

# Salem Police Department Strategic Plan

October 2021 – Strategic Plan Survey

## Summary Report

### Introduction/Overview

The Salem Police Department 3-Year Strategic Plan development has been underway since June 2021. During the summer the Department established the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Department and identified three overarching Goals for the Plan: Safety, Legitimacy, and Excellence. The Department next identified three to four Objectives for each Goal.

In October 2021 the Department engaged the community for feedback on the Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives through a survey. The survey introduced each proposed Objective of the plan and asked community members to rate the importance of each Objective on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being unimportant and 5 being very important. The survey also provided the opportunity for written feedback.

The survey was offered in Spanish and English. 492 community members completed the survey. 479 of the survey responses were in English and 13 were in Spanish.

### Overall Themes

Throughout the survey results several themes emerged that were not specific to an objective or could be applied to multiple objectives. What follows is a summary of the overall themes with more details included in the Objective summaries.

- **Public engagement is key.** Suggestions for proactive public involvement were proposed for most of the objectives. Respondents are eager for more community engagement with the Police Department.
- **Increased transparency is needed.** People responded positively to objectives that would enhance transparency between the Department and the community.
- **More officers are needed in the community.** Across the survey, many respondents requested a greater day-to-day police presence in neighborhoods. Several respondents asked for greater 'community policing' with officers walking the neighborhoods. There were several calls for additional police hires to meet the community's needs.
- **Greater non-police support for persons in crisis.** Many community members would like to see non-police responses to people in crisis and interaction with houseless individuals. There were several references to Eugene's CAHOOTS program and Portland's Street Response Team as models for Salem.
- **Diverse voices within the department and in community discussions.** Many would like to see a police force that reflects the demographics in Salem. Respondents would like to see this same diversity represented in police Advisory Councils or other community group convened to work with the Salem Police Department.

## Objective Importance

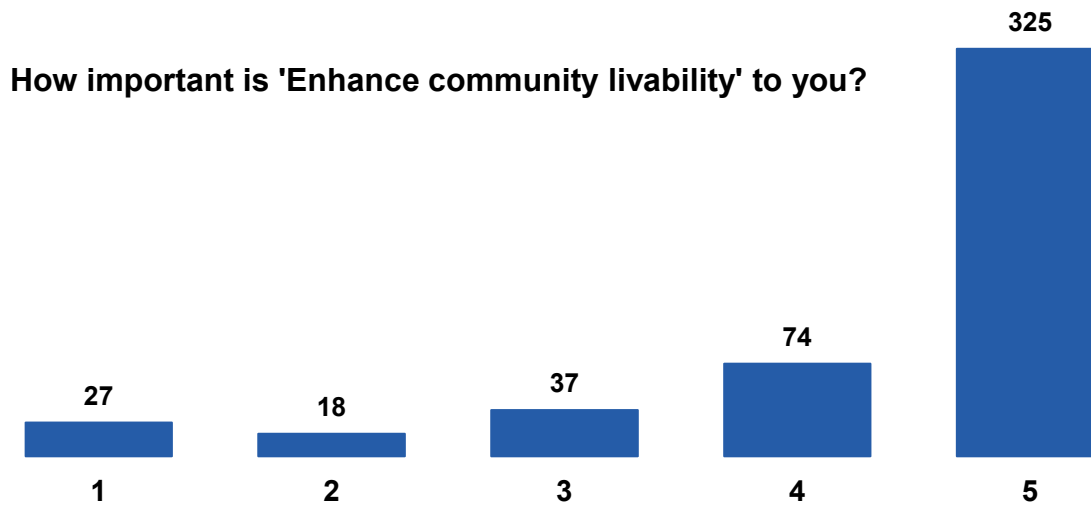
Overall, community members believe all the Strategic Plan Objectives are important. Though, there were noticeable difference in what was considered most and least important.

They Safety Objectives ranked the highest, followed by Excellence, and then Legitimacy.

Goal	Objective	% that ranked the Objective at a 4 or 5
Safety	Enhance community livability.	83%
Safety	Increase community safety efforts.	81%
Excellence	Foster a culture of excellence.	78%
Excellence	Enhance recruitment and hiring efforts.	77%
Legitimacy	Increase transparency and information-sharing.	74%
Legitimacy	Enhance police and community trust-building.	72%
Excellence	Increase employee retention and professional development opportunities.	71%
Legitimacy	Engage in informed organizational and structural change.	68%
Safety	Enhance employee safety and wellness.	66%
Excellence	Build analytical capacity.	58%

## Goal: Safety

**Objective: Enhance community livability.**

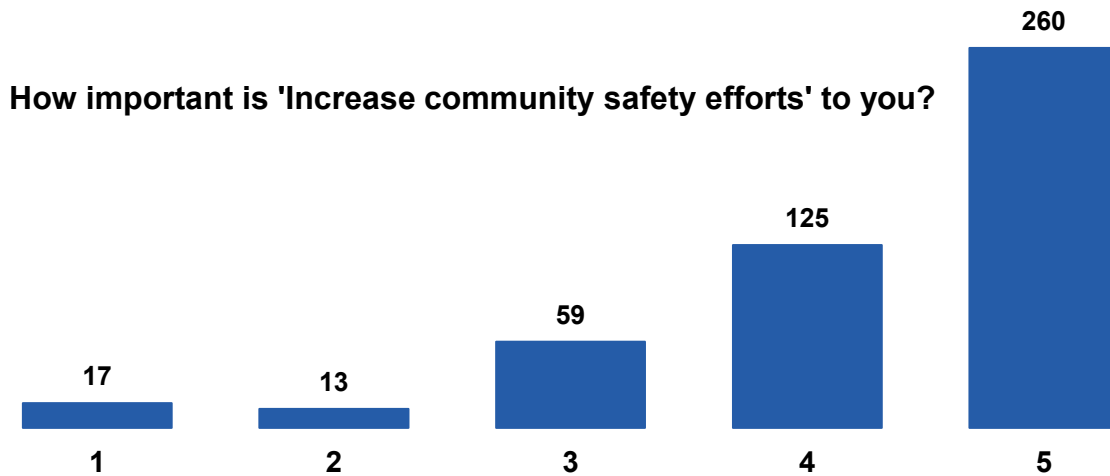


**Community members found this objective to be very important. 83% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating. This objective was rated as the most important by participants.**

**The houseless population was a topic of interest with more than 100 comments.** Many participants believe that addressing the impacts of the houseless community is **not an SPD issue and should be addressed through community partnerships or a CAHOOTS-style program**, like in Eugene.

Several participants asked for **more traffic enforcement and quicker response** to increase livability in their communities.

## Objective: Increase community safety efforts.



**Community members found this objective to be important.** 81% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

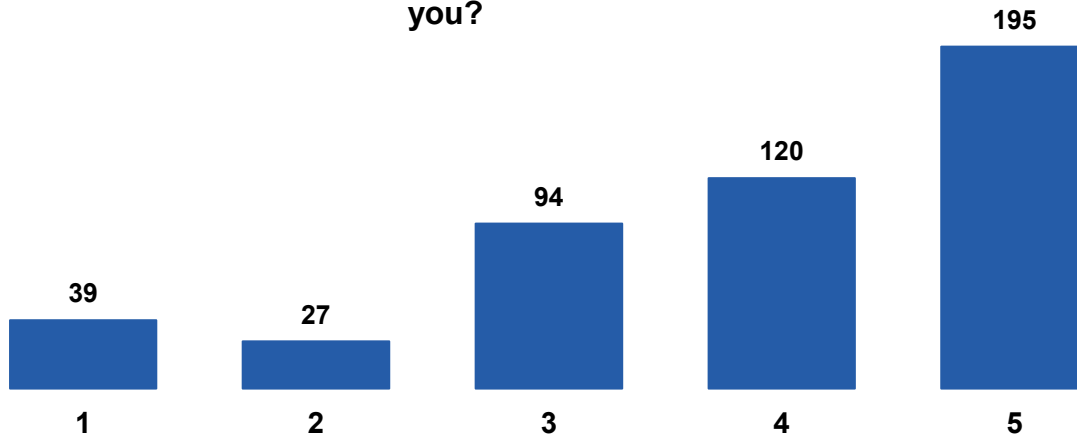
Several community members recommended **police-led education in schools**.

**Community engagement through public meetings** was also recommended.

**Another theme was partnering with other organizations.** This included recommendations of specific organizations to partner with for the Salem Police Department.

## Objective: Enhance employee safety and wellness.

How important is 'Enhance employee safety and wellness' to you?



**Community members found this objective to be important**, although less important than the other two objectives in the 'Safety' goal. 66% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

Many respondents **supported providing high-quality equipment for officers**, especially body cameras. However, there were **several comments against 'para-military' or 'militarization' style equipment**.

Several community members suggested that hiring **more officers in the department** could help with the Department's safety and wellness goals.

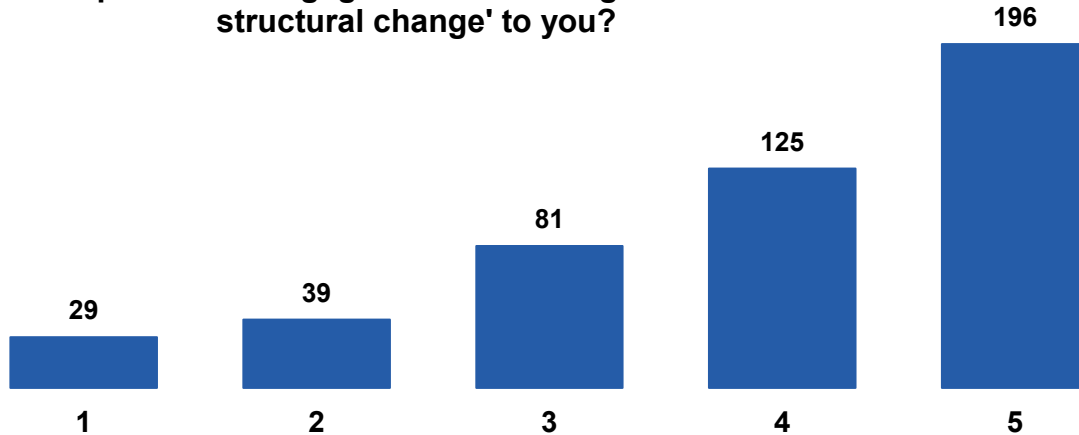
More than 80 participants wrote in **in favor of increased training and wellness programs** at the SPD. Some participants believe that wellness activities should be the responsibility of the individual officer and not a part of the Department's official policies.

Some community members believed that **officers should be vaccinated** as part of a safety and wellness program.

## Goal: Legitimacy

**Objective: Engage in informed organizational and structural change.**

How important is 'Engage in informed organizational and structural change' to you?



**Community members found this objective to be important**, though in the narrative responses, several people were confused about what the objective meant. 68% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

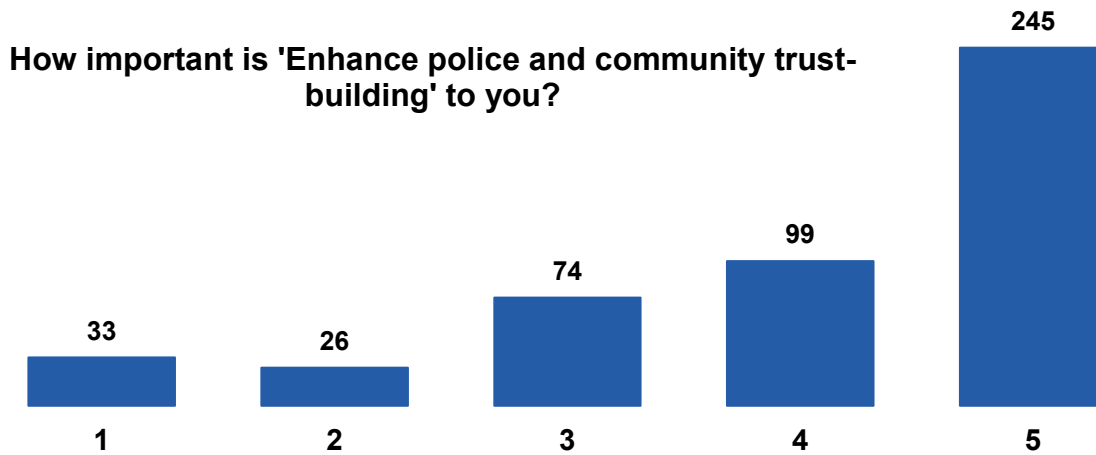
Community members were **positive about a data first approach**.

Many respondents advised the Community Engagement Unit to **meet with diverse groups to hear all perspectives**.

Participants asked for **transparency to build trust with the community** as the Department engages in more data-driven activities.

Some respondents were concerned that this objective may **take away from officers patrolling and doing police work**.

## Objective: Enhance police and community trust-building.



**Community members found this objective to be important.** 72% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

Respondents were **largely positive about the Chief's Advisory Council.**

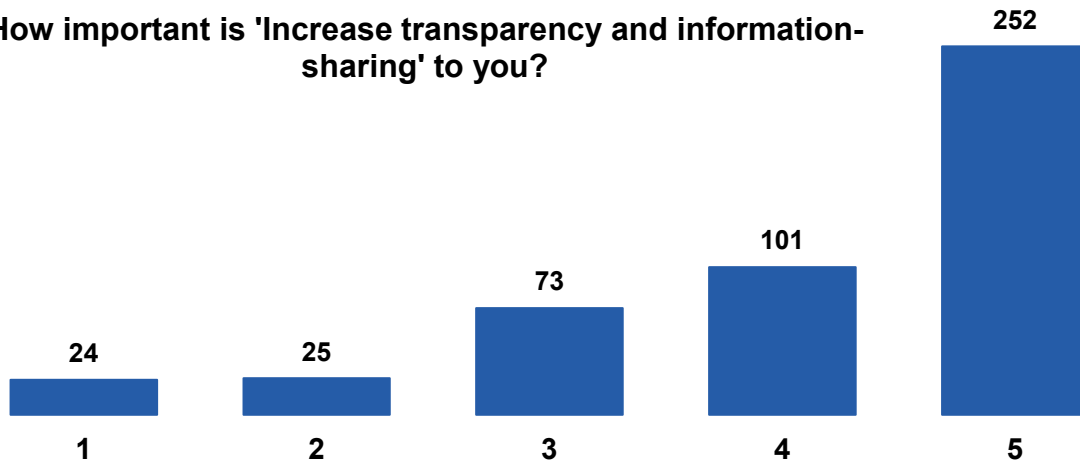
Community members stated that **community policing is vital** to build trust within the community.

Respondents offered several **community engagement** strategies that the Police Department could use to build trust in the community.

Several respondents cite **that diversity in hiring** is important to build trust.

## Objective: Increase transparency and information-sharing.

How important is 'Increase transparency and information-sharing' to you?



**Community members found this objective to be important.** 74% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

Most respondents **supported greater transparency and information-sharing** in the comments

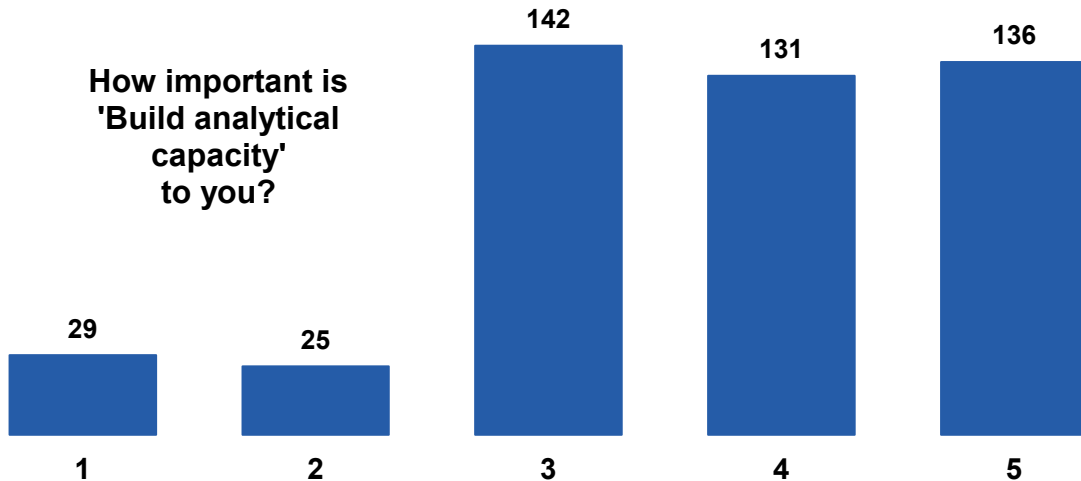
Public input on this objective was overwhelmingly related to **body cameras** with more than 90 comments related to them. Most comments were **in favor of the purchase**, though people expressed some concerns.

There were also negative comments around a body camera purchase, though these were in the minority.



## Goal: Excellence

### Objective: Build analytical capacity.



**Community members found this objective to be mildly important** and only 58% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating. This received the **lowest importance score of the survey**.

One cause of the low score could be general confusion from respondents about what the meaning of the objective. More than 25 people wrote that they didn't understand the objective.

Several community members were **skeptical about how useful data analytics could be** or how data could be manipulated.

Several participants requested that **new data be shared with the public**.

## Objective: Enhance recruitment and hiring efforts.

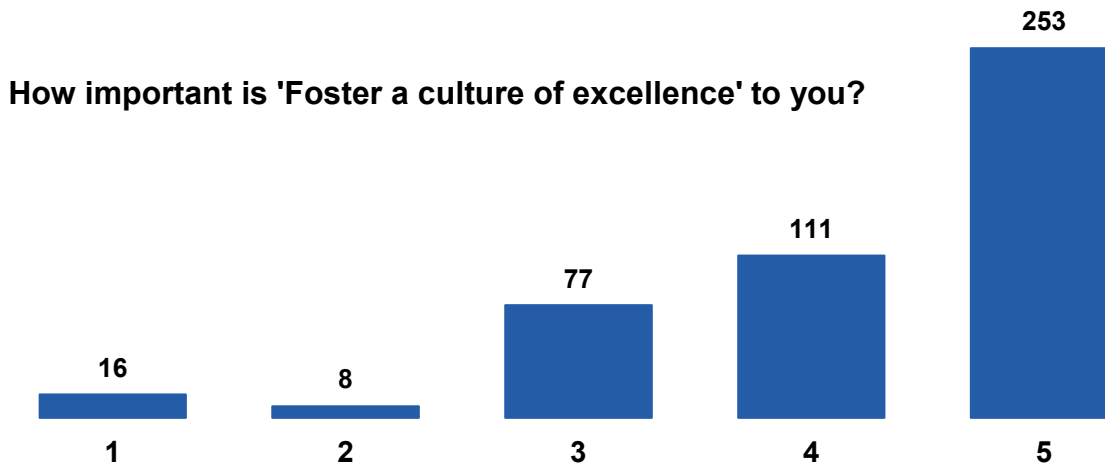


**Community members found this objective to be important.** 77% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

Most respondents were in favor of this objective and encouraged the Department to focus efforts on **diversity hiring and retaining officers** that reflect the demographics of the city.

Many participants recommended that the Department **hire officers after intensive background checks** and some suggested **raising education requirements for candidates**.

## Objective: Foster a culture of excellence.



**Community members found this objective to be important** and 78% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating.

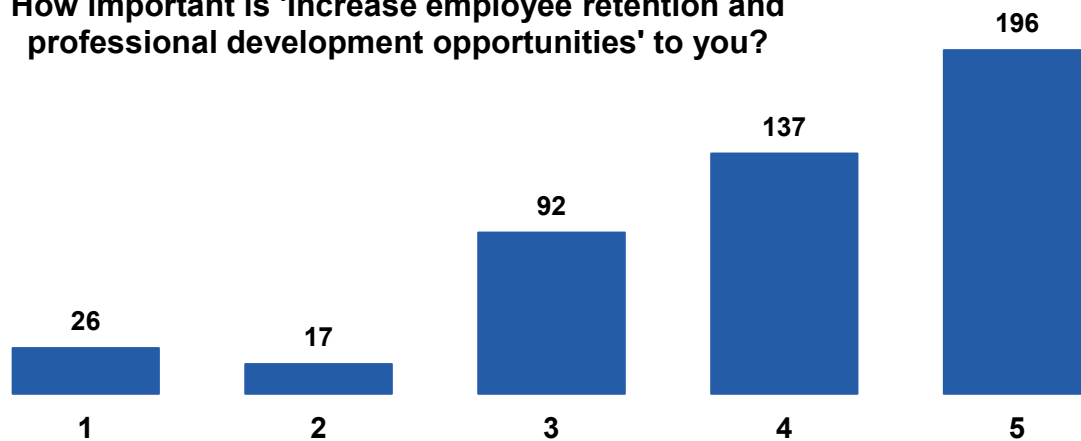
To foster excellence, many community members agreed that **officers should be held accountable** in a variety of ways. Some participants stated that this can be achieved by internal reviews. Others would like the community to be involved in the process.

Several community members recommended **rewarding excellence** to retain high performing officers.

Respondents also recommended **using metrics established with community input** to evaluate officers' performance.

**Objective: Increase employee retention and professional development opportunities.**

**How important is 'Increase employee retention and professional development opportunities' to you?**



**Community members found this objective to be important.** 71% of respondents gave this objective a 4 or a 5 rating. Overall, participants agreed that employee retention is key to a high-quality police force in Salem.

**Respondents reacted favorably to a mentoring program** and offered advice on how it could be implemented.

A few people would like to see **high retention of diverse officers.**

Several written comments **support increased pay, benefits, and other perks to retain officers.**