

Title of Recommendation	Accelerating a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)		
Author(s): (Subcommittee or committee members)	Andrew Kalloch, Settlement Agreement and Policy Subcommittee	Date presented	June 23, 2020
Summary of Recommendation: Accelerate the plan to launch a Portland Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Specifically, we urge the City to work with the community to launch a TRC working group by Labor Day 2020 to develop a TRC that can be launched in 2021.			

Explanation of recommendation:

In 2019, PCCEP passed a [recommendation](#) from the Settlement Agreement and Policy Subcommittee that the PPB "as part of the Community Engagement plan--formally create a Truth and Reconciliation Working Group to analyze various models and develop a plan to implement a TRC in Portland within the next three years."

The Portland Police Bureau subsequently integrated that recommendation into its Community Engagement Plan, pledging to work with the City and its bureaus to effectuate a TRC.

The recommendation of a TRC was prompted by comment comments, as well as [recent survey results](#), which found that "The community and some officers feel that an acknowledgment of the history of racism in Portland and in the PPB is a necessary first step to improved trust and legitimacy."

In response to a question from a PCCEP member at the March 2019 PCCEP meeting, then-Chief Outlaw acknowledged the promise of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission model for airing and acknowledging the history of discrimination in Portland. Nascent efforts in the U.S. (in Greensboro, NC and Maine) have shown encouraging signs, but more should be done to study the process and work with the community to develop a plan for a Portland-specific TRC model.

As detailed in a [recent article](#) (excerpted below) by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, there are multiple models and organizations to engage:

The [National Network for Safe Communities](#) (NNSC) at John Jay College has laid the foundation for this kind of engagement through a framework known as “reconciliation” between Black communities and law enforcement. The approach draws from the experiences of international transitional justice commissions like those in post-apartheid South Africa, and seeks to address both contemporary and historical abuses by police in communities of color.

As the leading organization of the Department of Justice (DOJ) [National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice](#), NNSC designed and piloted a city-wide “reconciliation” process in six U.S. cities (Birmingham, Al.; Fort Worth, Tx.; Gary, In.; Minneapolis, Mn.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Stockton, Ca.)... It has made a difference.

According to an [evaluation by the Urban Institute](#), there has been measurable improvement in police-community relations in the cities where the DOJ initiative focused its efforts. The evaluation showed that perception of police legitimacy has increased among many historically disadvantaged communities, and it has been linked with increases in public safety.

PCCEP recommends that the city support the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission Workgroup created by community partners-- including but not limited to, the Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform and the Mental Health Alliance--and including the City, Portland Police Bureau, and the Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing among other partners as members of this workgroup. The goals of the workgroup should include the creation of a historical record of past events, ownership of harm inflicted by PPB to specific communities, preservation of community member experiences, and a path to rectify past harm.

<p>How does this recommendation redress barriers to racial equity?</p>	<p>As noted above, survey data shows that the community believes that “acknowledgment of the history of racism in Portland and in the PPB is a necessary first step to improved trust and legitimacy.” This belief is widespread, including in communities of color that have long borne the negative consequences of disproportionate policing.</p>
<p>How does this recommendation improve outcomes for people with behavioral health issues, challenges and /or in crisis?</p>	<p>The lawsuit that led to the Settlement Agreement was rooted in disproportionate policing of people with mental illness or perceived to be in a behavioral health crisis.</p>
<p>How were marginalized and underrepresented communities, including those who will be affected by this recommendation, engaged to shape, write and otherwise develop this recommendation?</p>	<p>The initial recommendation was developed in committee, discussed at full board, and voted/passing after input from the Chief.</p> <p>In recent weeks, community members have expressed a desire for a TRC, “citizens tribunal” or similar mechanism to address historic problems.</p> <p>This specific recommendation was discussed at public meeting on Sunday, June 7, and received broad support. It was further refined and brought to the Settlement Agreement and Policy Subcommittee on June 10, where it received additional feedback and improvement.</p>