



CITY OF EASTHAMPTON

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MAYOR'S PLEDGE TO REIMAGINE POLICING REPORT SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

EASTHAMPTON, MA – Today, Mayor Nicole LaChapelle submitted her Mayor's Pledge report reviewing the Easthampton Police Department's Use of Force policies to the City Council. The submission requested President Peg Conniff refer the report to the Public Safety Committee for public feedback on the report's recommendations.

On June 3, 2021, Mayor Nicole LaChapelle signed the [Mayor's Pledge](#) as created by My Brother's Keeper under the Obama Foundation. To fulfil the Pledge, the Mayor formed a Mayor's Pledge Work Group composed of Easthampton residents. The work group's charge was to report out recommendations that re-envisioned public safety and focused on practices that would lead to increased trust and accountability.

"I am grateful to each work group member for their dedication and diligence. They each brought their own experience to the table while recommending steps that address the broader community's thoughts around policing.", stated Mayor LaChapelle upon reading the final report.

The Mayor engaged Nicole Hendricks, Professor and Chair of the Criminal Justice Department at Holyoke Community College to facilitate a review of past police use of force, reporting methods and policy with the work group. Providing context for the work, Professor Hendricks remarked:

"To reimagine we let go of old ways of doing things and envision new systems, new responses, and new ways of relating to one another. Like the pandemic, systemic injustice in our criminal legal systems is a threat to public health and democracy. And while images of police violence did not originate in Easthampton, local responses to long-standing challenges in policing must be part of the solution. We hope this work serves as a foundation and starting point for deeper, more inclusive community dialogue in the service of collaborative decision-making about community safety."

City Councilor and Mayor's Pledge Work Group member, Homar Gomez noted "After a long process with the Mayor's Pledge Work Group and the community, we present this report to start

working and take the first steps to be more inclusive and for everyone to feel secure with the programs that the city should provide in our community."

The final report contains six recommendations: 1) Invest in community-led non-police responses to health & safety concerns; 2) Engage in robust data collection, analysis, and regular reporting; 3) Strengthen oversight; 4) Engage in intentional, regular, communication and collaboration with the community to understand and co-define safety needs and develop responses; 5) Examine police culture and training; 6) Educate & inform the Easthampton community about the revised use of force policy.

Reflecting on the process and recommendations, Police Chief Bob Alberti said, "The Easthampton Police Department welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with the Mayor's Pledge Work Group. EPD continues to be committed to our entire community. ...we are excited about further enhancing partnerships and continual bridge building here in Easthampton. We are all dedicated to promoting better policies, improving transparency, accountability and assessing these recommendations."

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