'Village' Model."

concept—transferred and implemented the idea in Oklahoma when he headed the Owasso Fire Department.

However, the lesser-known village fire-company concept is an innovative idea. Simply stated, it is an element of the more recently developed community risk-reduction philosophy, taken a step further. The village fire-company concept is also similar to the community-oriented policing approach in that relationships built between citizens and officials are mutually beneficial. Creecy's idea dates back to the late 1800s and early 1900s when firefighters were seen as neighbors, helpers, and ultimately the problem solvers of the village.[42] In this approach, firefighters housed in specific locations take ownership of their service area or village and are responsible for every aspect in keeping the citizens in their village safe.[43] A fire station in a particular neighborhood is the fire department for that particular community and the firefighters housed there are responsible for it.[44] While the village concept may not be as recognized as community risk reduction, it has many of the same ideals but on a more personal level.

Creecy and Garrett concur that if the concept is successfully implemented, it can be extremely effective and rewarding for firefighters, community members, and the fire department as a whole.[45] Garrett describes the close, human-level protection and connections fostered between the firefighters and citizens in the village fire-company approach.[46] Both former chiefs continue to endorse this "brother's keeper" philosophy and suggest that the fire service must return to this way of operating to stay valuable in the community as well as build relationships, foster trust, and ensure safety and fire prevention—as American culture and demographics continue to evolve. This concept,

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[42] Creecy, interview.

[43] International Fire Service Training Association, *Fire and Life Safety Educator*, 3rd ed. (Stillwater, OK: Fire Protection Publications, 2011); Christopher A. Garrett, "Determining the Appropriate Staffing Model for the Owasso Fire Department" (applied research project, National Fire Academy, 2009), 11, https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=698749.

[44] Creecy, interview; and Garrett, interview.

[45] Peluso, "Fire Officials Push 'Village' Model."

[46] Garrett, interview.

which was a way of life more than a century ago, could positively impact modern-day fire prevention efforts and reduce accidents, injuries, and deaths of citizens and firefighters as America continues to change.

The village fire-company concept is primarily about preventing fires and accidents; however, it also encourages firefighters and firehouses to be more approachable and the public to be more responsible. In addition, firefighters are trained in specialty areas such as fire and life safety inspections and public education, and are ultimately given full authority and responsibility of their village.[47] Notably, the village framework is composed of all structures, businesses, activities, and people who reside and work there, yet police officers are often overlooked. This is significant because firefighters and police officers are often helpers by nature yet often miss opportunities in which they could assist each other. Both have knowledge and strengths to offer the other, and inviting officers into the firehouse could facilitate this transfer. If officers were included, meaningful dialogue and camaraderie might also be fostered between the disciplines, and these interactions might literally save lives.

3. The Challenges of Community-Oriented Police and Fire Strategies

While many researchers agree that there are benefits to community-oriented fire prevention and policing approaches, some do not completely accept these strategies, especially when it comes to policing. There is an abundance of information regarding the obstacles and ineffectiveness of these strategies for law enforcement purposes. Scholars of both ideas suggest that organizational and cultural changes as well as member acceptance are historic obstacles to the effective implementation of new concepts, in both fire and police agencies. Others claim that community policing is a great idea in theory, but it does not necessarily reduce crime or foster relationships.[48] Ray suggests that community policing is declining because the core component of community relations has never really developed.[49] Sozer also emphasizes that for community policing to be the least bit

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[47] Garrett, "Determining the Appropriate Staffing Model," 10.

[48] M. Alper Sozer, *Crime and Community Policing 1977* (El Paso: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2009).

[49] John M. Ray, *Rethinking Community Policing* (El Paso: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2014).

effective, police organizations "must do much more than just say they are engaged, they must live it."[50] Finally, Weisburd and Eck suggest, "Community policing alone does not reduce crime, although it may make the public feel safer."[51]

Numerous experts argue for community policing but describe the development of relationships between police officers and citizens as a major challenge. For example, Brunson asserts that African-American and Latino communities rely largely on personal experiences or on those of family and friends when forming opinions of others—including police.[52] If first- and second-hand accounts have been negative, overall perceptions are much more likely to be negative as well.[53] Brunson also suggests that there is much more to community-oriented policing than just being present. He and others indicate that the manner in which an officer interacts with the public and asserts his or her authority has a lot to do with the public's trust, perception, and cooperation.[54] Those who acknowledge this obstacle advise that police agencies work diligently toward procedural justice—practicing professionalism, fairness, consistency, and treating citizens with dignity and respect at all times.[55] Many of these scholars discuss the overarching theme of procedural justice as extremely important and describe that a citizen's perception and trust of an officer are often based on how he or she interacts with the public.[56]

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

The hypothesis of this thesis is that a more cooperative approach between police officers and firefighters will develop a symbiotic relationship that also promotes positive

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[50] Ray.

[51] David Weisburd and John E. Eck, "What Can Police Do to Reduce Crime, Disorder, and Fear?," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 593, no. 1 (May 2004): 60, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716203262548.

[52] Brunson, "'Police Don't Like Black People,'" 72–74.

[53] Brunson, 75–76.

[54] Brunson, "'Police Don't Like Black People'"; Tyler, "Policing in Black and White"; and Zimmerman and Kness, "Building Trust in Law Enforcement."

[55] Brunson, "Focused Deterrence," 508.

[56] Brunson, "Focused Deterrence"; Brunson, "'Police Don't Like Black People'"; McGuire, "Policing from the Inside Out"; and Meares, "The Path Forward."

relationships with the public. This newly formed community-centered partnership will facilitate collaboration between the two agencies, and officers will be in proximity to neighborhoods and the people who reside there. Firefighters and police officers will connect, which will ultimately increase their safety and emergency response efficiency.

1. Methodology

This study focused primarily on determining how existing community-centered approaches might be improved to enhance trust, cooperation, and ultimately the safety of police officers and firefighters by using firehouses as central hubs for officers located within the same geographical area. This study did not examine existing community-oriented policing or community risk-reduction models to determine whether they are successful at reducing crime, accidents, or fire fatalities. Instead, the focus was on agency and community relationships and ways to improve the cooperation and safety of police officers and firefighters.

2. Focus Groups

The majority of the research centered on focus group interviews and discussions. Three specific focus group discussions were conducted to brainstorm ideas and to determine perceptions and customer needs of police officers, firefighters, and citizens. The focus group interviews entailed meeting and brainstorming with sample groups of community members, police officers, and firefighters to determine what an improved joint community police and fire model using fire stations might look like, if applicable.

The groups were convened to discuss current strategies and the foreseeable positive or negative impacts and challenges of firehouses being used as central hubs for police officers. The focus group questions were broad in nature, and the main objective was to brainstorm ideas with a sampling of members from each of the three groups represented: Tulsa police officers, Owasso firefighters, and Tulsa citizens. Twenty-four out of 30 contacted subjects participated and were interviewed in various locations—Tulsa Community College, Owasso Fire Stations 2 and 3, and Rudisill Public Library—or by phone.

a. Focus Group #1: Owasso Firefighters

Eight members participated in the Fire Department focus group. Group subjects consisted of five Caucasian male and two Caucasian female firefighters. Chris Garrett, a village fire-company subject-matter expert and the former Owasso fire chief was also included. Garrett is a native of the Richmond, Virginia, Fire Department and served with Robert Creecy, the village concept's originator.[57]

The Owasso, Oklahoma, Fire Department was selected for the focus group discussion. Available subjects were limited to this department because it is one of only two known fire departments that have fully implemented the village fire-company mindset of the community risk-reduction model.[58]

Owasso is a small community with a population of approximately 35,000 people and is known as the fastest growing city in Oklahoma.[59] The Owasso Fire Department is located approximately 15 miles northeast of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and is made up of 154 uniformed firefighting personnel who are also paramedics. The department serves approximately 55,000 city and county residents and, according to Garrett, responded to approximately 5,200 calls in 2017.[60]

While there are no specific departmental policies in place that describe the village fire-company concept, firefighters in Owasso are, for the most part, hired based on character and openness to the concept. As a condition of their employment, new Owasso firefighters are expected to understand the importance of partnering with the public and developing relationships with the "villagers" they serve and protect.[61]

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[57] Garrett, interview.

[58] Peluso, "Fire Officials Push 'Village' Model."

[59] "Demographics," City of Owasso, accessed March 11, 2018, http://www.cityofowasso.com/326/Demographics.

[60] Garrett, interview.

[61] Garrett, interview.

b. Focus Group #2: Tulsa Police Officers

Nine subjects participated in the police department focus group. Group subjects consisted of four African-American males, one Hispanic male, one Caucasian male, and three Caucasian female police officers. Subjects were limited to Tulsa, Oklahoma, police officers who are currently assigned to community-policing or foot-patrol operations, and those members who are directly involved in community-policing strategies or engaged with the community in some way.

Tulsa, Oklahoma, is a large, metropolitan community situated on the banks of the Arkansas River in northeastern Oklahoma. Tulsa is the second largest city in the state with a population of approximately 400,000 people.[62]

The Tulsa Police Department consists of approximately 750 uniformed personnel and 170 civilians serving an area of 197 square miles.[63] The department currently has only one full-time foot-patrol officer operating in the Riverside Division, specifically in the area of 61st and Riverside in Tulsa, Oklahoma; however all officers are encouraged to get out of their patrol cars and interact with the public.[64] The Riverside Division is also co-located within Tulsa Fire District 3, which consists of six fire stations strategically located throughout the area.

c. Focus Group #3: Tulsa Citizens

Seven subjects participated in the citizen focus group discussion. Group subjects consisted of three African-American females, two Caucasian females, one African-American male, and one Caucasian male. Subjects were limited to residents of Tulsa,

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[62] "Tulsa, Oklahoma Population 2018," World Population Review, accessed June 29, 2018, http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/tulsa-population/.

[63] Tulsa Police Department Internal Affairs, *2016 Annual Report* (Tulsa, OK: Tulsa Police Department, 2017), https://www.tulsapolice.org/media/163107/ia%20annual%20report%202016a.pdf; and Wikipedia, s.v. "Tulsa Police Department," December 23, 2017, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tulsa_Police_Department&oldid=816691939.

[64] Tulsa Police officers, focus group discussion, June 2018.

Oklahoma, who were interested or engaged in community and city issues. The group was composed of a mixture of working and retired adults.

Tulsa Police and Fire divisions, districts, precinct, and fire-station locations were also geographically examined and highlighted to provide a general overview. Specifically, the Tulsa Police Gilcrease Division and Tulsa Fire District 4 were further investigated to provide a visual presentation of the boundaries and locations of the police precinct, fire stations, and violent crime hotspots. This information is provided to show gaps and overlaps and to show how existing personnel and infrastructure might be used for creating a new model in the fire-station hub approach, if applicable.

d. Focus Group Outcome

The outcome of this thesis is a set of community-oriented approaches aimed at enhancing the cooperation and safety of police officers and firefighters, which may be used to create a pilot program for the Tulsa Police Gilcrease Division and Tulsa Fire District 4 as well as a policy for Tulsa Police and Fire Departments. Ultimately, the results of this research could be used as a general framework for increasing safety and enhancing the cooperation between firefighters and police officers locally in Tulsa—and potentially across the country.

F. CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapters II, III, and IV present hypothetical scenarios in which a lack of collaboration affects the well-being and safety of police, firefighters, and the public, respectively. Then, each chapter analyzes the proposed firehouse hub concept through the eyes of corresponding focus group participants. Chapter V presents a counter-scenario to the scenarios of the previous chapters, summarizes the findings of the focus groups, and offers recommendations for implementing the proposed firehouse hub concept.

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II. HYPOTHETICAL FAIL #1: WHEN FIREFIGHTERS FAIL POLICE OFFICERS

A. SERGEANT LANDRY'S STORY

The firefighters from Station 8A did not speak as they drove back to the firehouse in the darkness. They had been unable to save the life of the three-year-old boy who had been physically abused by his father. The firefighters had been on scene for what seemed like an eternity and had worked tirelessly in their resuscitation efforts—to no avail.

During the incident, a large crowd had gathered to watch them work while the father—outwardly grieving—sobbed, paced beside them, and at times cursed at them to save his baby. At one point, the man collapsed to the ground and began rocking back and forth, crying and praying to God to take him instead of his son. When the police arrived and it was determined that the father had actually caused the injuries, things became even more chaotic. Once the crew made it back to the station, however, normalcy returned. The fire truck and equipment needed cleaning and dinner needed to be prepared—the firefighters would also have to prepare mentally and physically for the next call.

Jimmy was a rookie firefighter with a two-year-old son of his own. Captain Smith knew this about Jimmy, who surely had never experienced anything like what he had just seen. Smith also knew from experience that interacting with the crew and engaging them in station tasks would benefit everyone's mental health—including his own—after a call like that. Later at the dinner table, the firefighters talked and joked as they often did, but eventually the conversation circled back to that somber call.

Captain Smith took the opportunity to reach out to his crew. He reminded Jimmy and the other firefighters about the wide range of emotions that are common after responding to such a traumatic event—and that these feelings are normal. He also reminded the crew of the many departmental resources available to them should the need arise. He told them to lean on each other or reach out to him, the peer support team, a mental health provider, or even their family pastors or private counselors.

Jimmy was grateful for this advice and the brotherhood he had acquired since becoming a firefighter. It eased his mind, and he felt relieved to know he was not alone. The call had shaken him. He felt helpless because he and his crew could not help the situation—and he was extremely angry with the father for what he had done. He could not stop thinking about what he had experienced or what he would like to do to the man who had called himself a dad. After talking with his crew, however, he knew that his brothers cared about him and that even Captain Smith had experienced calls like this before. He knew that things would get better in time, and resources were available if he needed them. When Jimmy went home the next morning, he hugged his wife and son.

Sergeant Landry of the police department had also responded to the gruesome call, first assisting the medics with crowd control, eventually restraining the victim's father, and finally assisting with the investigation surrounding the young boy's injuries and horrific death. By the time he had finished coordinating with homicide detectives and medical examiners—and booking that despicable piece of crap—it was late into the evening. He had not had time for dinner, although he did not have much of an appetite, and still had mountains of paperwork to complete.

Sergeant Landry silently climbed into his patrol car and drove down the dark street past Fire Station 8 to the vacant parking lot near the school where he often connected to Wi-Fi to complete his reports. As he passed the firehouse, the bay door was up, and he observed the firefighters washing the truck, talking, and smiling. Landry wondered how they could actually be smiling after returning from a call like the one they had just experienced.

Sergeant Landry sat alone in his car and reflected on the things that "sucked" in his life—the career of 10 years that he had come to despise and the low-life idiots he was sworn to protect, his failed marriage and ongoing custody battle, his drinking problem, and life and society in general. He also thought about his friend and academy classmate who had been senselessly killed less than a year ago. An ex-con on parole had ambushed and shot him in cold blood as he sat alone in his patrol vehicle completing a report.

At that moment, Sergeant Landry could not see anything good in the world. The senseless death of his friend and the call he had just returned from only confirmed that society, just as his marriage and relationship with his kids, could not be saved. Wiping a tear from his cheek, he unholstered his service Glock. For a brief, nostalgic moment, he remembered the day it was issued to him and the sense of pride he felt as he began his career as a police officer. But just as quickly as it had appeared, the memory faded, and he mourned his unraveling, unfinished life and the loss of his good friend. And—in that moment—Sergeant Landry decided that there was nothing left to live for.

B. CHANGING THE STORY

The topic of police officer and firefighter suicide is disturbing yet a growing national concern. In 2017, there were 140 police officer suicides compared to 103 firefighters; however, in previous years, these numbers were closer.[65] In fact, although reported suicides for both groups do not seem all that remarkable, police officers and firefighters alike are much more likely to die from suicide than in the line of duty.[66] Also, while the number of reported suicides for both police officers and firefighters appears to be down from last year, another major concern is that they are often under-reported.

Critical incidents, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), cultural and organizational stress, and the propensity for substance abuse are all known risk factors for first responders, and while agency awareness, resources, and peer support groups are becoming more prevalent, first-responder suicides continue to occur. In Sergeant Landry's case, exposure to trauma compounded with personal crises and alcohol abuse made him extremely vulnerable. Some research suggests that firefighters have a significant built-in protective factor against suicide that police officers do not.[67] These researchers indicate

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[65] Miriam Heyman, Jeff Dill, and Robert Douglas, *The Ruderman White Paper on Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders* (Boston: Ruderman Family Foundation, April 2018), 19–20, https://rudermanfoundation.org/white_papers/police-officers-and-firefighters-are-more-likely-to-die-by-suicide-than-in-line-of-duty/.

[66] Heyman, Dill, and Douglas, 7.

[67] "Firefighter Suicide," Nova Southeastern University, accessed July 28, 2018, https://nsubso.nova.edu/programs/research/firefighter-suicide.html.

that firefighters may suffer from mental health issues, such as depression which can lead to suicide, at higher rates when they are separated from their "firefighter family," especially if the separation is unplanned as in an unforeseen illness or injury, disciplinary leave, or retirement.[68]

While police and fire agencies are beginning to recognize the significance of providing awareness and resources to their members, they often overlook the vital significance of the brotherhood that naturally occurs in the firehouse. Undoubtedly, much has been written about this camaraderie among firefighters and the natural built-in support network.[69] In the proposed model, police officers would have access not only to fire-station facilities but more importantly to the firefighter brotherhood and network.

C. APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY—TULSA FIT FIRST RESPONDERS

Tulsa-area Fit First Responders (FFR) is a local—and recently national—fitness program that fosters camaraderie and resilience among police officers, firefighters and other first responders. The program was developed by coach Jonathan Conneely of Dynamic Sports Development and is aimed at bringing area first-responders together to build and develop the physical, mental, and spiritual health required for their line of work.[70] The program also focuses on building interpersonal relationships among participants.

For some, FFR has been life changing, contributing to individual health improvements including overcoming obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes.[71] Still others have gone so far as to credit the program for literally saving their lives after battling mental health issues such as burnout, anxiety, and depression.[72] Moreover, the program has not only improved the health of first responders but also instilled a sense of true

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[68] Nova Southeastern University.

[69] Nova Southeastern University; and Kirschman, *I Love a Firefighter*, 175–77.

[70] "Home Page," Fit First Responders, accessed June 3, 2018, https://fitfirstresponders.org/.

[71] Jonathan Conneely, *Fit First Responders: Be Your Best Physically, Mentally, Emotionally & Spiritually to Be Fit for Duty & Fit for Life* (Tulsa, OK: JJC Enterprises, 2016), 65, 126–127, 155.

[72] Conneely, 177.

camaraderie, friendship, and trust among officers, firefighters, medics, and soldiers that seems to carry over into real life and emergency response. Those in the program commonly describe a sense of family that comes from struggling and sweating together that goes beyond agency lines. These responders also describe how personally knowing another first responder leads to better coordination and efficiency when they are working on scene together. FFR has developed these types of relationships in Tulsa.

Even before FFR, some Tulsa firefighters had already been cooperating informally with police officers. Commonly, police officers and firefighters who frequently run calls together develop camaraderie. As a result, the officers are invited into the firehouse to use the restroom or have a cup of coffee or bite to eat.[73] Indeed, this small gesture of sitting and breaking bread together often seems to foster relationships, and the "coffee table" wisdom that often transpires in the firehouse is a known force in contributing to resiliency among firefighters.[74] While the practice of inviting police officers into the firehouse may not be widespread in Tulsa, the fire-station hub approach could promote this dynamic. The officer–firefighter friendships that may develop could ultimately improve emergency-response communication, cooperation, and efficiency as FFR does.

D. FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Officers participating in the focus group described the numerous benefits of a fire-station hub approach—the ability to access wireless points, the option to remove vests in a safe space, not to mention possible decreased response times because of fire station proximity to neighborhoods. They also spoke candidly about the benefits of bathroom accessibility, which firefighters coincidentally mention as a possible concern. One police officer offered a unique perspective on bathroom accessibility:

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[73] Based on my knowledge of the Tulsa Fire Department. On occasion throughout this thesis, specific references not otherwise cited are from my personal knowledge of the Tulsa police and fire departments.

[74] Kirschman, *I Love a Firefighter*, 175–77.

> I really like the idea of having access to a bathroom. Honestly, my partner and I work at night and there are limited bathroom choices for, how should I say this—ha-ha—number two. We only have a couple that we feel comfortable enough to use, but sometimes you don't want to overuse them, and also we might be clear across town when it hits. I have literally almost had to respond hot to make it to a bathroom in time. Having the option of going inside and using the restroom at a fire station would be a huge benefit for those of us who work graveyard shifts.[75]

Officers also suggested that working more closely with firefighters could carry over into more cooperative community-centered strategies and efficiency on calls. Many officers in the group compared the potential benefits of the arrangement to those of FFR. Many officers stated that they belonged to the program and referenced how it had improved relationships and increased cooperation between individuals and agencies alike.

One officer went into more detail about FFR and illustrated how interacting with other first responders in non-emergency settings is crucial:

> FFR is really cool and has brought firefighters and police together. I think firefighters and police have always been tied together, but once our job is done, we leave. There is no down time with each other to create personal bonds. FFR has done that for me, and I think the fire stations could have the same effect. There are lots of firefighters and others that I would never have met and gotten to know if it hadn't been for FFR. I can see that it makes a difference. There is just something about arriving on scene and seeing a firefighter or paramedic that you know.[76]

Indeed, most of the officers in the group shared that FFR does make a big difference when a responder personally knows another, especially on emergency calls.

The officers elaborated in length about call efficiency, and at least one described a synergistic effect that comes when emergency responders know each other:

> I think there is a synergy at calls when everyone is working together towards the same goal. There is already general cooperation, but when you actually know someone, it is really nice. I have often thought about what their [firefighters'] priorities are on certain calls like MVAs [motor vehicle accidents] or fires. I would like to know what the priorities are so that we

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[75] Police participant, phone interview, June 12, 2018. See Appendix B for full notes on focus group discussions and phone interviews.

[76] Police participant.

> can work even better together. Maybe being in the fire stations more would help with this.[77]

E. CONCLUSION

If police officers and firefighters from Station 8 would have known each other on a more personal level, the hypothetical story presented at the beginning of the chapter might not have occurred. Someone would have noticed Sergeant Landry's downward spiral, and colleagues could have intervened by offering support or resources to lessen the chances of his suicide. In the proposed approach, firehouses would be used as collaborative hubs for police officers. Firefighters and police officers would have opportunities to know each other personally and work together more efficiently at emergency incidents. Officers would also have a safe mobile office space with access to Wi-Fi, station facilities, and hot coffee. More importantly, police officers would have access to the brotherhood and the built-in support network that might save their lives.

[77] Police participant.

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III. HYPOTHETICAL FAIL #2: WHEN POLICE OFFICERS FAIL FIREFIGHTERS

A. THE FIREFIGHTER'S STORY

"Everybody loves a firefighter," shouted Officer Champlin to the firefighters working the scene with him. "Look at all the people smile and wave at you; they must think you're in the calendar or somethin.'" He chuckled and then added, "Don't get me wrong guys, I get waved at all the time, too, only usually it's with just one finger."

Officer Champlin was a motorcycle cop with 15 years on the force. He had spent the last five years teaching situational awareness and defensive tactics to the new apprentice officers at the police academy. He loved his job, but more importantly, he loved to pass on his knowledge and experience of officer safety and survival to the rookies. He knew that today more than ever, officers and the public in general needed to be vigilant of their surroundings and ready to act if needed.

The firefighters liked Champ. They ran into him often on calls in their district, but none of them really knew much about him—other than he was a motorcycle cop and liked to joke. They had no idea that Champ was an instructor or that he had knowledge of the potentially dangerous activities that were taking place in their district. More specifically, they had no idea that Champ had recently been briefed about the possibility of someone with known terrorist ties living somewhere in the city.

The firefighters were oblivious to this information as they left the car wreck and responded to the "investigate an odor" dispatch at a nearby apartment building. As they climbed off the fire truck, they did not notice the vehicle with the missing license plate parked in the street with the strange chemicals and box of nails on the backseat floorboard. As they made their way to the front door of Apartment 1A, they failed to notice the withered leaves on the shrub next to the side window and the tiny video cameras strategically placed around the building.

Next door in apartment 1B, Mrs. Johnson poked her head out to say "hi." She appreciated the firefighters and always went out of her way to speak when she saw them

in the neighborhood. She sadly and fondly remembered the day her husband had passed away. The firefighters from the station down the road had responded and were so compassionate and considerate of her needs that day. She loved "her firemen," and even a year later, they continued to check on her frequently. Curious about what they were up to today, she came out to the front stoop to visit and get a closer look.

The firefighters, distracted and eager to talk with Mrs. Johnson, diverted their attention from apartment 1A. While they were chatting and laughing, one firefighter absent-mindedly placed his hands on the window of the door to peer inside. To his surprise, the door pushed open and he started to fall forward. The last thing the firefighters heard was a soft click that triggered the booby trap. In that instant the entire building exploded, and none of them, including Mrs. Johnson, ever saw it coming.

B. CHANGING THE STORY

In this scenario, Officer Champlin was in possession of key information that could have saved the lives of the firefighters and Mrs. Johnson. If the firefighters had even basic knowledge or awareness of the potential problem, they may have helped prevent a terrorist plot. While firefighters are often knowledgeable about the intimate details of their first-in areas, police officers are privy to law enforcement intelligence that is crucial to the safety of firefighters and the public. Often, even basic "need-to-know" versions of this knowledge are never provided.

If firefighters and police officers working in the same areas were to interact more frequently, they might also form stronger relationships, informally collaborate, share important information, and even educate each other. The firefighters need only basic information and knowledge, not necessarily law enforcement–sensitive intelligence. This informal sharing of information might result in a transfer of knowledge between agencies and better safety for all, including the public.

For firefighters, the new arrangement could also lead to acquired knowledge that might improve their safety in other ways. The fostered relationships may lead to knowledge of where officers are operating. This could improve both the firefighter's and police officer's safety, as they may know where the other is responding. Sharing stories of the

issues and concerns of the village may increase the situational awareness of both groups. In addition, as firefighters get to know and understand this new group of villagers who are located in their areas of responsibility, they may work with them more cooperatively and effectively during emergency responses.

C. APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY—TULSA POLICE AND FIRE COOPERATIVE TRAINING

Cooperative and combined efforts between agencies could create advantages and benefits for everyone. While there seems to be a long history of mostly good-natured rivalry between police officers and firefighters across the country, many already cooperate informally. For example, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Tulsa Police and Fire Departments routinely train together in the police forum. Tulsa fire investigators, who are also sworn Tulsa police officers, must complete training with the Oklahoma Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET) and maintain this certification through annual skills qualification and continuing education hours. As one option to attain this requirement and strengthen relationships between the agencies, the Tulsa Police Department commonly makes room for new fire investigators in its basic academy for apprentice police officers (APOs).

For six months, new police recruits and fire investigators are immersed in police life, training, and culture. After graduation, new officers and investigators are under the direct supervision of a police field-training officer and work side-by-side with him or her to prove they are ready to be on their own. The entire experience ensures that the officers and investigators receive consistent, high-quality training and learn the skills necessary to operate as confident, competent, and professional members of the Tulsa police force. The Tulsa Police Department also offers full use of the firing range and training facility to fire investigators as needed for continuing education, skills practice, and certification purposes. This cooperative arrangement in which facilities and resources are shared helps develop skills and competency and strengthen relationships between the police and fire departments.

The Tulsa Fire Department reciprocates these cooperative gestures by welcoming the Tulsa Police Department to use their fire-and-rescue training facilities for other police training activities, such as special weapons and tactics (SWAT) and K9 search-and-rescue training. Members from both departments and others who are also members of Oklahoma Task Force One—Oklahoma's northeast region urban search-and-rescue task force—also frequently train together on team search-and-rescue skills specific to multi-agency disaster response. Once again, by sharing resources and working side-by-side, relationships are developed and strengthened between the two groups. This frequent interaction often equates with better cooperation and efficiency between the agencies during emergency response, as everyone knows one another on a first-name basis and is able to deploy quickly when disaster hits in Oklahoma or across the nation.

D. FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

When asked to brainstorm about the possibility of using fire stations as central hubs, officers and firefighters both agreed that the approach could present a positive united front to the public and provide easier foot access into neighborhoods for police officers. They also agreed that being seen together might go a long way to calm fears and possibly improve public perceptions and trust of police officers. Additionally, while both groups reacted favorably, they each had specific and differing ideas about the benefits of the proposed arrangement. Interestingly enough, the firefighters participating in the study actually had prior experience with police officers sharing space in their firehouses.

In their small city, at least two of the three fire stations accommodate shared office space for police. The firefighters discussed the benefits and challenges based on their experiences; however, during the discussion, they seemed to realize they had not been using this opportunity to its fullest potential. They pondered and illustrated some of the positive impacts that the somewhat forced arrangement had already provided. For example, they described the seamless coordination that occurs during emergency calls, which comes only from working together frequently. They also mentioned an appreciation for the safety benefits of having the officers close by. They explained that police officers in their city often monitor fire radio traffic and self-dispatch when they perceive trouble.

Firefighters also seemed to realize there were important pieces they had been neglecting to offer the officers. Members of both agencies expressed that each group might offer insight and basic education in agency-specific topics, such as first aid or defensive tactics, to the other. In addition, they added that they might also train together more frequently for potential joint-response events such as for active shooters. Firefighters also referenced the safety benefits of officer–firefighter information sharing in their city's joint arrangement: "We often know what we are responding to and what we might run into based on the officer field notes and information that they provide to dispatch. If there is any important safety-sensitive information that we need to be aware of, it is literally attached to the address that we are dispatched to."[78]

Another discussed how more conscientious and deliberate interactions and conversations at the fire station might positively affect agency efficiency and reduce redundancy. One firefighter described his frustration with the sheer volume of medical calls that keep fire trucks out of service but do not actually require paramedic response:

> I often wish they [police officers] had just a tad bit more knowledge of EMS. I think they could take care of a few more things and address some of those calls that don't really need our [advanced life support (ALS)] response, so we could stay in service for fires and actual ALS emergencies. Part of this is the way dispatch prioritizes calls, but maybe we could work on this some by talking with them about it.[79]

As a whole, the firefighters talked mostly about coordinated efforts on emergency scenes and how the arrangement could promote collaboration and increase understanding of the other's strengths and weaknesses. They also mentioned public education opportunities and the ways in which the arrangement could encourage joint development of new programs, coordination, and teamwork for existing events such as child car seat installations.

Interestingly, firefighters also noted that working together and being seen with police officers more frequently might go beyond improving efficiency:

> One hundred percent, you learn each other's strengths and weaknesses, and this creates fluidity. It's kind of like working with the same fire crew for a

[78] Owasso firefighters, focus group discussion, June 2018.

[79] Firefighter participant, focus group discussion, June 6, 2018.

> number of years. You learn what the other needs without them even having to ask—it's seamless. You work well together, and others can tell. When there is fluidity and camaraderie between firefighters and cops, you are educating the public that you all have the same end goal. Most cops have knowledge that they are not the most liked, but they still have a job to do. I think firefighters could help improve the image of police if we are seen working together toward the same goal more frequently.[80]

E. CONCLUSION

If the proposed firehouse hub approach were in place, the hypothetical story presented at the beginning of this chapter would change for the better. The lives of the firefighters, Mrs. Johnson, and the rest of the apartment's residents might have been spared because of the interagency relationships and cooperation between police and firefighters. In the new approach, these individuals would interact more frequently at the firehouse hub, and as a result, informal, safety-sensitive information might be shared. In the arrangement, police officers and firefighters might also educate the other on basic discipline-specific topics, such as advanced auto defibrillation or first-responder defensive tactics, and train together for infrequent, high-risk events such as weapons of mass destruction or active shooters. In short, firefighters would have quick, frequent access to police officers, and both groups would share knowledge.

[80] Firefighter participant.

IV. HYPOTHETICAL FAIL #3: WHEN POLICE OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS FAIL THE PUBLIC

A. PADGE'S STORY

Padge Sanders was a tall and muscular 27-year-old. He and his family were beloved members of the community, and neighbors fondly described him as an outgoing young man who had excelled in baseball during his school years. The firefighters stationed in Padge's community knew him and his family well. When he was younger, they had often stopped by the ballfield to watch him play. Padge had earned a pitching scholarship and then a bachelor's degree in information technology from a well-respected university. After returning home from college, he landed a job at a local business and was working his way up the corporate ladder—when his life began to unravel. One year ago, Padge was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Because the firefighters had recently responded to several medical calls at his house, they also knew that he and his family had been struggling with his mental illness.

Lately, Padge seemed to have good days and bad days, so his doctor had changed his medication. After a recent medical response related to Padge's illness, the firefighters visited his mom and learned that the family was struggling to cope. Mrs. Sanders described her son's unusual new challenges and informed them about his medication change. She seemed hopeful that he would level out soon.

Officer Martin was a brand-new rookie, fresh out of the academy and eager to fight crime. He had always dreamed of becoming a police officer, and now he was living it. All he had ever wanted to accomplish in life was to serve others and protect them from the "bad guys."

Martin had recently completed his officer-in-training period and was in his first month of patrolling unsupervised when the call came in: "Dispatch to officers in the area of 27 N. Carter Street, respond to a call of a suspect with a knife, break." Martin realized that he was only a block away, so he took the call and sped to the address. As he rounded the corner, he immediately found himself face-to-face with Padge, a large, muscular,

agitated man carrying a butcher knife and shouting obscenities. Officer Martin noticed that the knife was covered in blood, and the angry man was bleeding.

Officer Martin did not know Padge, his story, or his recent mental-health struggles, so he quickly exited his patrol car with pistol drawn. He shouted for the suspect to stop, drop the weapon, and place his hands in the air. Padge was confused and angry, and the voices in his head would not quiet. To Padge, Officer Martin was part of the confusion and agitation; he could not distinguish him from the noise. All Padge knew was that he wanted the noise to stop. All Officer Martin knew was that a very large, athletic man wielding a knife—and not following instructions—stood only a few feet away.

For a brief instant, Officer Martin's life flashed before his eyes, and he remembered that Carter Elementary School was only a few blocks away. He recalled seeing kids on the playground minutes before the dispatch came in. Officer Martin then realized the bad guy had to be stopped.

Forcefully, he shouted again for Padge to drop the weapon and follow his commands. Padge, still trying to stop the noise, instead raised the knife over his head and lunged toward Officer Martin. The young officer immediately stopped the threat—just as he had been trained to do. In less than three seconds, he had fired his weapon four times directly at the suspect's center mass, as he had done so many times before at the paper targets of the firing range. Padge Sanders died instantly in the street, and the voices in his head stopped. For Officer Martin and his department, the angry voices were only about to begin.

B. CHANGING THE STORY

Sadly, a simple internet search reveals stories like Padge's are becoming all too common. Tragedies like the one portrayed in the scenario can never be completely averted. Police officers still have a dangerous job to do that ultimately includes protecting the public from immediate threats and sometimes using deadly force. However, situations such as this might be avoided with positive changes in education, training, and better cooperation among police officers, firefighters, and the public.

In the fire-station hub approach, firefighters and police officers who interact regularly might notice and share information about trends in their village—such as the specific needs of citizens or increases in kitchen fires or burglaries in a particular area. They may work more collaboratively to address problems in the form of specific actions or joint public-education programs to guide community members toward becoming part of the solution. As members of the community notice the officers and firefighters working together more frequently, trust, cooperation, and interpersonal relationships may improve. Simply stated, the village might become better connected as each group gains human-level knowledge of the other, resulting in desperately needed symbiosis.

C. APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY—TULSA POLICE AND FIRE COMMUNITY ENDEAVORS

The Tulsa Police and Fire Departments already work cooperatively in many areas related to the community. Tulsa's Community Response Team (CRT) is a cooperative, community-focused endeavor between the two agencies and others. The program is an innovative program that brings police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and mental healthcare professionals together to help provide concentrated mental health assistance to Tulsa citizens. The collaborative group essentially responds together as a crisis team to identify and address specific individuals' needs, with the main goal of reducing the city's high mental illness and suicide rates.[81]

Tulsa Fire and Police also work together as neighbors in the community in other ways. Both organizations are often seen side-by-side at community block parties, parades, and other special events. One specific example is the positive impact that Officer Popsey Floyd has had on the citizens of Tulsa.[82] Officer Floyd is Tulsa's only designated foot-patrol and community outreach officer, and he currently operates in a designated crime

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[81] "Community Response Team Receives Funding to Continue Program to Help Tulsans in Need," City of Tulsa, accessed June 3, 2018, https://www.cityoftulsa.org/press-room/community-response-team-receives-funding-to-continue-program-to-help-tulsans-in-need/.

[82] Tulsa Police officers, focus group discussion; and Citizens of Tulsa, focus group discussion, June 26, 2018. See Appendices B and C for full notes on focus group discussions and phone interviews.

hotspot as part of the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program.[83] While the grant and foot-patrol assignment are geared specifically to reduce crime, Officer Floyd is known as a positive force in uniting the Tulsa Police Department and the community.

Officer Floyd and firefighters housed in his area of response often work together toward community-centered events and activities such as a bike giveaway program.[84] Moreover, Floyd, other Tulsa police officers, and firefighters often work jointly to honor community members who have demonstrated courage and bravery in the face of danger. Tulsa police and fire have been known to unite for somber events as well: they often provide joint honor guard representation for ceremonies and funerals, and have even worked together to grant a last wish to a critically ill child.[85]

First Responder Support Services (FRSS) is yet another Tulsa police and fire cooperative endeavor that benefits not only first responders but the public as well. FRSS is a free and confidential mental health counseling service offered to Tulsa police officers, firefighters, and their immediate families. Although the agency is primarily in place for first responders, it also indirectly benefits the community by providing proactive mental health education and training for the Tulsa Police and Fire Departments. For over 35 years, the city of Tulsa has provided uninterrupted mental health support, resources, and training for its emergency responders—originally through the recently dissolved Psychological Services of Tulsa, and now with former staff members who comprise FRSS.[86]

When the progressive leaders of that era realized the value of mental health support and resiliency for their first responders, they could not have foreseen the significant impact the program would have on the public. Besides providing individual and family support, FRSS professionals also train firefighters and police officers in interpersonal

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[83] Tulsa Police, focus group discussion.

[84] Tulsa Police.

[85] "Tulsa Community Surprises Girl Battling Cancer," FOX 23 (Tulsa), accessed June 24, 2018, https://www.fox23.com/news/tulsa-police-firefighters-community-members-surprise-girl-battling-cancer/533011365.

[86] Douglas Gentz, Dana Mugavero, and Nikki Fortin, *Psychological Services of Tulsa Fiscal Year 2016–2017 Final Report* (Tulsa, OK: Psychological Services of Tulsa, 2017), 8.

communication, active listening, and suicide awareness and recognition skills, while providing leadership, team training, and resources for both agencies' critical incident response and newly formed peer support teams.[87] The mental health professionals from FRSS also specifically educate new apprentice police officers in recognizing and communicating with individuals suffering from mental health crises using de-escalation techniques.[88] In addition, staff members often respond jointly with Tulsa Police and Fire to provide specific, real-time mental health expertise as needed in emergencies such as hostage negotiations or suicidal subject situations.

D. FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Police officers and firefighters are public servants, and a large portion of their respective job duties involves serving the community. Therefore, one of the first topics discussed in the focus groups was whether community-oriented strategies are important or effective. One interesting point that came from this deliberation was that while most subjects from both groups agreed that these approaches were generally beneficial, each had different justifications.

As the scenario depicted, it is important for firefighters and police officers to know and understand the people who live in their villages. The firefighters in the focus group solidified this point; for them, the main reason behind community-centered strategies is for safety and efficiency during emergencies, both for them and for the people they serve. Firefighters stated that understanding the structures and relating to the people in their first-in area was crucial in emergencies.

They discussed in detail how fostering dialogue and developing trust before the 9-1-1 call ever occurs allows them to operate much more efficiently in times of crisis. They also described how developing relationships and educating the public beforehand encourages people to call sooner and significantly reduces anxiety because citizens are familiar with them.

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[87] Gentz, Mugavero, and Fortin, 6–7.

[88] Gentz, Mugavero, and Fortin, 6–7.

Firefighters in the group also agreed that knowing your village improves safety at emergencies, especially when it is dark or when vision is obscured, such as during a structure fire. One firefighter talked about the significance of pre-fire planning:

> Just recently, we responded to a medical emergency at a path house. While we were there, we educated the owner and evaluated it. We actually went back to the station and planned our strategies and tactics. We later responded to a fire at the same house on another night and knew exactly what we were dealing with, as well as the layout. Getting ahead of it made it easier and much safer for us in the long run, and I was thankful that we knew about it before we were there for the fire.[89]

Besides planning, firefighters explained other community-centered activities that have had positive impacts in their city. For instance, the Owasso Fire Department utilizes many of the CRR avenues meant to bring emergency responders and the public together. These firefighters stated that being among the people and staying involved in community events, such as public education, fire prevention, and school mentoring, are high priorities for their agency.

The firefighters also described that their department employs some unique, proactive approaches that are remarkably auspicious. Saturday birthday parties at the firehouse may be scheduled by the public and include free use of the community room, a station tour and fire safety presentation, and the opportunity to meet and greet the firefighters. In addition, Owasso fitness centers offer deeply discounted memberships to firefighters and other emergency responders, which encourage them to improve their health and interact with the public. All of these types of affairs promote positive relationships and allow citizens to see officers and firefighters as regular people, so everyone knows one another better.

For the police officers in the focus group, the conversation took a different path. To this group, the importance of community-oriented actions had more to do with the return on investment that often occurs from building positive relationships. Calming and reducing fears and increasing public trust seemed to be the theme, and these officers indicated that

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[89] Firefighter participant, focus group discussion.

if positive interactions were consistent and normal, they believed citizens would be much more likely to reach out to them and cooperate when needed in times of emergency. Most officers also suggested that the key to improving trust and perceptions among the public was to interact with them in more positive ways—instead of solely during critical incidents, traffic stops, and arrests.

The majority of these officers gave genuine, first-hand accounts of experiences that turned out well and even saved lives, only because of relationships that had been built previously. Their stories primarily involved situations in which people learned to view them as human, not just as law enforcement. One officer described building a relationship with a woman who had been the victim of domestic abuse. This officer recounted offering help and resources and checking in with the victim over the course of several years:

> Once when I was on foot patrol in Comanche [apartment complex], I worked a physical assault case. The mom was a victim of domestic violence, and then I ran into her and her kids later on several occasions there. Because of the relationship that developed between us, I was able to help her and model what being a responsible parent looked like. I was able to teach her how to get her kids to help clean the house. She learned to trust me over several years, and we eventually got her into Catholic Charities, and they taught her parenting and other skills. She is doing better now, and I still hear from her. If I had not done the foot patrol, I never would have built that kind of relationship that ended up getting her out of that situation.[90]

Certainly, most of the officers in the focus group maintained that community-centered approaches were effective; however, a few disagreed. At least one officer conveyed that community-oriented strategies were important and effective for firefighters because they already had the public's trust but iterated that "at the end of the day, 90 percent of the people . . . are never going to be persuaded to like police."[91] Others acknowledged that they often cannot get past "being a cop."[92] At least two officers concurred that community policing is a wonderful concept, but in reality, "those who do not want to see

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[90] Police participant.

[91] Police participant.

[92] Police participant.

law enforcement in a positive light, never will."[93] One officer in particular admitted that it was often very difficult to change people's views of police but established his reasons for remaining diligent: "I would say that people really think we [police officers] are robots. We have to show them that we are not robots, but human, because being human can also show them that we are capable of making mistakes, just like them."[94]

Still, other members of the group continued to consider how relationships often correlate with saving lives, maintaining that increased interpersonal interactions often lead to crime reporting and cooperation in times of crisis. One officer offered a detailed account of his relentless attempts to interact with a young man who lived in a high-crime area and how this persistence eventually paid off:

> I used to roll through this apartment complex, and there was this one guy who would intentionally get lost when I came through. He would never even look my way. I started rolling up listening to music with my windows down. After doing this every day for a very long time, he finally came up and talked to me—said he didn't have any good history with cops. I think the music showed him I was human—more like him. After that, he would come up and talk to me frequently.[95]

Additionally, the participants talked at length of the individual efforts of officers who live to serve the people in their communities and give of themselves daily without expecting recognition. In fact, the discussion revealed that many of these selfless acts happen without the knowledge of department heads or city leaders. The group concluded that most officers get into the business of helping others and often view community-centered strategies as "low-hanging fruit" ripe for the picking.[96] However, these subjects also expressed that developing real-life success stories involves encouragement and empowerment from agency heads as well as time and hard work on the officer's part.

The citizen focus group offered yet another point of view about the importance of community-centered approaches. Similar to what the police officers described, the subjects

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[93] Police participant.

[94] Police participant.

[95] Police participant.

[96] Tulsa Police, focus group discussion.

in this group often talked about the benefits of seeing the other as human. Most of their perspectives, however, revolved around the differences in the approachability of firefighters versus police officers—and how being visible and approachable in the community encourages dialogue and trust.

The citizen group viewed firefighters as familiar and trustworthy neighbors. After further probing, the group explained this perception originates in fire stations being located within neighborhoods and firefighters seen informally in public places such as grocery stores, neighborhood parks, and block parties. They also mentioned that firefighters as a whole seemed to be friendly, helpful, and engaging. From the group's point of view, firefighters are easy to approach. Also, from their perspective, casual approachability is a crucial element that carries over to trust and the willingness of people to ask for help, report problems, and cooperate during emergencies. From personal experiences, most of the participants viewed police officers—as a whole—as unapproachable. Subjects often described law enforcement officers as militaristic and intimidating. Many in the group stated that they were fearful of police.

Another general theme that surfaced was the general attitudes and dispositions of firefighters and police officers. Firefighters as a whole were viewed as relatable and easy to talk to while police officers were generally seen as commanding and untrustworthy. One participant stated that police officers seemed to be a necessary evil. This subject further described that although he agreed police are indeed necessary, his circle of friends and family are often hesitant to call or report problems because they have experienced personal harm at the hand of police. He then expounded in eloquent detail:

> From a public perception, firefighters are seen as people who will help you no matter what—they are on our level. Police are seen by some as the enemy—to your own safety, to your personal property, and even to your body. I don't want to be inaccurate, but I think some of them think they are more important than the people they are serving, and that adds to the tension. My mother always reminds me to be cautious if I run into police when I am traveling. She is afraid for me. And then we see them at events talking to people and goofing off with kids. It seems that they are really no different than us except they carry a gun. We see a different side—they are trying to show us that there is more to them than the badge and gun. I think it will be really hard to mend those fences, but when police officers

> consistently treat people humanely and they see us and we see them as human, it goes a long way. I think they should not be tone deaf to what the public says about their attitude and actions. But I also think the public should appreciate it when they see cops doing positive things and find some common ground there.[97]

The citizens then offered several examples of positive experiences they had with police officers. Many of the participants illustrated that while the perception of law enforcement as a whole is not always positive, many individual officers are making a difference. They also went into detail about the positive effects of officers on foot patrol. Participants described how talking breaks down barriers—and patrol cars seem to be a huge barrier to dialogue. One participant simply stated,

> When I see the officers walking or on bicycles, I think they are more accessible and approachable for some reason. I think they may be more likely to chat with me. A lot of people are lonely and want to talk—it would build relationships. If the citizens and police officers shared some connection, people might reach out more.[98]

The citizens continued to offer examples of specific police and fire community-centered programs that were having positive impacts in Tulsa such as Officer Popsey Floyd's community outreach endeavors, Huffy the Firefighter Educational Clown, and Coffee with Cops.[99] Undoubtedly, the citizens in the focus group agreed that these types of educational programs are beneficial. Even more importantly, however, they were interested in seeing more officers accessible within their communities on a daily basis such as Officer Floyd's foot-patrol detail.

Additionally, the group expressed intriguing insights into the differences between officers and firefighters who reside or attend church in the neighborhoods in which they work versus those who do not. At least four of the seven citizens articulated that they personally knew a firefighter because they either lived in the same neighborhood or

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[97] Citizen participant, phone interview, July 15, 2018.

[98] Citizen participant, phone interview, June 7, 2018.

[99] Citizens of Tulsa, focus group discussion.

attended the same church.[100] None of the participants personally knew any police officers. Many subjects equated this to the fact that most police officers do not live in the communities or even the cities in which they work. According to them, this makes a big difference—and if an officer is not invested in his or her community, it plays a part in people's perceptions. One participant clearly and emphatically declared her frustration with political correctness in officer–citizen relationships: "Don't just send a token black police officer to our community events and think you are doing something, because most of the time it's a Caucasian officer who doesn't know us that we most often make contact with."[101] According to participants, officers who reside in the same communities and cities in which they work seem to be much more tied to the residents and can often influence them in positive ways, similar to firefighters who "live" at the station and are often seen in the neighborhood.[102]

E. CONCLUSION

In a new scenario, and one in which officers and firefighters collaborate and interact frequently, a troubled young man like Padge might still be alive, and a young Officer Martin might be beginning his bright career instead of facing public outrage. Firefighters and police officers would know and understand the citizens working and residing in their respective villages. At the fire-station hub, information regarding the safety of first responders and the public would be freely shared among officers and firefighters. Both groups would come together as a united community force to educate, protect, and connect with each other and the citizens of the village.

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[100] Citizens of Tulsa.

[101] Citizen participant, focus group discussion, June 26, 2018.

[102] Notably, a large percentage of firefighters do not reside in Tulsa, and the accounts of citizens knowing firefighters may have been coincidental. Moreover, even though firefighters may not permanently reside in the cities in which they work, they do "live" in their home away from home for 24 hours at a time. This equates to them spending one-third of their working lives at fire stations within their respective communities.

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V. HYPOTHETICAL WIN: WHEN POLICE OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS COOPERATE

A. A STORY OF FATE

Firefighter Katy Johnson-Ramirez and Officer Heather Landry greeted each other with a hug as they arrived in the foyer of city hall. Their respective agencies always had a rich history of cooperation, but little did they realize these efforts had fatefully brought them together this day. Katy's fire crew and Heather often responded to calls together and frequently ran into each other at the firehouse, which was also used as a neighborhood hub for police officers. Their professional working relationship had encouraged and fostered a deep friendship that eventually resulted in a productive collaboration between the two. For these reasons, the dynamic duo had created, developed, and implemented several innovative joint police–fire public service initiatives for their city, and today, the mayor was honoring them for their dedication.

As Katy awaited her award, she reminisced about how she had arrived at this moment. When she was growing up, she often spent summers at her grandmother's house. She remembered the firefighters from up the street and the story of how they had once thwarted a potential terrorist attack in the neighborhood. The firefighters had responded to a seemingly innocuous call that day, but because they worked so closely with their station police officers and had been trained in awareness, they had noticed the indicators of the dangerous situation. She remembered how she often spotted Officer Champ at the station with the firefighters back in those days. She recently heard that he had passed away; she smiled, recalling how much she had trusted him and the firefighters and how safe she had felt knowing they were all right down street. Now as an adult, Firefighter Katherine Johnson-Ramirez was extremely grateful of the relationship between the two agencies that had saved her grandmother's life that day and had allowed her the opportunity to spend summers and make memories with her. Also, Lieutenant Angela Grayson, AKA "Firefighter Angie," was a part of that crew. As her "shero" back then, Grayson was the very reason that Katy had decided to become a firefighter. Nervously, she awaited her moment on stage.

In the audience, retired police sergeant Kenneth Landry beamed with pride as he saw his daughter Heather standing near the stage in full Class A dress. He could not stop the tear from rolling down his cheek as he recalled how he might not have been around to experience this moment—if it had not been for fate. With a quick glance upward, he silently thanked God again for sending his firefighter "angels" to save him that night so many years ago. To this day, nobody, not even the firefighters from Station 8, knew that Landry had planned to kill himself after that horrific call they had worked together late one summer night. He cringed for a moment as he thought of his old life and the many times he had placed his service weapon in his lap and contemplated ending it all. But that fateful night, after experiencing the most gruesome call he had ever witnessed in his career, his plan was to drive to the vacant parking lot and finish the job.

The firefighters from Station 8 housed in his patrol area, however, did not let it happen. Insistent and not taking "no" for an answer, Captain Nathan Smith and the others convinced him to come by the station for a cup of coffee. Eager to implement the station hub concept that their fire and police agencies had just started, the firefighters decided to "adopt" him as one of their police officers. Little did they know that this much-needed late-night encounter with coffee, meaningful conversation, and brotherhood would result in him reaching out for counseling, eventually joining AA, and ultimately living to see his daughter join the police force and receive this award. After that night, fire Captain Nate Smith, who was already a member of his department's critical incident response team, and police Sergeant Kenny Landry went on to develop and become team leaders of their agency's joint police–fire mental health support team. Shaking the old memory, now back in the moment, an extremely proud dad applauded with delight as Officer Heather Landry took her place on stage.

Major DeJuan Martin skimmed over his notes backstage as he gathered himself in preparation for his keynote address. He could not believe the mayor had asked him to speak and that it had been 25 years since he joined the police force—and 25 years since the day that might have changed his life forever. Today, he was the honored guest speaker who would get to encourage and empower two strong young women to continue their passion

projects and foster collaborative growth between their agencies and the community.[103] Major Martin knew that joint efforts like this had been the key to his long and rewarding career. Early on in the police academy, he and his classmates had been immersed in de-escalation and implicit bias training. During his six-month field training experience after the academy, he and his field officers frequently stopped in at area fire stations, where he learned about the station hub concept. Back then, all he had really wanted was more time at the firing range, but his instructors and the firefighter friends had persuaded him to recognize the importance of community knowledge, active listening, and communication skills as well. Major Martin then vividly recalled a firefighter's cell phone picture of Padge Sanders that he had viewed at a squad meeting during his first week as a new police officer so long ago. It was this snapshot and information from the firefighters stationed at the neighborhood hub that helped Martin, a brand-new rookie cop, recognize Padge as the man with the butcher knife in the street all those years ago. It was also then that he realized the true significance of what the firefighters and his instructor had been trying to teach him. To this day, he knew that his prior knowledge, training, and his acquired de-escalation and communication skills had allowed him to help the troubled man that day—instead of ending his life. Now 25 years later, he continued to recognize and advance the importance of community and inter-agency cooperation and relationships. He was proud of his city, the police officers, and firefighters, including Firefighter Johnson-Ramirez and Officer Landry, who would be honored today. Major DeJaun Martin then took a deep breath and walked confidently onto stage to greet the award recipients and face the eager crowd.

B. FOCUSED COOPERATION—THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

This chapter's hypothetical scenario depicts a story of symbiosis between police officers and firefighters. The turn of events that transpired in the story is meant to reveal the power of a more cooperative approach and the unexpected positive ripple effects of inviting police officers into the firehouse. In the individual agency approach, police officers and firefighters may go about their daily business without even considering the advantages that each group offers the other. For example, the 24-hour shift schedules that are common

[103] Tulsa Police, focus group discussion.

for firefighters naturally develop a "family" support network and brotherhood to which many lone patrolling police officers have no access.[104] If police officers were integrated into the group, even on a limited basis, they might benefit from this informal peer support and mental health resource that firefighters already seem to enjoy.

The arrangement might encourage the officers and firefighters to interact more frequently and to develop relationships on a more personal basis. Not only would the firehouse be a catalyst for brotherhood; it would also allow officers access to Wi-Fi to complete reports and to station facilities and amenities, such as bathrooms, showers, or a hot cup of coffee. Foot-patrol officers would also have a secure location to leave their vehicles with easy, direct access to different areas of the neighborhood or community.

Safety of both groups is another advantage that the joint approach could improve. Police officers on foot patrol and those in patrol vehicles must frequently and routinely complete reports. Often, this task is completed while sitting alone in a patrol vehicle or back at the precinct office, away from the community, at the end of shift. According to recent statistics, the majority of violent ambushes to officers have occurred when officers were alone, and over half of those occurred when officers were in patrol vehicles.[105] A firehouse could provide so much more protection than the patrol vehicle provides. The simple implementation of inviting an officer in might also allow him or her to stay engaged with the community for longer periods and, therefore, become more familiar with those who live and work there. It might also allow for better connections with the public as the officer might be seen as an approachable "neighbor" instead of just law enforcement.

Firefighters would benefit directly from this system as well. The informal interactions and relationships might increase firefighters' knowledge of the officers in their area of response. Firefighters may personally get to know these officers and contact them more quickly in safety-sensitive situations if needed. At the very least, they would know

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[104] Kirschman, *I Love a Firefighter*, 176.

[105] International Association of Chiefs of Police, "Ambush Fact Sheet" (Alexandria, VA: IACP, 2014), http://www.theiacp.org/Portals/0/documents/pdfs/Ambush_Project/IACP_Ambush_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

each other on a first-name basis, which could lead to increased efficiency and effectiveness in emergencies.

Developing relationships might also increase the sharing of non-classified information and the possibility of cross learning. Firefighters and police officers have different knowledge, skills, and abilities that could be passed on to each other. For example, firefighters could instruct police officers on topics such as tactical first aid skills, CPR and defibrillator use, and 360-degree structure fire surveys and information gathering. Police officers could, in turn, instruct firefighters in topics such as situational awareness and emergency defensive tactics. They could also train cooperatively for infrequent, high-risk situations such as active shooters or catastrophic disaster response.

All of these interactions might improve informal information sharing between the officers and firefighters. Having knowledge of key information would improve both situational awareness and knowledge of those who reside and work within their respective communities.

Citizen relationships could be positively affected by increased police and fire cooperation as well. To relate more with the public, firefighters and police officers might unite in community-oriented efforts. Joint planning and hosting of "meet your cops and firefighters" community breakfasts, block parties, and other gatherings, or creating police and fire public-service announcements or public education programs are some possibilities.

School resource officers and firefighters might collaborate to mentor youth and develop programs geared to positively influence and educate young people. In addition, some firehouses have incorporated community rooms into their architecture, and this setup could allow for increased collaboration with agencies and the community while also providing officers with mobile office space if desired.

In short, if firehouses were used as central hubs and police officers were invited in, amazing things might happen. Instead of just patrolling in vehicles, officers could incorporate community-centered foot-patrol practices into their daily routines to improve public relationships and their own physical and mental health. Instead of being perceived as just law enforcement, police could become trusted neighbors in the community and

enjoy the relational benefits of those already in the fire service. Instead of continuing to go about daily business independently, police officers and firefighters could come together for the betterment of each other and for the people in communities they serve. Coming together in such a small way could lead to big improvements for all. Simply put, the village would be connected, and everyone would reap the benefits.

C. GOING FORWARD

Although focus group participants reacted positively, connecting the village through firehouse hubs would require firm foundations, particularly at the beginning of the building process.

1. Focus Group Findings: Barriers to Change

According to the information from previous chapters, community-centered activities and programs are important, effective strategies that bring people together and have the potential to reduce crime and save lives. Connecting the entire village to include police officers, firefighters, and the public sounds like a novel idea, but can it be accomplished?

In an effort to answer this question, police officers, firefighters, and citizens participating in the focus groups were asked to brainstorm and provide their perspectives, this time regarding the challenges of community-centered strategies, but more specifically toward the proposed concept of using firehouses as central hubs.

According to the agency groups, the biggest challenges of community-focused efforts in general largely center on the staffing requirements to engage the public. In short, doing more with less is difficult. Fire and police agencies are often unable to contribute as much time to community strategies as they would like due to limited staffing and lean budgets. To illustrate this further, Former Owasso Fire Chief Chris Garrett specifically referenced the demands of the village fire-company concept:

> The biggest challenge from an administrative standpoint is people and time. We don't have enough of either to do everything that we would like to conceptually because of this. Firefighters must have time off and down time. With limited staffing, this is often difficult, and some things must get

> overlooked at times. When you add in temporary and permanent transfers, the firefighters don't get to truly know their village. The longer a firefighter stays at a particular station, the more invested they become in the village—they get to know the village, and the villagers know them. This is extremely important but also extremely difficult to achieve with limited staffing.[106]

The police officers echoed similar administrative concerns and offered several possible agency-specific challenges. Several participants voiced concerns of gaining officer buy-in and concurred that for every one officer who supports community policing, another one is against it.[107] For example, the group conveyed that some officers in Tulsa do not agree with community policing and offered reasons why the idea may not be popular:

> The biggest issue is there is no real definition. The number one complaint we hear from citizens is that officers are talking to them crazy and commanding—that they did not use procedural justice. Many officers think it [community policing] requires them to be so much different—that they lose their identity as law enforcement. They don't realize it is about doing the same thing they are doing, only treating people like humans and building relationships along the way. They don't realize it will also cut down on crime.[108]

Another point of concern voiced by the police group was the lack of empowerment and encouragement toward incorporating community-centered strategies into individual officers' daily activities. The participants reiterated that not every officer agrees with community policing or believes it is beneficial. On several occasions, however, participants also suggested that officers have no real definition, guidance, or policies regarding community-policing practices. One participant elaborated further:

> The real issue is that officers aren't empowered to do community policing. If an officer wants a promotion, he or she doesn't get any advantage by being a stand out in the community. They are graded based on arrests and crime fighting, not what they are doing in the neighborhoods. The

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[106] Garrett, interview.

[107] Tulsa Police, focus group discussion.

[108] Police participant, focus group discussion, June 12, 2018.

> department's promotional process doesn't recognize or reward the positive effects of officers trying to make a difference.[109]

Notably, the citizen group seemed to notice these agency difficulties as well. The group described that while police and city leadership have been supportive and open as well as seem to have good ideas, they have not shown much follow-through. The citizen group did not expect that law enforcement culture will change any time soon. For example, participants specifically referenced that they had not seen any real effort by law enforcement to change officer mindsets or encourage new ideas and techniques, such as de-escalation over use of force, even though these topics are often discussed as policing alternatives.[110]

As for the fire-station hub approach, unequivocally, all firefighters, police officers, and citizens who made up the small sampling of participants reacted favorably to the proposed idea. Regarding the foreseeable barriers, fire and police both delineated minor issues that would need to be resolved. The firefighter participants were primarily concerned with the living arrangements; however, at least one referenced the loss of trust that might occur if community members perceived that firefighters and police officers share information more frequently.

Interestingly, however, most of the barriers depicted by the firefighters centered on differing cultures and expectations. One case in point was the bathroom situation. The firefighters in the focus group work 24-hour shifts, and a large portion of their daily routine requires cleaning and maintaining the firehouse, equipment, and grounds. The police officers, on the other hand, work 12-hour shifts and may or may not be privy to these firehouse rules and traditions. Many officers may not realize or even agree that cleaning a bathroom (or housekeeping in general) is part of their daily job duty or understand that it is a way of life for firefighters. As mentioned in Chapter II, bathroom access was seen as a huge benefit by officers in the police group. Firefighters, however, were not quite as thrilled

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[109] Police participant, focus group discussion, June 4, 2018.

[110] Citizens of Tulsa, focus group discussion.

with the idea. For instance, one participant expanded on the discussion of shared bathrooms by offering a first-hand experience:

> Who does that? Who blows up a bathroom and then just walks away? They don't clean their bathrooms, and they don't know how to change a roll of toilet paper—you know, petty things. But *we* want them to always be welcome, so we will continue to clean the bathrooms because we are also responsible for keeping them clean for the public. We've come to accept it, but we aren't that happy about it.[111]

Clearly, the important facts that came out of the debate were that expectations between the two groups need to be clarified and worked out from the beginning. If not, the lack of understanding and unwillingness to pitch in may lead to negative discourse, disagreements, and a dirty bathroom in the end.

The police officers revealed a few unique challenges of the shared space arrangement that differed from the firefighters' view. Concerns varied about certain police officers who might abuse the system, clashing personalities, and politics between the two groups as well as also how to implement the idea and best encourage officers to incorporate firehouses into their community-policing approaches. Officers also brought up that there might be differences in policies and procedures that would need to be addressed. In addition, many had concerns about achieving acceptance of the new arrangement.

The overarching barrier, however, was that many of the police officers believe a firehouse is a personal space much like a police vehicle is, and the majority do not want to invade it. They also noted that some officers feel most comfortable in their own vehicles and may not be receptive to a different option. Most officers in the group also agreed that while they felt comfortable and cooperative with firefighters, it would indeed be a major imposition to knock on a firehouse door and encroach on their personal space, especially in the middle of the night. They perceived that firefighters might take issue with this as well. One participant remarked further, "I really think that it [using fire stations] is a good idea and that bonds and relationships extending outside the job will be developed. I also

[111] Owasso firefighters, focus group discussion.

think that it will be a real challenge for the majority of officers to get over not wanting to impose, especially those that work the night shift."[112]

The takeaway in these cases is that there are often organizational, cultural, and even relational barriers that sometimes interfere with positive change. From the participant group perspectives, however, even though barriers were identified, they were nominal and could be resolved in various ways.

2. Applying the Firehouse Hub Approach in Tulsa

Certainly, change does not typically come without challenges, and community-oriented approaches often take a substantial amount of time, effort, and manpower. However, the principal benefit of this approach is that it does not require any new construction, changes in existing strategies, extra costs, or additional training. The firehouse hub approach is for agencies that truly want to move forward to improve the cooperation, efficiency, and safety of firefighters and police officers while also improving connections within the community. The only requirement to ensure its success is a shift in mindset of both the agency heads who will be implementing the approach and of the emergency responders who will be affected by it. However, this shift can only happen after true agency buy-in at all levels and the support and guidance of administrators and supervisors who are encouraging it.

For cities that wish to implement the approach, existing infrastructure and personnel are the main components. In Tulsa's case, the 30 fire stations spread throughout the city would serve as station hubs for officers operating in the three police divisions—Gilcrease, Mingo Valley, and Riverside—as shown in Figure 2. These station hubs would be offered primarily to foster camaraderie between firefighters and police officers and to encourage officer foot-patrol operations. The station hub approach would also place police officers in proximity to people or crime hotspots and ultimately foster better safety, efficiency, and symbiosis between the firefighters and police officers.

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[112] Police participant, focus group discussion.

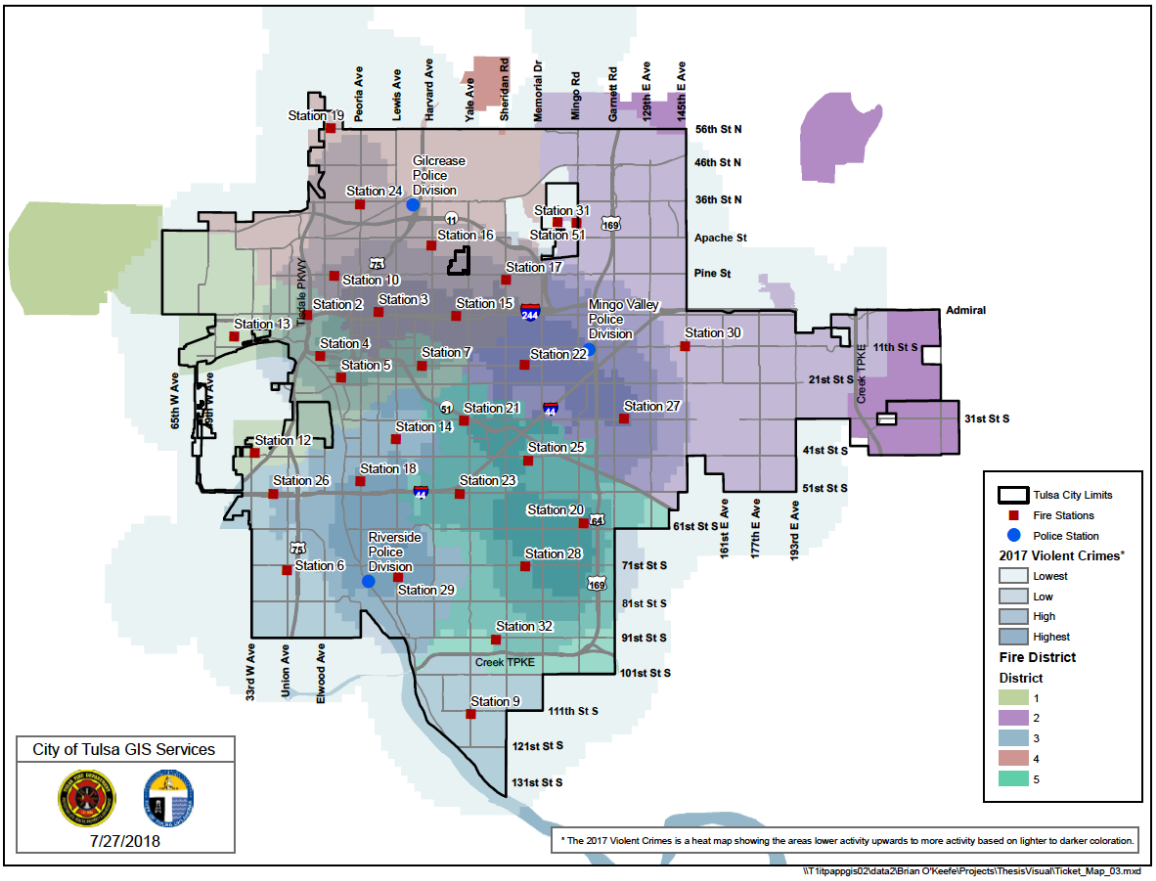

Figure 2. City of Tulsa Police Divisions and Fire Stations in Relation to Violent Crime Areas[113]

To demonstrate the firehouse hub approach even more clearly, fire stations of Tulsa Fire District 4 and Gilcrease Police Divisions are highlighted and applied as a pilot concept. There are seven fire stations located within Fire District 4 and the boundaries of Gilcrease Police Division. Gilcrease Police Division is actually much larger than District 4, and its boundaries extend into Fire District 2; however, for this brief explanation, only District 4 stations are examined.

All fire stations located within the city of Tulsa already have existing Wi-Fi technology for police officers to connect securely to city servers from outside these

[113] Source: Brian O'Keefe, "City of Tulsa Police Divisions and Fire Stations in Relation to Violent Crime Areas" (unpublished map, City of Tulsa Geographical Information Systems, July 27, 2018).

stations. All stations also have wireless keypad locks to allow authorized personnel to enter without a key. These existing technologies may or may not exist in other agencies, so minimal costs may be incurred to implement these optional components if desired. In Tulsa, however, the existing technology negates the need for upgrades, and the existing keypad would allow officers working night shifts to enter the hub without the need for a key. Utilizing the keypad would also eliminate the police officer's concern of imposing or disturbing the firefighters, as it would not require someone inside to open the door.

Each fire district in Tulsa also has at least one station with an existing community room. In District 4's case, Fire Station 16 would serve as the designated community-room hub station. Community rooms have a separate entry door and restroom that could be used for their intended purposes as well as for joint police–fire public relation meetings or activities, restroom and shower use, or a safe, quiet office space for police officers when not in use. In the firehouse hub approach, all fire stations are available and important, but those with community rooms offer even more possibilities.

District 4 fire stations are also located in proximity to some of Tulsa's highest crime areas (see Figure 3). The proposed hubs would allow officers to be close to these hotspots while also permit them access to several safe facilities. It would allow them freedom to park their vehicles at the stations and get into the neighborhoods on foot if desired.

In the Tulsa pilot application, the Gilcrease Police Division would be further broken down to include these strategically located firehouse hubs. These hubs would be offered to encourage officer interaction with the community and to give them freedom to be in many different areas, with seven convenient, safe facility options. Officers could utilize Fire District 4 (and eventually District 2) fire stations to accomplish this. The new approach could benefit the firefighters, too, as it fosters camaraderie, collaboration, cooperation, and better efficiency and safety for all.

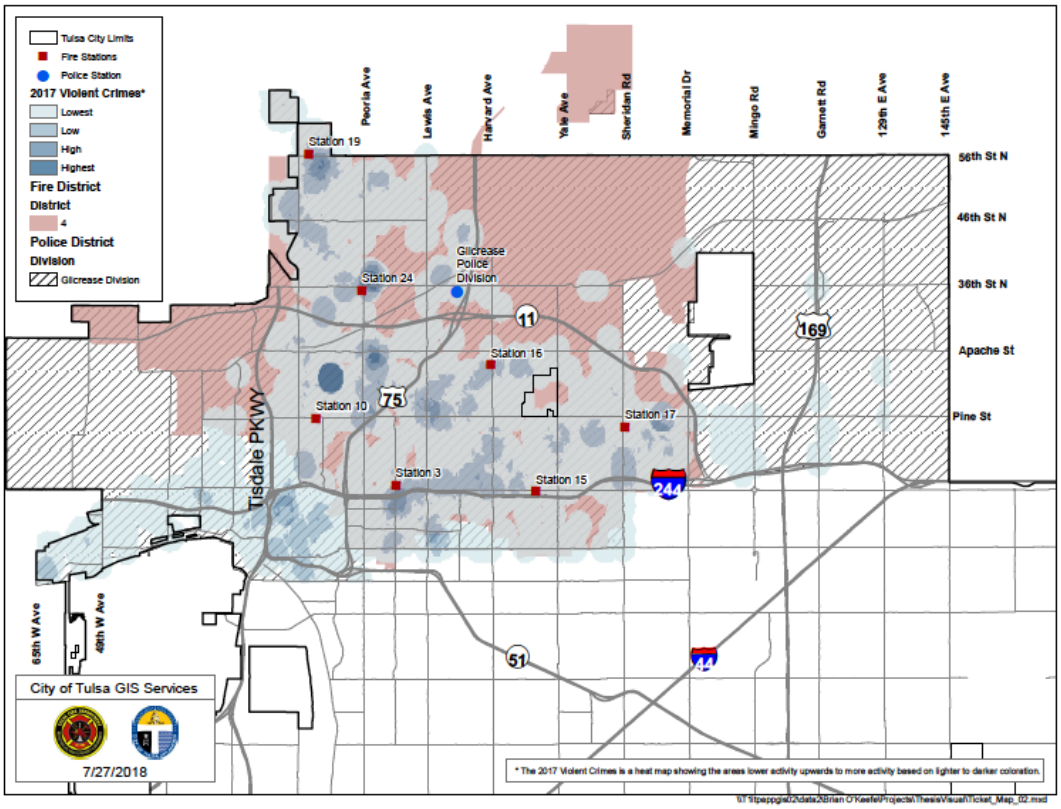

Figure 3. City of Tulsa District 4 Fire Stations in Relation to Gilcrease Police Division Violent Crime Areas[114]

Ideally, in the proposed firehouse hub approach, police officers working in the three police divisions and firefighters housed in the 30 fire stations located within the five fire districts would work jointly and cooperatively together.

3. Focus Group Suggestions for Success

The previous section laid out the logistics and reasoning behind the proposed firehouse hub approach as applied to Tulsa; however, it did not discuss what respective agencies might do to encourage its success. All three focus groups answered questions on this theme. Participants were also asked whether they had anything else they wished to add to the discussion. Incredibly, participants from all three groups were able to offer several

[114] Source: Brian O'Keefe, "City of Tulsa District 4 Fire Stations in Relation to Gilcrease Police Division Violent Crime Areas" (unpublished map, City of Tulsa Geographical Information Systems, July 27, 2018).

promising suggestions for agencies wishing to go forward with the concept as well as interesting tips for those hoping to improve their community-focused efforts in general.

a. Firefighters

- Have focused police–firefighter discussions—learn what each other's priorities are.
- If police officers occasionally bring in food and cook for the firefighters, it would go a long way in developing relationships.
- Offer community pancake-breakfast events at a selected fire station periodically (with officers and firefighters present to interact with public).
- Police officers and firefighters could work out and be seen more together at local fitness centers.
- Officers and firefighters could develop community-centered programs together.
- New rookie firefighters should spend time riding with officers during probation.
- To reduce shared-space issues, teach rookie officers and firefighters about the firehouse hub approach and expectations during recruit academy.[115]

b. Police Officers

- Use social media to create and develop a positive brand—incorporate police and fire human-interest stories.
- Recruit officers who are passionate about being officers at the human level.
- Empower and encourage officers to be responsible for a small area.
- Empower and encourage officers to get out on foot at least 15–30 minutes a day, three days a week.
- Define the intent of city community-policing strategies and the firehouse hub—explain to officers how it should work.
- Recognize officers for their community-policing efforts.

[115] Owasso firefighters, focus group discussion.

- In order to implement the firehouse hub approach, advertise and host open houses to get officers in the door and show them the options available.
- Develop a police/fire community outreach team—used as a united positive force in minority communities and for specific crowd-calming situations such as officer-involved shootings as scene is being worked.
- Learn and understand officer and firefighter priorities.
- Plan and host cooperative block parties or events—"meet your police officers and firefighters."
- In order to encourage foot patrols, require new rookie officers to spend some time on foot before going to vehicle patrol.
- Utilize key cards or other electronic technology to allow police officers access to firehouses.
- Incorporate more sophisticated technology to allow better communication between firefighters and police officers.
- Offer concealed-carry option to interested firefighters.
- Utilize fire-station community rooms as intended, and offer them to police officers for community contact.
- Have more opportunities for different emergency responders to sit and collaborate—"this may be the first time we have experienced anything like this" (in response to the focus group discussions).[116]

c. Citizens

- Agencies do not need more money to have an impact in the community—just do things differently.
- Encourage police officers to live or somehow invest in the communities they serve.
- Host open houses at police precincts and fire stations.
- The church could be the positive link for cops—pastors could help with this.
- Show up—police officers need to be where people are—at schools, public events, libraries, health fairs, etc.

[116] Tulsa Police, focus group discussion.

- Host joint police and fire block parties, designated gatherings, or annual public safety events—these types of things make an impression.
- Work jointly on police and fire recruitment strategies to get a more diverse workforce.
- Get out of the police cars and start having dialogues—connect and relate with the public.
- Work on connecting with and making a good impression with "at-risk" children (possibly through school outreach and mentoring).
- Train officers in de-escalation and skills other than force.
- Utilize public safety announcements, town hall meetings, or other forums to dispel myths.
- Treat people the way you would like to be treated.
- Get out and talk—possibly use the "Next Door" app.
- Focus on human interest stories, so we learn about police officers on a human level.
- Police and the public should work on taking responsibility.
- Incorporate implicit bias training for officers.
- Train officers to be a part of the community.
- Work more on people skills and changing the demeanor of cops.[117]

D. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This thesis has sought to highlight what is already working between police and fire agencies to suggest building on existing cooperative strategies and encouraging improvements in areas as needed. There was much elaboration about how things currently work with community-centered police and fire strategies and how they might be improved if agencies were to focus on working together. There was extensive discussion about the relationships between officers, firefighters, and the public; and three hypothetical scenarios identifying critical failures were presented.

[117] Citizens of Tulsa, focus group discussion.

The current problem is that police and fire, with distinct roles, often respond to the same emergencies and interact with the same people. Furthermore, many officers and firefighters who are located in the same neighborhoods do not know each other personally nor have any idea what the other is doing or responding to or where he or she is operating. They also may not realize the benefits they could provide each other, nor the image of what a cooperative officer/firefighter front could do to improve their safety, build trust, and unite a neighborhood. The bottom line is that opportunities have been missed.

One small, impactful step that requires nothing more than a shift in mindset is to focus on police and fire cooperation by inviting officers into firehouses. The approach could be implemented in a small town with only one fire station or in a large city with 50. These firehouses would serve as central hubs and catalysts of positive change for the officers, firefighters, and the communities in which they serve. This thesis suggests that better collaboration between police officers and firefighters might significantly influence positive changes to improve the relationships and safety of first responders and the public.

In a perfect world, police officers, firefighters, and citizens would all live and work together harmoniously. Fires, accidents, and criminal acts would be rare, and all members of a community would be responsible for helping each other solve problems. Firefighters, police officers and the public would know each other on a human level and trust in each other. People or events that seem out of the ordinary would be noticed, reported, and investigated quickly. Firefighters, police officers, and community members with mental health issues would have the professional resources and assistance needed. Firefighters and police officers would be trained not only to help each other but also to identify and interact with citizens experiencing severe issues and help them, too. Officers would be able to mitigate problems while being mindful of the most humane way to handle the situation presented, and to ensure safety for all involved.

Unfortunately, it is not a perfect world. A police officer's job often requires that he or she make arrests and sometimes use deadly force. Firefighters will never run out of accidents and fires. Sometimes, no matter what, it is difficult to merge two distinct cultures. And sadly, officers and firefighters will continue to die in the line of duty and by taking their own lives. However, small focused approaches implemented at the local level may

create meaningful events that might spark positive change in an individual, a community, a city, or ultimately the nation.

APPENDIX A. OWASSO FIREFIGHTERS FOCUS GROUP NOTES

The author held a focus group on June 6–7, 2018, as well as one phone interview with Owasso firefighters, of which eight out of ten invitees participated. The group participants were as follows: Group A, two Caucasian males and one Caucasian female; Group B, three Caucasian males and one Caucasian female; and Group C, a subject-matter expert whose notes are not included. Questions, quotations, and notes from the focus groups and phone interviews comprise the following pages.

1. Are you familiar with the village fire-company concept or community risk-reduction model?

Group A

Village fire is the premise that it is the community firehouse. We follow the concepts—safe haven for the community, similar to the library to instill trust and knowing the village. Police officers could be part of the village.

Out in the community constantly. We do tours, rodeos, dunk tanks, car seats—we witness to the community this way. Gyms give discounted rates to firefighters and other first responders, really get to know citizens. In October, we hit every classroom with fire prevention—sit and eat lunch. People would not be intimidated to come by our station.

Three fire stations share info between firefighters and fire marshal. Building of the month by fire marshal, games, and marathons, etc.

Group B

Yes, getting out into the community and knowing our village. Forming positive relationships and helping/educating on prevention. Educating and helping the public—like car seats, etc.

2. Are you familiar with community-oriented policing?
Note: Community policing was described to participants.

Group A

No knowledge of community policing—police are good about getting out/ community outreach.

Group B

No.

3. Do you think community-oriented fire and police programs are important? Why or why not?

Group A

Yes. My son lives in Skiatook, and they do not have the same types of programs. Super-beneficial for the community to see us when it isn't a disaster—tough when staffing is an issue. We would be even more behind it if had enough staff.

Good, because people are not so hesitant to call because we are familiar. When people know you, their anxiety is reduced about half.

Group B

Extremely important to get to know the community, and district lets them see what we can do for them. Path house responded later for structure fire and had educated the owner and evaluated it—knew exactly what they were dealing with at night fire.

[Regarding planned strategies and tactics,] we are getting ahead of it—and makes job easier in the long run. It is also good to have them on our side for votes.

4. Do you know (or have you met) the patrol officer in your first-in area of response? If so, what kind of interaction have you had with him/her?

Group A

Yes, in our department we commonly run in with officers every day.

Group B

Yes, we know the officers who office here and most of them in the city. We run in with them and see them frequently.

5. Do you personally know any police officers in your first-in area of response? If so, describe.

Group A

Yes. We know first and last names of 80 percent of our officers. Once a month an officer would by the food and FD would cook it. This is a great

way for police officers and firefighters to come together. Our rookie firefighters also spent time with cops during academy before they hit the streets.

Group B

We work out with them and run in with them often. They work 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., so we get to know them at the gym. They stop by. We have community breakfast and powwows frequently.

6. As a firefighter, is it important to personally know and interact with the police officers in your first-in area and have an idea where they are located? Why or why not?

Group A

It is [important].

Cops scan fire radio and listen for needs and problems. They also assist with medical calls such as car wrecks, etc. They often pay attention to our calls.

Group B

Yes—dispatch based—some police listen. Fire doesn't monitor the police side, but they often monitor us. CADS lists police officers and locations—when we get on scene, we know them.

Follow-Up: What do you do if you need an officer now?

Usually already there, they listen. If it is iffy, they are there. We respond a lot together. Have a good relationship and mostly run together on calls.

7. Have you ever been in a dangerous situation in which you needed a police officer very quickly? If so, explain?

Group A

Yes, we sometimes need an officer there now. If we key up our radio and they are scanning, cops respond within one to two minutes.

Group B

Yes, most of the time, they are there when we need them, or the battalion chief responds.

8. Can you think of any situations in which firefighters and police officers could work symbiotically?

Group A

Working together towards community-oriented approaches like car seats, games, etc. PD works together and comes to station to do reports, and then we could chitchat.

Group B

Wish they had just a tad bit more knowledge about EMS, etc., so that they could take care of a few more things. Sometimes police and fire don't see eye-to-eye on emergency detainment orders. They often pawn off on each other to cover themselves. Dispatch could be educated more—they are a huge block to what we need sometimes and often respond . . . when it is not an ALS need.

9. If firehouses were used as a central hub for patrol officers to informally interact with you, use the restroom, get coffee, complete reports, etc., what benefits or challenges do you foresee?

Group A

[Regarding challenges,] bathroom issues and station duties—[and] station fund[ing]—may have to have a set time/open time.

[Regarding use of microwave,] officers [are] afraid to impose. Need to lay it out how it should work. Maybe teach APO classes [to] rookies. Getting used to the idea of a shared space.

Group B

[Benefits include informal information sharing:] field notes that officers put in to dispatch, peer support teams of both fire and police, defensive tactics for firefighters, and de-escalation of situations.

[The challenges include the following.] The bathroom situation. Who does that? Who blows up a bathroom and then just walks away? They don't clean their bathrooms, and they don't know how to change a roll of toilet paper—you know, petty things. But we want them to always be welcome, so we will continue to clean them because we are also responsible for keeping the bathrooms clean for the public. We've come to accept it, but we aren't that happy about it.

10. If offering patrol officers access to the firehouse resulted in mutual safety benefits to both you and the officer, informal information sharing, and better community relations/public relations, etc., would you be interested? Why or why not?

Group A

Yes, we do this somewhat [but] need to develop it more.

Group B

Yes. They come in and out all of the time. We sit down and chitchat for a while.

[Regarding informal information,] we have built some relationships [but] we could do more.

11. How could firefighters and police officers work better together? What are the benefits?

Group A

Programs that involve both of us—but often take buy-in and funding.

[Regarding public education,] if you are looking to change people's opinion, you change rookies' mindset and you change kids' opinions in school.

[Regarding joint public education opportunities,] our station has a good relationship with cops.

Group B

One hundred percent—you learn each other's strengths and weaknesses. When there is fluidity and camaraderie, you are educating the public and all have the same end goal.

We work well together—similar to working with the same crew for many years. You know each other, and you can tell [that] each person knows the other, and we don't have to ask what is needed. Very fluid and seamless.

Think firefighters can improve the image of police by knowing them. Most cops have the knowledge that they are not the most liked but still have a job to do.

12. Is there anything you would like to add to this topic?

Group A

No.

Group B

Yes. I'm glad we have already done this somewhat, and it makes me think about the potential benefits we haven't been developing. It gives a presence when the police cars are with us out there for safety. I think we have a good relationship with officers and the higher-ups.

APPENDIX B. TULSA POLICE OFFICERS FOCUS GROUP NOTES

The author held a focus group on June 4–12, 2018, as well as conducted phone interviews with Tulsa police officers, of which nine out of 10 invitees participated. The group participants were as follows: Group A, three African-American males, one Caucasian male, and one Hispanic male; Group B, two Caucasian females; Group C, one African-American male; and Group D, one Caucasian female. Questions, quotations, and notes from the focus groups and phone interviews comprise the following pages.

1. Could you tell me more about TPD's community-oriented policing programs and, specifically, the foot-patrol operation?

Group A

[There are] lots of informal programs: school resource officers, Hispanic outreach, reaching out and talking with the community.

Doing their passion projects—why they wear the badge and how they can be part of the solution. No really formal programs—the crutch is not enough officers.

[Regarding the] Impact Unit and Police Activity League, many officers are doing community policing, and the department doesn't even know about it. [Regarding] Popsey's program—a grant aimed at specific hotspots [in which] government selects high crime areas—the goal is to change high crime areas: Savannah Landing and Quikstop at 61st and Peoria (Byrne Grant).

Primarily community based, implemented foot beat based on what people wanted. Gives people a chance to see a different side of things.

Foot beat and mentoring kids.

Group B

Yes, we are combining our community policing with implicit bias training, and we are trying . . . a better outreach with minorities. Popsey Floyd's program—community police officer, Police Activity League (PAL), children's sports activities. Trying to better educate officers with bias training.

[Regarding CAPLC, community and police leadership collaborative,] we get together and do different things like use-of-force scenarios, history of

Tulsa, etc. We bring lots of people together. Department is trying to bridge the gap between minorities by having Caucasian officers ride with minority officers.

Many programs [are] going on but not much written down. Community-oriented APO academy class has turned into implicit bias class. Foot patrol opportunities [include] officers, who wish to get out of vehicle, ask permission and spend time walking around, especially if events are happening or [there are] high crime areas. [We] do it as part of our shift when we know there are large numbers of people—like an event, etc. [Foot patrol] creates positive experiences, and it is enjoyable for officers to get out of the car.

Group C

TPD follows the national model of community policing—a model of getting out of the police car and showing your face. Not just responding to calls, but to be known in the community, instead of just taking people to jail. Encourag[ing officers] to get out and talk to business owners and get to know people creates a comfort level between police and citizens so that they will be comfortable calling us.

[We have] implemented programs like Popsey's—full-time job getting out into communities and getting donations to provide things for kids and community. [Community-oriented policing] is a good face for law enforcement—we are human and not always bad. Now we are taught to be responsible for a small area, and I'm supposed to get out and about in my area. Social media is a big part of posting positive interactions. We realize that the key to getting our brand is through social media—has to do with personality whether officers do it or not.

Group D

We have Popsey Floyd's community policing. We have just started PAL, Physical Activity League, to work with kids in the area—little league football, basketball, etc.—with officers involved. [Regarding foot patrols,] within squads, they will have a designated person for the day—nothing in writing. You can ask a supervisor, or they will assign and dispatch. Within divisions, there are lots of community relations going on but nothing in policy and often not known.

2. Do you have any written policies or procedures in place for these programs? If so, may I have access to use them in my research?

Group A

Just Popsey's procedures.

[Respondents were split on buy-in for community policing within the department.]

Group B

Yes, minimal. We may have some that I can find.

Group C

Not really. Informally, we follow the national guidelines for community policing.

Group D

Not really. Community-policing strategies [are] mostly based on crime trends.

3. Are you familiar with the village fire-company or community risk-reduction models? Note: These concepts were described to participants.

Group A

No.

Group B

No.

Group C

No.

Group D

No.

4. Do you think community-oriented strategies are important/effective? Why or why not?

Group A

Yes. Low hanging fruit—you can't be an army policing the community. You must relationship-build to show them what our intentions are. Just because I wear this uniform, it does not make me. Must teach young people another view than what they are getting from drug-dealing neighbors. If you have officers who are continually working with kids, they see that there are two sides to every story.

I would say that people really think we [police officers] are robots. We have to show them that we are not robots, but human, because being human can also show them that we are capable of making mistakes, just like them. [We] also have to be honest, but we do have a job to do.

I want them to build relationships—I want them to trust me, but I still have to tell them that I have a job to do. [It is] important to build trust and have experiences with them. You would be very surprised at how people would want to talk with police. After 10 minutes of human-level interaction, they will start telling you information. Relationship building also saves lives through information sharing. Interacting helps teach kids that just because family members made a mistake, it doesn't dictate their life. [It's] all about relating. People need to see human side.

Group B

Fire, yes. On the police side, not really. Honestly, community policing, not really. People who don't want to see us in positive light never will. How do we change the mindset when there are so many negatives?

We want them to understand what we do on a daily basis. Often can't get past being a cop.

Popsey is doing great things with younger kid stuff. If you can reach out and touch this group, maybe when they are adults things will change.

Group C

Yes, if implemented. It must have agency buy-in, and higher-ups need to encourage/empower officers. I think it sounds really good; however, at the end of the day, 90 percent of the people I deal with are never going to be persuaded to like the police.

[Regarding upper-management making decisions and losing touch,] are they effective? Maybe in the long term, but they take so much time. I have heard [from the public] "You're not Popsey" when I try to do community policing, which is discouraging. [There is] huge distrust between the African-American community and police—think we are just there to run them. Sometimes we just roll up and start talking to them. Programs are good but doesn't change the community overnight. For every Popsey, there is another officer who is totally opposite.

Group D

Yes, it builds a relationship with the public. A lot of our contact is during a traffic stop or critical incident. People think that every time they run in with cops it's a bad day—unless we do this. If you can meet with the public and

have a good exchange [besides a crisis, traffic stop, arrest, etc.] on another day, it builds a better relationship.

They can be effective—when you build a relationship, people are more apt to call or report to police. I remember an instance when police weren't bad, so I'll call and report this crime.

5. In general, what is the consensus on community-oriented policing with other officers?

Group A

The biggest issue is there is no real definition. The number one complaint we hear from citizens is that officers are talking to them crazy and commanding—that they did not use procedural justice. Many officers think it [community policing] requires them to be so much different—that they lose their identity as law enforcement. They don't realize it is about doing the same thing they are doing, only treating people like humans and building relationships along the way. They don't realize it will also cut down on crime.

Also, officers must have the desire and freedom to do so. Most want to do so, but do not feel freedom to do so. [There is a] real fear that the department doesn't empower. Officers are graded based on arrests and crime fighting for promotion, not what they are doing in the community. The department doesn't recognize the positive effects and recognize CP efforts.

Group B

[This question was not asked.]

Group C

[See response 4C.]

Group D

[This question was not asked.]

6. Have you seen any positive results since implementing community-oriented strategies?

Group A

Yes, calming fears within the Hispanic community, [for example,] 9- to12-year-old union students 18 months ago. [After the presentation, during a Q and A session,] a 12-year-old boy was afraid of being separated from

parents if a certain politician was elected. [We] convinced them that this is not what officers are about. We are comforting fears. Media perpetuates fear. We have to be able to get out in front of things.

[For] a dying young woman who lived in a high-crime area who wanted to be a police officer, police and fire came together and ended up making an impact on residents in the area.

I used to roll through this apartment complex, and there was this one guy who would intentionally get lost when I came through. He would never even look my way. I started rolling up listening to music with my windows down. After doing this every day for a very long time, he finally came up and talked to me—said he didn't have any good history with cops. I think the music showed him I was human—more like him. After that, he would come up and talk to me frequently.

Group B

When we are out there on foot, we get a lot more people coming up to us to thank us for what we are doing. When we are out in the public, some people acknowledge us, and I feel like lots more people support us—being out and about.

[Referencing Officer Dan and how effective he was in the community, he] stayed in the same squad and area for years.

[Also referencing a similar story,] Officer Jeff Gatwood was born and raised in the same area he now patrols. [Participant discussed importance of being a part of the community.] Most of the time, officers move around and don't stay in same squad. Normally, because of call volume, you only get to know frequent flyers.

Group C

Yes, people see that we are just people like them.

Group D

Once when I was on foot patrol in Comanche [apartment complex], I worked a physical assault case. The mom was a victim of domestic violence, and then I ran into her and her kids later on several occasions there. Because of the relationship that developed between us, I was able to help her and model what being a responsible parent looked like. I was able to teach her how to get her kids to help clean the house. She learned to trust me over several years, and we eventually got her into Catholic Charities, and they taught her parenting and other skills. She is doing better now, and I still hear

from her. If I had not done the foot patrol, I never would have built that kind of relationship that ended up getting her out of that situation.

7. Have you visited or utilized any of the fire stations in your response area?

Group A

Visiting the fire stations—some have, some have not because they did not know they could.

Group B

Yes, we use their outside Wi-Fi access point to upload video.

Group C

Yes, last year we went to Station 21. My partner's brother-in-law is a firefighter. I've been to his stations—Station 32 and Station 25, also Station 5.

Group D

No.

8. Do you personally know any firefighters located in your area of response? If so, describe.

Group A

Yes, from working with them in the district and knowing them in previous life. The EMT program helped build relationships. Cross training is important—active shooter, EMT program, etc.

Community events.

Group B

Yes, from FFR—and Station 21 and from the two fire investigators in my academy.

Group C

Yes, from FFR. [It] is really cool and has brought firefighters and police together. I think firefighters and police officers have always been tied together, but once our job is done, we leave. [There's] no down time to create a personal bond. [We] need that before we come together. FFR has done that—there are lots of firefighters and others that I would have never

met if had not been for FFR. Also, fire investigators. [FFR is Fit First Responders, a local gym/workout group discounted for police, fire, EMS, and military personnel.]

Group D

Yes, from FFR and fire investigators in academy.

9. Do you feel it is important to personally know and interact with the firefighters in your area and have an idea of how to access them or the fire station quickly?

Group A

Yes.

Group B

Yes, but I feel like it is an inconvenience. Even though they have never told me I can't come in, but I don't always want to invade it. Kind of intruding on space—like a police car is an officer's space.

Group C

Yes, any time you are working with others, it helps to have personal relationships between them. We would probably be more willing to work together—more efficiency and better cooperation. You know how each other operates—we don't have to discuss how to do the job. [It] would be great if fire and police could do this.

Group D

Yes.

10. Have you ever completed a report alone at night in your patrol car?

Group A

[On completing report in an unsafe area,] yes. But some don't know that firehouses have Wi-Fi hub.

Group B

Every night. We usually try to park by or with someone. Usually park by the fire station

Group C

Yes. We have some pretty good hidey holes. We don't go to fire stations because officers like to be in their own space and stay in the car.

Group D

Yes. I do not like it. It is good to know that there are fire stations around—we don't know about it. Maybe an open house or other things for police officers so that they will know.

11. Do you think there are any benefits to police and fire relationships and/or partnerships?

Group A

Yes. People work better together.

Group B

Yes. You work better and more streamlined on calls.

Group C

Honestly, when it's down time. When people stay in their car, we look for places with walls behind them. Don't have to worry about anyone coming up from behind. If we could go inside and use the restroom and take off our vests—but most officers, especially those working overnight, don't want to impose by going in. Parking there may not be able to keep threats in front of you. But at night—there are limited bathroom facilities—the fire-station restroom facilities would be a huge benefit

Group D

I think there is a synergy at calls when everybody is working together. There is already a general cooperation, but when you know something, it's nice. Also using the firetruck for a barrier—I would like to know what their priority is on calls so we can work together better.

12. Can you think of any situations in which firefighters and police officers could work more symbiotically?

Group A

A police and fire outreach team would be amazing. Firefighters think the Hispanic population will not trust them if they are together. But teaching

together would teach this. . . . Would love to see an event with both groups after officer-involved shooting, etc.

What about the CRT team? Fire response with TPD after officer-involved shooting, serving the crowd while scene is worked.

Empower firefighters to be more involved with PD and community outreach. Opening fire hydrant and spraying kids, etc.

Starts with leadership. Partnerships.

Group B

Not sure.

Group C

There are certain times when we really need medical help, and there are other times that we do not need to bother the firefighters. If there were scenarios where we could say we need EMSA [emergency medical services authority] and not fire—that we could leave fire in service—streamline it. What would help also is to know what are fire's priorities.

Group D

Depending on where station is located, if a fire station is close to a problem area somewhere, we wouldn't have to walk very far.

Make a cooperative block party—plan it together with firefighters. Have a neighborhood party—meet your emergency responders.

13. If firehouses were used as a central hub for patrol officers to interact with firefighters, get coffee, use the restroom, complete reports, etc., what benefits or challenges do you foresee?

Group A

A huge benefit [would be] wireless access points at fire stations. If guys knew they could go, they would be more receptive. [It] would take word of mouth and the norm. Challenges may be between different policies between police and fire, politics at the table and different opinions, different mindsets.

A benefit of the hub would be response times to call.

Negatives [include] clashing personalities. To implement foot patrol—new rookies spend time in this capacity before going to patrol—implement it as part of FTO program.

Benefits would be that we would learn priorities and how to assist. We could get out of our vehicles and help like with rehab and water, etc.

Group B

Bonds and relationships that extend outside the job.

The challenge of getting over not wanting to impose.

Group C

Maybe people [are] abusing the system.

Not wanting to impose.

Benefits [include] more streamlined efforts. Spending time there and go 10–8 and off radio. Abuse of the power—I could see some officers saying they are busy but actually just hanging out at the firehouse.

Group D

[Regarding] peer support, we eat [on] our own sometimes. Showers, bathrooms, coffee, etc.

Once you get to know that group—if you have an in—it will develop to more.

14. How could firefighters and police officers work better together?

Group A

Possibility of key card to community rooms for reports and coffee—for officer access. We can't do it institutionally because of cost.

Technology for better communications between police, fire, and EMS on calls.

Danger of not being able to communicate quickly—safety and ambushes. Maybe concealed carry for firetrucks.

Breaking bread together. Open space for office for officer and community contact. I feel like it isn't hard for leadership to implement community policing—15 minutes a day or three times a week is doable for anyone. If

we don't as a department do more with community policing, the mayor will be forced by the community.

Group B

We could get out of our vehicles and help with rehab and water, etc., instead of just standing by on fires. Everything we show up on firefighters are going above and beyond – I think we always work hand in hand together but if we knew priorities and ways to assist this could improve further.

Group C

Maybe working better with dispatch. We often call for EMSA but do not need fire. Dispatch tells us that they have to call fire for certain calls—even though we do not need [fire] to respond—[which] . . . take[s] them away from more important calls.

Group D

Getting to know each other—it is easier to call that person and ask for help. The more we get to know each other, the better we work together.

15. Do you have anything else to add to this topic?

Group A

It is rewarding and makes the day better when you get out into the community and relate. [We] must recruit officers who are passionate about being officers at the human level. Must work on relationships culturally between different responders.

More opportunities to sit down and speak with each other and brainstorm. This may be the first time something like this has ever happened.

Group B

No.

Group C

I don't know. I honestly think that FFR is very good at bringing people together on a personal level. Any way you can gain personal relationships, it goes a long way with work relationships.

Group D

No.

APPENDIX C. TULSA CITIZENS FOCUS GROUP NOTES

The author held a focus group as well as phone interviews in June 2018 with Tulsa citizens, of which seven out of 10 invitees participated. The group participants were as follows: Group A, one African-American female; Group B, one African-American male; Group C, one Caucasian female; Group D, one Caucasian male; and Group E, two African-American females and one Caucasian female. Questions, quotations, and notes from the focus groups and phone interviews comprise the following pages.

1. Are you familiar with the Tulsa Police Department's community-oriented policing?

Group A

I know that there was a committee formed to maybe . . . get more involvement within the community.

Group B

No, I am not.

Group C

Yes. More recently, they have the strategy of cultural education. I've been in contact with the mayor about the new body cams but keeping car cams. There was no reassurance because of money. Experience by others says you don't need to have more money—just police in different ways.

While he, the police chief, has been supportive—he does some good showing up and has good ideas—supportive, but not much formal practice going on.

They are more accessible in the community, but I don't know that they are following through on everything. Mayor's office has also put into place some new things and people in play that are supposed to be working on things. Think it will take a long time for the police department to assure the public that they are re-educated.

[I'm] concerned about police officers driving around by themselves and being parked by themselves. A lot of north Tulsans know the term [community policing]. A more informed citizenship is occurring through town hall meetings. When I talk about government and leadership in my African-American women's book club, they are distrustful of government/

policing. Always distrusted—track record isn't good for thinking justice will happen for African-Americans. Long time mistrust—police officers have a lot of credibility to make up for. But there are some good connections happening between individual officers and community members.

Group D

Just from what I read in the paper—a little more cognizant effort to connect with the community—clubs and groups.

Group E

No—yes, have heard of the term. Community based—officer in the neighborhood to know what is going on in the neighborhood. Instead of fear, they know them.

2. Are you familiar with community-oriented fire strategies (village fire-company or community risk-reduction concepts)?

Group A

No.

Group B

No, not familiar.

Group C

No.

Group D

No.

Group E

Community-oriented police and fire strategies like TFD's firefighter clown, Huffy, neighborhood organizations—TFD very accommodating and happy to do this—Coffee with Cops, [and] Popsey Floyd's programs.

3. Do you think community-oriented fire and police programs are important?

Group A

Yes. I think that it would help relationships between emergency personnel and people, maybe faster treatment and resources, [and] families . . . having crisis.

Better flow. Sometimes people hold back on calling because of trust.

Group B

Yes, most definitely. From a police standpoint, one thing people say is cops need to be more visible and interested in you as a person and not a suspect. Would give lots more confidence to the public for them to call without fear. What holds people back from reporting is that they don't know the officer on a relatable [level] and would improve relationships as a whole.

Group C

Yes, because putting a human face on people is important. It says to me we want to know people. When they are relational with our children and they are being part of community it works. Seeing each other as human.

Group D

Yes. Both need to raise the awareness and make a first step to decrease barriers.

Group E

Yes. Yes, because people are really angry and distrustful. It is really bad with videos. Police officers—trust is super broken. Don't know how to fix unless cops are in neighborhoods getting to know them. Police at church would be good—the link between people and cops would be the churches. Going through individual pastors to get police there. Coffee with Cops was a wonderful experience. When I see one, now I make it a point to stop.

4. Did you know that Tulsa Police Department has recently started a community-oriented foot-patrol operation? If so, what do you know about the program?

Group A

Yes, on community-oriented programs—not sure about foot patrol

Group B

No.

Group C

No knowledge of foot patrol.

Group D

No, I don't think so.

Group E

No, I know Popsey but not foot patrol.

5. Do you know (or have you met) the foot-patrol officer in your community? If so, explain.

Group A

No.

Group B

No.

Group C

No.

Group D

No.

6. Do you think foot-patrol officers are important? Why or why not?

Group A

Yes. Foot patrol would may make crime go down because of presence. Would know key people within the community and a more personable approach would be benefit.

Group B

The same as community-oriented importance questions.

Group C

Yes. When I see officers walking or on bicycles, I think they are more accessible and approachable. I think people would be more likely to chat. A lot of people are lonely and want to talk. It would only build relationships.

The police and citizen would feel closer and possibly reach out to each other if they are accessible.

Group D

Yes, especially in high-pedestrian traffic. Another way to get on the level [of] people.

Group E

Yes, because our neighbors know who we are, and the cop car is a barrier. I would love to see police officers in the community more.

7. Do you know any of the firefighters in your community? If so, explain.

Group A

Yes. Victor is in my neighborhood, and I seem him at church. And a friend's husband. Lorenzo is a firefighter who lives in the neighborhood. Why firefighters and not cops? Better rapport—they visit and dialogue at the store or gas station. Cops do not. Firefighters seem to engage. They act human and are out in the community and are so nice and helpful. Cops seem to be in a hurry and demeanor is not personable.

Group B

No.

Follow-Up: Do you ever see them in the community?

There is a firefighter at my church—Victor.

Follow-Up: Do they seem to be approachable?

Yes.

Follow-Up: What is the difference between them and police?

From a public perception, firefighters are seen as people who will help you no matter what. Police are seen by some as the enemy to your own safety, personal property, and even to your body.

Group C

No.

Follow-Up: Do you ever see firefighters in the grocery store?

Yes.

Follow-Up: Do you ever talk to them?

Yes. I asked about car seats.

Follow-Up: What is the difference between cops and firefighters?

They are out in the community, and we see them. We know that they have the time to visit—they seem more like neighbors, and they have stations in the neighborhoods that we see.

Group D

No.

Follow-Up: Do you know any firefighters?

Oh, yes—on firefighters in the community—occasionally.

Group E

Yes, we know some at church, and some live in the neighborhood.

8. What is the current opinion of police (in general) in your community?

Group A

Don't trust the police—they are not your friends. Anything you say will be used in general—local and national.

Follow-up: How about the opinion of firefighters?

Never heard anyone say anything bad about firefighters. Has something to do with their approach.

Group B

They are seen as a necessary evil—we need to call them for help, but police have also been involved in harming those they are supposed to protect. There is a lack of trust due to things that have occurred over time.

Group C

Too militarized with the equipment they use. Some think it is not the best plan to recruit from the military to be officers—PTSD, trauma, etc. Concern about those who would have mental illness/instability. Mistrust of racism and profiling and trying to get enough money through tickets/arrest.

We understand they are put in impossible situations sometimes, and it is stressful, but we also want them to be helping themselves to be as healthy

and thoughtful as possible. There has to be some procedure/strategy so that they will take time off when they are stressed.

We are in low respect. Tulsa is as acutely aware of the mistrust here and across the nation. National scene and media has made it worse.

Group D

Not great. We are still trying to digest the Betty Shelby decision. I don't think a lot of folks paint with the right brush—most don't think that they are bad. It's like anything else—it's something bubbling under the surface—with police.

People form biases—I think that's what happens a lot. I think with people, there is still some lack of trust and this has grown. We all have bias—it is something we all think about.

Group E

Not comfortable—it is not solid. There is a lot of fear. In my close-knit community, it's okay, but when I am outside of my neighborhood, I am sometimes fearful of being stopped by police. Black men can be easily profiled for driving a nice car. Black males [are] also profiled if they are at the wrong place at the wrong time. I'm afraid for my little grandsons.

9. Is it important for citizens to personally get to know and/or interact with the police officers and firefighters in the community?

Group A

Yes. We all need each other. It would help our community. They would get vital information, and it would be a good information exchange. Most police officers do not live in the community. It plays a part in people's perception when they aren't invested in the community—it makes a difference. School resource officers are important, but I'm not sure if they do that anymore.

Group B

I think so. The only way to mend fences between the public and LE is to know who is policing them. There will always be this mistrust. And then when we see them at events, it seems that they are no different from us except they carry a gun. We see a different side—they want the public to know there is more to the badge and gun. The public should appreciate that and find some common ground.

Group C

I think it is good to get to know them. It's good to know your neighbors, period. If there were open houses at police precincts, it would be great. That is how you build trust.

Group D

Very much so—it breaks down barriers. The best thing to do is to talk to your enemy. Talking breaks down barriers.

Follow-Up: Do you see any opportunities to do that?

It's a matter of getting on folks' level—being places where the people are.

Follow-Up: Where is a good place?

Block parties/events, schools with firetrucks and hose—great opportunity—[to] get into the neighborhood.

Group E

Yes, it is important to be seen in a non-threatening situation. You are a person—you are not looking at the uniform but the person—also would know us. There is an us and them right now. Name recognition—you would get to know them, and we like seeing them as people.

10. Have you seen any positive outcomes in the community since TPD's community-oriented programs have been implemented?

Group A

I have seen some positive stories that have been featured—but not in my community.

Group B

N/A. Not familiar.

Group C

The officer who joined the interfaith group—he is making good connections. Not out in the community much—bike safety.

Group D

No, can't say that I have.

Group E

Yes. FD—had an elderly neighbor who had medical issues—they were very encouraging and patient also comforting. FD helped with smoke alarms with mother who can't hear. Coffee with the Cops—cops came and took some old ammo from my mother's house the next day after we spoke to them.

11. Can you think of any situations in which the community, firefighters, and police officers could work more cooperatively?

Group A

I think when maybe they should do a public safety community event. Block party—annual events for communities. Most of the time, these are times that you can exchange information. I think community should come together with block parties—mental health—[to] get to know each other. Resources are available. We are here as a resource.

Group B

Um, I think that there should be designated gatherings with all groups [so they] can interact with the public in a more casual setting, and the public can address concerns and officers can explain what they do. This would cut down on the ignorance for everyone. What we have in terms of tragedy is there is a lack of knowledge in the process, and it could go a long way in solving community issues.

Group C

Recruitment? Definitely need more minorities—maybe work on recruitment strategies together. Recruiting and relationship building and be consistent. Open houses where both groups are there and available in a positive atmosphere

Group D

Yeah—events like block parties—participate—4th of July—[in] opportunities like that can make positive impressions.

Group E

They could come to some of those meetings—community meetings. Grassroots community organizations—action committee meeting at church—resilient Tulsa strategy. Dialogue. Barbecues, block parties.

12. How could firefighters and police officers work better together to increase positive relations and public trust?

Group A

They are going to have to get out of their cars and start having dialogue one-on-one. Maybe get together and exchange.

Group B

Well, I think that just being a more approachable presence could help. I don't know, in Chicago firefighters open their doors, especially for kids to look at the firehouse and trucks to let them know it's cool and that their job is important—some police are tone deaf on how the public perceives them. I don't want to be inaccurate, but I think some of them think they are more important than the people they are serving. FFs seem to be on the level of the people they are serving. I think that is why there is tension—them on a pedestal versus us, which perpetuates distance.

Group C

I don't know. Need to separate.

Group D

Make a good start with children—like at schools with resource officers and mentoring. Also, anything else is a good way to get on the ground floor. Could reach some at-risk kids—takes a long time to get them on track.

Group E

Dialogue and the hair-trigger reactions need to stop. De-escalation training is desperately needed. Don't go in thinking the worst. School mentoring and teaching youngsters—maybe officers in schools?

13. How can relationships be improved between police officers and citizens?

Group A

I do think we gotta figure out a way to dispel myths. Debunk myths. Maybe more PSAs on radio. Town hall meetings. Even in the schools—career days . . . too maybe if they can get a little more personable. Go into the schools and get the kids' input.

Group B

Well, people I know try to stay as far away from them as possible. My mother always reminds me to be careful when I am traveling and tells me to be cautious if you run into police. Equity needs to be built up before they are trusted to do the job again. Over time, and day to day, treat people as they want to be treated and not as a combatant. Overall, no matter where you go, you hear the same sentiments. Seems like a pattern has developed, and they think that this is the norm.

Group C

Get out and talk to people. Know me and my neighborhood. Next Door app—neighbors. Neighbors knowing each other builds more trust. The more we know each other in our neighborhoods, there would be fewer shootings. Won't you be my neighbor theme in a time of mistrust would be really good.

Group D

A good question—a long time to fix. People of color are more likely to get beaten, harassed, etc.

Group E

How can we mend? Human interest stories—portraying them as human instead of cop. Meet the officers in the community. Showing up to places where people are at—libraries, community parties, programs, etc. Health fairs—mix in with the general public.

14. What else would you like to add about these topics?

Group A

I don't know. My opinion is that I don't have anything bad to say about FFs. I think there are good police officers, but now they are overshadowed by bad publicity. We've got to come up with a way to say they are not our enemy. They are human and want to go home to their family. I would like to see an annual community thing so that people can have real dialogue. Don't just send a token black officer to the community events because, most of the time, it's a Caucasian officer that we come in contact with.

Group B

Um, the one thing that I would emphasize is that police should be less tone deaf towards the public and what is being said about them. This is something that they need to work on. The police are starting to explain or

decipher what has happened after bad shoots—they talk to people like they are inanimate objects. Treat[ing] people more humanely would be a good start.

Group C

I'm glad that people are raising these questions—it helps people think out loud and address hope. It balances out fear. How can we draw on the hope instead of fear?

Group D

That we are all in this together—black, white, rich, poor—we are all connected. It doesn't matter—I wish it would stop happening, and I don't know what it is going to take. Lots of implicit bias training. Also, it's not just police; people need to take responsibility.

Group E

Train them to be part of the community—non-military. Work on recruitment. Make sure there is a fair representation, so people see more who look like them. Lots of bias in the fire department and police department. They seem so aggressive and angry—need inclusion training, and taught they are human. Kick it down a notch; cop demeanor needs to change. Work on interpersonal skills and people skills.

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