

EVALUATION OF THE FALCON HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS PROCESS

*Elizabeth Dressel*¹

Summary of Evaluation Findings

This report shares the results of an evaluation of the five community conversations that took place in Falcon Heights from February through June 2017. The evaluation was commissioned by the Minnesota Bureau of Mediation Services' Office of Collaboration and Dispute Resolution, the Dispute Resolution Institute at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, and the Center for Integrative Leadership at the University of Minnesota with funding from the American Arbitration Association — International Centre for Dispute Resolution Foundation. Elizabeth Dressel, a master's student at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, led the evaluation with support from Kathryn S. Quick, PhD, Associate Professor, Humphrey School of Public Affairs and Co-Academic Director of the Center for Integrative Leadership, and Chen Zhang, PhD candidate, Humphrey School of Public Affairs.

Six main topics arose from the analysis of focus group transcripts and survey responses.

- 1) **Divergent and Changing Concerns:** Participants arrived and left with divergent concerns and many changed their priorities over the course of the process.
- 2) **Interface with City Council and Task Force:** Participants wanted more action, accountability, and interaction with these bodies.
- 3) **Impacts of a Resource-Constrained Process:** Participants observed and bemoaned that limited resources had negative impacts on communication, childcare, and food.
- 4) **Lack of Diversity:** Participants explored multiple concerns with turnout and diversity of perspectives.
- 5) **Circle Format and General Process:** Participants articulated feedback on the benefits and limitations of the circle format and its implementation in this setting.
- 6) **Facilitation Role:** Facilitators reflected on the distinctions between a circle process and other types of facilitation, and the ambiguity and tension they felt in this setting.

These topic areas are groups of frequently expressed ideas and comments. Within each were areas of convergence and divergence. The report details the findings for each in greater detail.

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Outcomes Highlights

One of the most interesting findings is a **positive change in the emotional state of the participants**. Participants felt more optimistic and trusting and less cynical, sad and angry after participating in the conversations. In addition, participants expressed feeling both more energized and more fatigued after the community conversations.

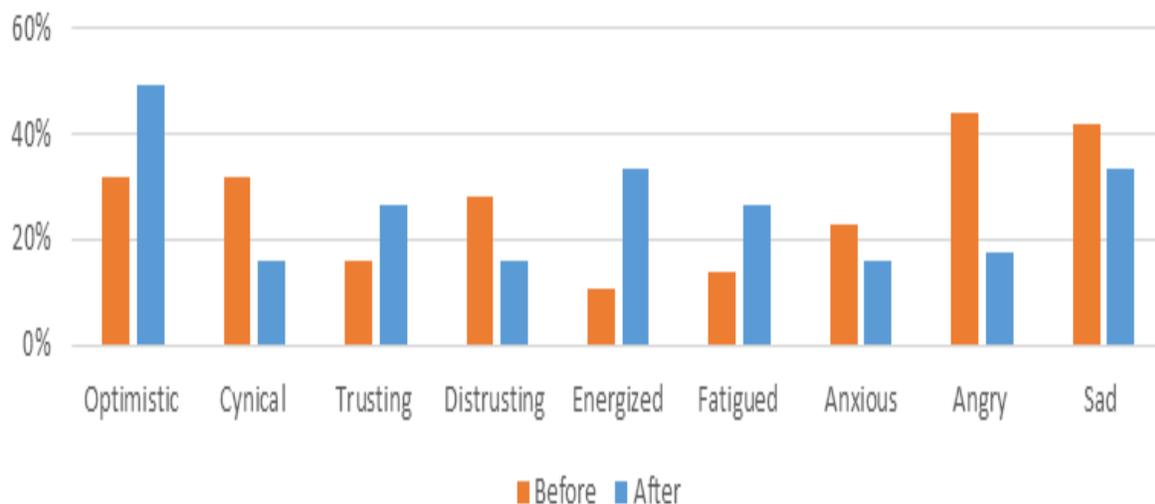
Another noteworthy finding is changes to what participants hoped to accomplish through the community conversations. Following the conversations, participants prioritized higher:

- understanding the role I play in injustices within my community; and
- making new connections with people in my community

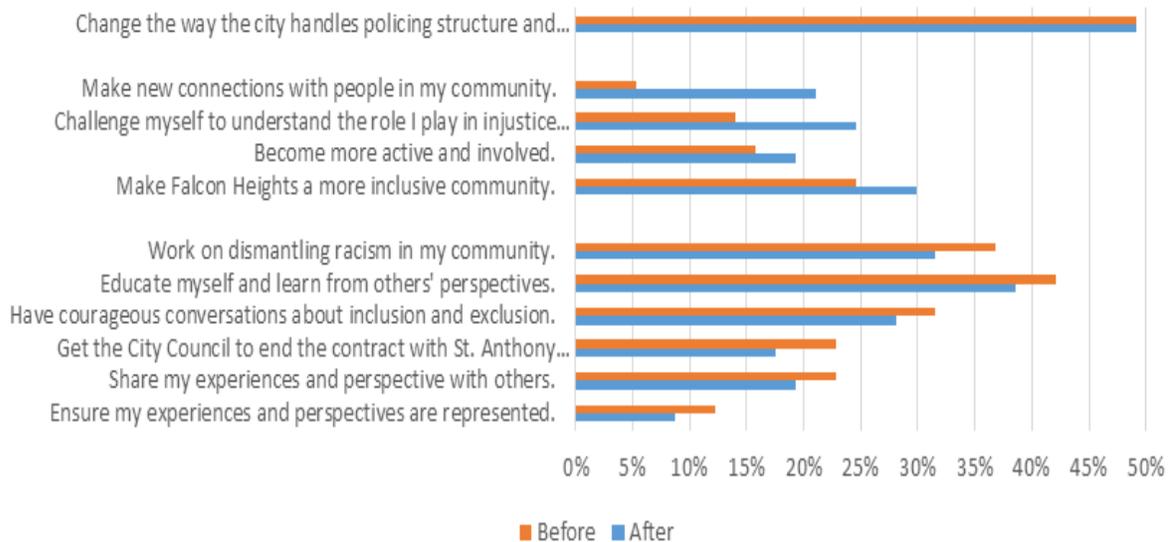
These changes are reflective of the planning team's goals that the conversations provide the opportunity for impact at various levels including policy, community, inter-personal, and intra-personal.

The conversations did not make any difference in one prominent area of concern: both before and after, the number one priority was changing the way the city handles policing practices. Notably, however, framing that change in terms of St. Anthony Police Department (SAPD) became less important: fewer people prioritized ending the contract with SAPD after the conversations than before them.

Most dominant emotions (aggregated for all survey respondents)



Top Priorities To Accomplish



Process Highlights

91% of survey respondents said that they strongly or slightly agreed that participating in the community conversations was a valuable way to spend their time. With a few key caveats, participants liked the circle method. However, there was a clear message that there was **too much material to cover at each conversation**. Both participants and facilitators often felt too rushed while trying to get through all of the questions in each conversation. This did not allow participants to fully share, and some mentioned they quickly passed or chose not to share so that others in the circle could have more time. It is recommended that future processes allow more time to cover the materials either through extending the time period or reducing the agenda.

Another key finding is that, **participants would have liked to have had more time to directly discuss the draft recommendations and provide direct feedback to the Task Force and City Council members**. This lack of direct interaction left many participants feeling frustrated and uncertain about the next steps, and whether the recommendations and input will be implemented. Future processes should include more time on the development of recommendations and allow for more interaction between participants, Task Force, and City Council.

Overview of the Task Force and Community Conversations

The Falcon Heights Task Force on Inclusion and Policing was created by the City Council of Falcon Heights, Minnesota, following the killing of Philando Castile by a police officer in Falcon Heights. The Task Force was charged with articulating community values, identifying community needs, and recommending programming and policies that would make Falcon Heights a more inclusive and welcoming place for residents and guests.

The Task Force was comprised of 11 committed individuals with diverse experiences and perspectives. Beginning in December 2016, they met for 13 regular task force meetings. To develop a set of recommendations on policing and second set of recommendations on inclusion, the Task Force deliberated with the interested public through five Community Conversations (the focus of this report), and consulted with subject matter experts in four priority areas (policing, police-community relationships, citizen oversight boards, and joint powers authorities). The Task Force members also stayed connected with the broader community through individual dialogues with other residents and guests of Falcon Heights, by attending City Council meetings, and by being involved in other community events.

The **policing recommendations** lay out a set of goals for policy implementation and change relating to restoring mutual safety and trust for community members and police. The final version of the policing recommendations was adopted by the City Council on May 24, 2017, and may be found here: www.falconheights.org (Search for Policing and Inclusion Recommendations).

The **inclusion recommendations** include a Statement of Community Values, and a series of recommendations for building a more inclusive Falcon Heights. The foundation of all of the recommendations is that many people feel that they do not fully belong in the Falcon Heights community. The final version of the inclusion recommendations was adopted by the City Council on June 14, 2017, and may be found here: www.falconheights.org. At that time, the Council also unanimously agreed to seek grants and allocate funds in upcoming city budgets in order to be able to dedicate skilled staff attention to sustaining this work.

In conjunction with the Task Force meetings, more than 180 people participated in a series of Community Conversations. The dialogue and feedback was used to develop and shape the recommendations.

- Conversation 1 - February 16, 2017: Conversations focused on personal and community values. Conversation 2 - March 2, 2017: Participants helped develop options for how the City can live out the Community's values in its activities, policies, and policing policies and practices.
- Conversation 3 - April 3, 2017: Participants reviewed and provided feedback on draft policing recommendations.
- Conversation 4 - May 1, 2017: Participants shared their thoughts on what is needed for transformational change to begin and each made a personal commitment.
- Conversation 5 - June 19, 2017: Commemoration of the work accomplished and development of next steps for the community.

Data and Methods

Evaluation data was gathered in two ways. First, the evaluation team emailed a survey to all participants who attended at least one of the community conversations and provided an email. In total, the survey was emailed to 158 participants for whom we had email contact information, of whom 57 completed and submitted survey responses. Removing the 13 emails that bounced back due to incorrect addresses, there was a 39 percent completion rate.

In addition to the survey, the evaluation team conducted four focus groups, two specifically for community conversation participants and two for conversation facilitators. One focus group of each type was held in June and a second pair was conducted in August. We intentionally invited individuals to the first set of focus groups in June to represent diversity in terms of the number of community conversations they attended/facilitated, where they were from, gender, and race or ethnicity. A second invitation was emailed to all participants or facilitators and they were asked to RSVP if they were interested in participating and providing feedback. Due to this methodology, the first participant focus group was quite a bit more diverse including both residents, non-residents, varied ethnic and racial background, and gender balance. Across all of the focus groups, 23 people attended — 13 community conversation participants and 10 conversation facilitators.

A complete list of the survey questions and results can be found in Appendix A, and a complete list of the focus group questions are located in Appendix B. I want to acknowledge and thank Kathryn S. Quick, PhD, Associate Professor at Humphrey School of Public Affairs and Co-Academic Director of the Center for Integrative Leadership, and Chen Zhang, PhD candidate, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, for their assistance in designing the approach to the survey and focus groups, for partnering with me to facilitate the focus groups, and for helping to analyze the data from both the survey and focus groups. I am also thankful for Giulietta Perrotta for transcribing all of the focus group recordings.

Key Findings

Six main topics arose from the analysis of focus group transcripts and survey responses.

Divergent and Changing Concerns:

- 1) Participants arrived and left with divergent concerns and many changed their priorities over the course of the process.
- 2) Interface with City Council and Task Force: Participants wanted more action, accountability, and interaction with these bodies.
- 3) Impacts of a Resource-Constrained Process: Participants observed and bemoaned that limited resources had negative impacts on communication, childcare, and food.
- 4) Lack of Diversity: Participants explored multiple concerns with turnout and diversity of perspectives.
- 5) Circle Format and General Process: Participants articulated feedback on the benefits and limitations of the circle format and its implementation in this setting.
- 6) Facilitation Role: Facilitators reflected on the distinctions between a circle process and other types of facilitation, and the ambiguity and tension they felt in this setting.

These topic areas are groups of frequently expressed ideas and comments. Within each were areas of convergence and divergence. Below, for each topic area, I provide a description and analysis of the variety of reasoning and comments that were shared within each group, broken out by survey results, as applicable, followed by findings from focus group comments. I conclude the report with a few short recommendations for carrying this work forward in other communities.

Divergent and Changing Concerns

Participants arrived and left with divergent concerns and many changed their priorities over the course of the process.

Survey Results

The priorities of participants before and after the community conversations are highlighted in Figure 1. The conversations did not make any difference in one prominent area of concern: both before and after, the number one priority was changing the way the city handles policing practices. Notably, however, framing that change in terms of St. Anthony Police Department (SAPD) became less important: fewer people prioritized ending the contract with SAPD after the conversations than before them. In contrast, there were a few areas that became a higher priority for the survey respondents after the conversations:

- understanding the role I play in injustices within my community; and
- making new connections with people in my community.

These changes are reflective of the design team's goals that the conversations provide the opportunity for impact at various levels including policy, community, inter-personal, and intra-personal.

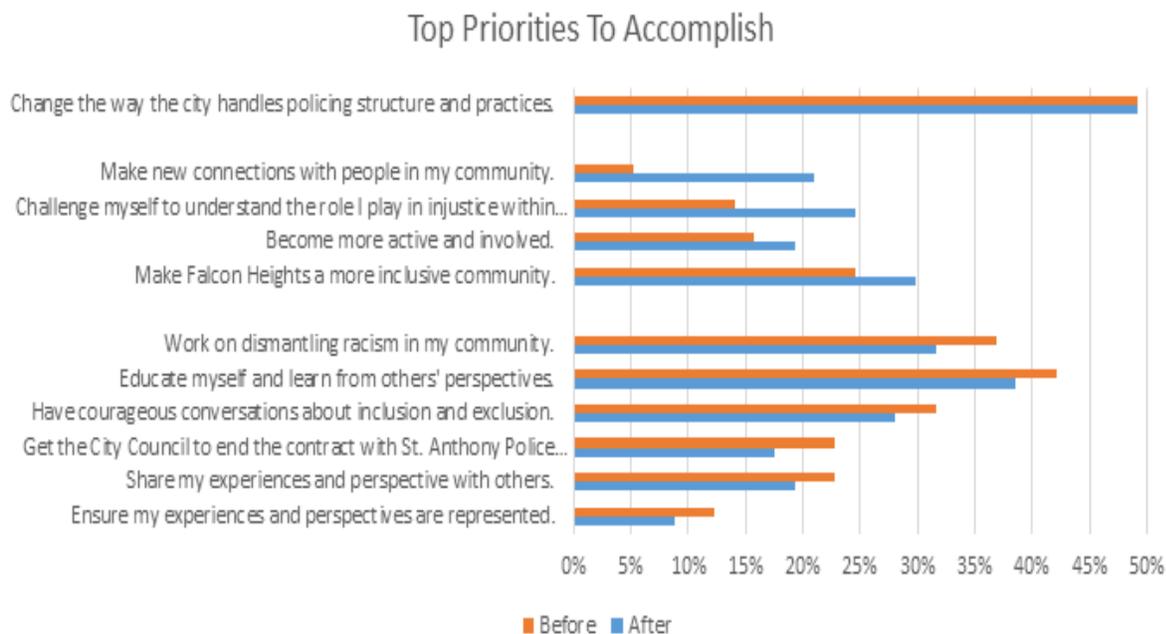


Figure 1: Top priorities to accomplish.psdTop three priorities before and after the community conversations.

Focus Group Comments

Many of the focus group participants shared their commitment and connection to Falcon Heights and dedication to working to create a more inclusive community. Facilitators expressed a desire to help and be involved in a topic they feel personally connected to even though they live outside of Falcon Heights. Many expressed that they hoped to use their professional skills

and passions to help the community. As the organizers and facilitators anticipated and recognized during the conversations, there was no single theme or concern that brought people to the table. We asked people in the focus group what had compelled them to participate in the conversations, and found no consistent patterns. We heard a variety of reasons for why people attended the community conversations and how they defined the issues at hand. There was divergence on what participants perceived as the problem and how to move forward. There were some who expressed that canceling the contract was the most important outcome and the need to solidify a new contract was important. Others felt that the city would have been better off continuing to work with SAPD. A number of ideas and differences arose over the need to gather funding and make changes to the budget. The second participant focus group discussed the reality of the upcoming election and whether new councilmembers would have power and control to change the budget priorities. The take-away for evaluating this community conversation and planning comparable kinds of processes in the future is that it's important for the design team to expect and anticipate that participants will present very diverse experiences, concerns, and priorities in the conversations.

Interface with the City Council and Task Force

Participants wanted more action, accountability, and interaction with these bodies.

Survey Results

The top priority that participants listed as wanting to accomplish before *and* after the community conversation was to change the way the city handles policing structures and practices. Forty-nine percent of participants listed this as one of their top *three* priorities before and after the conversations. This indicates a high level of commitment to action and change within the city. Additionally, more people expressed a priority to “make new connections with people in my community” and “become more active and involved”. This highlights that many participants are interested in taking action and making connections.

The comments in the open-ended response questions on whether this was a valuable use of their time and whether or not they changed their mind indicated some survey respondents' disappointment with the actions of the city council. Some respondents stated they are unsure what the next steps are and feel discouraged by that. Others feel that the conversations were a way to start informing recommendations and feel that their voices were acknowledged and matter. In next steps, respondents stated commitments to staying involved, connected, and on top of the implementation of the recommendations. The desire for action and to see accountability from the city council and city officials was a strong theme.

Focus Group Comments

Action and accountability themes arose throughout the focus groups. Community conversation participants converged on the desire to take action personally, and the desire to see the city council take action on the recommendations. There was frustration and feelings of uncertainty about the next steps, and whether the recommendations and input will be implemented.

Participants felt disappointed by the lack of action and concrete next steps from the city council. Specifically, they mentioned the final community conversation as particularly frustrating. Participants felt that the conversation goals did not meet their personal goals of hearing the final recommendations, having time to discuss them, and then moving into personal next steps. The circle questions during the final conversation felt disjointed from the participants' desire to focus on the final recommendations and get to action steps. The questions at that particular conversation were noted as not allowing them to connect to their actions. Additionally, they left without next steps and did not feel the follow-up communication from the small groups met their desire for actionable next steps. The design of the conversations did not align with the desire for action. The circle process constrained the ability to have cross dialogue and move quickly towards actions, which is discussed further in the Circle Format and General Process section of this report. Based on the comments from the participants, I would recommend more of an interface with the task force process and more structured ability to have dialogue with the Task Force, and react to both the draft recommendations and the final recommendations. In future processes that interface with a city council or task force, I recommend a design that includes direct feedback and interaction with the task force/city council.

Impacts of a Resource-Constrained Process

Participants observed and bemoaned that limited resources had negative impacts on communication, childcare, and food.

Focus Group Comments

There are constraints of an all-volunteer facilitation and recruitment team and the impacts of this were seen by participants and facilitators alike. Across the focus groups, participants and facilitators named a variety of visible resource constraints and the impacts these had.

- *Childcare:* The childcare was not well utilized because it was last minute and its availability was not well advertised.
- *Food:* There was a lack of food at the conversations. People suggested offering healthier and more robust dinner options. It was also noted to pay attention to culturally specific foods, such as not offering pork and the timing of food being offered during Ramadan.
- *Advertisement:* Feedback on the location of advertisement was shared. Many suggested that there could have been more outreach to local community leaders within the African American community and publication through social media.
- *Unclear Commitment from the City:* Participants shared that it was unclear what the city had committed to at the outset of the community conversations. There was not a clear timeline for when and or how the city council would take up the policy recommendations.
- *Plan for Action Oriented Follow-Up:* There were concerns about steps community members can take after the final community conversation. They wanted more information on follow-up within action groups. It would have been helpful to have commitment at

the outset from the city and others involved in the design process on a plan for communicating next steps and potential resources to support the work and places to hold meetings within City Hall.

- *Facilitator Roles:* Facilitators did not always feel clarity in their roles and where they could have flexibility in the questions or structure of the conversation. Facilitators were able to use the ambiguity to be creative and resourceful in a positive and productive way. At times when there were extra facilitators for the evening, they felt a bit underappreciated. While they understand the nature of a volunteer process, they encourage a different choice of wording when letting people know they are not needed. They felt that being told they “have their night free now” was dismissive of their commitment and preparation. They suggest language that thanks them for their commitment and acknowledges that they may be disappointed.

Putting in more resources — both financial and personnel — would provide a better experience on a number of the resource based constraints raised above. While there are a number of changes that could be made in future engagement processes by utilizing more resources, respondents expressed that this process was positive and worth their time.

Lack of Diversity

Participants explored multiple concerns with turnout and diversity of perspectives.

Survey Results

The survey respondents shared concern about turnout and the diversity of participants who attended. A third felt somewhat or very dissatisfied with the diversity of attendees. Nearly 60 percent felt somewhat or very satisfied with the participation. This is the section regarding the satisfaction with the process that had the highest level of dissatisfaction.

Focus Group Comments

Across all of the focus groups, people had mixed feelings about the turnout at the conversations. Diversity of participants was used to refer to a variety of types of diversity including: where people came from, Falcon Heights resident versus outside of Falcon Heights, ideological diversity, and racial diversity. The feelings ranged about whether there was enough participation and engagement from residents of Falcon Heights. Some felt there was a lot of engagement for a sustained period of time while others felt that there was not a high enough proportion of residents in attendance. We noticed convergence around feelings of a lack of ideological diversity in participants. They noted that many of those in the circle had similar thoughts and there could have been more people with divergent ideas in attendance. There was a convergence of opinions around a lack of racial diversity among participants and facilitators. They noticed that the majority of participants were white and that most circles had just one or two people of color. Some participants noted that they felt that it was on them as person of color to explain to the white participants the experience of being a person of color and that felt burdensome. People expressed that they did not always feel heard or that their diverse perspective was listened to.

Additionally, there were discussions about police participation in the conversations. There was a divergence on whether police should have been included in the community conversations in a formal manner to provide a diversity of perspective or whether that would have caused some participants to feel unsafe, not attend, or not have the ability to share freely. Safety can mean different things to different people, but some participants expressed that police presence, whether in uniform or not in uniform could cause participants of color to feel unsafe; while others expressed the need to formally include police into the conversation and that it would be important for them to attend in uniform in official capacity. It was noted that to include police in a formal manner, a more professional level of facilitation would have been needed to ensure all felt safe. The take-away for planning future comparable kinds of processes is that extensive planning, outreach, reflection, and design is needed to ensure diverse participation and productive dialogue among diverse participants.

Circle Format and General Process

Participants articulated feedback on the benefits and limitations of the circle format and its implementation in this setting.

Survey Results

Figure 2. depicts the survey responses on satisfaction with the process (see appendix A for individual graphs of each question on process). It indicates a high level of satisfaction with the quality of dialogue, facilitators, and the circle process. Overwhelmingly, survey respondents felt satisfied with the circle format used in the conversations. Eighty-four percent of respondents were somewhat or very satisfied with the circle format. Eleven percent felt neutral and five percent felt somewhat dissatisfied. No one indicated being completely dissatisfied. The most dissatisfaction arose regarding the diversity of participants. The concerns with turnout are discussed above in the Lacking Diversity: Exploration into Multiple Concerns with Turnout and Diversity of Perspectives section of this report.

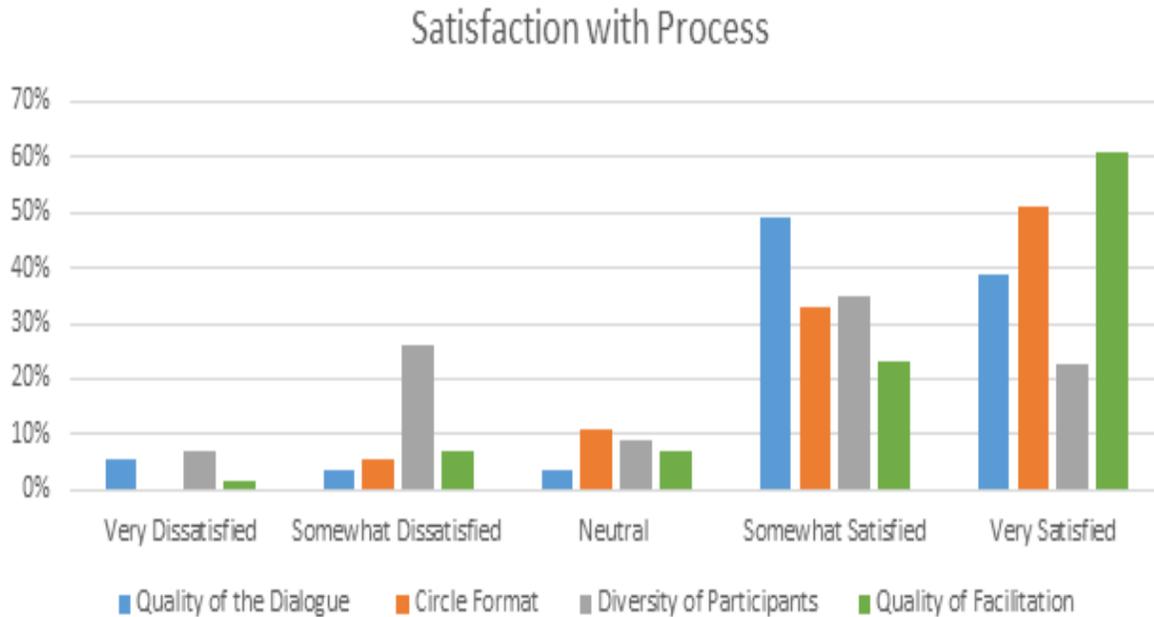


Figure 2: Survey responses based on number of responses to the satisfaction with the process.

Focus Group Comments

Circle Format

The topic of the process and circle format came up in each focus group. There was a consistent theme that people liked the circle format. However, we saw divergence in the reasons for liking the circle format. Some of the differing reasons for connecting with the circle process were:

- Allows people to have a voice.
- Talking piece can empower people to share and allow time to speak.
- Appreciate that the talking piece allowed the speaker to talk without interruption and did not allow for cross talk.
- Each person has to look at one another.
- A circle with no barriers allows for vulnerability and for participants to become closer.
- Provides a safe space for people to share and be heard. Safety does not mean people may not feel shame or be uncomfortable in the process.
- It is a focused process where people have to be engaged and respectful.

While all focus groups in general appreciated many aspects of the circle format, there are two notable ways in which there was not full agreement on this:

- Some participants had strong negative reactions to some aspects of the circle format. In the first focus group of community conversation participants, many described the circle format as overly constraining, too polite, and a structure that did not allow people to really get to know one another, transform their own and each other's thinking through genuine dialogue with one another. Participants did not feel that the structure allowed for getting to action. They would have liked to be allowed to have cross dialogue, to

question one other, and dig deeper. In fact, this focus group was challenging to keep on track in part because the participants were so activated to engage in cross-talk and dialogue, and seemed to be using the focus group format to express their resentment of what they experienced as an overly confining format in the community conversations. The convergent and divergent comments on the circle process should indicate future community dialogue process should allow time for cross dialogue and response and developing actions and next steps.

- Some of the facilitators found the circle worked poorly because there was not enough clarity about whether the role of the facilitators was to hold or host a circle and/or to take a more traditional facilitation role to guide dialogue. This is discussed in more depth below in the Facilitation vs. Circle Process: Implications for the Facilitator Role section.

Space and Audibility

Space and audibility issues were named as concern. Many participants and facilitators mentioned that it was hard to hear one another in the circle when they were sitting close to another group. The gym location for the first community conversation was noted as particularly loud.

Flow of Time

Regardless of feelings toward the circle format, participants raised concerns about the process feeling rushed and constrained. At times there were too many questions to move through. This did not allow participants to fully share, and some mentioned they quickly passed or chose not to share so that others in the circle could have more time. Both participants and facilitators shared that filling out the notecards prior to the report out often happened quickly and in a rushed fashion. Feedback was consistent regarding the desire for more time for each question. Alternatively, participants and facilitators suggested that fewer questions and tasks be included to allow more conversation to take place within the small groups. Not all focus groups brought up the topic of how the organizers launched each community conversation, but the second participant focus group felt strongly that too much time was taken in the beginning of each evening by people at the front of the room — be it the Task Force co-chairs, mayor, facilitation team, or hosts from the meeting site — giving a welcome, explaining the process, or making their own statements. They especially noted the fifth conversation as an example of too much time being taken at the beginning of the evening by the front of the room. They would have preferred to have more time in their circles to alleviate the rushed nature.

Facilitation Role

Facilitators reflected on the distinctions between a circle process and other types of facilitation, and the ambiguity and tension they felt in this setting.

Survey Results

The survey respondents felt very satisfied with the quality of the facilitation. Eighty-four percent of respondents felt somewhat or very satisfied with the quality of facilitation and 9 percent

felt somewhat or very dissatisfied. These responses can be seen above in Figure 2. The tensions that facilitators felt does not appear to have affected participants' experiences.

Focus Group Comments

The facilitators named the tensions they felt between the roles they were asked to play as a circle keepers sharing a piece of their own stories versus a more traditional neutral facilitation role. They mentioned tensions they observed at the initial facilitator training about the role of a circle keeper vs. the more neutral facilitation role and felt this did not resolve into clear direction for the role they should play in the community conversations. Facilitators individually sorted out this dual role tension, and shared the variety of ways they dealt with it. A few facilitators were keenly aware of what they observed to be an overabundance of white female facilitators. They were thinking a lot about racial and gender aspects of their identity, as white, female facilitators, when facilitating conversations. Several mentioned their resentment, rolling forward into these community conversations from previous experiences, of people of color all too often being "facilitated" by white facilitators, which fed into their negative reactions against facilitators who took a more traditional, intervening stance rather than keeping circle during these conversations. Some explained that they fully embraced either end of the spectrum, from circle keeper to traditional facilitator, and shared a personal story during the circle, while others stated that they chose to pass the stone without sharing during the circle. Those who shared within the circle felt that it showed humility and vulnerability. Additionally, if facilitators felt that the conversation was moving away from the questions or personal sharing or that the lead facilitator was not keeping the circle, they could model an answer to a question and reorient the conversation. While there was this tension between roles, facilitators were able to make personal decisions to use the tools that the community conversation organizing team provided in the preparatory training session, held on February 7, 2017 at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, and the briefings that took place right before each the conversation. In future processes, clearer identification of roles could eliminate this tension and confusion. The facilitators felt that the format required them to do a lot at one time, which obliged them to switch modes from holding the circle to filling out cards and notetaking. At times there was a lot that needed to get done in the circle, and not always enough time to accomplish those goals. They had to rush through questions to give enough time to each of them and transition into completing the notecard activities. In the future, facilitators would like more time to complete the tasks or guidance on what could be cut or shifted.

Other Observations

Attachment to Place

In analyzing the focus group data, we noticed a strong attachment to place among residents of Falcon Heights. In identifying their purpose for attending community conversations, participants highlighted that they felt connected to the community and to being involved. There was a sense that the length of time living in the community was an important factor motivating participation. This theme is something I make note of to pay attention to in future community

based conversations. Community residents carry this sense of commitment to the place they live and express a high level of expectation and commitment from those organizing conversations.

Changes in Emotions

In analyzing the survey data, we noticed that participants' emotions changed in noteworthy ways, when comparing how respondents felt before and after the community conversations. Generally, the shift was to the positive. The chart in Figure 3 outlines the percentage of participants who became more, less, or still felt particular emotions. Thirty-four percent of individuals became more optimistic while 21 percent became less cynical. Smaller percentage of participants became less optimistic or more cynical. Nineteen percent became more trusting and 17 percent were less distrusting. The graph lists the changes seen across all of the emotions measured. Feeling energized and fatigued were both named as more prominent feelings after the community conversations. Fewer people named feeling angry or sad afterwards. These results indicate the community conversations potentially had an impact on the prominent emotions of participants. These preliminary results indicate this process changed emotions in a positive way.

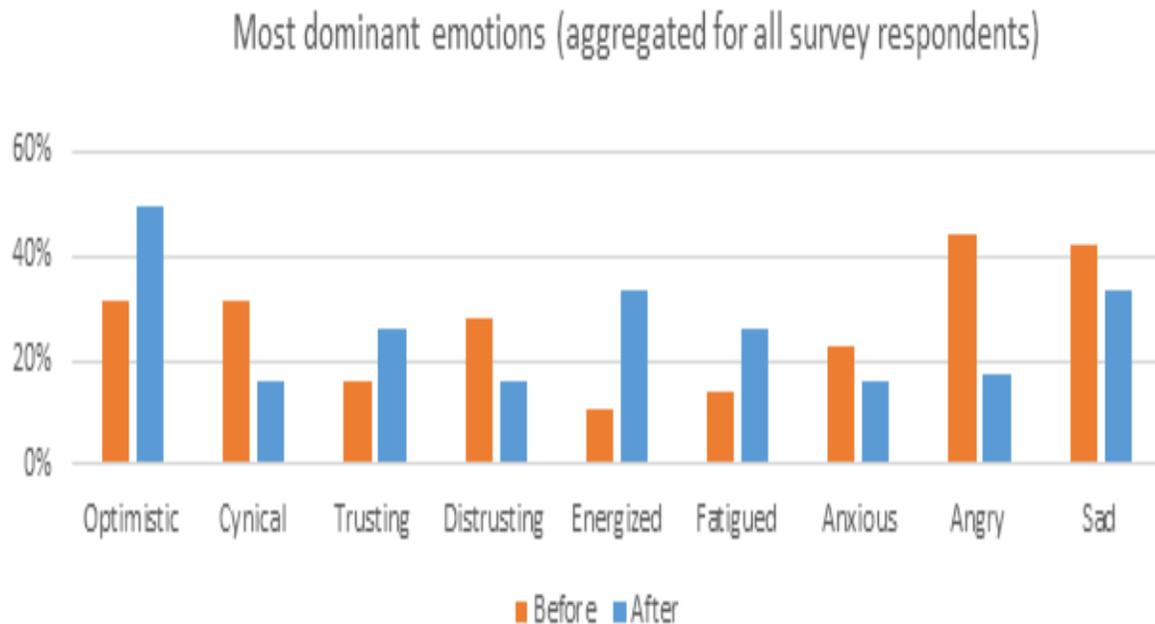


Figure 3: Most dominant emotions before and after the community conversations.

Change	<i>Optimistic</i>	<i>Cynical</i>	<i>Trusting</i>	<i>Distrusting</i>
More dominant	34% (18)	8% (4)	19% (10)	8% (4)
Less dominant	17% (9)	21% (11)	9% (5)	17% (9)
Still dominant	17% (9)	9% (5)	8% (4)	11% (6)
Never dominant	32% (17)	62% (33)	64% (34)	64% (34)

More – Chose as dominant feeling after, but not before

Still – Chose as dominant feeling both before and after

Less – Chose as dominant feeling before, but not after

Never Dominant – Never chose the feeling

Recommendations

Recommendation – Process

With a few key caveats, participants liked the circle method. People became tired with the repetition and wanted to move towards action and felt hindered in that goal. However, there was a clear message that there was **too much material to cover at each conversation**. Both participants and facilitators often felt too rushed while trying to get through all of the questions in each conversation. This did not allow participants to fully share, and some mentioned they quickly passed or chose not to share so that others in the circle could have more time. It is recommended that future processes allow more time to cover the materials either through extending the time period or reducing the agenda, and a design that includes a variety of circle format and cross dialogue.

Another key finding is that, **participants would have liked to have had more time to directly discuss the draft recommendations and provide direct feedback to the Task Force and City Council members**. This lack of direct interaction left many participants feeling frustrated and uncertain about the next steps, and whether the recommendations and input will be implemented. Future processes **should include more time on the development of recommendations and allow for more interaction** between participants, Task Force, and City Council members.

Recommendation – Facilitator Preparation

In future processes, **clarify the role you are asking the facilitators to play and work out any potential disagreement prior to training**. This will provide more clarity and less tension. In addition, providing guidance or suggestions for managing time and how to switch between a circle based conversation to more task oriented activities would be useful.

Recommendation – General Resources

Provide adequate resources for future processes to ensure well-advertised and sustained child care, substantial and culturally appropriate food, improved advertisement and outreach to ensure participation of racially and ideologically diverse participants, and more complete facilitator training and preparation.

**Appendix A. Full Survey Questions and Responses
(Total Survey Responses Received: 57)**

Question 1. Which session (s) did you participate in?

Session 1: February 16, 2017: Conversations focused on personal and community values.	29
Session 2: March 2, 2017: Participants helped develop options for how the City can live out the Community's values in its activities, policies, and policing policies and practices.	31
Session 3 April 3, 2017: Participants reviewed and provided feedback on draft policing recommendations.	31
Session 4: May 1, 2017: Participants shared their thoughts on what is needed for transformational change to begin and each made a personal commitment.	26
Session 5: June 19, 2017: Focused commemoration of the work accomplished and move towards next steps for the community.	34

Total Conversations Attended by Respondents

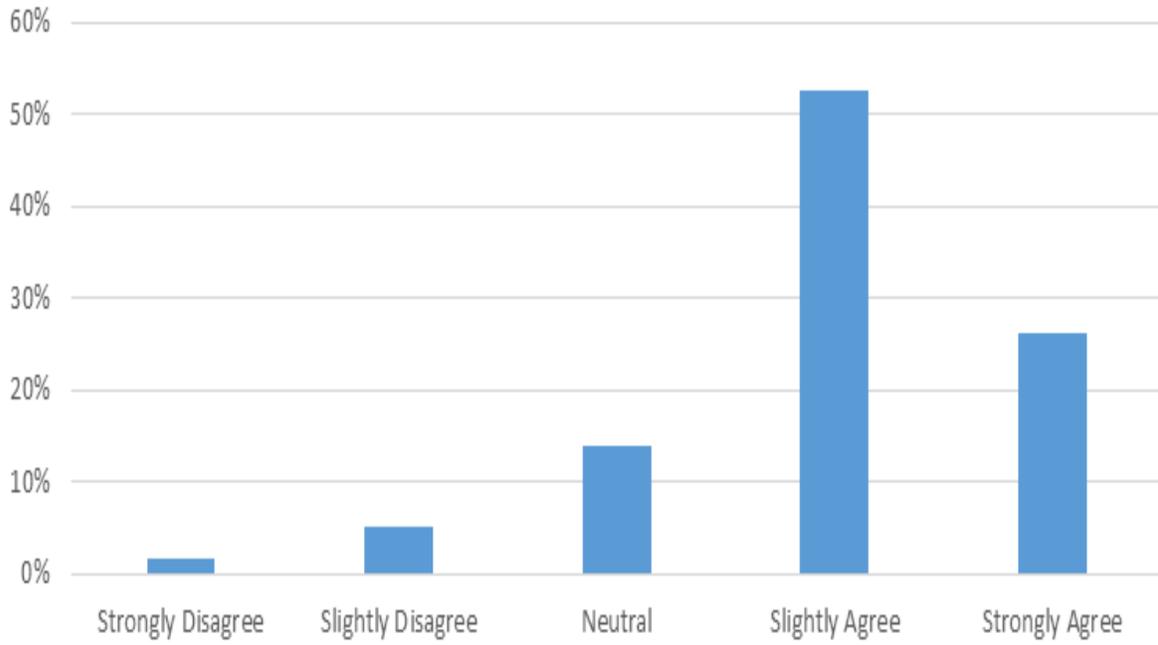
1	39% (22)
2	12% (7)
3	16% (9)
4	12% (7)
All 5	21% (12)

Question 2: Before Participating in the Community Conversations what were the top three things you wanted to accomplish?

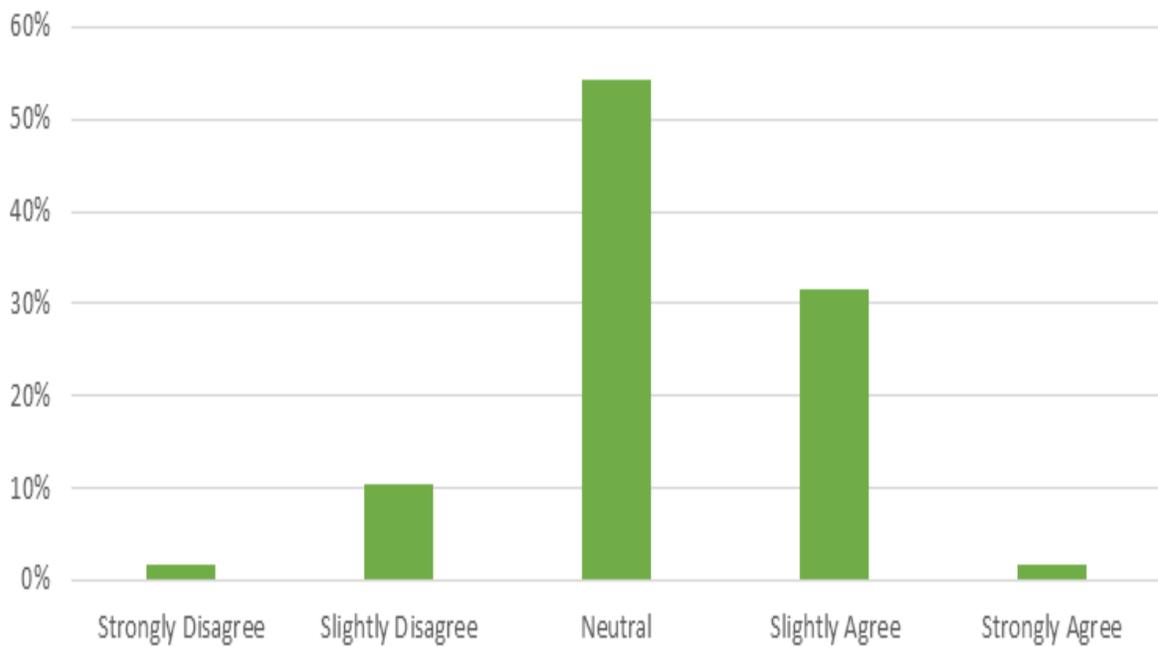
Change the way the city handles policing structure and practices.	50% (28)
Educate myself and learn from others' perspectives.	43% (24)
Work on dismantling racism in my community.	38% (21)
Have courageous conversations about inclusion and exclusion.	32% (18)
Make Falcon Heights a more inclusive community.	25% (14)
Share my experiences and perspective with others.	23% (13)
Get the City Council to end the contract with St. Anthony Policy Department.	23% (13)
Become more active and involved.	16% (9)
Challenge myself to understand the role I play in injustice within my community.	14% (8)
Ensure my experiences and perspectives are represented.	13% (7)
Make new connections with people in my community.	5% (3)

Question 3: Rate your feelings on the statements below:

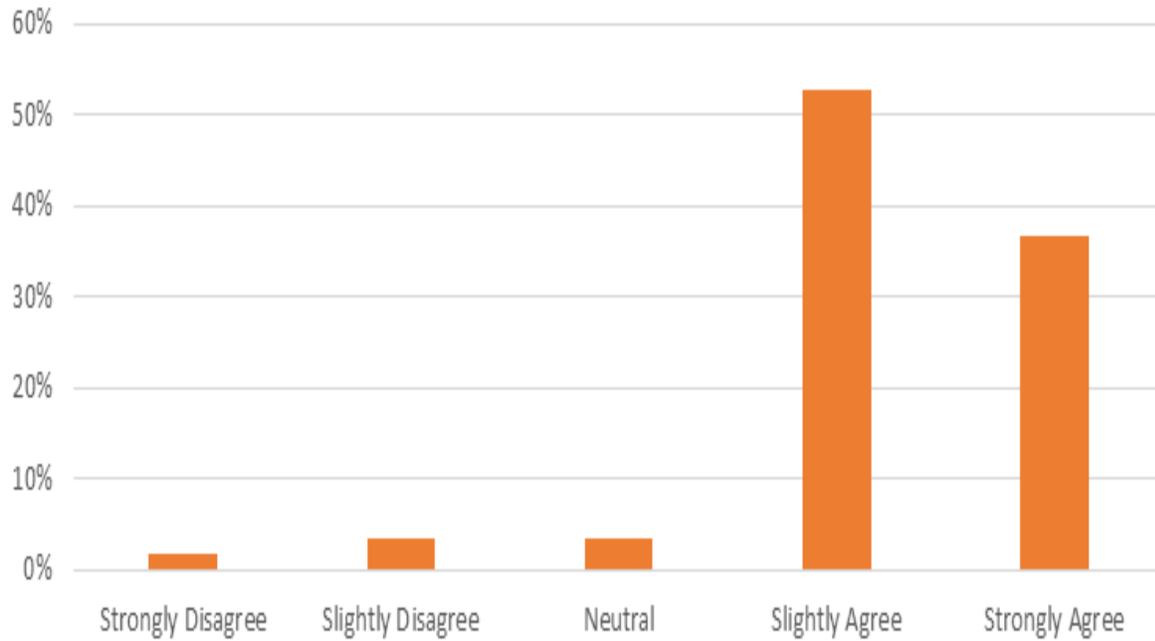
- I believe this process had an impact on the community of Falcon Heights.



- I believe I changed other participants' perspectives.

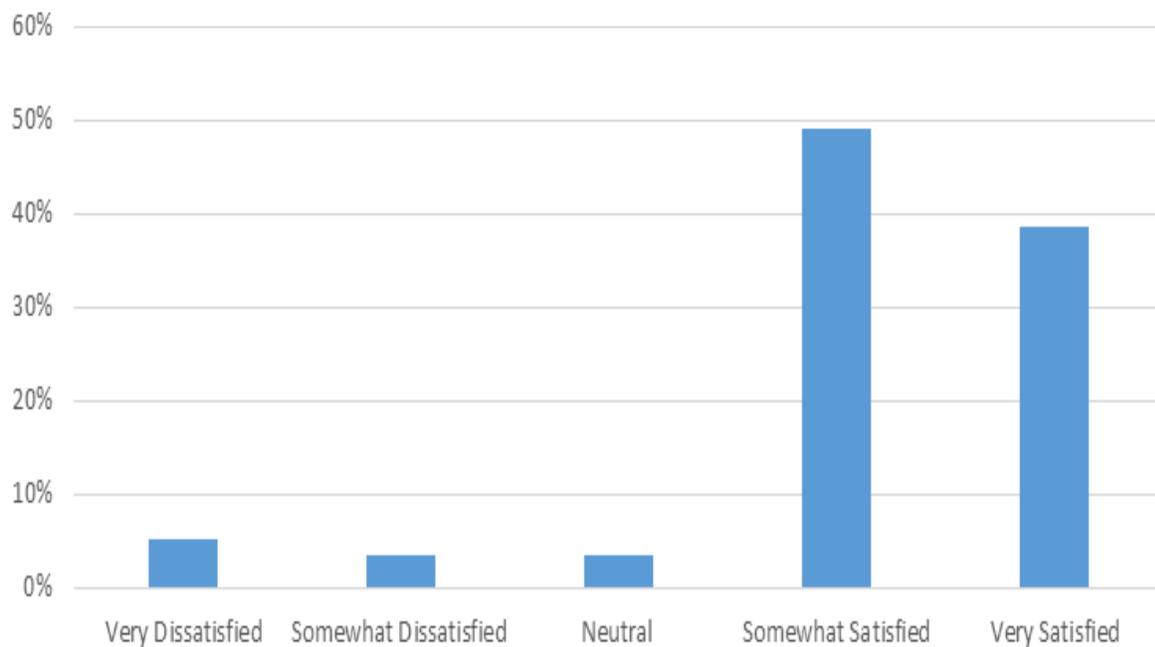


- I learned something new from participating.

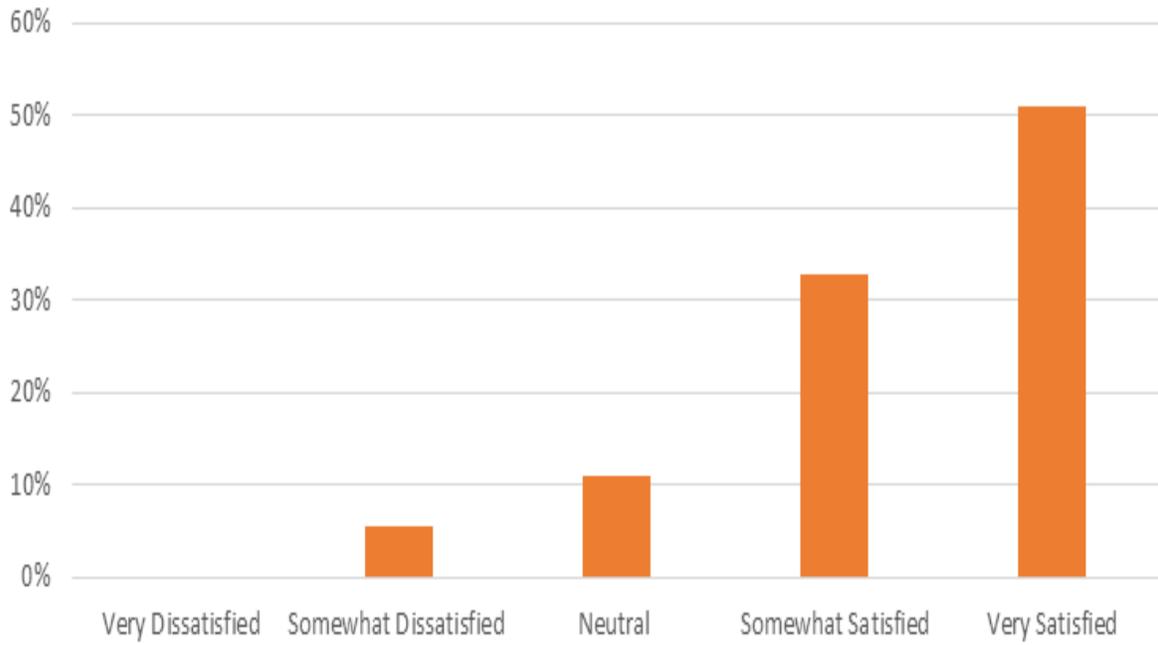


Question 4: Rate your level of satisfaction on the process and format of the Community Conversations:

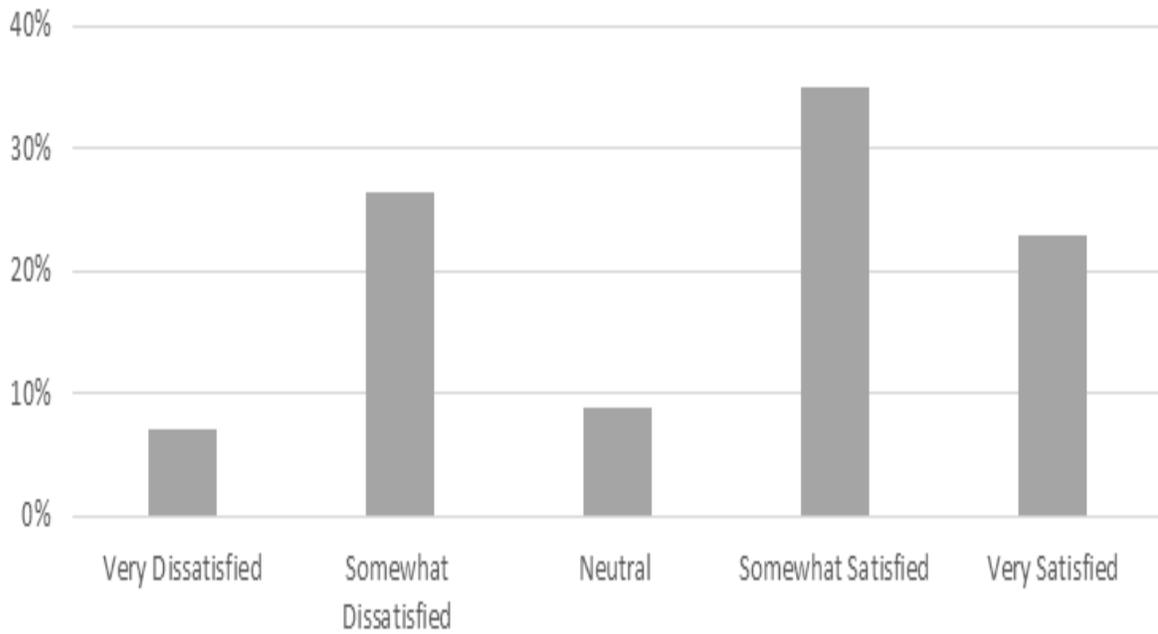
- Quality of the Dialogue



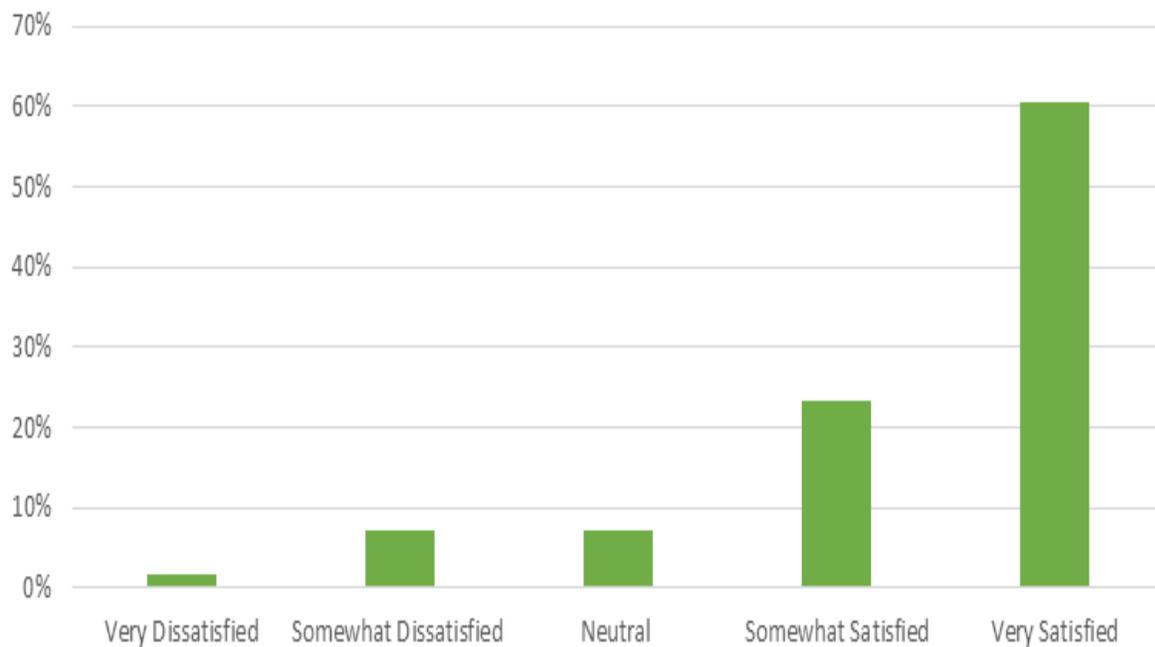
- Circle Format



- Diversity of Participants



- Quality of Facilitation



Question 5: Rate your feeling on the statement below:

- I feel that participating in the Community Conversation(s) was a valuable way to spend my time.

Strongly Agree	64% (36)
Slightly Agree	27% (15)
Neutral	0%
Slightly Disagree	2% (1)
Strongly Disagree	7% (4)

Question 6: Please share why this was or was not a valuable way to spend your time.

The five major types of explanations given by those who agree are:

- The conversations brought people together to share and heal.
- It was good to listen to others and hear perspectives that were different from my own. There was a sense that there was a diversity of opinions shared.
- It is important to show up and be engaged and the conversations were a way to do that.
- It was a good way to start to seek change and make connections within the community.
- The conversations were a way to start to inform the policing recommendations. This thread acknowledged that some are not sure their voices and opinions mattered to the elected officials.

Only five comments were made by those who felt it was not a valuable way to spend their time. Direct quotes are below.

- "Invited to attend the final event as a resource person the turnout ended up being so huge, and the groups so large, that no individual was able to meaningfully contribute to the conversation, let alone determine which resources they would need going forward."
- "Attendance was low, needed to stop and evaluate how to get more diversity in age and race among attendees."

- “The city council has no interest in actually implementing any real reforms. Nothing happened because of the events.”
- “Participants were more interested in talking about parties and inclusion activities rather than discussing the blatant racism of our police department which is obvious to anyone who notices that it is almost always people of color who are stopped.”
- “I did not feel understood at all except by the facilitator.”

Question 7: People often change their minds through community dialogues. For example, they gain new perspectives that lead them to change their understanding of a problem. They might learn about options they had not thought about. They might become more optimistic or more pessimistic about an issue. We are guessing you may have changed your mind in some way. Please tell us how.

Themes from those who shared how their mind changed:

- Gained a new awareness of issues facing people of color including racism from white people and pervasive targeting by the police.
- Gained a new perspective and understanding of the difficulty of being a police officer and city councilmember.
- Felt more pessimistic and discouraged. Some of these feelings were directed at the police and/or expressed in terms of a lack of action by city councilmembers.
- Felt more connected to their neighbors and heartened by the participation of others in the community.
- See the possibility for change. (A few people mentioned this, and also that they are in strong support of the Task Force recommendations.)

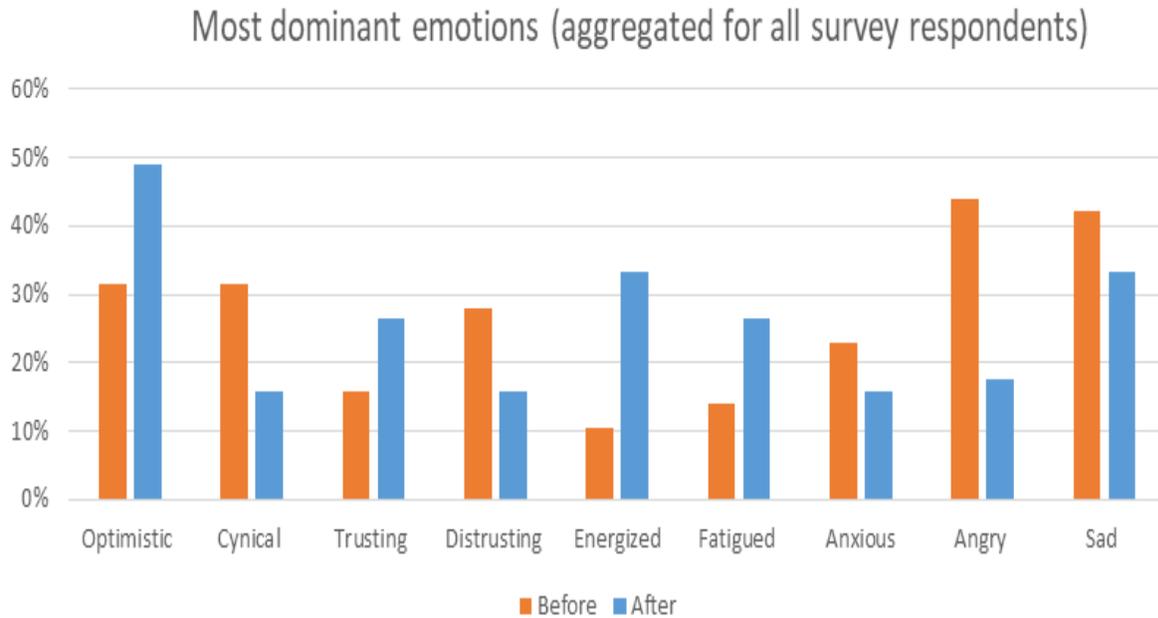
Question 8: What are your next steps?

Themes based on those who shared their next steps.

Themes are similar to those that arose in community conversation #4: Transformational Change and Personal Commitments.

- Personal actions and continued conversations: People list that they plan to continue to have personal conversations and commit to specific actions.
- Ensure recommendations are implemented.
- Continue to make connections and stay involved.
- Educate themselves and to share the work the community is doing with others.
- Some respondents expressed that they are unsure about what their next steps will be and that they are disappointed and discouraged.

Question 9: Below, please select up to three of your dominant feelings before and after the Community Conversation(s).



Changes in dominant feelings (shifts within individual survey respondents)

Change	<i>Optimistic</i>	<i>Cynical</i>	<i>Trusting</i>	<i>Distrusting</i>
More dominant	34% (18)	8% (4)	19% (10)	8% (4)
Less dominant	17% (9)	21% (11)	9% (5)	17% (9)
Still dominant	17% (9)	9% (5)	8% (4)	11% (6)
Never dominant	32% (17)	62% (33)	64% (34)	64% (34)

More – Chose as dominant feeling after, but not before

Less – Chose as dominant feeling before, but not after

Still – Chose as dominant feeling both before and after

Never Dominant – never chose as dominant feeling

Question 10: Now, what the top three things you want to accomplish.

Change the way the city handles policing structure and practices.	51% (28)
Educate myself and learn from others' perspectives.	40% (22)
Work on dismantling racism in my community.	33% (18)
Make Falcon Heights a more inclusive community.	31% (17)
Have courageous conversations about inclusion and exclusion.	29% (16)
Challenge myself to understand the role I play in injustice within my community.	25% (14)
Make new connections with people in my community.	22% (12)
Become more active and involved.	20% (11)
Share my experiences and perspective with others.	20% (11)
Get the City Council to end the contract with St. Anthony Police Department.	18% (10)
Other	11% (6)
Ensure my experiences and perspectives are represented.	9% (5)

Demographics*What is your gender?*

Male	49%
Female	51%
Other	0%

What is your ethnicity?

White/Caucasian	81%
Black or African American	9%
Hispanic or Latino	0%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2%
Other	9%

What is your age?

Under 18	0%
18-24	2%
25-34	2%
35-44	16%
45-54	12%
55-64	20%
Over 65	49%

Appendix B. Focus Group Questions

Focus Groups comprised of Community Conversation Facilitators

- 1) Why did you participate in the community conversation(s)? What was the key interest or concern that initially brought you to participate?
- 2) Please share the moment during the community conversations that most impacted you. What happened, and how did it impact you?
- 3) When things were working really well, what was going on? What specifically was happening, what was positive about it, and do you have an explanation for what / how it was working?
- 4) Conversely, when things were not working well, what was happening?
- 5) Did you notice any variation in how accessible... or meaningful... or burdensome this process was to people?
- 6) What suggestions do you have about improving accessibility for everyone?
- 7) If you were to rethink this process, what is one suggestion you would make?
- 8) How can you imagine using a process like this in another setting? I'll give you a few minutes to think, silently, about this, and then I'll ask you to share. Please imagine a particular place or topic where you would like to try some part of this. What is the setting? What would you carry forward from this process? What would you change?
- 9) Did you have the support and preparation you needed? Are there any additional things you wished you would have had or known?
- 10) Please share your 1 or 2 key "take aways."

Focus Groups comprised of Community Conversation Participants

- 1) Why did you participate in the community conversation(s)? What was the key interest or concern that initially brought you to participate?
- 2) Please share the moment during the community conversations that most impacted you. What happened, and how did it impact you?
- 3) Do you feel the community conversations were a valuable way to spend your time? Why or why not?
- 4) Did anything change for you, as you went through this process? What do you attribute that to?
- 5) Do you feel that the community conversations made a difference for the community as a whole? Why or why not? What kind of change did you observe? Or, if you did not see a change, what kind of change do you feel was missing?
- 6) Would you say that you started and ended with more (or less!) confidence or hope about your community? If we you were to participate in this again, what is 1) one thing that you would keep the same; and 2) one thing that you would do differently?
- 7) Please share your 1 or 2 key "take aways."