

# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PLAN

## LISTENING SESSIONS REPORT

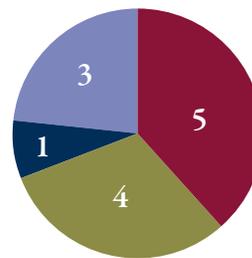
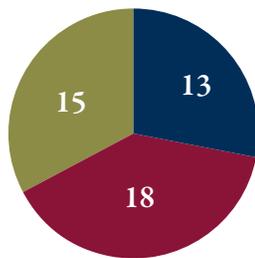
### SUMMARY

The City of Santa Rosa's Office of Community Engagement made extensive efforts to engage with members of the People of Color (POC) community here in Santa Rosa. Staff engaged 265 POC total in conversations around community safety, relationships and interactions with the police department, and solutions for moving forward. While conversations initially centered around participants' experiences with SRPD, these conversations expanded to address experiences with the broader City of Santa Rosa organization and community at-large. Specifically, input from participants pointed to communitywide issues and experiences with systemic racism, including discrimination, microaggressions, and acts of violence.

#### Number of people engaged:

- a. 280 total residents engaged
- b. 265 POC engaged
- c. 215 engaged in listening sessions

**TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT**  
13 listening session groups  
18 one-on-one conversations  
15 informal group conversations



#### LISTENING SESSION GROUPS

- 5 Latinx community groups
- 4 Black community groups
- 1 Indigenous community group
- 3 mixed race community groups

#### Listening Session Themes

1. Build positive and collaborative relationships between SRPD and community, including youth
2. Invest in community programming and services, particularly for POC communities
3. Create mechanisms of police accountability and oversight
4. Address institutional racism, systemic racism and the culture of white supremacy in Santa Rosa, and uplift and celebrate Santa Rosa's POC communities



Participants believe that addressing issues of systemic racism and developing solutions must be a collective action from not just the City of Santa Rosa, but all community organizations and members. However, based on listening session feedback, there are steps the City can take to make Santa Rosa a better place for all residents, including:



- ▶ Acknowledge its own history of systemic racism that impacts our communities of color;
- ▶ Address its own policies and practices that enable historical institutional racism;
- ▶ Declare racism as a public health crisis in Santa Rosa
- ▶ Commit to inclusion, diversity, equity, transparency in and access to City government
- ▶ Ensure mandatory trainings and educational sessions on inclusion, diversity, and equity for all City staff, appointed and elected officials, and members of all City boards, commissions, and committees;
- ▶ Create healing opportunities for community and Santa Rosa Police Department through community restorative justice circles;
- ▶ Increase civilian oversight of the Santa Rosa Police Department;
- ▶ Invest in community programming and services, particularly for POC communities;
- ▶ Create an organizational culture that values public engagement with all community members; and
- ▶ Increase access to public engagement opportunities for all residents.

From addressing systemic and institutional racism, to providing more funding for our POC communities, to working with POC to find and implement solutions that will support them and improve their daily lives, the City has a great deal of work to do. This will not happen overnight – the process will be slow and will take time, however, it is important that the City continue to engage with POC and the broader community to ensure changes are made and the City continues to work towards dismantling organizational systems that do not allow for an inclusive, diverse, equitable and transparent space for all its residents.

The City must make a real, authentic effort to provide opportunities to heal with and build trust with the community. There must also be more robust opportunities for engagement with the community, in which the community is a partner with the City in decisions that impact their lives, providing sense of ownership in creating a vibrant, resilient, and livable Santa Rosa for all.



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