



DISTRICT COUNCILS

COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

District Council Recommendations for the Chicago Police Department's District Strategic Plan Program

September 19, 2025

Vision of Recommendations

The following represent recommendations by District Councils (DCs) on steps CPD should take in order to optimize its District Strategic Plan (DSP) program. In recent years, CPD has made progress with the DSP program, including steps towards Consent Decree compliance. Still, we have identified opportunities for further improvement. Our vision is for the DSP process to serve as the blueprint for how CPD partners with communities to identify and address each District's unique priorities, build trust, and advance public safety collectively. Our recommendations will ensure more Chicagoans have a voice in the DSP process and the opportunity to be true partners in building safer communities. Implementing the recommendations in this document would improve the readability and accessibility of the DSPs and remove barriers to shaping its content. DSPs will become living documents that address community concerns as they arise by establishing a process to develop goals for emergent public safety challenges in addition to the chronic ones. Finally, with these recommendations, we call for more holistic usage of DSPs by Police District personnel, more consistent involvement of community partners, and more oversight and accountability for strategic goals. DCs also envision playing an important role in the DSP program, providing a source of quality assurance in DSPs that exists entirely outside CPD. With these improvements, DSPs will manifest Superintendent Larry Snelling's vision that every officer must be a community policing officer.

Improve the Accessibility of DSPs

In engaging constituents, DCs noticed that many people were unaware of DSPs. Of those that did know, there was a lack of engagement because plans were difficult to access and interpret. This is likely one of the reasons CPD has had such low attendance with their DSP community conversations. CPD members have also found DSPs challenging to fill out and use. To address this, CPD must invest in designing, writing, formatting, publishing, and distributing DSPs so that they are accessible to every resident in a police district. All Chicagoans should be able to easily find and understand the central priorities and strategies of their Police District.

1. **Publish in Multiple languages:**

While CPD has taken strides to provide translations upon request, CPD should work more proactively to provide DSP translations in the most common languages of the respective district with the goal of stimulating engagement of non-English speakers. CPD should also ensure DSPs are accessible for individuals with vision impairments.

2. **Write for a Broad Audience:**

Reduce the level of police jargon and ensure the document is easy for a broad audience to understand. For example, avoid acronyms and other police terms that may not be clear to the general public.

3. **Summarize/Organize for Brevity:**

Counteract the length of DSPs by providing a top-sheet overview, adding an executive summary and hyperlinked table of contents, and/or off-loading some content to enclosures or attachments.

4. **Simplify the Layout:**

Change the format of DSPs by creating a layout that is easier to fill, read, and update throughout the year.

5. **Digitize:**

Ensure the contents of the DSP are digitally searchable when people are reviewing the document.

6. **Distribute Broadly:**

Make DSPs impossible to ignore. Have DSPs posted in more prominent places on the individual Police District websites and social media in addition to having readily available printed versions in the lobbies of the stations for public access.

Improve the Quality of the Content of DSPs

DSPs feature an extensive number of prompts under each priority, from source of concern to root causes to response strategies and outside resources. The issue is the lack of a coherent goal-based framework that provides direction and clarity for District personnel and the community. DSPs also require only three public safety priorities. Although this limit provides focus for District work over the course of the year, Special Order S02-03-02 references the importance of also analyzing emergent public safety challenges. DSPs can be an effective tool for incorporating streamlined goals for tackling emerging crime challenges in the district. Finally, DSPs currently require District leadership to describe community partnership strategies in the context of public safety priorities and, separately, to develop community engagement priorities. CPD should eliminate this redundancy and frame engagement priorities as a cascading goal-setting process to address a crime priority. Taken together, these recommendations ensure that every Police District has a useful set of goals and strategies that are practical and easy to implement and operationalize.

1. **Set SMART Goals:**

SMART goals are goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely, Inclusive, and Equitable. District Councils recommend this approach to setting goals in DSPs. While DSPs provide many components of SMART goals, placing the information in a more coherent and constructive goal-setting framework will make DSPs clearer, easier to follow, and easier for District leadership to utilize. CPD has achieved compliance with Paragraph 17 of the Consent Decree by requiring DSPs to use crime-reduction metrics, but with the SMART goal format, Districts can also include metrics in DSPs that measure the efficacy of specific tactics and strategies.

2. **Designate Space for Emerging Public Safety Priorities:**

Ensure that DSPs go beyond the three high-level crime priorities by having a section dedicated to emergent crime trends that may be limited to a certain part of the district or a certain time of the year. DSPs should clearly indicate additional priorities added throughout the year. Having space to add emerging crime issues will make the DSP more relevant for addressing community needs as they arise.

3. **Develop Community Engagement Priorities within Public Safety Priorities:**

Rather than having community engagement priorities in a separate section of the DSP, CPD should have Districts design engagement plans that will help the District achieve each of its public safety priorities. This recommendation would streamline DSP development by merging community engagement brainstorming with the work of identifying community-driven crime reduction strategies.

Improve Community Engagement for Developing DSPs

To build trust and move CPD closer to full compliance with the Consent Decree, each district must do more to ensure that every resident has meaningful access to the DSP process. The impact of the DSP will be strengthened by engaging more diverse populations directly in the goal setting and problem-solving process. According to data provided by CPD, attendance at community engagement sessions regarding DSPs is lacking racially, geographically, and socio-economically diverse sub-sections of the community. CPD must ensure that District Councils and residents are engaged in the planning, implementation, and accountability towards goals outlined in DSPs. Demonstrating follow-through will build trust and demonstrate that CPD takes DSPs seriously, which will increase robust community participation. An expansive and organized approach to community engagement will help achieve the intended results outlined under CPD's Special Order S02-03-02.

1. Utilize Beat Meetings for Additions to DSPs

Have Districts leverage beat meetings for regular review and engagement on DSPs, with sessions devoted to collecting concerns from the public and exploring emerging DSP priorities and strategies for addressing those concerns. DSPs should be living compilations of strategies developed between the District and the public for addressing public safety concerns.

2. Review Performance to Date:

At the start of the development process, Districts should provide the public with the latest quarterly reports and deliver presentations on its performance under the current DSP at beat meetings, the DC meeting, and other community events.

3. Collaborate to Plan Outreach for DSP Development:

Work with the DC and community stakeholders to develop better community outreach plans for developing the next year's DSP, promoting awareness of the plan, and mobilizing public attendance at input sessions. Ensure that dates, times, and locations for community engagement sessions are released in a timely manner and shared with DCs. Use beat meetings to gather input on outreach. Consult with the DC on priority groups and populations for outreach. Maintain an inventory of community stakeholders. Community stakeholders should include:

- Attendees at beat meetings.
- Groups that collaborated on DSP priorities in the past,
- Community engagement priority groups/populations in the current DSP.
- Populations historically uninvolved with police collaborations/DSP work.
- Populations most impacted by crime and policing in the district.
- Affinity groups residing in the district.
- Any other groups and populations recommended by the DC.

4. Track Engagement Demographics:

Track and share levels of community involvement in the DSP development process not just by recording and reporting out general attendance but also by identifying levels of participation of key groups and populations in the district (e.g., number of youth, number of residents from a specific community area, etc.).

5. Use DC Meeting for Input:

Upon request by the DC, require that the Commander present on the DSP and solicit community input at a public meeting of the DC.

6. CPD Member Involvement:

Beyond training, we must holistically involve rank and file officers in DSP process to keep them engaged in the strategic work Districts carry out under DSPs. This engagement should include Department or District-wide orientations on the DSP process and how DSP's inform police work. District leadership should solicit input from officers on proposed DSP priorities and community collaboration opportunities for the upcoming year.

7. Hold Virtual Input Option:

Provide virtually accessible opportunities for input sessions on the DSP.

8. Hold Varied Input Sessions:

Make the community engagement process more inclusive by providing more variety of in-person community conversations and listening sessions to fit the needs of different populations in the District (e.g., youth vs elderly, people with families, people with evening or other atypical work schedules, opportunities for translated sessions for neighborhoods with heavy levels of non-English speakers, etc.).

9. Utilize Independent Input Sessions:

Invite and equip community stakeholder organizations to hold independent community input sessions on the DSP by providing them with easy-to-use toolkits, with the goal of increasing public input and community collaboration without over-burdening CPD personnel.

10. Gather DC Input:

Solicit, receive, and review recommendations and feedback from the District Council on the draft DSP. Share and discuss community input collected during the development process with District Councils to identify key trends and priorities. DCs can provide updates and community engagement summaries to demonstrate the extent of community involvement with the formation of District Council input.

Improve the Implementation and Usage of DSPs

One of the most concerning problems identified by District Councils is the lack of sufficient use of DSPs. District Councils found that some Districts use DSPs exactly as intended, but other District leaders admitted that they do not frequently use or revisit DSPs after they are approved. Others suggested that DSPs do not represent a focus of training and direction for officers. DSPs identify opportunities for outside collaboration, but those collaborations too often do not materialize. Despite the requirement of Quarterly Progress Reports, these reports are extremely difficult to find, and in some cases, it is unclear if they exist. CPD should work to ensure that each DSP becomes a governing document for police work throughout the year, with guidelines for implementing partnerships and strategies, report-outs on progress, and organized opportunities for making modifications.

1. Follow Through on Executing Strategies:

Establish, document, and carry out specific plans for executing the strategies outlined in the DSP, including plans for meetings with community partners, City agencies, and other entities identified in the DSP.

2. Coordinate with Community Partners on Implementation:

Provide opportunities for District members involved in DSP strategies and missions to meet with community partners listed in the DSP to promote partnership and collaboration. Provide time for beat officers to engage with DSP community partners and members of priority community engagement populations, in line with the Superintendent's goal of ensuring that every officer is a community policing officer. In collaborating with community partners on strategies outlined in the DSP, provide these partners the opportunity to host meetings and set the agenda with the District.

3. Ensure Regular Implementation Meetings:

Ensure each District holds regular meetings with District members, including rank-and-file officers, focused specifically on implementing and carrying out strategies outlined in the DSP. Use beat meetings, DC meetings, and other community meetings for the public and District personnel to discuss the DSP, review progress, and explore opportunities for improvement.

4. Promote Quarterly Progress Reports:

Improve the publication and distribution of DSP Quarterly Progress Reports via easy-to-find pages on CPD's main and district-specific website, via social media, at CPD District stations, at community meetings and resource fairs, etc. Also, improve the format, accessibility, and contents of the Quarterly Progress Reports in line with the recommendations listed for the DSPs.

5. Improve Metrics Reporting:

Ensure Quarterly Progress Reports clearly outline progress on metrics that are designed for tracking not just outcomes but the strategies developed to achieve those outcomes; process-related metrics will help CPD and the public to more easily identify the best approaches to achieving its goals and priorities.

6. Establish Structured Assessments for DSP Modifications:

Incorporate assessments throughout the year of priorities to add to the DSP, ensuring that the DSP is a living document and public safety priorities are identified throughout the year and not just in the fall. Utilize beat meetings to gather specific, localized priorities to add to the DSP, and establish a clear threshold for when issues warrant DSP inclusion. Beat meetings should follow an organized format for reviewing, identifying, and developing emergent new priorities and focus areas for DSPs. In connecting beat meetings to the DSP development and review process, CPD can also improve the purpose and functionality of beat meetings.

Improve the Accountability, Oversight, and Enforcement of DSPs

An overarching challenge for the DSP process is the connection between CPD Headquarters and the individual Districts. While CPD recently achieved secondary compliance with ¶47 of the consent decree, requiring CPD to develop procedures to annually evaluate community partnership and problem-solving strategies, full compliance will depend on how effectively those evaluations translate into practice. Strengthening the guidance, resources, and accountability CPD gives each district on DSPs is an opportunity to remove the burden from Districts in finding their own ways to design and implement DSPs. The following guidelines would ensure DSPs are not only carried out consistently, but also function as genuine tools for community collaboration, problem solving, and accountability—not only moving the Department closer to full compliance with the Consent Decree, but also setting it up for future success.

1. Trainings by the Office of Constitutional Policing and Reform (OCP):

Provide trainings to all District leaders on SMART goals and how to draft and implement effective DSPs. The trainings should incorporate assessment of understanding, such as an eLearning module, in line with Consent Decree requirements.

2. Submissions to OCP:

Require District leaders to submit community outreach plans for DSP development, implementation plans for specific strategies in the DSP, meetings held with community partners and the public, and information on briefings with District members.

3. DC and Community Input to OCP:

OCP should solicit input from community partners and the District Council on the District's usage of DSPs.

4. Briefing Activities with Community:

Require Police Districts to formulate and implement periodic district-wide educational and briefing activities, including events with community partners and other meetings that are open to the general public. Districts can use existing meetings scheduled in the community, such as DC, beat, and other community meetings, to fulfill this requirement.

5. Other Accountability Measures:

Develop more robust accountability measures to ensure District leaders produce high-quality DSPs, utilize them properly, and adjust them as needed.

Role of DCs in Reviewing and Finalizing DSPs

District Councils are in a unique position to be helpful in the DSP process. As elected public bodies, they are only accountable to the voters and therefore can exercise strong independence in their input on policing matters. Their responsibilities include creating forums for community members to raise and address policing issues, and to work with District Commanders on community policing initiatives. In essence, DCs were designed to engage in strategic planning and problem-solving on public safety issues. CPD should incorporate DCs into the process of developing and engaging on DSPs, not simply by asking for help with attendance at community conversations, but through substantive input and discourse with District leadership on how to ensure the final DSP for the year truly captures the needs of each neighborhood in the district.

1. **DC Review of Early Version:**

Require Districts to solicit input from the local DC on the initial plan summary of the DSP. DC should be a source of input on the DSP forms.

2. **DC Review of Full Version:**

After the community conversations, the District should be required to seek out DC input on the final DSP under consideration for the upcoming year. The DC can either approve, approve with comments, or reject with comments by majority vote. The DC can only take 15 days to submit a response; otherwise, the District will be able to proceed with its draft.

3. **DC-District Collaboration to Finalize DSP:**

If the DC rejects the DSP, the District must meet with the DC in good faith to discuss the DC's concerns. If, after 30 days, the DC still has not approved the DSP, the District can proceed with its version.

4. **Final Comments:**

If the DC does not approve the DSP, the DC may submit comments on its reasons for concern, which the District will include as an appendix to the DSP.

Process and Timeline

District Councils developed the following recommendations through a comprehensive process of qualitative data collection and stakeholder engagement, spanning from February to September 2025, across the twenty-two police districts. Through this process, District Councils reviewed the accessibility, quality, engagement, and implementation of District Strategic Plans (DSPs).

In February 2025, six District Councilors, each representing different police districts and areas of the city, formed a working group to evaluate the effectiveness of DSPs across the city. This aligned with the release of CCPSA's 2025 Goals for the CPD Superintendent, which call for the Chicago Police Department (CPD) to revise the District Strategic Plans policy with input from District Councils and the community, and to provide evidence of effective communication and engagement with District Council members on community engagement efforts related to the District Strategic Plans. The Working Group initiated the development of a set of recommendations for the DSPs and first presented the proposal at the March 2025 Quarterly Meeting of District Councils, where members discussed and debated the proposal. The objective was to gather input from both community members and police personnel to inform recommendations aimed at improving the implementation and effectiveness of the DSPs.

In April 2025, the DSP Working Group developed a DSP Toolkit designed to support a city-wide, community-driven approach to data collection. The toolkit included resources such as educational materials on CPD's directive on DSPs (S02-03-02), recommended questions to ask District Commanders, and a community feedback form designed to collect resident input on the effectiveness of the current DSP model.

Between April and June 2025, nearly every District Council convened at least one meeting and often multiple meetings to engage community members in discussions regarding the DSPs. These meetings provided an additional platform for gathering feedback on the accessibility and effectiveness of the plans. District Councils engaged with District Commanders and other members of local police leadership to discuss the implementation of DSPs within their respective districts.

In June 2025, District Councilors created an initial draft of the DSP recommendations based on input gathered by District Councils. During the June Quarterly Meeting of District Councils, District Councilors held breakout sessions to discuss the data collected and refine the initial recommendations.

From July to August 2025, the DSP Working Group worked to synthesize data collected from community meetings, feedback forms, and breakout sessions. The Working Group met with a representative from the Office of Community Policing to further understand the DSP program from the lens of CPD project management. District Councilors incorporated this information into a second draft of the DSP recommendations, which they further refined to ensure the recommendations accurately reflected community input and district-specific needs.

In September 2025, the Research, Policy, and Planning team issued recommendations on the second draft of the DSP Proposal for review and feedback. The DSP Working Group reviewed and

integrated the feedback into a final draft, which they presented to all District Councils for final review and approval. The District Councils voted on the final set of DSP recommendations during a seven-day voting period from September 9th to September 16th, 2025. District Councilors demonstrated strong participation in the vote, with 60 out of 65 members submitting a vote: 57 voting in favor, 3 voting against, and 5 not casting a vote. At least one member of each of the twenty-two District Councils took part in the vote, with majority support from twenty District Councils and unanimous consensus in sixteen District Councils. This strong participation and overwhelming support demonstrate the District Councils' commitment to enhancing DSPs and ensuring they become effective, community-driven tools for public safety.

For more information about these recommendations, please contact Julio Miramontes, District Council Project Manager, Julio.Miramontes@cityofchicago.org, and Charles Isaacs, Deputy Director for District Councils, Charles.Isaacs@cityofchicago.org.

Members of the District Strategic Plan Working Group

Alexander Perez, District Council 002

Thomas McMahon, District Council 005

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Jennifer Schaffer, District Council 019

District Councilor Vote Results

Proposal Name	District Council Recommendations for CPD’s District Strategic Plan Program		
Proposed by	DSP Working Group		
Voting timeframe	Wednesday, September 10 – Tuesday, September 16		
Vote requirement	Greater than 50% of all District Councilors (33/65)		
Result	Adopted (57/65 District Councilors, 88%)		
Voting Results	Voted Yes	Voted No	Did Not Vote
District Councilors	57 (88%)	3	5
DCs represented	22	2	5
DC majorities	20	1	0
DC consensuses	16	0	0
Vote Breakdown by Individual Councilors (* = DC majority, ** = DC consensus)			
Voted Yes **DC consensuses: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24 *DC majorities: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25	001	Adrienne Johnson	
	002**	Ephraim Lee, Marquinn McDonald, Alexander Perez	
	003**	Kenya Franklin, Janice Jones [3 rd seat vacant]	
	004**	Lovie Bernard, Gloria Jenkins, Brenda Waters	
	005**	Robert McKay, Thomas McMahon, Ponchita Moore	
	006*	Aisha Humphries, Ciera Whitaker	
	007**	Teresa Chandler, Dion McGill, Joseph Williams	
	008	Al Cacciottolo	
	009**	Denise McBroom, Carlos Sanchez, Erin Vogel	
	010*	Elianne Bahena, Rosemarie Dominguez	
	011**	Alees Edwards, Bryan Ramson, Jr., Jocelyn Woodards	
	012**	Michelle D. Page, Leonardo Quintero, Chloe Vitale	
	014**	Christopher Laurent, David Orlikoff, Ashley Vargas	
	015*	Carmelita Earls, Deondre’ Rutues	
	016**	Colleen Dillon, Daniel Martin, Colleen Murphy	
	017**	Luis Bermudez, Beth Rochford, Anthony Tamez	
	018**	Robert Johnson, Karen Kane, Brad Kessler	
	019**	Maurilio Garcia, Jenny Schaffer, Sam Schoenburg	
	020**	Darrell Dacres, Deirdre O’Connor, Anna Rubin	
	022**	Lee Bielecki, Patrick Kennedy, Carisa Parker	
	024**	Veronica Arreola, Keo Jean-Joseph, Marilyn Pagán-Banks	
	025*	Saul Arellano, Angelica Green	
Voted No	001	Sarah Kammerer	
	008*	Mark Hamberlin, Jason Huff	
Did Not Vote	001	Jamie Brown	
	006	David Boykin	
	010	Kiisha Smith	
	015	Arewa Najm EKUA	
	025	Jacob Arena	