

Chief of Police

Follow-up Questions

Please explain how you embody being a reform-minded leader, able to rebuild trust and nurture legitimacy by actively seeking to modernize the policing model and embracing and advancing the principles of procedural justice.

Over my 22-years as an Oakland Police Officer, I have led and created several reform-minded initiatives and have been a thought leader within the department on our trust building effort. Starting with the creation of the Intelligence Led Policing Stop-Data Program, which was designed to provide officers clear guidance on how to be more focused when making the decision to conduct enforcement stops, with the goal of reducing racial disparities. Prior to Intel Led stops, OPD would seek to achieve crime reductions by stopping as many people as possible, most of which were African American. Intel Led, forces officers to provide more specific detail, explaining why the stop was necessary and helps the department achieve its goals of reducing crime. The Negotiated Settlement Agreement (NSA) was born out of complaints of racial bias and violations of community members civil rights. As a result of Intel Led, overall stops of African Americans have reduced over 50% since 2017, and racial disparities have reduced 16%.

I lead the design and implementation of the departments current Risk Management Program, which examines officer's performance to determine potential at-risk-behavior and potential racial bias. I worked closely with Stanford professors to create a Risk Management program that allows the department to thoroughly examine all data collected during vehicle stops, use of force, citizen complaints, and overall performance. The process used in these meeting led to the creation of the Slalom Data Dashboards created by City of Oakland Director of Technology Andrew (Pete) Peterson and now being recognized as the most progressive policing data analytics in the country. Peterson and I are currently working to create the first publicly accessible data dashboard in the country which would allow the public the to view OPD data in near real-time.

I also currently lead the departments nationally recognized Procedural Justice Training Program. I have led the OPD program for the past seven years and we have trained all OPD sworn and non-sworn personnel (1200 staff). I have also trained over 3000 officers from other departments across the country. I was selected as a Subject Matter Expert by the California POST Commission. In 2016, I was selected by US Senator and current Vice President Nominee Kamala Harris and former California Attorney General as the lead trainer for the State-wide Principle Policing training, which became a mandated training for all law enforcement officers in the State of California. Within OPD, I continue to make sure PJT is reinforced within the department by creating mandates that supervisors document officers' practice of PJT in their yearly appraisal and supervisors mandatory body worn camera audits to determine if officers are treating community members with dignity and respect.

Please explain your ability to work with and establish relationships with a wide range of diverse stakeholders and communities, as well strategic partners, officials, colleagues, and the media.

Since the beginning of my career I have made it a priority to never lose my connection with the community. As someone born, raised, and live in the city, I have always made it a priority to partner with community members and community-based organization within the City of Oakland, and other stakeholders, to come up with collaborative solutions to public safety problems. In 2011, I partnered with Oakland Community Organization (OCO) calling on community members and legislators to support the creation of an Oakland Ceasefire Program. As the only officer in OPD at the time who supported the implementation of an evidence based approach to reducing gun violence, it was my belief that law enforcement would not be able to address gun violence by solely arresting people, I supported the need for a program that provided support to those who wanted to make changes in their lives through excepting support services. Since 2012, Ceasefire have led to reductions in shootings and homicides for 5 years in a row.

I also partnered with CBO's and community members city-wide to start hosting Livingroom meetings at their facilities and homes. These meetings provide community members an opportunity to sit down with OPD officers and discuss the community concerns and build relationships. I also brought stakeholders together to create the OPD Youth Advisory Council, this group of young people have (10) representative from across the city who come together twice a month to receive training and work together creating recommendations OPD could implement to improve relationship with youth and improve policies and practices, we're currently starting our third year of the program this month. Some of the great ideas include, allowing a youth representative to sit on the OPD hiring panel, and establishing a yearly youth conference for all youth, both of which have been implemented.

I believe one of the most important traits of a good police officer is their compassion for the community. This idea led me to work with Interim Chief Susan Manheimer and our OPD Media Team to create the #OPDCARES initiative. During a global COVID-19 pandemic and huge increases in violent crime, we believed there was a need to collaborate with our community to address public safety. This meant requesting not only support to address the crime related issues but also recognizing the need for support for our community who did not have access to Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). I procured all available OPD surplus of face mask (7000) and sanitizer (400 bottles) and distributed them to the community through partnership with CBO's, elected officials, and community groups. We have also deployed community resource vehicle throughout East Oakland, to provide a presence and distribute PPE if needed.

My most recent initiative is a partnership with Youth Alive and Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) to support the cities Violence Interrupters Program (VI). OPD continues to face a lack of trust within the community and when critical incidents occur requiring police intervention officers can be faced with hostile crowds and high emotions. I have solicited a partnership with DVP for violence interrupters to respond to these critical

scenes and provide support and assist with communication with family and friends at homicide scenes, when OPD incurs a hostile crowds, or when emotions are high in the community and OPD is unable to communicate with community members. I provided special vest and identifications to the VI's, and there's been several instances recently when the VI's have been requested to a scene and they've been able help to reduce tensions.

Please explain your demonstrated passion for and leadership resulting in significant crime reduction.

In March of 2017, I was promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief of Police and assigned to the Bureau of Field Operation – East (East Oakland). At the time I was assigned to the area violent crime was up 45% and there were three newly promoted captains assigned under my command. I was also advised by the chief of police that the community felt like the prior command was unresponsive to the community's concerns. I immediately provided clear goals and expectations and required captains to create monthly crime reduction strategies and community follow-up tracking sheets. I also implemented a weekly crime meeting where commanders provide their strategies to address emerging crime trends. Since the changes were put in place and there has been a continued focused approach, we have seen reductions in shootings and homicides 2017-2019.

Based on my belief that the departments crime reduction strategies needed to be evidence-based and seek to reduce the harmful impact law enforcement can have on minorities. I worked tirelessly with the community to bring the Ceasefire strategy to the City of Oakland in 2011. The community selected me as the OPD representative and Co-Chair of the Ceasefire Steering committee and I've been leading the law enforcement side of Ceasefire and the sole speaker from the department at all Call-In's and direct communication with the young men most at risk. The Ceasefire strategy has led to historic reductions in shootings and homicides since 2012, with a laser focus of those involved in violence. The most important of the strategy is the lives that have been saved and reduction in the overall recidivism rates. We also helped several young men that were traditionally at-risk transition into employment and starting a positive lifestyle.

Leading innovative approaches to reducing crime, while still minimizing harm to our community has been synonymous with my leadership style. Partnering with community and seeking input from those who are truly impacted by the actions of law enforcement, helps bring legitimacy to the department. I have proven over my long career I have the ability lead my staff and based on the reductions in violent crime in East Oakland over a three-year period, I believe I understand the challenges facing the City of Oakland, and I'm prepared to lead to the Oakland Police Department into the future.

In conclusion, should I be fortunate enough to be selected as the next Police Chief for the City of Oakland, I'm prepared to immediately begin the work of achieving full compliance with the Negotiated Settlement Agreement (NSA), to make the cultural change needed to increase trust within our community through fair and unbiased treatment of all people, in a manner that reflects the values of our Oakland community, which is all people shall be treated with dignity and respect despite their race, sexual orientation, or gender.

LeRonne Armstrong