



Q&A from July 29, 2020 City of Northglenn Telephone Town Hall

Below are **questions/comments from residents** during the call, with *answers and resources*. Please note: some questions were edited for spelling and grammar

Main Topic: Northglenn Police Department 360 Assessment

Meeting hosts: Mayor Meredith Leighty, City Manager Heather Geyer, Chief Jim May, Commander Heidi Walts and Mitch Weinzetl, Sr. Consultant for Berry Dunn

Why are there no persons of color, only one woman, and no representation of the LGBT community on the committee for the 360 and how is that addressing systematic racism within the Northglenn police department?

The City put out a request for proposal and within that document is a formal purchasing document. It was an invitation for companies across the nation to bid on the project. The City received seven or eight proposals which varied in company size and experience as well as the individuals serving as the project management team. Through a competitive purchasing process, staff narrowed the list of top firms based on experience and qualifications. Staff then interviewed the top firms and made a selection for overall recommendation to city council. Staff recommended BerryDunn because of their experience in law enforcement in terms of the project team. On the surface the team may not look diverse. But the team has significant experience, specifically in gender bias. Additionally, BerryDunn offered experience in data management, which several firms did not. BerryDunn is an accounting firm with a proven track record.

Regarding the Internal project team, Commander Walts served as the lead project manager. The City Manager, along with Chief May and command staff, have also been involved every step of the way. As part of the project there was broad, diverse participation through interviews with every unit of the police department, council member interviews, community forums and online community input opportunities.

The city has had conversations over the past couple of months and has several efforts underway to address diversity, equity and inclusion. Efforts include: the diversity, inclusivity, and social equity board and internal training for staff and city council. The heavy lift is the development of a social equity tool. We have partnered with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), as of last fall, to further our learning on what systemic racism is and what our role is in addressing it. Additionally, the City Manager is making sure that the appropriate diversity training is provided to all staff and city council. Our goal is to identify the work that needs to happen to advance racial equity in the City of Northglenn. We feel we are a diverse and welcoming community, yet there is always room to improve.

I've become aware of the STAR's program through Denver Metro Health (re-routing non-violent dispatch calls & sending a social worker & ambulance instead of an officer). Is there any possibility of working w/ Tri-County Health on a similar program here?

This is something that could be explored further through the committee co-production policing. Please join the council discussion on August 12 as we move forward to establish this committee.

What can we do to help community members understand how the state and governmental laws impact decisions based on what choices the Northglenn Police make in relation to arrests/etc.?

We try to give community members many opportunities to learn about our Police Department. Namely the Citizen's Police Academy, which is a twelve week course to help the general public understand police operations. Additionally, the city website is an excellent source of information which includes:

- *A Q&A page to archive questions and answers*
- *The Police Staffing & Operations assessment final report*
- *Crime Mapping*
- *The City of Northglenn Municipal codes*
- *The City of Northglenn Budget*
- *City Council meetings and Telephone Town Hall meetings and associated recordings and documents*

Why is the police tax funding being wasted on mental health stuff?

The portion of police funding that can be translated into dollars towards mental health is related to training. This training includes recognizing behaviors that may be indicative of persons with special needs requiring peace officer intervention. It is critical that officers have an understanding of mental health issues for our response in the community.

What kind of testing is done before a cop is hired - Psychological testing? What are the Educational requirements? Are background checks done? What is the diversity breakdown on police officers in Northglenn?

The minimum education required to be hired as a police officer in Northglenn is a high school diploma or equivalent. However, most of our hires have at least a two-year degree and many have a four-year degree. Initially, applicants complete a written test and a physical fitness test. Once they advance through the oral board they proceed to an integrity interview, a pre-psychological test, a polygraph test and an interview with the Chief. If recommended for hire they receive a conditional job offer pending a final post-psychological and a medical exam. The Northglenn Police Department does complete in-depth background checks on police applicants. That includes visiting prior employers and looking for areas of concern.

The breakdown on race and gender of Northglenn officers is as follows: 84.4% Caucasian, 9.1% Hispanic/Latino, 2.6% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3.9% African American. Male 60 and Female 13.

How many hours of training do cops and animal control officers get before they are hired?

New officers receive approximately 1350 hours of training. Their on-going training required by the Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) is a minimum 24 hours per year. Northglenn officers exceed that minimum and receive closer to 100 hours through in-service training and online trainings.

New Animal Control Officers receive approximately 560 hours of training through an in-house training program and a field training program. Animal Control Officers have continuing education requirements, approximately 20 hours annually, and must recertify through the Colorado Association of Animal Control Officers each year. Additionally, Animal Control Officers obtain other job related certifications through the Department of Agriculture and the Colorado Department of Health.

If the thugs from Denver start coming into Northglenn, can the police department stand up to them?

The Police Department will continue to address law enforcement related issues as they arise in Northglenn for the safety of our residents. In regards to protesting/demonstrations/marches the police department will provide public safety support to individuals and groups allowing them to safely express their first amendment rights in a peaceful manner.

Regarding the mandatory policy around equity and diversity, is the recent incident going to be classified as a hate crime?

While the facts and evidence of the incident in question show the suspect stole the flags and knowingly destroyed them, the facts do not show on the suspect's part that this was done with specific intent as a method of intimidation or harassment because of the victim's race, color, ancestry or national origin.

We understand that although the actions by the suspect may be hurtful and offensive to the victim(s), they do not meet the statutory requirements of a bias motivated crime and, therefore, cannot be charged as such.

How much of the city budget goes to the police?

Northglenn's general fund budget is approximately 27 million dollars for 2020. This is our operating budget and of that roughly eleven million dollars is dedicated to the police budget. A big portion of this expense is staffing of the police department. We have 73 sworn officers which includes command staff. It also includes supplies, equipment, and all the overhead to operate the police department.

From the City Managers perspective for the size of our community it is believed the budget is appropriate. You may access the city budget on our website at www.northglenn.org

Follow-up Question - Will there be police accountability audits and reports on things such as spending, training, ensuring systemic racism is not a problem?

The Police Department has a software program that tracks all use of force incidents and complaints which allows us to be transparent in monitoring and addressing any areas of concern. Additionally, the city is implementing various training around diversity and anti-oppression to help identify barriers or racial disparities and implement tools to address.

Follow-up Question – How do we get information to get involved on boards that have been discussed?

Information pertaining to the diversity, inclusivity, and social equity board is forthcoming in the August Connection and on the website. The application for this board will be available August 11. Additionally, a post card will be mailed to each household to inform and encourage participation. The police oversight board has not formally been created and is still under discussion – that council discussion is scheduled for August 12.

Regarding the traffic, racing and illegal mufflers, what are possible solutions to this issue?

With the implementation of the traffic team we have expanded our ability to focus on traffic enforcement efforts and work collaboratively with neighboring jurisdictions. As we've mentioned in our previous telephone town hall discussion the police department is writing tickets for altered suspensions, exhaust systems, illegal lighting etc. to help deter groups meeting in Northglenn with intentions to race.

What are they going to do with the money they get from the airport for the renewals?

Staff researched this question and there is no money the city is receiving from airport renewals that we are aware of.

What is the biggest opportunity for the police department based on the assessment?

(Comment - shocked the police department doesn't know what systematic racism is)

This assessment has provided the police department an opportunity to be transparent and work collaboratively with our community to ensure we are modeling best practices in our operations. Adequate staffing and training are areas that can help move our department forward.

One thing that has emerged with the recent events is the renewed push to increase community involvement and the issues of systemic racism and implicit bias. We are looking at models to increase community collaboration and root out and eliminate potential bias.

Does the city have any plans to shift some of the responsibilities from police officers to professionals in the area of homelessness or mental illness?

Through COVID-19 the City of Northglenn has received federal funding through Adams County CARES Act dollars. With this funding we've created a part-time Community Resource Navigator position. We are assessing the use of this position to help address the homelessness issue as well as other COVID-19 impacts on families and individuals in our community. We'll be collecting data to assess the need for this type of position in 2021 to determine if it becomes a full-time position.

They talked about 45 different recommendations, what are the different categories are these recommendations in (how were they categorized) and will this information be made public?

The assessment final report is available to the public for review and comment on the city website at www.northglenn.org/PoliceAssessmentFeedback.

There are thirteen chapters within the study that looked at different operations of the police department. The final report provides recommendations that corresponds to each of those chapters. The recommendations are grouped by criticality. Additionally, there are five themes that the recommendations fall into which are:

- 1. Policing strategies, organization, culture, and leadership*
- 2. Communication*
- 3. Staffing, recruiting, retention, and related workload issues*
- 4. Technology*
- 5. Investigations*

When are we going to be able to light off fireworks in the city of Northglenn?

Fireworks has been a long standing issue in our community. Fireworks are illegal in the state of Colorado but communities enforce it differently. The City and police department are trying to be creative and strategic in our

response and enforcement to fireworks. Last year city council approved a local ordinance implementing a minimum mandatory fine of \$1,000 for the first offense, and increasing fines for additional violations. At this time the City Manager has not received direction from city council to make any changes related to the fireworks local ordinance. We are hopeful to be able to have a professional fireworks display next year and get greater compliance.

What anti-bias training is done for Berry Dunn? What are the findings of the report on homelessness?

BerryDunn has an internal training division and is committed to the professional development of its staff. Like all reputable corporations, BerryDunn has been providing regular training to staff on harassment and on maintaining a safe workplace. The issue of bias training is relatively new to the firm and continues to evolve. Following the George Floyd tragedy, BerryDunn's CEO, John Chandler, provided several personal messages to the firm, clearly stating BerryDunn's commitment to equity and diversity. BerryDunn's CEO has also signed the Action for Diversity and Inclusion commitment, and has been working to incorporate bias and implicit bias training into current and future training for staff. As an example, BerryDunn held an online training seminar in June on LGBTQ issues, which was presented by Gia Drew, the program director for EqualityMaine. Other training directly related to bias is planned for upcoming training events.

As mentioned in prior correspondence, both Mitch Weinzetl and Fred Fletcher, the primary team members for the Northglenn project, have attended numerous courses in the areas of diversity, equity, impartial policing, and implicit bias. Both Mitch and Fred have also provided instruction to police staff in these areas.

BerryDunn heard from some that homelessness has increased within the community and it is an area of concern. We also understand that the NPD responds to complaints regarding homeless persons. Like many other studies, BerryDunn heard from the NPD that limited community resources and the fact that homelessness is not illegal, are challenges to responding to incidents involving this group of people. Other than making these observations, BerryDunn did not study the NPD's response to the issue of homelessness and we did not make a specific finding in this area.

What are the criteria for the homeless population that has seemed to increase a little bit?

The impact of COVID-19 has resulted in there being very limited opportunities opening up in low income housing which may be reflected in increasing homelessness. The City's newly hired Community Resource Navigator is in a position to gain a better understanding of the community needs as it relates to the impacts COVID-19 has placed on our community.

What does 8 can't wait mean? How do we get youth in the community interested into the police force?

8 Can't Wait is an initiative to try to reduce deaths by police during police and community encounters. It includes 8 policies that they suggest police agencies should submit. The report comments on each. Their website is here: <https://8cantwait.org/>

Are you considering restarting your Explorer Program?

The Police Department is not considering an Explorer Program at this time.

What do they see the first steps are around building out the model of co-policing?

The first step is to establish a committee co-production policing (CCPP) board to become the executive body that oversees the implementation of committee co-production policing. It can be started fairly quickly and grow incrementally as demands dictate.

Follow-up Question - Does that executive body exist within the police department?

The city council is the executive body that decides how they will proceed. The CCPP board is made up of representatives of the community as well as members of the police department who collaborate on the construction and production of policing within the community. A study session is scheduled August 12 to provide city council options to consider.

